

**Min Thimar Al-ilm
Wa Al-Hikmah**
Fatwas and Benefits

3
Volume

Section on Fiqh
Benefits and Rare Points
In Various Sciences

Authored by

Al-Sayyid Al-'Allamah Al-Mujtahid

Muhammad bin Abd Allah Awad

May Allah preserve him and prolong his life



Al-Bayt Library (A.S)

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Min Thimār al-'Ilm wa al-Ḥikmah
(*Fatāwā wa Fawā'id*)

*From the Prospects of
Knowledge and Wisdom
(Fatwas and Benefits)*

Part Three

Section on Fiqh

Benefits and Rare Points in Various Sciences

Authored by

Al-Sayyid al-'Allamah al-Mujtahid

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(*May Allah preserve him and prolong is life*)



Ahl Al-Bait Library (A.s.)

Written, researched, and edited by



Ahl Al-Bayt Library (A.S.)

Yemen - Saada - T (531580\713842989)

Third edition - 1441 AH

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Foreword - Verification Section

In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds, abundant, pure, and blessed praise. We praise Him for His tremendous blessings and His immense favors, and we send prayers and peace upon the best of creation, Muhammad son of ‘Abdullah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the chosen one of Allah and His beloved, and upon his noble, radiant family, and thereafter:

This is the third part of the book "***Min Thimār al-‘Ilm wa al-Ḥikmah***" *From the Prospects of Knowledge and Wisdom*, the section "Benefits and Rare Points in Various Sciences." In it we have gathered what, in the previous two parts – in the earlier editions – concerned topics not related to jurisprudence, and we have added to it many benefits that had been scattered in notebooks, as we pointed out in the introduction to the verification in the first part of this book. These benefits are in various sciences, and the author – *may Allah preserve him* – has indicated this on the first page of some of his notebooks in which he records these benefits, where he said: "*Benefits and rare points in various sciences, which came according to what arises of a question or a scholarly discussion, or what presents itself to the mind. And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah send prayers and peace upon our master Muhammad and upon his pure family.*" End of his words, may Allah preserve him.

These are tremendous benefits, which every student and researcher, every learner and scholar, is in need of. A person rarely finds them in a book, for they are the extract of the effort of the author – *may Allah support him* – and the distillation of his reflections. He undertook to write them down after he had untied their symbols, solved their knots, and lifted their veils, so that they might reach us with clarity of expression and lofty structure, sound in meanings and easy in words and composition. You will see, dear reader, that which will delight your eye and gladden your heart from these beneficial benefits and ripe fruits.

We have arranged them under main sections according to importance, exerting our utmost in that: what pertains to the Noble Qur’an first, then what pertains to knowledge, then what pertains to the fundamentals of religion, then what pertains to the principles of jurisprudence, then the benefits that pertain to acts of worship, then the benefits that pertain to transactions, then what concerns supplications and remembrances, then what concerns wisdoms and admonitions, then discussion of some of the hadiths of Ahl al-Sunnah, then what is from the prophetic biography in

mentioning the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) or the prophets, then Ahl al-Bayt (*May Allah's Blessing be upon them*), then the miscellaneous benefits, then important benefits for women, then scattered sessions, which were in a separate notebook, so we preferred to leave them as they are and made them the conclusion of this blessed part.

There may be resemblance between two or more topics, yet we did not suffice with one of them; rather, we recorded all of them, because in one of them there may be an additional benefit that is not in the other. They were not arranged in this way by the author – *may Allah preserve and support him* – rather, he would write about a topic at one time, then write about it at another time in another place. When they were typeset and prepared for printing and arranged according to topics, this similarity appeared. Also, there are many topics in, for example, the fundamentals of religion and the principles of jurisprudence and other than them that are not complete as in the books authored in these sciences; and the reason for that, as the author – *may Allah preserve him* – indicated, is that these benefits were only according to the situation, or what presented itself to the mind. From that, many abundant benefits have been gathered in many chapters of these sciences.

There may also be from us some mixing in the arrangement of certain topics, or advancing what ought to be delayed, or the opposite of that; and this is only due to shortness of reach and limited knowledge.

We ask Allah, *exalted is He*, that we may have been granted success in our work, that He forgive us for what we have been heedless of, or erred in, or fallen short in, that He make it beneficial to all who read it, that He make our deeds purely for His noble Face, that He preserve for us our master and support him, avert from him every evil and disliked thing, and make this book and other than it from his unique and beneficial books in the balance of his good deeds, and multiply for him the reward and recompense. Verily He is All-Hearing, Responsive. And may Allah send prayers upon our master Muhammad and upon his pure family, and grant them abundant peace.

Verification Section / Ahl al-Bayt Library (*peace be upon them*)

Month of Muharram / 1441 A.H.

[In Mention of the Noble Qur'an]

The Noble Qur'an

In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful.

The Noble Qur'an is the root and source from which the valleys and rivers of the Islamic sciences flow, and they are:

- 1- The science of Divine Unity (*tawhid*) and justice, and what is attached to that, and it is called the fundamentals of religion.
- 2- The principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*).
- 3- The science of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), which includes the science of acts of worship, transactions, and conduct.
- 4- The science of histories and of the beginning of creation and its end.
- 5- The science of philosophy, which means the science of the path of happiness.
- 6- The science of noble character traits.
- 7- The science of vocabulary (*single words of the language*).
- 8- The science of grammar and morphology (*the science of parsing*).
- 9- The sciences of meanings, rhetoric, and embellishment (*ma'ani, bayan, and badi'*).
- 10- The sciences of politics, sociology, and economics.
- 11- The sciences of the seas, of space, of the stars, and of the computation of the mansions (positions).
- 12- Unseen (*ghaybi*) sciences.
- 13- And many other sciences, which al-Suyuti, in his book *al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an*, brought up to one hundred sciences.

The Qur'an is the Speech of Allah, *exalted is He*, which He sent down to the people in the language of the Arabs, *"in a clear Arabic tongue"* [al-Shu'ara':195].

And knowing the Qur'anic meanings as they ought to be known is dependent on knowing the language of the Arabs (the language of the Qur'an), and knowing the language of the Arabs is dependent on:

1- Knowing the meanings of the single words; and by that we mean knowing the meanings of nouns, verbs, and particles. And this is a necessary matter that one cannot dispense with. And to know what we have mentioned, we set for you some examples:

"(ma)" has multiple meanings:

- It comes for interrogation: *"What has put you into Saqar?"* [al-Muddaththir: 42].
- For negation: *"Allah has not taken any son"* [al-Mu'minun:91].
- For condition: *"Whatever mercy Allah opens for the people, none can withhold it"* [Fatir:2].

- For emphasis: *"So by mercy from Allah, you were lenient with them"* [Ali ‘Imran:159].
- As a relative pronoun for rational beings and others: *"And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens"* [al-Nisa’:126].

And so on with the rest of its meanings, which amount to fifteen meanings.

2- Knowing the science of parsing (*grammar and morphology*); for indeed, the nominative case, for example, indicates a certain meaning in the word, and when you make it accusative, the meaning changes, and so on.

3- Knowing the science of eloquence and rhetoric; for the Arabs have secrets in the structures of speech, and knowing these secrets depends on being firmly grounded in the sciences of rhetoric, together with intelligence, sharpness of understanding, and full focused attention in contemplation. And for this reason He, *exalted is He*, said, regarding knowing the interpretation of the mutashabih (ambiguous) of the Noble Qur’an: *"And no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firm in knowledge"* [Ali ‘Imran:7].

4- Being firmly grounded in the comprehensive Islamic rules that guide how to act when there is contradiction between the general and the specific, and conflict between the absolute and the restricted, and between the explicit text and the apparent (*zahir*), and between the apparent and the implied meaning (*mafhum*), and between the various implied meanings, and between two generalities, and between two apparent texts, and so on. And this, together with sound understanding, sharp intelligence, and focused concentration of thought, when coupled with the success granted by Allah, *glorified is He*.

If a Muslim masters what we have mentioned, then, with the help and success of Allah, he is able to know the sciences of the Qur’an which Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, has deposited in the verses of His Noble Book.

And we must not forget that complete knowledge and good understanding are contingent upon sincerity of intention for Allah, *exalted is He*, and adherence to piety, then seeking aid from Him, *exalted is He*, and taking refuge in Him for guidance, right direction, and success. He, *exalted is He*, said: *"I will turn away from My signs those who behave arrogantly upon the earth..."* [al-A’raf: 146].

So whoever gathers together what we have mentioned, and is as we have described, will—by the success granted by Allah, *exalted is He*—be among those firm in knowledge, whom Allah mentioned in His saying: *"And no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firm in knowledge..."* [Ali ‘Imran:7]; and he will deserve the lofty merit with Allah

that is indicated by His saying, *exalted is He*: "*Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees*" [al-Mujadila:11], and "*Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?'*" [al-Zumar:9].

As for the one who does not have knowledge of what we have mentioned, he will not be guided to extracting the sciences of the Qur'an and its interpretation. However, Allah, *exalted is He*, has made it easy for people in general to understand the admonitions of the Qur'an, and the details of promise and threat, reckoning, Paradise and Hell, and to understand the greatness of Allah, *exalted is He*, His Oneness, His power, His knowledge, the vastness of His mercy, the abundance of His favors, and the like of that from the pieces of knowledge with which Allah, *exalted is He*, has charged all those who are legally responsible.

Sciences of the Noble Qur'an

The Noble Qur'an comprises types of sciences, the most important of which are:

- 1- The science of the fundamentals of religion (*usul al-din*) with all its branches.
- 2- The science of the principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*) with all its branches; for it contains the general and the specific, the absolute and the restricted, the ambiguous and the clarified, the explicit text and the apparent wording, the spoken (*express*) meaning and the understood (implied) meaning, the literal and the metaphorical, the definitive and the ambiguous, the apparent and the interpreted, the abrogating and the abrogated, and so on.
- 3- The science of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) with all its branches.
- 4- The science of ethics and purification of the hearts.
- 5- The sciences of the Arabic language: grammar, morphology, meanings, rhetoric, figures of speech, and vocabulary.
- 6- And in it also is mention that:
 - The Prophet of Allah Yusuf (*Peace be upon him*) was knowledgeable in managing the economic policy of the state.
 - And that he succeeded in his economic policy for the state during an economic crisis that lasted seven years.
 - And that the Prophet of Allah Dawud (*Peace be upon him*) was knowledgeable—by Allah's teaching him—of the craft of iron, shaping it into coats of mail and other things, "*and We made iron soft for him*" [Saba':10].
 - And [that he was] knowledgeable in the politics of kingship.
 - And that industry advanced in the time of the Prophet of Allah

Sulayman (*Peace be upon him*) with a tremendous development, and that this development was under his supervision and command.

The Noble Qur'an as the Source of the Islamic Sciences

From it the sciences branch out, and to it they return:

- For in it there is an immense treasure of the vocabulary of the Arabic language.
- And by it the science of parsing and construction, and the sciences of rhetoric and their appendages, are preserved.
- And in it is the science of the prescribed shares of inheritance (*fara'id*),
- And the science of jurisprudence (*fiqh*).
- And the science of the principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*) is present therein in potential form.
- And the science of the fundamentals of religion.
- And in it is the science of the biography of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).
- And in it is knowledge of many of the accounts of the prophets and messengers, and many of the earlier communities, and the reports of the beginning of creation, and the reports about the hypocrites.

[Some of What the Noble Qur'an Contains]

The legal rulings of the Qur'an include most of the jurisprudential rulings, such as purification, impurities, and menstruation; the issues of prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage, marriage, divorce; buying and selling, pledges, leasing; lawsuits, testimonies, oaths, vows; endowments, inheritances, bequests; enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong; jihad, conduct of war (*siyar*), prescribed punishments, criminal offenses, and on to the rest of the chapters of *fiqh*.

It also contains the science of Divine Unity and justice, prophethood and imamate, promise and threat, and so on.

It likewise includes issues belonging to the science of the principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*).

It also encompasses the science of spiritual purification, the science of dialectical debate, the science of philosophy, the rudiments of the science of medicine, and headings from the sciences of the seas, astronomy, geography, and natural science.

Likewise it includes the sciences of the Arabic language in all its branches, and it includes the history of the beginning of creation and of creatures, and an aspect of the science of the angels and the jinn, and the

histories of earlier nations throughout the span of history, and the history of the prophets and messengers, and the histories of many kings and tyrants, and much of the histories of the Children of Israel.

It also contains many reports about future events; and in it are reports about the hypocrites and the polytheists, and the biography of our Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) from its beginning to its end, and what he suffered in his call at the hands of the polytheists and the hypocrites.

Knowing Allah in the Noble Qur'an

Allah, *exalted is He*, has commanded reflection and contemplation upon His signs scattered throughout the heavens and the earth, and upon the selves, in many verses beyond count, especially in the Makkan surahs: *"Have We not made the earth a resting place"* [Al-Naba':6], *"By the sun and its forenoon brightness, and by the moon when it follows it"* [Ash-Shams:1-2], *"Do they then not look at the camels, how they are created"* [Al-Ghashiyah:17], *"Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High, Who created and proportioned"* [Al-A'la:1-2], *"Recite in the Name of your Lord who created, created the human being from a clinging clot"* [Al-'Alaq:1-2], and *"And among His signs are the night and the day"* [Fussilat:37], *"And among His signs is that you see the earth humbled"* [Fussilat:39], and *"And a sign for them is the dead earth"* [Ya-Sin:33]; and nearly all of the Makkan surahs focus on this theme.

Reflecting on the Blessings of Allah

Allah, *exalted is He*, reminds His servants of His blessings upon them, His bounty toward them, and His beneficence to them, so that they might turn to Him with their hearts and acknowledge His favors upon them, devoting to Him alone thanks and praise, and making their obedience and worship sincere for Him; and in the Qur'an there is much in this regard.

The Oneness of Allah and Knowing Him

Allah, *exalted is He*, has made His servants know what He is characterized by of greatness, majesty, and oneness by several ways:

1- By making them know His Most Beautiful Names; and in the Noble Qur'an there are close to one hundred of the Most Beautiful Names, through which Allah has made Himself known to His servants by what He has of majesty, perfection, greatness, and transcendence.

Among that is what is in Surah al-Ikhlās, in Ayat al-Kursi, in the end of Surah al-Hashr, at the beginning of Surah al-Hadid, and in Surah al-Ra'd: *"Allah knows what every female bears, and what the wombs lose and what they increase, and everything with Him is by due measure, Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Most Great, the Most High"* [Al-Ra'd:8-9], and *"He*

is the First and the Last..." [Al-Hadid:3], and the beginning of Surah al-Fatihah.

And whoever desires more, let him read the Qur'an from its beginning to its end; he will find of the greatness, majesty, and perfection of Allah that which fills his soul and his mind, and takes hold of his thinking and his feelings.

2- By striking parables and addressing the intellect with convincing proofs, after which the innate reason is left with no doubt about the soundness of Allah's Oneness and His exclusive right to be worshipped.

3- By nullifying the godhood of those that are worshipped besides Allah, such as idols, 'Isa, Maryam, 'Uzayr, the angels, and so on.

4- By reminding them of His various great favors upon His servants, and that He alone is the Bestower who has graciously given to them, unlike those whom they worship besides Allah.

5- By reminding them and making them acknowledge that He alone is the Creator, who created the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them.

Faith in the Angels, the Scriptures, the Messengers, and the Last Day

Allah, *exalted is He*, has made clear in His Book the evidences and proofs for the truthfulness of His Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), that he is a Messenger from Allah, and that the Qur'an is the Speech of Allah and His revelation to the people, in such a way that no excuse and no doubt remains with it. And the Qur'an contains the obligation of believing in the angels, the scriptures sent down upon the prophets and messengers of Allah, *May Allah bless them*, and the obligation of believing in resurrection after death for recompense, reckoning, reward, and punishment.

Worship of Allah, Exalted is He

The Qur'an includes teaching those who are legally responsible how to worship Allah, remember Him, praise Him, thank Him, glorify Him, and it explains the types of worship that are required.

Transactions

And in it is detailed what the servants are to do and to refrain from in their dealings among themselves, such as marriage, divorce, expenditures, sales, leasing, pledges, loans, inheritances, bequests, testimonies, lawsuits, criminal offenses, oaths, vows, and endowments.

Wilayah (Authority), Jihad, and Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil

And in it is what is obligatory upon the ruler in his authority of

conduct and actions, such as striving against the polytheists, striving against the People of the Book, striving against rebels, collecting and distributing the fay', adjudication, prescribed punishments, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and removing mutual injustices, and so on.

And [it clarifies] the duties of war and the duties of peace, and what pertains to covenants and contracts and fulfilling them, and what pertains to breaking them, and so on.

The Merit of Reciting the Qur'an from Memory

Question: Which is better: reciting from the muṣḥaf, or reciting from memory?

Answer: It has not become clear to me that there is any difference between the two, and the transmitted reports have come regarding the virtue of reciting the Qur'an in an unrestricted manner, without restricting it to being from the muṣḥaf or from memory.

It may be said: it has come regarding the merit of this Ummah something whose meaning is: *"Their muṣḥafs are in their chests; water does not wash them away."* From this, it may be inferred that reciting from memory is superior. In addition to that, the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the Companions used to recite the Qur'an from memory, and the muṣḥafs did not appear until after some time; thus, in reciting from memory there is following the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the foremost Companions.

- And on the other side it may be argued as proof: that reciting from the muṣḥaf gathers the mind more fully, and is nearer to reflection and contemplation; so from this perspective it is superior.

Recitation of the Qur'an and its Memorisation

Reciting the Qur'an is a tremendous act of worship in the religion of Islam, and what is obligatory of recitation is divided into two categories:

- 1- An individual obligation upon every Muslim, and that is reciting al-Fatihah and whatever is easy along with it in the prayers.
- 2- And a communal obligation, and that is upon the scholars; for it is obligatory upon them to study the Qur'an and to ponder its verses, so that they may take from it its sciences and its lessons, act upon them and teach them to the people; and this is not attained for them except through abundant pondering, repeatedly, and prolonged reflection: *"A blessed Book We have sent down to you, that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding may take heed"* [Sad:29].

As for the common Muslims, nothing is obligatory upon them except

al-Fatihah and whatever is easy along with it for their prayers, and it is not obligatory upon them to recite the Qur’an, and it suffices them to believe in it in a general way and to refer back to the scholars in the matters of their religion.

[The Ruling on Reciting the Qur’an without Contemplation]

Question: A reciter recites the Qur’an in Ramadan or outside of it, and his intention is to contemplate during his recitation and to reflect upon the verses of the Qur’an, but his mind becomes distracted during the recitation and reflection and contemplation slip away from him; so is the reciter rewarded for this recitation that is empty of reflection and contemplation, without deliberate neglect?

Answer: What appears to me is that such a reciter is rewarded for his recitation of the Qur’an, and that is because:

- The intention of the reciter, at the commencement of the recitation, to reflect and to contemplate is a righteous act for which the reciter is rewarded.

- The reciter recites the Qur’an out of magnification for the Qur’an and the Speech of his Lord, so his recitation, from this perspective, is an act of worship, even if he does not reflect and does not contemplate.

And it has been reported: *“Looking into the muṣḥaf is an act of worship, looking at the face of one’s parents is an act of worship, looking at the Noble Ka’bah is an act of worship, and looking at the face of the scholar is an act of worship”*; and it would not be an act of worship except because of what it contains of exaltation for that which Allah has exalted.

Yes, contemplation and reflection during recitation is superior, because in it there is a combining between worship and knowledge; for the one who contemplates the verses of the Qur’an gains knowledge.

- And if we were to say that none is rewarded for the recitation of the Qur’an except the one who contemplates and reflects during his recitation, we would thereby deprive the non-Arabs who recite the Qur’an and do not understand its meaning – and how many they are – and the common Muslims – and how many they are – of the reward of recitation, and it would then not be good that the generality of people should learn the recitation of the Qur’an.

And it is known throughout history in all lands of the Muslims, among Arabs and non-Arabs, that the common people learn the recitation of the Qur’an and teach it to their children, and the scholars have not alerted them to any error in that; so this indicates that reciting the Qur’an without reflection and contemplation is an independent act of worship. Otherwise, the scholars would have alerted them that it is not an act of worship, so that they would not trouble themselves and their children

with what contains no reward.

[On the Reward of One Who Recites the Qur'an for a Wage]

A question has been asked about the one who recites the Qur'an for a wage: does he receive a reward for his recitation of the Qur'an, or is the reward entirely for the one who paid the wage?

The answer: The one who pays the wage has the reward of the recitation of the Qur'an, and the one who recites for a wage has the reward of his own recitation of the Qur'an; nothing of his reward is diminished.

It has been reported that the one who strives in doing good is like the one who actually does it, and it has been reported regarding performing ḥajj on behalf of another for a wage what indicates what we have mentioned.

And what indicates the permissibility of reciting the Qur'an for a wage is the hadith about ruqyah with al-Fatihah, and it is a well-known hadith.

[The Ruling on the Recitation of One Who Makes Many Mistakes (Lahn) in the Qur'an]

Question: If there is a reciter who recites the Qur'an and makes many mistakes in it, due to his weak knowledge of recitation, is it obligatory upon the listener to point out to him every mistake? And is this an evil that must be changed?

Answer: Some scholars have said that this is an evil that must be denounced and changed, but this has not become clear to me; for the reciter of the Qur'an recites it out of magnification for Allah and for His Book, and what is known is that no corruption results from his mistakes, such that from his mistake there arise meanings that are not intended and the listener believes them.

Once you know this, the recitation of the reciter of the Qur'an, out of magnification for Allah and for His Book, is a good act of obedience, and the occurrence of mistakes (*lahn*) is an error that the one making the mistake does not intend, and error is excused, and no corruption results from his mistake; thus, there is no basis for denouncing the one who makes mistakes unintentionally.

If it is said: We concede that he is not to be denounced, but it is obligatory to teach him.

We say: It is not obligatory upon a person to recite the Qur'an outside of the prayer, so it is not obligatory upon the reciter to learn what is not obligatory, and it is not obligatory to teach what is not obligatory.

If it is said: Then it should at least be obligatory to make him aware that he makes many mistakes in his recitation, and to say to him: It is more fitting for you to leave off the recitation of the Qur'an and turn

instead to tasbīḥ and dhikr, as a way of safeguarding the Book of Allah and exalting His Speech.

We say: If the reciter does not know that he is making mistakes, and thinks that he has memorised as he ought to, then he should be guided to further learning of recitation, and he should not be advised and guided to leave off the recitation of the Qur'an and turn instead to tasbīḥ; because there are benefits that result from his recitation: for when he recites, he is conscious that he is reciting the Speech of Allah, so the awe and greatness of Allah descend into his heart, and he obtains admonitions, restraints, desire and fear; he benefits from the recitation of the Qur'an in proportion to his knowledge and understanding. So he should not be directed to leave off the recitation of the Qur'an.

Moreover, among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) there was a group of non-Arabs, such as Suhaib, Bilal, Salman, and others, and it has not been narrated that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) forbade them from reciting the Qur'an, even though it is known that non-Arabs do not pronounce the speech of the Arabs as it ought to be pronounced. Then great nations of non-Arabs entered into Islam, and it has not been narrated that there was any denunciation from the scholars of the Muslims of their recitation of the Qur'an, nor has it been reported from any one of them that he directed the non-Arabs to leave off recitation and turn instead to tasbīḥ and dhikr.

[If a man recites the Qur'an and is not affected by it]

Question: If a man recites the Qur'an and is not affected by it, does that indicate a deficiency in his faith?

Answer: That does not indicate weakness or deficiency of the man's faith. What indicates the deficiency and weakness of faith in a man is that he leaves some obligations, or commits some acts of disobedience; for that indicates the weakness and deficiency of his faith, even if he shows humility in reciting the Qur'an and weeps when hearing it!! For that does not benefit him, nor increase his faith.

- As for the one whom fear of Allah restrains from committing sins and from leaving obligations, then he is a believer, even if he is not affected by reciting the Qur'an and does not show humility when hearing it. However, the believer who is affected by reciting the Qur'an and shows humility when hearing it, together with his adherence to the God-consciousness of Allah, *exalted is He*, in fulfilling the obligations and leaving sins, is higher in rank and more complete in faith.

If it is said: Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: *"The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith, and upon their Lord*

they rely" [al-Anfal:2], which indicates that the trembling of the hearts at the remembrance of Allah is among the necessary concomitants of faith.

Then it is said in reply: the meaning of His saying, *exalted is He, "when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful"* is that when the believer is reminded of Allah as he is about to commit a sin, his heart trembles and he fears Allah, and he leaves the sin; and when he is reminded of Allah while he is heedless of performing an obligation, he fears Allah, *exalted is He*, and his heart trembles, and he turns to performing the obligation. This is the intended meaning of His saying, *exalted is He: "when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful."*

And the meaning of His saying, *exalted is He, "and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith"* is that when the verses of the Qur'an are recited to the believers, they affirm them and believe in them, and do not deny them as the disbelievers and hypocrites do. Every time the believer hears a verse from the Qur'an, he believes in it, and so his faith increases; and in this way his faith increases when he hears every verse and believes in it.

As for the disbeliever or the hypocrite, his disbelief increases when he hears each verse and disbelieves in it; and thus the disbelief of the hypocrite or the disbeliever increases when he hears every verse, because he disbelieves in everything he hears from the verses of the Qur'an.

And the explanation of His saying, *exalted is He, "and upon their Lord they rely"* is that the believers turn to Allah, *exalted is He*, alone in seeking success in their religious and worldly affairs, and they depend upon Him alone.

[The intention of some priests to burn the Noble Qur'an]

On the day of Eid al-Fitr in the year 1431 AH, some American priests announced that he would burn the Noble Qur'an on the occasion of the anniversary of the eleventh of September, which coincided with the day of Eid al-Fitr for the Muslims. And I heard on the radio that the American officials, including the American president and the secretary of state, were consulting this priest that he should retract his decision, but he did not retract.

When the day of Eid al-Fitr came, the time appointed for burning the Noble Qur'an, fire broke out in the city in which the priest lived, and the fire blazed and intensified until it burned hundreds of houses and towers, and two airplanes fell upon the city because of the density of smoke in the air.

In that there was a tremendous sign and a great lesson, and a miracle for the Book of Allah, *exalted is He*. Some satellite channels filmed that enormous blaze and broadcast it.

Then the priest suspended his decision to burn the Qur’an and postponed it, and he retracted from carrying it out. So praise be to Allah, who made manifest the greatness of the Qur’an and made it clear by the clearest sign, at the level of the inhabitants of the globe; and with this sign He supported the religion of Islam and the Prophet of Islam (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and with this sign He humiliated the enemies of the Qur’an and the enemies of Islam and the Muslims – with praise that fills the earth and the heaven. We ask Him, *Glorified and Exalted is He*, to make us firm upon His religion, to illumine our inner sights, to increase the Qur’an in might and elevation, and to abase the enemies of His religion, His Book, and His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

And praise belongs to Allah who has guided us to this; and we would not have been guided had Allah not guided us. And may Allah bless our master Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and his pure, good Household.

The numbers mentioned in the Qur’an

Half, quarter, eighth, third, sixth, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 100, 200, 300, 1000, 2000, 3000, 5000, 50000, 100000.

The dream-vision (ru’yā) in the Qur’an

Mention of the dream-vision (ru’yā) occurs in many places in the Wise Qur’an, which indicates that it has great significance. It occurs therein:

- In the dream-vision of Yusuf (*Peace be upon him*), and the dream-vision of Ibrahim (*Peace be upon him*), and the dream-vision of our Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) concerning the army of the polytheists on the Day of Badr, and his dream-vision of the conquest of Mecca.
- And in the dream-visions of those other than the prophets, the mention has come of the dream-vision of the two companions of Yusuf (*Peace be upon him*) in prison, and the dream-vision of the king of Egypt.

From that it is understood that the dream-vision is true for the prophets (*Peace be upon them*) and for others.

- And in the Qur’an, the true dream-vision is named *ru’yā*, and the corrupt dream-vision is named *ḥulm* and *aḥlām*: "*They said, 'These are confused dreams, and we do not know the interpretation of dreams'*" [Yusuf:44]. The king called what he saw in sleep by the name *ru’yā* (dream-vision); but when its interpretation was obscure to the interpreters, they called it *aḥlām* (dreams), as in this verse.
- And in the Qur’an: "*And when the children among you reach*

puberty, let them seek permission just as those before them sought permission" [al-Nur:59]; what is meant by *ḥulm* (puberty) in this verse is that the sleeper sees in his sleep that he is having intercourse and so ejaculates. When a child sees that in his sleep and ejaculates, then he has reached the age of legal responsibility.

- And in distinguishing between *ru'yā* and *ḥulm* there has come from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "*The ru'yā (dream-vision) is from Allah, and the ḥulm (bad dream) is from Satan.*" And in the hadith: "*The righteous dream-vision is seen by the righteous man, or it is seen for him...*" Hadith, or its meaning; thus it is known that the true dream-vision is that which is righteous, and that the *ḥulm* is the opposite of that.

Seeking Healing through the Qur'an

It is permissible to seek healing by means of the Qur'an and to perform ruqyah with it. Some of the Companions did so, and the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) approved it, and he also approved taking a reward (*ju'alah*) for performing ruqyah with the Qur'an.

Al-Hadi (*Peace be upon him*) has related in *al-Ahkam*, in the chapter on the virtue of al-Fatihah, that it has never been recited over a sick person without his being cured... and so on.

[The Scholars and Those Who Know the Secrets of the Qur'an]

In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful, and by Him we seek help. And may Allah bless our master Muhammad and his family and grant them peace, and [bless] his pure Household. To proceed:

No one knows the secrets of the Qur'an, nor understands the subtleties of its rulings, nor becomes acquainted with the laws of the lawful and the unlawful which Allah, *exalted is He*, has deposited in it, except the people of knowledge. Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, said: "*And no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firm in knowledge...*" [Al 'Imran:7].

And for a reason did Allah prefer the scholars over other than the scholars. He, *exalted is He*, said: "*Allah will raise those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge by degrees.*" [Al-Mujadila:11] And He, *glorified is He*, said: "*Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?'*" [Az-Zumar:9] And the Qur'anic verses in this regard are many.

- What is meant by "the scholars" in these verses and the like of them are the scholars of the religion which the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought from Allah; as indicated by His saying, *exalted is He*: "*He is the One Who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses,*

purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although before that they were in clear error.” [Al-Jumu‘ah:2]

- And it is fitting that we mention here the reality of the knowledge whose possessor has deserved good praise in the Noble Qur’an, elevation of rank, and lofty degrees with Allah, *exalted is He*. **We say:** the knowledge intended here is an existent quality that becomes firmly rooted in the soul of the legally responsible person, by which he is able, with the eye of his insight, to perceive the subtleties of the rulings of Islam, and what Allah has charged His servants with of the laws of the lawful and the unlawful.

- As for that which is not of the subtleties of the rulings, in knowing it the scholar and the ignorant person are the same. For every Muslim knows that wine, fornication, and theft are forbidden, and he knows that the five daily prayers are obligatory, and that they are divided into four-unit prayers such as Zuhr, ‘Asr, and ‘Isha’, three-unit prayers such as Maghrib, and two-unit prayers such as Fajr; and that zakat is an obligatory, firmly established duty; and that the zakat on what the earth produces is one-tenth, if it is watered naturally (by rain and the like), and half of one-tenth if it is irrigated by machines and the like, and so on, and similar matters.

- What we have mentioned of the reality of knowledge is what is meant here, which the Qur’an has come praising its possessor and commending him.

And “*knowledge*” is also used for two other meanings:

- 1- Perception (idrak), which is a relation between the perceiver and the perceived; that is, in this sense it is a relational attribution that has no independent existence in the soul of the legally responsible person nor in the thing known.
- 2- The very objects of knowledge (the known things); for the term “knowledge” is applied to them, and it is said: “The science of grammar” for its issues. But the knowledge concerning whose possessor the Qur’anic verses have come in praise is knowledge in the first sense.

- And with our coming to know the virtue of knowledge and its reality, it is fitting that we mention the causes that lead to acquiring it and the ways by which one who follows them reaches it. **We say:** it is known among people that the path to acquiring the various sciences and kinds of knowledge is learning at the hand of one who knows. From here the edifices of knowledge and teaching were built in all lands, and the institutions of knowledge continue, up to this day, to employ specialised scholars to teach the seekers of knowledge.

[How the Noble Qur’an was Sent Down]

Question: Did the Qur'an descend to the lowest heaven all at once? And does saying that lead to affirming the doctrine of the Jabrites and the Qadarites, because the verses are "ready" before the acts? While there is a difference between the sending down of the ruling and Allah's prior knowledge, as I believe.

Answer: The Qur'an was sent down as a whole to the lowest heaven, then it was sent down in parts to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- And in the sending down of the Qur'an as a whole to the lowest heaven there is nothing that indicates the doctrine of the Jabrites and the Qadarites; for it is merely information about what is in Allah's knowledge, and it contains nothing in addition to what they themselves say about Allah's knowledge. There is no difference between Allah's knowledge, *exalted is He*, and the "translation" (expression) of that knowledge in the verses of the Qur'an.

[On the mass-transmission of the seven readings]

Question: Are all of the seven readings (qirā'āt) actually mass-transmitted (mutawātir) from the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)? And why did some make them ten?

And since the Companions heard all of them from the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), why did they not teach them all at once? As, for example, 'Abd al-Basit reads now, and then in this way the narrators would transmit all of them from them; so that the chain of the reading of Nāfi' and his transmitters would be a way for the reading of Ḥafṣ, and so on?

And why is this reading attributed to so-and-so, and that one to so-and-so?

Or was it that the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) would sometimes recite with one reading and sometimes with another? If so, why did the Companions not transmit one surah in one reading and another surah in a different reading? That is, that a Companion should transmit Sūrat al-Baqarah, for example, according to what Warsh narrates from Nāfi', and should transmit Āl 'Imrān according to what Ḥafṣ narrates from 'Āṣim, and so on?

And how did the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) recite the seven readings to them, and yet each group among them transmits only one reading from them? Did he designate specific transmitters for each reading? Or was it that they only heard one narration from him? And were the readings different only because of the differences of the dialects of the Arab tribes, and the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) permitted that even if he did not recite with it himself?

What increases the depth of this [problem] within me is that most of the difference is in the way the words are pronounced, such as the hamzahs: some pronounce them, some drop them, and some make them easier (by lightening them), according to the dialects of the Arabs, and other such things.

And another type of difference is in some letters and vowels; does this go back to their differing over reading the rasm (consonantal outline of the muṣḥaf), such as *malik* and *mālik*, between which there is nothing but a small alif; and such as “*ansāran li-llāh*” (according to Nāfi’) and “*ansāra Allāh*” (according to Ḥafṣ): there is no difference between them except the presence or absence of tanwīn, otherwise the letters are similar; only in the first instance we attach the alif to the first word, and in the second we attach it to the second word.

Clarify this matter for me, for it troubles me greatly, and I want to uproot my anxiety from its roots, and you are the best surgeon for such ailments. May Allah reward you with the good of both abodes.

Answer:

All of the seven readings are mass-transmitted (mutawātir) from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*); and the reason why the scholars did not make them ten is because of the difference regarding the tawātur of the remaining three as opposed to the seven.

And each of the reciters read with the reading that was in agreement with his own language and Arabic dialect. So the one who inclines the alif towards the yā’ cannot read according to the language of one who does not incline it; and the one who lightens the hamzah by *tashīl* (easing) finds that his tongue does not comply with reading according to the language of one who pronounces it fully; and the one who lightens it by *naql* (transferring the vowel) cannot read according to the language of one who does not lighten it by *naql*, and the reverse likewise.

From here it was that each of the imams of recitation transmitted from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that which suited him of the reading, and not that which did not come easily to him.

And the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) would recite for each one that which suited his language, as a concession and facilitation for the Ummah, knowing the difficulty of memorising it upon a single language: *"And he does not speak from [his own] inclination"* [al-Najm:3].

- And the difference among the reciters in something like *malik* and -*ālik* is not due to the rasm of the muṣḥaf; because the Qur’an is received by hearing it from the mouths of the reciters. Thus, the people of

Madinah received the recitation of al-Fātiḥah and other than it from the mouths of their reciters, including the word *malik*; they heard it without an alif, and those who came after them received it from their predecessors likewise, by hearing and direct taking from the mouths (of the reciters), not from the muṣḥafs.

This was the method relied upon by the scholars of the Ummah in the early centuries, and it remains so up to this day.

And measure upon what we have mentioned the case of “*ansāran li-llāh*” and “*ansāra Allāh*”: each group heard from its predecessors what it heard, and they received it from their mouths. And in the same way they received from the mouths (of the reciters) the modes of lengthening (mad) and their measures, and the forms of the word, such as thinness and heaviness (tarqīq and tafkhīm), concealment, assimilation, clear pronunciation, *rūm*, *ishmām*, *imālah*, pausing and connecting, and so on; all of that they received by hearing and perfected it with the shaykhs until they preserved it just as they had heard it.

In conclusion: the difference that exists among the seven readings is not a cause for anxiety, and it should not be a source of problem; because the seven readings are mutawātir from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) has passed generation after generation reciting with each one of them without mutual rejection.

- And as for what has been narrated from Imam al-Hadi (*Peace be upon him*) that he considered correct only the reading of the people of Madinah and not the others among the readings, the matter with him is thus because he only ever heard the reading of the people of Madinah. And if he (*Peace be upon him*) had grown up and been raised in Mecca or in Kufa, he would have heard all the reciters reciting with what they heard from their predecessors, and the soundness of what he heard would have been established with him due to the consensus of the reciters of those lands upon their readings.

And if for al-Hadi (*Peace be upon him*) no reading other than that of the people of Madinah was mass-transmitted, then for others readings other than that of the people of Madinah have been mass-transmitted; and in that case there is no hindrance for a Muslim to recite with whichever of the seven is made easy for him, neither from the standpoint of transmission, nor from the standpoint of language, nor from the standpoint of meaning.

Thus, the reading “*ansāra Allāh*” “helpers of Allah” is correct from the standpoint of transmission, correct from the standpoint of language, and correct from the standpoint of meaning; and likewise the reading

“ansāran li-llāh” (“helpers for Allah”). There is no rational impediment to this; so it is permissible that the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) should recite it at one time with annexation *idāfah*: “helpers of Allah”, and at another time without annexation “helpers for Allah”.

- And the difference between the two readings may have a wisdom and a benefit. For example, His saying, *exalted is He*: *“And upon those who are able to fast, [their] ransom is feeding a poor person / feeding poor persons”* [al-Baqarah:184]; one of the two readings clarifies the amount that is obligatory to be given in food for each day, and the other reading clarifies what is upon the one who has broken the fast for many days or a few days. And although there is some generality in it as far as stating the measure of what is obligatory, the detail appears from the second reading.

- And in the readings *“malik”* (“king”) and *“mālik”* (“owner”) the wisdom is that they show that Allah, *exalted is He*, is characterised by each of those two attributes and is called upon by both of them; and measure other examples by this.

Benefits and Rare Points Related to the Recording of the Qur’an and the Sunnah

- The Noble Qur’an was written in the time of the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace), and it was compiled in the time of Abu Bakr, and it was written in its present form in the time of ‘Uthman.

And the ordering of its surahs is from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace), and likewise the ordering of its verses.

- And the Sunnah was written in the second century, and likewise historical writing.

And it appears that the collection of Imam Zayd ibn ‘Ali was among the first that were written down and recorded in scrolls, or that it was the very first that was written. Before that, hadith, *sīrah*, history, the science of language, and other things were preserved in the breasts (memories).

- The dating system of the Arabs before Islam was based on the lunar months, and upon that the Islamic rulings came.

[From the Words of Imam Zayd (Peace be upon him) on the Categories of the Qur’an]

(And the Qur’an is upon four aspects:

- Lawful and unlawful, the ignorance of which is not permissible.
- And interpretation (*tafsīr*) which the scholars know.

- And Arabic expression which the Arabs recognise.
- And a level of interpretation (ta'wīl) which none knows except Allah, and it is that which will be, of what has not yet been.

And know that the Qur'an has an outer aspect and an inner aspect, a limit and a point of rising. Its outer aspect is its revelation (tanzīl), and its inner aspect is its interpretation (ta'wīl). Its limit is its obligations and its rulings, and its point of rising is its reward and its punishment.)

End of his words, from the collection of his epistles (*Peace be upon him*).

[In Mention of Knowledge and its Virtue]

Knowledge

Knowledge, wisdom, purity of natural disposition, accuracy in intuition and discernment, as well as correctness in opinion and planning, and what is similar to that, are qualities that every human being loves to be characterised by and to be mentioned with, and hates to be upon their opposites. If such things were sold for prices, every precious and valuable thing would be offered to purchase them.

Yes, Allah, *exalted is He*, has guided to the path that leads to those noble aims. He, *glorified is He*, said while mentioning Yusuf (*Peace be upon him*): *"And when he reached his full strength, We gave him judgment and knowledge; and thus do We reward the doers of good"* [Yusuf:22]. So He, *glorified is He*, informed that He granted Yusuf judgment and knowledge, then He, *exalted is He*, informed that He will give the doers of good what He gave Yusuf of knowledge and wisdom, as a recompense and reward for their excellence (ihsan).

So then, the path to attaining that is ihsan; and ihsan is the God-consciousness (taqwa) of Allah, *exalted is He*, and obedience to Him in what He has commanded and forbidden.

And He, *exalted is He*, said: *"O you who have believed, fear Allah and believe in His Messenger; He will grant you a double share of His mercy, and He will make for you a light by which you walk, and He will forgive you"* [al-Hadid:28]. This light which Allah, *exalted is He*, has mentioned in this verse is knowledge and wisdom.

And He, *exalted is He*, said: *"If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion"* [al-Anfal:29]; and the *criterion* (furqan) is knowledge and wisdom.

[The knowledge whose possessor deserves elevation]

Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, said: *"Allah will raise those who have believed among you, and those who were given knowledge, by degrees"* [al-Mujadila:11]. The knowledge that is meant is the knowledge of the laws and rulings which the Prophet of Islam (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) came with.

[Hadiths on seeking knowledge]

1- The hadith: *"Whoever seeks knowledge for the sake of Allah, Mighty and Majestic, not a single gate of it does he attain except that he increases thereby, within himself, humility; and among people, modesty; and towards Allah, Mighty and Majestic, fear; and in the religion, striving. Such a one is the one who benefits from knowledge, so let him learn it. And whoever seeks knowledge for the sake of this world, and for status among people, and for favour with the ruler, not a single gate of it does he attain except*

that he increases thereby, within himself, self-aggrandisement; and over people, arrogance; and with Allah, delusion; and in this world, coarseness. Such a one does not benefit from knowledge, so let him hold back and refrain, lest he bring proof against himself, and regret and disgrace on the Day of Resurrection".

2- The hadith: *"Whoever seeks knowledge and attains it, there is written for him a double portion of reward; and whoever seeks knowledge but does not attain it, there is written for him a single portion of reward".*

[Hadiths on the virtue of knowledge from the introduction of al-Bayan]

In the virtue of knowledge, from the introduction of *al-Bayan al-Shafi*, the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said:

"The scholars are the heirs of the prophets".

"The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like my superiority over one of you".

"The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like the superiority of the full moon over the rest of the stars".

"Going out in the morning or evening to teach the religion is better with Allah than striving (jihad) in the path of Allah".

"One jurist (faqih) is better with Allah than a thousand ignorant worshippers".

"The sleep of a scholar is better than the worship of an ignorant person".

"And reviewing knowledge for an hour is more beloved to Allah than worship of twenty thousand years".

"A small amount of action done with knowledge is better than much done in ignorance".

"Two rak'ahs from a scholar are better than a thousand rak'ahs from an ignorant worshipper".

"One single word which a Muslim learns from his Muslim brother, or teaches him, is better than standing (in prayer) for a thousand nights, and fasting for a thousand days, and giving a thousand poor people charity, and [better than] a hajj that is accepted".

"Looking at the face of a scholar is better than worship of sixty years, fasting its day and standing in prayer its night".

"Learning one letter of knowledge is better than worship of one hundred years; and reflecting for an hour is better than worship of a year".

"Keeping the company of scholars is an adornment, sitting with them is generosity, looking at them is worship, walking with them is an honour,

mixing with them and eating with them is a cure for people; thirty mercies are sent down upon them, and upon others only one mercy".

"The destruction of two tribes from the tribes of the Arabs is better for this Ummah than the destruction of a single scholar".

On knowledge and seeking knowledge

A report: *"All people go out striving for their provision, except the scholar; his provision strives towards him".*

- The reality which we live today confirms this hadith, and it is narrated in the books of the Imamis.
- And in it there is encouragement to seek knowledge.
- And the wisdom in that is that seeking knowledge consumes the time of the one who seeks it, and there does not remain for him of time what would enable him to earn a living in search of provision, in addition to what the seeker of knowledge needs of a long span of time with seriousness and diligence, night and day. So Allah, *exalted is He*, has Himself taken on the provision of the seeker of knowledge and guaranteed it for him without his seeking and without [taking] causes; rather, it comes to him unbidden.

If it is said: Allah, *exalted is He*, provides for His servants, those who seek provision from Him and those who do not seek it; and in that case the seeker of knowledge is among the servants of Allah whom Allah provides for without their seeking, so what is the aspect of specifying the scholar with that in this hadith?

It is said to him: It has come from 'Ali (*Peace be upon him*): "Provision is of two kinds: a provision that you seek and a provision that seeks you..." and so on. The provision that seeks you is that which Allah, *exalted is He*, gives to His servants, whether they seek it or do not seek it; in that the scholar and other than him are equal. And the provision that you seek is the provision that comes about through taking causes, such as trade, manufacturing, agriculture, and so on.

What Allah, *exalted is He*, gives to the scholar is of this latter kind, which is not obtained except by means of causes; yet Allah, *exalted is He*, gives the scholar this kind of provision without his seeking and without [taking] causes, while He does not give it to other than him except with seeking and causes. This is from the bounty of Allah upon the scholar. So praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless Muhammad and his pure Household and grant them peace.

[A benefit on the ways of attaining knowledge]

Some have said:

*My brother, you will never attain knowledge except by six things
I shall make clear to you their explanation in detail:*

*Intelligence, eagerness, poverty (to Allah), and estrangement,
Taking from a teacher, and a long span of time.*

[The Virtue of Visiting the Scholar]

Visiting the scholar has a virtue, and that is because in visiting him there is:

- 1- Honoring him; and honoring him is part of honoring what Allah has magnified: *"And whoever honors the symbols of Allah – indeed, it is from the piety of hearts"* [al-Hajj].
- 2- Manifesting his virtue and distinction among people, and that leads to attracting people's attention to him, their taking knowledge from him, and their asking him.
- 3- Strengthening the bonds between the visitor and the scholar, and there is no doubt that great benefits result from that.
- 4- The visitor's obtaining benefits when he attends the scholar's gathering, for he hears from him religious benefits and legal rulings.
- 5- The visitor attains the reward of the visit, because of what has come in the reports encouraging the visitation of brothers for the sake of Allah; and the scholar is a believing brother for the sake of Allah, with the additional virtue of knowledge.

[The Superiority of the Acting Scholar over the Fighter in Jihad]

Question: Which is better with Allah and higher in rank: the scholar who acts according to his knowledge and teaches people good, or the one who fights in the path of Allah, patient and seeking reward, until he is killed?

Answer – and success is from Allah: The scholar who acts according to his knowledge and teaches people good is better with Allah and higher in rank than the one who fights in the path of Allah, patient and seeking reward, until he is killed facing [the enemy] and not turning his back. That is due to the proofs indicating this, such as His saying, *exalted is He: "Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?'"* [al-Zumar], and: *"...and those who were given knowledge, by degrees"* [al-Mujadila:11]. And in the Qur'an there are many verses mentioning knowledge and its virtue.

- And the scholar is the one who succeeds the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in conveying the religion, spreading its rulings, and clarifying its laws; and the scholar is a candidate for succeeding the Prophet of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in leadership if the other considered conditions are fulfilled in him.
- And there is no doubt that the virtue intended here is the abundance of reward; so whoever's reward is greater is the more virtuous.

- And through the scholar Allah rescues many groups from misguidance, and clarifies for them guidance and the path of right direction.
- And in the well-known hadith: *"Whoever establishes a good practice will have its reward and the reward of whoever acts upon it until the Day of Resurrection."* There is no doubt that the scholar revives the practices of guidance and causes the practices of misguidance to die.
- Furthermore, what is established among the Muslims and firmly rooted in their souls from their first day until today is that the rank of the scholar is higher with Allah, and that he is more virtuous than the fighter in jihad.
- Moreover, it is the scholar who guides the fighter to jihad, clarifies the truth for him, outlines for him the path of jihad, and teaches him its laws and rulings. Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: *"Is then he who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who finds no guidance unless he is guided? So what is [wrong] with you – how do you judge?"* [Yunus].
- While the scholar dies, his knowledge remains, from which people benefit after his death, generation after generation, and nations after nations are guided by it.
- The mention of the scholars of the Ummah becomes widely famous among the generations with great fame, whereas the fame of the fighters in jihad is not like that. This indicates the greatness of the scholars in people's hearts, and their belief in the scholars' great superiority over other believers and fighters.
- The scholar is, in his religiosity, upon an insight that surpasses the insights of the fighters in jihad; for this reason Allah, *exalted is He*, coupled the testimony of the scholars with His own testimony and the testimony of His angels in His saying: *"Allah bears witness that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge, maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Mighty, the Wise"* [Al 'Imran].
- And it is the scholar who fears Allah, *exalted is He*, with the true fear, contrary to the ignorant person; from here His saying, *exalted is He*: *"Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge"* [Fatir:28].
- And how many texts have come in the Sunnah mentioning the tremendous virtue of the scholars, clarifying the loftiness of their ranks, and their surpassing every other rank.

[Seeking Knowledge when the Parents are not Pleased]

Question: Is it permissible for a son to go out to seek knowledge without the approval of his parents, even though they are neither incapacitated nor weak, but rather strong and not in need of him?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success:

Seeking knowledge is obligatory, and seeking the approval of the parents is obligatory. The child must not fall short in either of the two obligations, as long as he finds a way to combine them. So the child must seek knowledge, and at the same time he must seek to please his parents, show gentleness towards them, and be considerate of them.

It is not permissible for the child to abandon seeking knowledge in order to please his parents, nor to abandon seeking to please his parents under the pretext of seeking knowledge. Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: *"But if they strive against you to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them, but accompany them in this world with appropriate kindness..."* [Luqman:15].

[The Ruling on One who is Hostile to the Scholars or the Seekers of Knowledge]

Question: What is the ruling on one who is hostile to the scholars and belittles them, and likewise one who is hostile to the seekers of knowledge and belittles them, or who is hostile to the believers and belittles them?

Answer: The causes of enmity are varied. If what called to the enmity and brought it about was the narrow temperament of the believer or the scholar, or his sharp nature, or his heaviness, or the like, then one looks at the enmity: if it is in the heart only, without [manifesting by] the tongue or the hand, then there is no harm in it.

But if it is by the tongue or the hand, then it is permissible from him to the extent that matches the harm that has reached him, due to His saying, *exalted is He: "And the recompense of an evil is an evil like it; but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation – his reward is with Allah..."* [al-Shura: 40-41]; and patience and forgiveness are better, due to His saying, *exalted is He: "And whoever is patient and forgives – indeed, that is of the matters [requiring] resolve" [al-Shura]*, and: *"And that you pardon is nearer to righteousness..."* [al-Baqarah:237], and other such verses.

But if what called to the enmity and brought it about is nothing other than knowledge, or faith, or seeking knowledge – and were it not for that, the enmity would not have arisen – then it is disbelief (kufr), because it is enmity towards Allah, His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the religion.

[Who is it that is Firmly Grounded in Knowledge]

Question: Who is the one who is firmly grounded in knowledge (al-rasikh fi-l-'ilm)?

Answer – and with Allah is success: The one who is firmly grounded in knowledge is he whose knowledge of Allah, *exalted is He*, has become

well-established: [knowledge] of what He deserves of majesty and perfection, and of what He is exalted above of likeness and equal, and of the attributes of originated things and the committing of vile acts, and so on.

Together with his firmly established knowledge of the language of the Qur’an, and his distinguishing between the definitive (muhkam) and the ambiguous (mutashabih), the explicit texts and the apparent meanings, the general and the specific, the absolute and the restricted, the abrogating and the abrogated, and so on.

In addition to his knowledge of and familiarity with the doctrines of the pious predecessors from the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*) and others from among the scholars of the Companions and the Followers.

And along with all of this, it is necessary that he be among the people of truth, the people of God-consciousness, certainty, and fear of Allah, Lord of the worlds. Whoever is such is among those who are firmly grounded in knowledge.

Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: "*And those who strive for Us – We will surely guide them to Our ways; and indeed Allah is with the doers of good*" [al-‘Ankabut], and He, *glorified is He*, said: "*And fear Allah, and Allah will teach you*" [al-Baqarah:282].

[On the Availability of Books of Knowledge and Learning in This Age]

In this age, books of knowledge and learning have become widely available, and the markets are filled with bookstores packed with books of knowledge at low prices. Rather, a seeker of knowledge can carry in his mobile phone a thousand books or more. Yet, students who truly study knowledge have become few – the opposite of what it was in the past, when books were few, rare, and expensive, while the students of knowledge were many in almost every land.

Today the situation is reversed: books have multiplied and become available, while the seekers of knowledge have become few. In the past, knowledge and the scholars had value, weight, and importance in the eyes of both the elite and the common people, and a man’s worth in the past was according to his knowledge. As for today, knowledge and scholars have no value in the eyes of rulers nor others; knowledge today does not qualify the scholar to occupy any official post, neither great nor small – the opposite of what used to be.

[On “*Ladunni*” Knowledge through Inspiration]

Question: We hear that there are those whom Allah, *exalted is He*, singles out with knowledge, inspiring it to them and casting it into their hearts without their learning, and they call this knowledge *al-‘ilm al*

-*ladunnī* (direct, God-given knowledge), and its possessor *a rabbani scholar* (godly scholar), while they call the scholar who learns knowledge by study a “book-scholar.” What is your opinion on this?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: Allah, glorified and exalted is He, created the human being in general, when He created him and brought him out from his mother’s womb, ignorant; then He placed for him the means by which he attains knowledge, and then He charged him with acquiring knowledge. This is the way (sunnah) of Allah in His creation, exactly as He, *majestic is His affair*, said: *"And Allah brought you out of the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and He made for you hearing, sight, and hearts..."* [an-Nahl:78].

So the acquisition of knowledge of the revealed laws (sharā’i’) is only by means of these avenues – prophets and others being equal in that. From here Allah, *exalted is He*, said addressing our Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace): *"And He found you lost, and guided you"* [ad-Duha:7], and He said: *"And you did not know what the Book is, nor [what] faith is"* [ash-Shura:52], and His saying: *"And He taught you that which you did not know"* [an-Nisa’:113]. The prophets and messengers (*Peace be upon them*) are the most elevated of humankind in status with Allah, the highest of them in rank, and the closest of them in nearness to Him; yet they did not come to know the laws of Allah and His rulings except by Allah teaching them, as Allah, *exalted is He*, has related to us in His Noble Book. Likewise the angels who are near [to Allah] do not attain knowledge except by way of learning. From here Allah, *exalted is He*, related to us the words of the angels: *"Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise"* [al-Baqarah:32]. It thus becomes clear to us, by what we have mentioned, that the claim of those who assert “*ladunnī knowledge*” for certain people is a false claim, belied by the Qur’anic proofs.

Furthermore, it has reached us that some of them claim and say: that the Imam knows the unseen, or something of the knowledge of the unseen, and that a person is not an Imam unless he is such. This claim, like the one before it, is a false claim, falsified by the proofs of the Qur’an, such as His saying, *exalted is He*: *"Indeed, Allah [alone] has knowledge of the Hour, sends down the rain, and knows what is in the wombs. And no soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware"* [Luqman:34]; and His saying, *exalted is He*: *"And Allah would not inform you of the unseen, but Allah chooses of His messengers whom He wills"* [Al ‘Imran:179]; and His saying, *exalted is He*, relating from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace): *"If I had knowledge of the unseen, I would have acquired much good, and harm would not have touched me. I*

am only a warner..." [al-A'raf:188]; and His saying, exalted is He: "And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it..." [al-An'am:59]; and His saying, exalted is He: "Knower of the unseen – and He does not disclose His unseen to anyone, except whom He has approved of messengers..." [al-Jinn:26-27]; and His saying, exalted is He: "He is Allah, there is no deity except Him, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed..." [al-Hashr:22]; and His saying, exalted is He: "Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, the Most Great, the Most High" [Yusuf:53 or ar-Ra'd: 9, intended verse]; and His saying, exalted is He: "Say, 'None in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah'" [an-Naml: 65].

Yes, Allah, exalted is He, may grant some of His servants an increase in intellect, support him with understanding, and aid him in reaching what is correct; so he derives, by his understanding and his intellect, from the Qur'an legal rulings which other scholars may not be enabled to derive and extract. Likewise Allah, exalted is He, guides him and grants him success in knowing the sound Sunnah and distinguishing it from other than it, then in extracting legal rulings from it and deriving them. This is the reality of His saying, exalted is He: "And those who are guided – He increases them in guidance and gives them their righteousness" [Muhammad:17], and His saying: "If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion" [al-Anfal:29].

As for the claim that the Imam knows the legal rulings without reflection and derivation from the Book of Allah, *exalted is He*, and the Sunnah of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), then it is a false claim; likewise the claim that he knows the unseen. This is the blameworthy exaggeration (ghuluw) in the religion of Islam. The Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) said: "Two [types of people] will perish concerning me: an exaggerating lover and a hateful enemy..." and so it was: a people exaggerated regarding him (*Peace be upon him*) until they made him a lord, and a people hated him and disparaged him until they cursed him – rather, they made cursing him a "sunnah". *Upon them be the curses of Allah.*

Likewise, a people exaggerated concerning the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*) until they claimed for them knowledge of the unseen, and that they know without learning, and that they are infallible, and that they... and so on.

[The Ruling on Whoever Interprets Some Verses with an Obscure and Strange Interpretation]

Question: We hear from some people interpretations of verses from the Noble Book, and we find them somewhat objectionable because of their strangeness. Such as interpreting "face" in His saying, *exalted is He*,

"and there will remain the Face of your Lord" [al-Rahman:27] as meaning the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*); and interpreting *"In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful"* as "Ali ibn Abi Talib"; and interpreting the pronoun in His saying, *exalted is He*, *"Indeed Allah does not forgive that a partner be associated with Him"* [al-Nisa':48] as referring to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, and many similar things.

This is while they ascribe themselves to the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*). Then they claim and say that they interpret the Qur'an with "ladunni knowledge", and they describe whoever is like that as a "rabbari scholar", then they describe all other scholars as "book scholars". So is this strange interpretation correct?

Answer - and Allah is the One who grants success and help: The interpretation you have mentioned is a strange and objectionable interpretation; it is not known from the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*), nor from their scholars, nor from all the Zaydis. Here are the books of tafsir of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*) and their scholars and their followers, present [before us], and likewise their books of hadith and their doctrines in fundamentals and branches; all of them are free of this strange, objectionable interpretation. What we know of this kind of interpretation and what resembles it is that it belongs to the tafsir of the Batiniyyah, not to the tafsir of the Zaydis.

Clarifying the Proof for the Falsity of this Interpretation

We say: The Qur'an was sent down by Allah, *exalted is He*, in the language of the Arabs, as He, *exalted is He*, said: *"an Arabic Qur'an, without any deviation"* [al-Zumar:28], and as He, *exalted is He*, said: *"in a clear Arabic tongue"* [al-Shu'ara':195], and many other verses indicating that the Qur'an was sent down in the language of the Arabs and in their tongue.

Based on that, every interpretation by which verses of the Noble Book are interpreted contrary to what the Arabic language entails is a false interpretation, a distortion of the verses of Allah, deviation regarding them, and speaking about Allah with what He did not say.

If it is said: What do you object to? Perhaps Allah, *glorified is He*, has singled out some of His friends (awliya') with knowing the interpretation and ta'wil of the Qur'an, so that He inspires to him what He does not inspire to others.

We say: We do not deny that Allah, *exalted is He*, may single out some of His friends with additional understanding and may support him with lights of knowledge. And there is no doubt that the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was the purest of mankind in intellect and the most complete of them in understanding. Yet, in spite of that, nothing has been transmitted from him of the interpretations

that we hear from the Batiniyyah and those who hide such things. And He, *glorified is He*, said to His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"And We have sent down to you the Reminder that you may make clear to the people what has been sent down to them"* [al-Nahl:44]. And in fact, the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did make clear to the people what Allah, exalted is He, sent down in His Book, and he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did not die until he had completed the clarification in full.

If it is said: So where is the clarification by which the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) clarified what was sent down of the Qur'an?

We say: The clarification came in the Sunnah, in word and deed. So whatever is authentically established from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is clarification and tafsir of what is in the Book of Allah. And the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be upon him*) was the banner of guidance, the one who clarified to people what they differed about after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the Commander of the Faithful did not burden himself with interpretations and ta'wil other than what came from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). And likewise the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*) throughout history did not come with anything from their own selves.

Furthermore, we say: The way (sunnah) of Allah, *exalted is He*, has passed in His servants that He has bound them with obligations (taklif). For that reason He, *glorified is He*, made them possessors of choice, and He provided for them the power and capability. Then He, *majestic is His affair*, clarified for them the causes of perfection and the causes of ruin, the causes of good and the causes of evil. Then He, *exalted is He*, invited them to the causes of His mercy, and warned them against the causes of His punishment. On this basis, the obtaining of His mercy, *exalted is He*, is tied to the obtaining of its causes, whether that be of the enjoyments and adornments and rewards of this world, or of the reward of the Hereafter, its bliss and its degrees. So obtaining provision, for example, is tied to obtaining causes and preliminaries that are indispensable, and so on.

Knowledge also is tied to the obtaining of causes and preliminaries that are indispensable. Among these is: listening to knowledge. Through this way and by this path the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) took knowledge; Jibril (*Peace be upon him*) used to come to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in the form of Dihyah al-Kalbi and recite the Qur'an to him.

Likewise, the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) benefited from knowledge by listening to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and al-Hasan and al-Husayn (*Peace be upon them*) from their father, then the Imams (*Peace be upon them*) [from those before them]. And likewise, the scholars from among the Companions, and those who came after them from the scholars of the Ummah, only benefited from knowledge by listening and direct taking from the scholars and shaykhs.

Yes, in these later times there is, in addition to listening, a necessity for fully knowing the Arabic language; because the Qur'an, as we have mentioned, was sent down in a clear Arabic tongue. So acquiring knowledge of the meanings of the Qur'an is tied to acquiring complete knowledge of the Arabic language. The more complete the knowledge of the Arabic language is, the more complete and sound the knowledge of the Qur'an will be.

Then, along with that, there must be illumination in the heart, increased understanding, and sharpness of intellect. All of that depends on taqwa (God-consciousness), guidance, ihsan (excellence), and humility; exactly as He, *majestic is His affair*, said: "*And those who are guided – He increases them in guidance*" [Muhammad:17], and "*If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion*" [al-Anfal:29], and "*And when he reached his full strength, We gave him judgment and knowledge; and thus do We reward the doers of good*" [Yusuf:22], and "*I will turn away from My signs those who behave arrogantly upon the earth without right*" [al-A'raf:146]. So when all of that is present in the one who reflects upon the Book of Allah, *exalted is He*, he becomes capable of understanding the secrets of the Qur'an, its sciences, its rulings, its tafsir and its ta'wil. Then, nothing of that person's ta'wil and tafsir is accepted except what is in accordance with what the Arabic language entails: either explicitly in wording, or by indication, or by allusion; or by clear text, or apparent meaning, or metaphor; or by any path of indirect indication (kinayah), whether by suggestion (talwih), or symbol (ramz), or hint (isharah), or... and so on.

And as we said previously, since the Qur'an was sent down in the language of the Arabs, it is obligatory that the words of the Qur'an be interpreted according to what the Arabs know of their meanings, and nothing else. So the illumination that Allah, *exalted is He*, grants to some of His friends is only in order for them to know the realities of the Qur'an and its metaphors, its indirect expressions, its indications, its implied meanings and its explicit ones, the indications of requirement, indication, and allusion, suggestion and symbol, specification and generalisation, and so on, up to the end of what the language of the Qur'an contains of the secrets of eloquence and proofs of inimitability. Through these, the

rulings of the Qur’an are extracted.

[Ladunni (God-Given) Knowledge]

Ladunni knowledge is that which a person acquires from the direction of revelation; and this is with respect to the prophets and messengers (*Peace be upon them*), just as He, *exalted is He*, says: *“And it is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation, or from behind a veil, or that He sends a messenger, and he reveals by His permission what He wills...”* [ash-Shura:51] and as He, *exalted is He*, says regarding al-Khidr, whom Musa (*Peace be upon him*) accompanied: *“So they found a servant from among Our servants to whom We had given mercy from Us and had taught him from Us a [certain] knowledge.”* [al-Kahf:65] So the knowledge of al-Khidr was ladunni knowledge, except that he only acquired it by way of being taught, as He, *exalted is He*, said: *“and We taught him from Us a [certain] knowledge”* [al-Kahf]. What also indicates that he (*Peace be upon him*) only acquired it by way of being taught is the statement of Musa (*Peace be upon him*) to him, as Allah, *exalted is He*, has related: *“Shall I follow you on [the condition] that you teach me from what you have been taught of sound judgment?”* [al-Kahf:66] Thus, the knowledge of the messengers and prophets (*Peace be upon them*) is ladunni knowledge which they received from the presence of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, by way of revelation.

As for the legatees, the Imams, and the scholars, their knowledge is acquired from hearing—from the prophets (*Peace be upon them*), or from those who heard from the prophets, and so on. What they have acquired of knowledge is also ladunni knowledge, because the Book and the Sunnah are from the presence of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing.

On this basis, the knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah is ladunni knowledge; so everyone who possesses something of the knowledge of the Book or the Sunnah, his knowledge is ladunni knowledge. Then we say after that: whoever interprets the Qur’an with an interpretation and an explanation other than that which came from the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and from his Household, or interprets it contrary to what the rules of the Arabic language entail—his interpretation is a false interpretation, a claim against Allah of what He did not say, and a lie, falsehood, and calumny: *“So who is more unjust than one who lies about Allah...”* [al-Zumar:32], *“Only those who do not believe in the verses of Allah fabricate falsehood.”* [al-Nahl:105].

What supports what we have mentioned is that you hardly find for them, or hear from any one of them, anything of that so-called ladunni knowledge; rather, you see them concealing it with the utmost concealment, and not disclosing it except to some of the simple-minded

who have trusted them—knowing that none will believe it or accept it except people of ignorance and heedlessness. And if the knowledge which they claim were true, they would have made it manifest and published it in books and upon pulpits, as the adherents of the (recognized) schools do.

[The Rabbani Scholar]

The *rabbani* scholar is the one who knows the rulings that have come in the Book and the Sunnah, and acts according to them. Concerning such people He, *exalted is He*, said: *“Be you rabbaniyyin (devoted to the Lord), because of what you have taught of the Book and because of what you have studied.”* [Al ‘Imran:79] and in another verse: *“Why do the rabbaniyyun and the religious scholars not forbid them from their sinful speech and their consuming of what is unlawful?”* [al-Ma’idah:63]. The naming as *rabbaniyyun* was due to their devoting themselves to the Lord, *Mighty and Majestic*, through knowledge and action. On this basis, all the true scholars who act upon their knowledge are *rabbani* scholars. However, that pseudo-scholar wanted to cover the nakedness of his ignorance by claiming this designation for himself to the exclusion of others, so he called himself a *rabbani* scholar, and called the scholars who are in reality the true scholars by the name of “book-scholars”, thereby confusing the simple-minded among the ignorant.

In truth and in reality, the “book-scholars” are the *rabbani* scholars in truth. As for him, he has nothing of knowledge—neither little nor much, not even the speck on a date-stone nor the thin membrane upon it. Rather, what he “interprets” he interprets through ignorance, delusions, and whisperings, which he presents to his followers as “ladunni knowledge”—and by this phrase he means that such interpretation is not from the interpretations found in books, nor from the interpretations of scholars and shaykhs, but that they are interpretations “inspired” from the presence of the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, who has allegedly inspired them to him and singled him out with them to the exclusion of others.

For this reason you see them concealing such things except from their “chosen” simple-minded followers, in order that their nakedness not be exposed and their true state not be uncovered. For if they were to reveal that, questions would come at them in great number—questions for which they would find no answers. From this you come to know the falsity of their doctrine; for had they known their doctrine to be sound, they would have openly declared it, spread it, and written books about it—whether people were pleased or displeased.

[Section: The Fundamentals of Religion]

The Book of Divine Unity

The science of the fundamentals of religion

It is the exposition of the methods of thinking that lead to knowledge of the oneness of Allah, *exalted is He*, and of what He deserves of perfection and majesty; and to knowledge of His justice and the truth of His promise and His threat; and to knowledge of the truthfulness of the Prophets of Allah and His Messengers (*Peace be upon them*), and of what they brought of the Books; then to knowledge of what is connected to that of the succession to Prophethood.

The scholars of the Muslims have excelled in this field and have shown great skill in presenting this science; and by them we mean:

- 1- *The Zaydi scholars*; and this becomes evident by looking into the books of Imam al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim, his grandson al-Hadi, Imam al-Nasir al-Utrush, the two sons of al-Hadi, and before those, the books and epistles of Imam Zayd ibn ‘Ali (*Peace be upon him*); among them: *The Book of Faith, The Book of Establishing the Imamate, The Book of Establishing the Bequest, The Book of the Reply to the Fatalists, The Book of al-Safwah*, and other works contained in his printed collection.
- 2- *The Mu‘tazili scholars*, who expanded greatly in this science and followed the way of the philosophers in their manner of expression, even if they had some excesses. Their works are numerous.
- 3- *The Ash‘aris*, who followed the way of the Mu‘tazilah; they also have many works, and their errors in this regard are considerable.
- 4- *The Ja‘fariyyah*; they have many works, and many errors. All of these groups have investigations in presenting the issues, as well as explanations, proofs, and refutations.
- 5- *The Hanbalis*, or “Salafis”, or whatever they call themselves: their doctrinal books show that behind them lies ignorance, weakness, and great dullness together with great conceit. Through those books it appears that their minds are rigid to a far-reaching degree, and that as for knowledge and investigation they have nothing at all, in either great matters or small.

[That which is known of the fundamentals of religion by necessity and by inference, and the knowledge of the angels and the prophets]

Question: What, from the fundamentals of religion, is known by necessity, and what is known by inference? And are the knowledges of the angels necessary or inferential? And likewise those of the prophets (*Peace be upon them*)?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: There is nothing in the fundamentals of religion that is known by necessity; all of its knowledges are inferential. Faith in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and what is attached to that or related to it of the Imamate, intercession, eternity in the Fire, and so on – all of that is inferential. From here it is that Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, praised those who believe in the unseen in His Noble Book, commended them in many verses, and that the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) made that the best of deeds. The legally responsible person does not deserve praise and commendation except for that whose attainment and steadfastness upon it involve burden and hardship; and burden and hardship accompany only inferential knowledges. As for necessary knowledges, they do not require any of that; they require only the existence of intellect. With the existence of intellect, necessary knowledges come to be without any choice on the part of the rational person; so he has no action nor effort in them. Allah, *exalted is He*, has said concerning recompense: *“Indeed, you are only recompensed for what you used to do.”* [al-Tur] and: *“[It will be said:] ‘[This is] a recompense for what you used to do.’”* [al-Waqi’ah] and many other verses which clarify that the recompense in the Hereafter, of reward and punishment, is only according to deeds.

Yes, there is nothing to prevent something of the knowledges of the fundamentals of religion from being transformed from inferential to necessary; among this is what has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be upon him*), that he said: “By Allah, if the veil were to be removed for me, my certainty would not increase.”

If it is said: What is the path to that?

We say: The path to that is clinging to taqwa (God-consciousness), steadfastness upon guidance, and striving in that.

The proof of this is His saying, *exalted is He*: *“And those who are guided – He increases them in guidance”* [Muhammad:17] and His saying, *exalted is He*: *“If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion.”* [al-Anfal:29] and His saying, *glorified is He*, in clarifying the reward for righteous deeds: *“He will grant you a double share of His mercy, and make for you a light by which you walk...”* [al-Hadid:28] and other such verses.

On that basis, Allah, *exalted is He*, increases the guided and the God-conscious in knowledge and light; and the more they increase in guidance and taqwa, the more He increases them – and so on, until their knowledge reaches the level of necessity.

If it is said: You have mentioned previously that there is no reward for necessary knowledges; so is this type rewarded, or is his reward cut off?

We say: Rather, he is rewarded for what has become necessary of inferential knowledges. That is because necessity only came about through the care and continual effort of the legally responsible person in taqwa and steadfastness. Necessity is thus an effect of his action and a result of his taqwa and guidance. The results of deeds follow the deeds in deserving reward and punishment, as indicated by His saying, *exalted is He: "And We record what they have sent ahead and their traces, and all things We have enumerated in a clear register."* [Yasin:12]

Furthermore, what is closer [to the truth] regarding the knowledges of the angels and the prophets (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) is that they are like the knowledges of the legally responsible humans. The proof is that Allah, *exalted is He*, is only known by His signs which indicate His greatness, *majesty*, knowledge, power, and so on; for He, *glorified is He*, is: *"There is nothing like unto Him."* [al-Shura:11] *"And there is none comparable to Him."* [al-Ikhlās:4]. From here Ibn Abi al-Hadid said:

*"By Allah, neither Musa, nor 'Isa the Messiah, nor Muhammad,
Nor Jibril – as he ascends to the station of holiness – have known
The inner reality of Your Essence; only that You are One in Essence,
Eternal.*

*They knew [only] relations and negations, while the reality itself is not
found."*

However, the angels are more devout, more obedient, more God-fearing, and purer: *"They glorify [Him] night and day; they do not slacken."* [al-Anbiya':20] *"They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, but do what they are commanded."* [al-Tahrim:6] On this basis, they are more deserving of increased knowledge and light, and of that being multiplied, until their knowledges become necessary; then the prophets come after the angels.

There is also a proof that the knowledges of the prophets (*Blessings of Allah be upon them*) are inferential, and that is His saying, *exalted is He: "And [mention] when Ibrahim said, 'My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead.' [Allah] said, 'Do you not believe?' He said, 'Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be at rest.' [Allah] said, 'Then take four of the birds...'"* to the end of the verse [al-Baqarah:260].

[Clarifying What the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) Was Content With from Those Entering Islam]

- The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was content, from those entering into Islam, with faith and belief in Allah and in His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and in what Allah sent down to His Messenger (*May*

Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace); and with belief in the angels, the messengers, and the Books which He sent down upon His messengers; and with belief in the Last Day and what it contains of reckoning and recompense; then with hearing and obeying what came to them from Allah by the hand of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) of commands and prohibitions, and remaining steadfast upon that.

And he was content, regarding their knowledge of Allah, that they acknowledge and believe that there is no deity but Him, that He has no partner and no equal, that He has not taken a consort nor a child, that He is All-Knowing of everything and All-Powerful over everything, that He is the Lord of the worlds and their Owner, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement, that He is the Creator, the Provider, the Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving, the Generous, the Bestower... and so on, from His Most Beautiful Names, *majestic and exalted is He*.

He(*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did not teach them [the details of] compulsion and choice, decree and predestination, will and volition, nor anything similar to that of the subtleties of 'aqidah and the odd intricacies of the science of tawhid; nor did he ask them about that, nor open such topics with them.

[Knowing the Truth and Falsity of Faith]

What is known from the life of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is that he was satisfied from a man that he say: "*There is no deity but Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace)*," and that he establish the prayer and give the zakat. By that he would be one of the Muslims, having what they have and owing what they owe. The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) would not, after that, investigate the reality of the man's faith and Islam.

- Allah, *exalted is He*, took upon Himself the task of testing the believers by what He burdened them with of strenuous obligations. Whoever among the believers committed himself to fulfilling them is the true believer; and by failing to fulfil them, or some of them, the condition of the man becomes apparent to the Muslims, and they call him a hypocrite. For among the necessary consequences of faith is acting according to its rulings and laws; so when there is no acting upon the rulings and laws, it is known that faith is impaired. This was the case in the time of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- When the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) died, some disagreement occurred among the Muslims; then that disagreement expanded over time, until eventually it settled, and each

group came to have its own entity and school (madhhab).

After that, acting upon the legal rulings was no longer the only sign for the truth and soundness of faith; rather, the followers of the different schools invented other things by which they sought to infer the soundness or corruption of a man's faith.

[Sufficing with What is in the Qur'an as Evidence for the Existence of the Creator]

"And on the earth are signs for those who are certain." [Adh-Dhariyat:20]

The mutakallimun (scholars of kalam) infer the existence of the Creator, *exalted is He*, by the originatedness (huduth) of bodies. So when it has been established that they are originated, there must be a Creator for them. They have various types of proofs for inferring that they are originated:

1. Among them: the proof of possibility (dalil al-imkan).
2. The proof of opposing claims (dalil ad-da'awi).
3. Analogy of the seen to the unseen. And so on.

What comes to my mind is that in what they have used as evidence there is something of complexity and obscurity.

Meanwhile, in what Allah, *exalted is He*, has used as evidence for that in His Book there is sufficiency and richness, making one free of all other than it.

[The Divine Knowledges for Which No Muslim is Excused]

Question: What are the divine knowledges, and those attached to them, for which no Muslim is excused, and without which his Islam and faith are not complete?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: The knowledges that are indispensable, and without which faith and Islam are not complete, are as follows:

1. Knowing Allah, *Mighty and Majestic*, with the heart, then acknowledging [that] with the tongue.
2. Belief in the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and in the Qur'an and what it contains; and following that, belief in all of the messengers of Allah, *exalted is He*, and in what was sent down upon them from Allah; and belief in the angels of Allah. It is not a condition to know the messengers by their names and the names of their Books, nor to know the types of angels or some of their names.
3. Knowledge of the Last Day, and belief in it and in what it contains of reward for the obedient in Gardens of bliss wherein they will abide forever, and of punishment for the sinners who rebel

against Allah in the Fire of Hell wherein they will abide forever.

4. Then, after that, it is necessary to know the people of truth and to affiliate oneself with them in religion, exactly as Allah, *exalted is He*, said: "*O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with the truthful.*" [Al-Tawbah:119]

He does not need to know the disputed issues, nor to know the truth in every single issue; rather, it suffices him to affiliate himself with the people of truth, to believe that he follows their religion, and that he says what they say in general.

The proof for this is what we have observed from the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*): that they approved, in general, of their followers and those affiliated with them, upon what they were of affiliation in general.

Among the completeness of faith and Islam is yielding and submitting to Allah, *glorified is He*, and complying with Him by performing the obligations and avoiding the prohibitions. Allah, *exalted is He*, has described the faith of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the believers, saying, *majestic is His affair*: "*The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers, [saying], 'We make no distinction between any of His Messengers.' And they say, 'We hear and we obey. [Grant us] Your forgiveness, our Lord; and to You is the destination.'*" [Al-Baqarah:285]

Yes, faith in Allah, *exalted is He*, and belief in Him does not require seeking or exertion. Indeed, every newborn is born upon the natural disposition (*fitrah*). For this reason we see that once a child reaches the stage of understanding and discernment, he searches by his innate disposition, and is drawn by his nature, to seeking and asking: "From where was I born? From where did I come? Who created me?" These questions continue to revolve in his mind until he reaches his aim of knowing Allah and believing in Him.

Children often direct these questions insistently to their mothers. From here came the hadith: "*Every newborn is born upon the fitrah, until his parents make him a Jew, or a Christian, or a Magian.*"

What also supports what we have mentioned—that faith in Allah, *exalted is He*, is part of the *fitrah* and does not require seeking or exertion—is that Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, very often says, after setting forth the signs that indicate His divinity and Lordship: "*Will you not reason?*" and "*Will you not remember?*" This indicates that knowledge of Allah, *exalted is He*, is established for those who possess intellects, and that the rational person needs no more than to return to his intellect and

recall the knowledge embedded in his innate disposition, if he has forgotten or been heedless.

[The Ruling on Reflecting upon the Creator]

Question: What is the solution for a man who, whenever he reflects upon the created being, immediately reflects upon the Creator, and is unable to repel this satanic thought... etc.?

Answer: Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, has commanded reflection upon created things, and has detailed the verses in that field. What is obligatory upon the one who reflects upon created things is that he strive, as much as he can, against the whisperings of Satan; and Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.

Some of the Companions complained of something similar to what you have complained of, so the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “Whoever something of that presents itself to him, let him say: ‘I believe in Allah,’” or as said. One should not abandon reflecting on what Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, has created because of what you have mentioned; rather, what is obligatory is to resist the whisperings of Satan, and after that nothing is upon him. Rather, that is pure faith, as has come in the narration from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), when a man complained to him of something like what you have complained of and said: “O Messenger of Allah, for my neck to be struck is more beloved to me than that I mention those thoughts,” or as he said.

[The Meaning of: “Do not curse Time, for verily Allah is Time”]

Question: What is the meaning of “Do not curse Time, for Time is Allah”... etc.?

Answer: The people in those times used to attribute the calamities of death, afflictions, poverty, old age, weakness, greyness of hair, decrepitude, and the like, to “Time (al-dahr)”. So if something of that befell one of them, he would curse Time, because in his view it was Time that had done that. For that reason – *and Allah knows best* – the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to them: “Do not curse Time, for Time is Allah,” meaning: the One who has done to you those trials and calamities is Allah. So if you curse Time, you have cursed Allah, because He is the One who truly does what you think is from “Time”.

A similar example is that you might say to someone whose leg is hurting him, thinking that its pain came from a thorn: “The thorn is the snake,” intending that the pain that occurred in his leg was not from a thorn, but rather from a snake; you do not intend that the thorn’s name is “snake”. Likewise is what has come in the hadith.

[Regarding the Supplication (Munjat) Found in the Şahîfah of Zayn al-‘Abidin (Peace be upon him)]

As for what is in the Şahîfah of Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin: “*Do not deprive us of seeing You*” – know that the whispered supplications (munajat) found in it are not from the Şahîfah of Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin. The Zaydis transmit the supplication of the Şahîfah, and in it there is not that munajat which is at the end. As for the rest of the supplication of the Şahîfah, the Zaydis transmit it from Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin without addition or omission.

[Faith in Allah, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers]

Faith in Allah, and in His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and so on, and the heart’s tranquility in that, is the best, most noble, and greatest of deeds; and it is thus because it is the foundation upon which righteous deeds are built.

If it is said: How can it be like that when in it there is no toil, burden, or hardship, while they have said: “*The reward is in proportion to the hardship*”?

We say: It is an action of the heart, and it does not settle in hearts nor remain in them except with great toil and constant striving; because doubts and ambiguities come upon faith and crowd it within the heart and attempt to uproot it completely from the heart or to weaken it, in addition to caprice (hawa) and the whisperings of Satan. So faith does not settle in the heart, nor endure, except with continual striving, toil, labour, and suffering in repelling doubts and ambiguities, and in repelling caprice and satanic whisperings. This struggle cannot be completed except with great patience that neither tires nor wearies. For this reason, faith is the most difficult, the hardest, and the heaviest of deeds upon the legally responsible.

The proof of that is what we see and sense of the great number of those who commit themselves to performing the obligatory acts of prayer, zakat, hajj, and fasting, and the small number of those committed to the faith which Allah, *exalted is He*, intended – that faith which the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), ‘Ali (*Peace be upon him*), the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*), Abu Dharr, ‘Ammar, and their likes, whose hearts Allah has tested for Allah-consciousness – possessed. May Allah’s good pleasure, mercy, and blessings be upon them.

The best of deeds after faith are the five daily prayers, as indicated by what is in the adhan: “*Hayya ‘ala khayr al-‘amal (Come to the good deed)*,” and by the hadith found in the authentic collections: “*Know that the best of your deeds is the prayer.*” After that come zakat, fasting, and hajj; these three are next in virtue after the five daily prayers, without a

specific ranking among the three as to which is superior.

The matter is as we have mentioned, because faith, prayer, zakat, hajj, and fasting are the pillars of Islam; Islam is not complete unless its pillars are established. After that is jihad in the path of Allah.

[Imam al-Qasim’s Interpretation of Faith]

Imam al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim (*Peace be upon him*) interpreted faith as the abandoning of major acts of disobedience; and likewise did Muhammad ibn al-Qasim (*Peace be upon them*).

This interpretation is an interpretation of faith by that which necessarily results from it and which it requires. For whoever believes in Allah, *exalted is He*, and in what has come from Him, and is certain of that, does not proceed to commit a major sin. Major acts of disobedience are only committed by one whose heart is empty of faith and certainty. From here is His saying, *exalted is He*, describing some of the sinners: *“No! But they do not fear the Hereafter”* [al-Muddaththir]. And in the hadith: *“The adulterer does not commit adultery while he is a believer, the thief does not steal while he is a believer, and the wine-drinker does not drink wine while he is a believer...”*

The meaning of faith is: the heart’s and tongue’s affirmation of Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and [one’s] hearing and obeying Allah, *exalted is He*, in performing what He has commanded and avoiding what He has forbidden. Thus Allah, *exalted is He*, has described the faith of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the believers at the end of Surat al-Baqarah.

Furthermore, we can say that the name “faith (iman)” has become, in the legal usage, a technical reality for the abandonment of major acts of disobedience. So it is applied, as a legal reality, to whoever abandons major acts of disobedience. This can be inferred from:

1. That when the term “believer” is applied to a person, it is understood that this person is cautious and guarded against committing any major sin.
2. That one does not say of a perpetrator of a major sin that he is a believer.
3. That Imam al-Qasim (*Peace be upon him*) interpreted “the believer” as “the one who is safe from major acts of disobedience.”

[Words of Imam al-Qasim on the Fundamentals]

Imam al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim (*Peace be upon him*) said: Whoever does not know, in the religion of Islam, five of the fundamentals is astray and ignorant:

The first of them is that Allah, glorified is He, is One, nothing is like

unto Him; He is the Creator of everything; He perceives sight, but sights do not perceive Him; and He is the Subtle, the All-Aware.

The second of the fundamentals: that Allah, *glorified is He*, is Just, not unjust; He does not burden a soul except according to its capacity, and He does not punish it except for its own sin. He has not prevented anyone from obeying Him, rather He has commanded him to do so; and He has not caused anyone to enter into His disobedience, rather He has forbidden him from it.

The third of the fundamentals: that Allah, *glorified is He*, is truthful in promise and threat; He recompenses a particle's weight of good with good, and He recompenses a particle's weight of evil with evil. Whoever He consigns to punishment will be in it forever, abiding therein eternally, just as whoever He consigns to reward that never ends will abide therein eternally.

The fourth: that the Glorious Qur'an is a detailed, decisive (judgement), and a straight path; there is no contradiction or difference in it; and that the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is whatever the Qur'an has mentioned and given meaning to.

And the fifth of the fundamentals: that engaging in wealth and trade and gains, at a time when the rulings are suspended and what Allah has made for widows, orphans, the blind, the disabled, and all other weak ones is being plundered, is not lawful and unrestricted in the same way as it is in the time of governors of justice and beneficence, those who uphold the limits of the All-Merciful.

So all of these five fundamentals it is not permitted for any legally responsible person to be ignorant of them; rather, it is obligatory upon them to know them. End of his words from *al-Hada'iq al-Wardiyyah*.

I say: This fifth fundamental needs explanation and clarification. What appears to me – *and Allah knows best* – is that the intent of Imam al-Qasim (*Peace be upon him*) is that the doors of trade and lawful gains, in the time of just rulers, are open before traders and seekers of gain and profit; whereas the opposite is true in the time of unjust rulers, for in that time the open doors decrease.

The reason for their decrease is that Allah, *glorified is He*, has forbidden helping the wrongdoers, in His saying, *exalted is He*: "*And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression*" [al-Ma'idah:2], and in His saying, *exalted is He*, relating from Musa (*Peace be upon him*): "*He said: 'My Lord, for the favour You have bestowed upon me, I will never be a supporter of the criminals'*" [al-Qasas: 17], and many other [texts] in the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

On this basis, it is not permissible to enter into any door of trade

whose zakat and levies strengthen the rulers of evil, injustice, and tyranny.

As for that trade from which the oppressors take nothing, there is no problem in its permissibility, and no harm in engaging in it.

Furthermore, the reason for that may be the scarcity of lawful wealth because of the abundance of injustice. Wealth, in the time of tyrants, is taken from those who have no lawful due taken from them, and given to those who are not entitled to it. With the continuation of that and its persistence, unlawful wealth spreads and its circulation among people increases.

When the matter reaches this extent, it is obligatory for the believer to be cautious for his own sake: he should not buy from the goods except what he thinks to be free of the unlawful, and he should not take of the prices for his merchandise except what he thinks to be lawful, and that it is not from the wealth taken unjustly.

Furthermore, the reason may be a combination of the two matters mentioned; and to that may be added what occurs, because of trade and mixing with people in the times of the oppressors, of seeing evil in the marketplaces and hearing falsehood, and so on.

Yes, Imam al-Qasim (*Peace be upon him*) made this fifth principle among the fundamentals because of what results from it of strengthening the people of tyranny and the sultans of injustice, through what they take of wealth by which their rule does not stand except with it, and because of what results from it also of weakening the callers to truth and justice. Otherwise, this issue is not of the issues of the fundamentals, but rather of the issues of the branches – *and Allah knows best*.

There are also fundamentals which Imam al-Qasim (*Peace be upon him*) did not mention, and they are:

1. Faith and belief in the Prophethood of our Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and what is attached and follows from it.
2. Faith and belief in the guardianship (wilayah) of the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be upon him*), then al-Hasan, then al-Husayn after his brother, then... and so on.
3. Faith and belief that the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*) are the people of truth and the interpreters of the Book; and believing in their love and following them; and that whoever opposes them is astray and doomed; and that they are Allah's proofs over His creation, and so on.

Perhaps the Imam (*Peace be upon him*) did not mention these

fundamentals because he directed those words to one who does not doubt their obligatoriness, even though he was insightful in knowledge of them, such as his own children and his followers; for knowledge of them among the Shi'ah is of the primary knowledges, like knowledge of the obligation of prayer, zakat, hajj, and the like. So he did not mention them, relying upon that – *and Allah knows best*.

[The First Thing Allah Created Was the Air]

Question: Our Imams (*Peace be upon them*) said: “O Allah, indeed the first thing Allah created was the air, which is a place that is not in a place.” They said: because if it had a place, this would lead to infinite regress, which is impossible. And the principle according to the investigators is that no body is intelligible except in a place, and it is impossible for there to exist a body that is not in a locus:

a) Does the statement of our Imams (*Peace be upon them*) amount to contradicting this principle?

b) According to this principle – namely, that it is impossible for there to exist a body that is not in a locus – it follows that affirming the air as “not in a place” is impossible, and affirming the air “in a place” is impossible because it leads to infinite regress. So why did our Imams (*Peace be upon them*) prefer the first statement, even though both are impossible, knowing that it is not permissible to assert something impossible?

c) Our Imams (*Peace be upon them*) adduced, as proof that the air is a subtle body, that it moves and rests, and that it fills skins and containers. This is known in the case of the air within the atmosphere. So is the air outside the atmosphere like that which is inside it, or is it still and unmoving? And if it is still and unmoving, is that a refutation of the proof of the Imams (*Peace be upon them*)?

d) Allah, *exalted is He*, said: “*There is nothing like unto Him*” [al-Shura: 11], and: “*Nor is there to Him any equivalent*” [al-Ikhlās:4]. So when our Imams (*Peace be upon them*) affirm air as being “not in a place,” does that make it share with Allah the attribute of placelessness?

Answer: The word *air* (al-hawā’) is used and intended for two things:

1. The first is pure empty space (void).
2. The second is a subtle body residing in that void, which rests and moves and fills containers.

As for the first – which is pure void – it is neither a body nor an accident. This is what is meant by saying that it is “not in a place”. This is not described by motion or rest; rather, that which is described by them is only the body residing within it.

And as for the second – which is the subtle body that rests and moves

and fills containers – its place is that void which we mentioned previously.

Thus, the statement of our Imams (*Peace be upon them*), that “the air was without a place,” is intended in the first sense.

And their statement that “the air is a subtle body” is intended in the second sense.

This, and what we have said already contains the answer to the questions up to the last but one, so understand.

And here is an example by which you know that place does not need a place: [imagine] an object whose length is ten centimetres, and its width is likewise, and its depth likewise. These dimensions themselves are its place; and necessarily it occupies of space only these dimensions. You will see that if you put it in water, it occupies nothing but those very dimensions. If those dimensions themselves needed a place, you would see the water splitting around them to the right and left. Since that does not occur, we know that they do not need a place.

As for the answer to the last question, we say: Their description of “place” as “not having a place” – this attribute, namely “not having a place”, only came to be after the coming-to-be of place. It is thus a originated attribute. On this basis, there is no similarity between the attribute of the Eternal and that of what is originated. What has occurred is only a sharing in the word, not in the meaning – just as the words “existent”, “able”, “knowing”, and “living” are used for both the Eternal and the originated. So reflect.

[Some Statements of the Theologians on the Division of Created Things]

The theologians say: created things are three: body, accident, and substance (for those who affirm it).

I say: In my view there are, among created things, some that are none of these three – namely, time and place.

[Proofs for the Origination of the World]

Question: What is the proof for the origination (createdness) of the world?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: What indicates the origination of the world are several matters:

1. Necessity (self-evidence), as we observe in the various kinds of animals, plants, clouds, winds, rains, and other things. These things are originated by necessity and direct observation. Once their origination is established, we analogize to them those things whose origination we have not seen and observed, such as the heavens and the earth and the like. The common element in this

analogy is similarity in corporeality; so whatever ruling is established for some bodies is established for the others. This path brings the one who reflects to knowledge and certainty.

2. That bodies are called a “work” (ṣun’), and a work cannot be without a Maker. Whatever needs a Maker is originated.
3. Rational analogy: namely, analogizing the bodies whose origination we have not witnessed – such as the heavens and the earth and the bodies within them – to constructed things like houses and other buildings. The common reason (‘illah) uniting the two is composition, for all bodies are composite. The Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) pointed to this proof in his words: “Can there be a building without a builder, or a crime without one who commits it?”
4. The proof of possibility: its meaning is that the particularization of each body with specific accidents, properties, shape, and form – despite its being possible for it to have other properties and characteristics – must be due to something additional to its mere corporeality; otherwise, bodies would share the same properties and accidents, and there would be no difference whatsoever.
5. The proof of “claims” (dalīl al-da’āwī), which is:
 1. That in the body there is an accident other than it.
 2. That those accidents are originated.
 3. That the body has never been without those accidents, nor prior to them.
 4. That its inseparable attachment to them entails origination.

Now, the accident that does not separate from the body is of five types: four specific to body, and one specific to substance (according to those who affirm it). The four are: motion, rest, conjunction, and separation. The fifth is absolute “being” (al-kawn al-muṭlaq), which is specific to the individual substance (al-jawhar al-fard). They said in its explanation, as in *Nahj al-Sa’ādah*: “It is the meaning which necessitates the being of the individual substance in a direction (side) at the initial moment of its origination.”

These five types are called “the modes of being” (al-akwān). The detailed exposition and clarification of this proof is mentioned in the books of kalām, so let it be sought there.

Yes, the path to knowing Allah, *exalted is He*, is nearer in its course than what the theologians mention. The Qur’an is filled with proofs and evidences; in it there is sufficiency for the intellect, healing for what is in the breasts, and guidance and mercy. From here He, *exalted is He*, said:

“And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the Speech of Allah...” [al-Tawbah:6].

[The clearest proofs, according to reason, for the origination of the world]

– The proofs by which the mutakallimun (theologians) infer the origination of the world, such as the proof of possibility and the proof of accidents, are not sufficient to convince the intellect, because of what they contain of obscurity.

– The most evident of proofs, in the view of the intellect, is the proof of dependence (ta'alluq), for the intellect decisively judges that there must be an agent for every act, who brings it into being and to whom it is attached.

– And the clearest of proofs, according to the intellect, is in that whose origination is perceived after it had not been, such as the falling of rain, the formation of clouds, the creation of the human being and animals, and the like of occurrences that were not, then came to be. Allah, *exalted is He*, has argued with the like of this in His Noble Book: *“Have you seen the water that you drink? Is it you who brought it down from the rainclouds, or is it We who bring it down?”* [Al-Waqi'ah]

– This is clearer to the intellect because it does not require examining whether it is originated;

– Whereas the heaven and the earth, in general, require that one first examine whether they are originated or pre-eternal; the intellect does not arrive at being convinced of their origination except after great effort, and then, secondly, it looks into the One who originated them. As for the occurrences we have mentioned, they require only that one look into the One who originated them, because their origination is observed and sensed.

– Because the proofs for the origination of the world are obscure, some of the philosophers said that the world is pre-eternal.

The answer to them is that we say:

- 1- What is meant by “the world” is that which we observe of the earth, soil, mountains, stones, the waters of the seas, the air, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the wide expanse of space in which the planets swim. This is what the human being knows by the term “world”.
- 2- Everything that has been mentioned in the meaning of “world” is subjugated to serve the human being; were it not for that, human life would not be complete. This indicates that behind all that there is a wise will that has arranged it.
- 3- The earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets are in

continual motion; each one of them swims in space according to a precise system and a wise speed. There must, therefore, be an agent who does that.

- 4- There is no doubt that the motions of the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets are originated motions, and those motions are attributes of them. If their attributes are originated, then they themselves must be originated. This line of reasoning returns to inferring by the proof of accidents which the theologians mention.
- 5- It has been established scientifically today, among the specialists in the natural sciences of the universe in both the West and the East, that the world is originated and that it will come to an end. In that case there is no need for theoretical inference when there exists a proof confirmed by sense and experiment. The specific proof which contemporary scholars mention does not come to my mind at this moment, but the reader can refer to what has been written on this subject.

[The essential and accidental attributes of bodies]

- Bodies have attributes, and an absolutely attribute-less body is neither intelligible nor conceivable. These attributes are called “accidents” (a’rad). Attributes are divided into two types: essential attributes of the body, and accidental attributes.

Essential attributes are: length, width, depth, occupancy of space, and composition.

Accidental attributes are such as colours, moisture and dryness, motion and rest, and the like. They are many, and they are among the properties of bodies. There is no doubt that Allah, *exalted is He*, has made what He created of bodies and their concomitant accidents a sign and a proof of Himself, *glorified be He*.

The intellect

- Allah has distinguished the human being, above all other animals, with the intellect, and has favoured him by it over them.

- The intellect has wide capacities for perception, for arriving at realities, for distinguishing between sensed things and intelligibles, for deduction and inference. It has an unlimited capacity that can contain information, and so on.

- By their intellects, human beings in this time have arrived at what we see and hear of astonishing advancement in all fields.

- The human intellect has a “temperament”: it tires and grows bored; it becomes active and becomes languid; it grows strong and grows weak; it becomes clear and becomes clouded; it increases and decreases, and so

on. These states befall the intellect, and come and go.

Does the intellect err and get things right?

The nature of the intellect is correctness; error is not of its nature. The judgements of the intellect are correct absolutely and always.

As for the erroneous judgements that issue [from a person], they are not from the judgements of the intellect; rather, they arise from delusions, fancies, whims, and desires.

- The intellect also has a nature, which is that it grows, increases, becomes illumined, widens, and advances in that, whenever the causes are present. The causes of that are: adherence to taqwa (Allah-consciousness) and righteous action, as Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: *"If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion" [Al-Anfal:29] "...and will make for you a light by which you walk" [Al-Hadid:28] "...And fear Allah, and Allah teaches you."* [Al-Baqarah:282].

And He, *glorified is He*, said: *"And when he reached his full strength, We gave him judgement and knowledge; and thus do We reward the doers of good."* [Yusuf:22] Just as being besmirched with the filth of sins clouds the intellect and confuses it: *"I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant upon the earth without right..."* [Al-A'raf:146] *"No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning."* [Al-Mutaffifin:14]

[Obligation according to the intellect]

The intellect is a special gift by which Allah has distinguished the human being and favoured him over the rest of the animals. The intelligent vary in their intellects: some have more refined intellects than others, and the qualities of intellect differ among people to the point that scarcely two are alike.

With all this, every intelligent person is pleased with his intellect and sees perfection in it, and hardly any of the intelligent accuse their own intellect of deficiency. Rather, you will find that the one lesser in intellect accuses the one greater in intellect of stupidity, and does not accept in his own mind any opinion.

All intelligent people share in this: that every intelligent person possesses of intellect what enables him to arrive at faith and at the essential obligations of the laws of Islam.

There are doctrinal rulings which differ in their level of obscurity and subtlety. The intelligent are charged with knowing and believing them in proportion to their intellects. Whoever is able, with his intellect, to know them, or to know some of them, is charged with that which he has come to know. Whoever is not able, with his intellect, to know them, is only charged with what he is able to know: *"And Allah does not burden a soul*

except [according to] its capacity.” [Al-Baqarah:286]

[Allah’s Presenting Good to His Servants and Their Squandering of This Offer]

In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, and upon his pure Household. To proceed:

It is among the astonishing things – at which wonder is exhausted while it itself remains a cause of wonder – that the merchandise of Allah and His goods displayed in this world are, in people’s eyes, the cheapest of merchandise and goods, while their profits are the greatest of profits absolutely. The buyer gains ten times the price, or seventy times, and the profits may reach seven hundred times; and in some seasons the profits may multiply to eighty thousand times – knowing that these profits remain for the winners and do not cease; they enjoy them for endless eternity in the Abode of Bliss.

Meanwhile, the markets of the devils are bustling, popular, and crowded, even though their profits are limited; rather, they have no weight and no value in comparison to the loss that is entailed by them.

– What is the reason for the servants turning away from what their Lord has offered them of multiplied good and happiness in this world and the Hereafter?

– And what is the reason for their rushing to what their enemy, Satan, has offered them of causes of great ruin in this world and the Hereafter?

– Is that due to their scant knowledge of their Lord and of their enemy, Satan?

– Or is the cause something else – and what is it?

The answer to all of that becomes clear when one reflects upon what we dictate to you, and it is:

That Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, presented to His servants what He presented of good, and provided for them all the causes leading to it: by making it known and announcing it, by making the way to it easy, by displaying incentives, by appointing callers to it, hosts, criers, welcomers, those who honour those who come down [as guests], and so on; and by setting up proofs that souls find tranquillity in, regarding the truthfulness and fulfilment of what that offer contains of profits and enticing rewards.

In every respect, Allah, *exalted is He*, has perfected, in what He has offered of good to His servants, everything the offer needs: from making it known, and making known its profits and rewards, to facilitation and enabling, and appointing callers to it, and so on.

Once you know that, it becomes clear to you that the servants' turning away from what Allah has offered of good is not for a reason returning to this offer itself, but for another reason returning to the servants.

If it is said: Most of the servants are ignorant of this offer and of what it contains of good and profits. If they knew, they would undoubtedly come to it, since everyone loves good, profits, and happiness.

We say: The cause of that ignorance is from themselves, due to their turning away and their not paying attention to what Allah, *exalted is He*, sent down of the offer to His servants and spread in the world, and for which He appointed many callers in all lands.

It was obligatory upon the servants, when they heard that offer, to look into it: if they knew it to be true, they would turn towards it; otherwise, they would leave it. But they did not pay any attention to it at all and turned away from it; thus their ignorance of it, in that case, is from their own side.

Among the reasons for the servants' distancing themselves from what their Lord has offered them of good is arrogance and haughtiness toward the callers who call to good.

Another reason is preferring immediate desires and the caprice of the soul.

Yes, it appears that these three causes – ignorance, arrogance, and desires – come together to form a single strong cause, and some of them may be a cause for others.

Haughtiness and arrogance may lead to abandoning consideration of the call of the callers; and the desires and caprice of the soul may prevent the servant from looking into the good that is offered; and these two causes may gather in a servant, so he leaves off looking into the good that is offered.

Haughtiness and arrogance may also be an independent cause for rejecting and leaving the offer, just as the caprice of the soul and its desires may be an independent cause for rejecting and leaving the offer.

On what we have mentioned, the servants' turning away from what their Lord has offered them of tremendous good is for a reason returning to their own selves, not for a matter returning to Allah or to what has been offered of good.

The matter is ignorance and the lack of believing in the profits offered. The occurrence of ignorance among the servants is due to their turning away from looking into what Allah has offered them, and that turning away arises from arrogance and haughtiness, or from preferring the caprice of the soul and satisfying its bestial desires and lusts.

If it is said: What is the cause that has made the peoples of the globe

turn away completely from this good, except for a very small few in some corners of the earth throughout history? Is that due to differences in the innate disposition of intellects? Or to differences in the composition of bodies and temperaments? Or to differences of lands and societies?

We say: Allah, *exalted is He*, has endowed all legally responsible beings with a sufficient amount of innate intellects and has made them equal in this bestowal; however, He increases in the innate intellect of whoever turns towards Him, as He, *exalted is He*, said: *“And those who are guided – He increases them in guidance”* [Muhammad:17], and: *“If you fear Allah, He will grant you a criterion”* [Al-Anfal:29].

And He may, out of grace, confer favour upon one whose state He knows will be that he will repent to his Lord and turn to the obedience of his Creator, as He, *exalted is He*, said: *“That is the bounty of Allah; He gives it to whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty”* [Al-Hadid:21].

[Man is Innately Disposed to Turn Towards Allah]

And Allah, *exalted is He*, has mentioned many times in the Qur’an that He has given His servants hearing, sight, and hearts so that they may give thanks. Allah, *exalted is He*, has repeated this in His Noble Book in many places. On this basis, every legally responsible person on the face of the earth has, in the innate disposition of his intellect, hearing, and sight, that which suffices him to turn towards Allah, accept His command, and attain what He has with Him of tremendous good. However, this innate disposition is, without doubt, affected and its sharpness lessened for certain reasons:

1- The upbringing by the two parents. The child’s innate nature clashes with the direction, religion, and behaviour of the parents. At the beginning, it tries to reach its goal through reflection and thinking, but it encounters obstacles arising from the parents’ direction, behaviour, and religion. Its looking (into matters) thus diminishes, and its sharpness lessens, until it finally yields to what surrounds it of the parents’ religion and guidance, then, thereafter, to what surrounds it of the religion and behaviour of society.

The proof of what we have mentioned about the innate disposition is what we see in our own children; for when the child reaches a certain age, his questions to his mother and father become many, with a meaning such as:

Who is the one who created me? Who is the one who made the house?

And who is the one who made the sun? Who is the one who created the tree?

From where did I come? And how did this happen?

And you – from where did you come? And how did that occur? And who is the one who did that? And how was he able to do that?

And so on, from what the innate natures of children contain of insistent asking in order to reach truth and reality.

In the end, the child accepts the religion of the parents because of his trust in them, or he is forced to accept the reality upon which his family and his society are in terms of religion – not because his innate disposition has been convinced and has believed; rather, the fitrah remains bewildered regarding the state it is in, namely the factual condition imposed by the society in which he has lived.

The innate motives continue to call their owner – whom the parents and society have diverted – to look and reflect upon what he is upon, and upon what he ought to be upon.

These innate calls become more frequent at the time when a man has become tied, in the affairs of his life, to the people of his society, and his friends, companions, and colleagues have become many, such that it becomes difficult for him to oppose them. He therefore turns away from reflection and wages war against it; the inner summons recurs to him, so he turns away and resists it; and thus he does every time it returns. This is the condition of disbelieving societies in the East and West of the earth.

As for righteous societies – and how few they are – the innate natures of those who grow up in them encounter what nurtures them and opens for them the doors of faith and the doors of true knowledge.

If it is said: Is the religious responsibility (taklīf) of one who grows up in a disbelieving society the same as that of one who grows up in a righteous society? And if they are the same, what is the aspect of justice in that equality?

We say: Their responsibility is the same with respect to knowing Allah, *exalted is He*, and believing in Him. The responsibility of one who grows up in a disbelieving society does not differ from that of one who grows up in a righteous society; because each of them possesses, in his innate disposition, that by which he is able to realise the truths of faith, while Allah, *exalted is He*, has made it among the properties of the innate dispositions of intellects that they do not accept falsehood, nor believe in it, nor have faith in it, nor adopt it as a religion or submit to it – this is the state of the fitrah.

If it is said: We have seen and heard that the polytheists profess the divinity of idols, which are carved stones that neither benefit nor harm, and that this is only because the innate dispositions of their minds have submitted to their divinity and their greatness.

We say: The submission of the polytheists in believing in their divinity is not a submission arising from the innate disposition of the intellects; rather, it is a submission arising from delusions and fanciful superstitions.

And to distinguish between the submission of the fitrah and the submission of superstition, we mention an example, which is:

A person may be in a house whose doors are closed, and there is no one in it besides him. When the night comes with its darkness over this house, the person may imagine ghosts in the house, and this imagining may increase, so that because of it fear and anxiety arise in the owner of the house; his heart trembles, his limbs quiver, and his skin shudders.

And if the owner of the house returns to the fitrah of his intellect, it will confirm to him that those imaginings have no foundation and that there is no reality to their existence. There is no doubt that the man trusts the report of his fitrah and believes it with complete belief, and is certain of its soundness.

When the owner of the house returns to his fitrah, that fear will be defeated and will weaken to a great extent; for the man, without doubt, when he returned to his fitrah and weighed between the report of imagination and the report of fitrah, judged with a certain judgment that the report of imagination is false and the report of fitrah is true.

When you know that, then the religiosity of the polytheists is the result of imaginings and delusions that have no reality. Obstinacy, self-exaltation, arrogance, and fanaticism for the religion of their fathers and grandfathers did not allow them to return to the fitrahs of their intellects so that, through that, they might know the invalidity of their religions and the truth of the religion of their Lord which their Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought.

And Allah, exalted is He, denounced them for turning away from returning to the fitrah of their intellects, and He said: *"Will you not then take heed?"* [Yunus] *"Will you not then use your reason?"* [Yunus]; He said this to them after He had mentioned His proof against them. Thus He, exalted is He, informed that, for knowing the falsehood of what they are upon, it is sufficient for them to return to what is in the fitrahs of their intellects and what is implanted in them of sound evidences and proofs that convince them, as an argument, of the falsehood of their religion.

And if there is, in the fitrah of his intellect, in every legally responsible person, that which makes clear to him the truth and certainty that contains the utmost convincing, distinguishes for him between superstition and reality, shows him right and wrong, and distinguishes for him guidance and misguidance such that there remains for the soul no doubt and no semblance of ambiguity, then the obligation is the same

with respect to one brought up in a disbelieving society and one brought up in a righteous society.

And perhaps you have come to know, from what we have mentioned, that societies and environments do not affect the rulings of the fitrahs of the intellects, and that their rulings are certain rulings in all states and circumstances.

Then we say: The upbringing of the legally responsible person between two righteous parents and in a righteous society is, from Allah, a grace and favor, and it calls for more gratitude, because of the ease of guidance it contains for the legally responsible person.

[The capacities of the fitrah of the intellect]

The fitrah of the intellect has immense capacities, in every legally responsible person, in the field of knowing Allah and in the field of knowing truth and falsehood and distinguishing between guidance and misguidance. In this respect there is no difference, in this field, between the scholar and the ignorant, the literate and the illiterate, the Bedouin and the town-dweller, the man and the woman, and so on.

And the proof of that is that Allah, *exalted is He*, is the One who created the intellects and hearing and sight, and He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. He has charged the legally responsible people with believing in Him, then said: *"Indeed, Allah does not forgive that anything be associated with Him..."* [al-Nisa:48]

Thus we know that everyone who has intellect, hearing, and sight has, by that, the ability and capacity to know the true religion, and by it to know the invalidity of falsehood and misguidance.

[Attaining faith]

Then, the reaching of the fitrah of the intellect to faith in Allah, *exalted is He*, is feasible; and Allah, *exalted is He*, has sent to the people messengers calling them to faith, and there is no doubt that every legally responsible person has heard of the call of the messengers to faith.

So when the legally responsible person hears this call, he does not need great toil in reflection, for he has that in which he may look, within himself and in what surrounds him of created things.

[Do differing temperaments contradict moral responsibility?]

If it is said: We see that the temperaments of the legally responsible people are different; among them is one whose temperament is evil, who inclines with evil wherever it inclines, and who recoils from good and stays away from it.

And among them is one whose temperament inclines to good, hates evil and recoils from it—exactly as we find in the difference between cockroaches and bees: the cockroach recoils from light and is at ease

with darkness, recoils from pleasant fragrances and is at ease with foul odors, dwells where there are decayed things, and keeps away from clean places.

And the bee recoils from foul odors and is at ease with pleasant fragrances, flees from decayed matter and filth, and goes to clean places and good foods, and so on. So is there not, in some temperaments, that which contradicts moral responsibility?

We say: There is nothing in what you have mentioned that contradicts moral responsibility, and here is the clarification:

In every legally responsible person there are two opposing temperaments, such as courage and cowardice, generosity and miserliness, mercy and harshness, deliberation and haste, modesty and foulness, gentleness and roughness, pardon and vengeance (the temperament of pardon and the temperament of vengeance), patience and weakness, gratitude and ingratitude, good and evil, forbearance and anger, arrogance and humility, faith and disbelief, loyalty and treachery, and so on to the rest of the temperaments imprinted in the legally responsible person; for every temperament in the person there is a temperament that opposes it.

Thus the faith of the legally responsible person is jostled by the impulses of the temperament of denial, with what it has of specious doubts and adornments of delusion; forbearance is jostled by the impulses of the temperament of anger and vengeance, with what it has of apparent justifications; and the temperament of generosity is jostled by the impulses of the temperament of miserliness, with what accompanies it of promoting and beautifying it, and so on to the rest of the temperaments.

And were it not so, moral responsibility would not be good; for if the praiseworthy temperaments were safe from the impulses of their opposites, the servant would have no burden in acting upon them. The obligations are built upon performing that which involves burden and hardship for the soul, and moral responsibility is a test from Allah, *exalted is He*, for His servants: do they prefer His obedience over obeying the impulses of their souls and the impulses of their temperaments?

Accordingly, the existence of evil temperaments and their instincts in the legally responsible person is necessary for the occurrence of moral responsibility; moral responsibility does not exist nor is it valid except with their existence; otherwise, moral responsibility would not take place.

What contradicts moral responsibility is what the determinists (*al-Mujabbirah*) say, namely that the legally responsible person is compelled to commit evil, meaning that the legally responsible person is

stripped of choice and has no ability to do what he has been charged with.

And this doctrine is invalid, by the necessity of direct inner awareness, for the legally responsible person finds in himself the ability to choose either of the two actions and the will for either of the two opposites.

[The Struggle of the Two Natures]

The nature of evil has soldiers and supporters, and the nature of good has soldiers and supporters. The nature of evil is assisted and encouraged by caprice, the desires of the soul, and its bestial instincts; then by the devils of humankind and jinn, some of them revealing to others adorned speech as delusion.

And the nature of good is accompanied and supported by the fitrahs of lofty intellects, which call to elevating the human being, to his purification and cleansing, and to letting him soar with the higher spirits; then by the call of Allah on the tongues of His messengers and His prophets (*May Allah bless them all*) , and on the tongues of His righteous friends.

Thus, these two natures struggle within the soul of the legally responsible person; each of them wants to take control of the person, to seize him, and to dominate him. The legally responsible person finds this struggle within himself and knows with certain knowledge the reality of each of the two natures, what each of them leads to, the outcome of their affair, and the beauty of the nature of good and the ugliness of the nature of evil.

Neither of these two natures has any authority over the legally responsible person; rather, the utmost of their power lies in calling, beautifying, making things seem fair, and presenting what each of them has to the person. After it is presented to him, he has the freedom to choose without any pressure. So if the legally responsible person chooses the calls of evil, desires, and the devil, he drives away the calls of good and turns away from them, and he tries to block the ears of his heart from hearing them and to shut the lids of his eyes from seeing them; at that point, the nature of evil takes control and seizes the human being.

It is the legally responsible person who has brought himself under the authority of evil and has enlisted himself for the service of desires and bestial instincts merely by his choice, without any internal or external pressures.

And if the legally responsible person chooses the calls of good, he expels the calls of evil, cries out in their faces, covers the eyes and ears of his heart from seeing or hearing them, and is able, by his good choice, to defeat them, break their sharpness, and weaken their strength.

By what we have mentioned, it becomes clear to you that it is the legally responsible person who defiles his own soul or purifies it merely by his choice. In reality, there is not, from the very origin of creation and composition, an “evil person” and a “good person” in the sense that there is a legally responsible person in whom there exists nothing but the nature of evil and the impulses of desires and instincts, and in whom the nature of good and its motives do not exist—or the opposite.

This said, we do not deny the effect of societies, environments, and so on; however, that does not affect the impulses of the fitrah, nor does it change its certain rulings. Thus the proof of Allah stands against all the legally responsible, those of the East and those of the West, the distant and the near.

And perhaps, by what we have written, we have made clear what was sought. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless Muhammad and his pure family.

[The Reason for People’s Turning Away from Obeying Allah]

Question: What is the reason for people’s turning away from obeying Allah, *exalted is He*, and their turning away from His religion, since most of the children of Adam are disbelievers and polytheists, and the fewer are Muslims, and most of the Muslims are disobedient, rebellious, immoral, and people of whims, while those who are obedient among them are few?

Answer: What appears to me in answering that is that Allah, *exalted is He*, has created human beings upon desires and whims, and obedience to Allah, *exalted is He*, is built upon leaving desires and whims.

So when Allah, *exalted is He*, sent the messengers (*May Allah bless them all*), the kings, the rich, the leaders, and the arrogant disliked to submit and humble themselves to one who was poor and humble, and most people follow the kings and leaders. Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“And We did not send into a city any warner except that its affluent said, ‘Indeed, we, in that with which you were sent, are disbelievers.’”* [Saba:34]

So it was too great for the affluent to climb down and humble themselves to obey one who, in their eyes, was insignificant. Allah, *exalted is He*, has related the saying of the polytheists about that: *“And they said, ‘Why was this Qur’an not sent down upon a great man from [one of] the two cities?’”* [al-Zukhruf:31]

As for the reason for the large number of disobedient Muslims, it is the predominance of desires. Among them is one whom the desire of the private parts fells, among them is one whom the desire of the belly fells, among them is one whom the desire of arrogance storms, and among them is one whom the desire of envy overcomes, and so on.

Yes, the proof of Allah is binding upon everyone and established against them; they have only come (into loss) from their own selves. They are the ones who have brought punishment upon themselves by choosing disbelief, wickedness, and disobedience, after Allah, *exalted is He*, had provided for them the causes of guidance by what He gave them of the fitrahs of the intellects, by what He spread in the universe of signs and lessons, and by what He sent of messengers and revealed of books. Were it not for arrogance and whims, they would have seen the doors of guidance wide open and its paths paved.

All this is together with what Allah, *exalted is He*, has embedded in the fitrahs of the intellects: that truthfulness is better than lying, that doing good is better than doing harm, that justice is better than injustice, and that the noble traits of character are better than their vile opposites; and this is what the heavenly religions call to.

So the messengers of Allah and His prophets only command what the intellects are familiar with and recognize, and they forbid what the intellects find repugnant, and they make lawful for them the good things and forbid them the evil things.

[The Ruling on a Person's Error in Choosing the School of Thought]

Question: If a man studies the differences between the Islamic schools of thought and then chooses for himself the school of the Jabrīs [those who say people are compelled] or the Mushabbihah [anthropomorphists], and so on, how is it then judged that, according to some, he is a disbeliever by interpretation, and according to others he is a sinner – when Allah, *exalted is He*, says: *“And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred.”* [al-Ahzab:5] and when the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) has said: *“My community has had [the burden of] error and forgetfulness lifted from it...”* – while this man has exerted due diligence in his investigation, has declared Allah, *exalted is He*, transcendent and holy, affirmed for Him what He, *exalted is He*, deserves of attributes of perfection, and negated from Him what does not befit His majesty of attributes of deficiency and blame; and Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: *“Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity.”* [al-Baqarah:286] and this man has done what lies within his capacity?

Answer – and from Allah is success:

1 – All the adherents of the Islamic schools who are the Ummah of Muhammad (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) are agreed upon declaring astray everyone who opposes the truth in this matter. The followers of each school declare astray the followers of the schools that oppose it; most of them rule that the one who opposes them

is a disbeliever, and they call that “the disbelief of misguidance,” or “the immorality of misinterpretation,” and some of them attach him to the ruling of the apostate.

After this consensus and agreement there appeared, in this century, a group who tried to bring the people of the differing schools closer together. They said: “All of them are correct, and it is not permissible to declare disbelief or immorality in this matter,” and they denounced what the people of the schools were upon. The people of this saying are from the scholars of Sana’a in the early period of Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din, among them ‘Abd al-Wasi’ al-Wasa’i. However, the adherents of the Islamic schools paid no attention to this new opinion and placed no reliance upon it, and consensus is among the strongest of proofs.

2 – The Noble Qur’an, in His saying, *exalted is He*: “*Indeed, Allah does not forgive associating others with Him ‘in worship’, but He forgives anything else of whoever He wills.*” [al-Nisa:48] has indicated that Allah, *exalted is He*, does not forgive shirk at all – whether it issues deliberately or by way of error, whether from one whose investigation is complete or deficient, whether before the sending of the messengers or after, and so on.

This is while He, *exalted is He*, forgives what is less than shirk, of acts of disobedience, for whom He wills: He forgives what occurs of them by way of error and forgetfulness, what occurs by way of mistake, what occurred before the sending of the messengers, and what occurred by way of error in interpretation – due to the evidences that have come regarding that, among them His saying, *exalted is He*: “*And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred.*” [al-Ahzab:5]

And among them His saying, *exalted is He*: “*And never would We punish until We sent a messenger.*” [al-Isra:15] and His saying, *exalted is He*: “*And Allah would not let a people stray after He has guided them until He makes clear to them what they should avoid.*” [al-Tawbah:115]

3 – When a rational person examines and investigates, his intellect does not find rest and tranquility until he has arrived at the clear truth, and he is not convinced until its reality becomes uncovered to him and he ascertains its identity. Before arriving at that, the intellect is not convinced and does not accept what is not truth, does not respond to it, and is not pleased with it.

If he accepts other than the truth and inclines toward it, that is only due to caprice and the desire of the soul, not due to the conviction of the intellect and its realization of that toward which he has inclined.

If the matter is thus, then the falling of the legally responsible person into a false belief regarding the knowledge of Allah is not something for which he is excused.

Allah, *exalted is He*, has made intellects for His servants and has implanted them in them so that they might know their Lord by them and give thanks to Him: *"And Allah brought you out of the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and gave you hearing, sight, and intellect so perhaps you would be thankful."* [al-Nahl:78] Indeed, Allah did not create the jinn and humankind and implant in them intellects except that they might worship Him, and worship of Allah does not truly occur until after knowing Him.

4 – And if the purpose and wisdom behind the creation of jinn and humankind – along with what is in them of hearing, sight, and intellects – is the knowledge of Allah, giving thanks to Him, and worshipping Him, then it is necessary, according to the requirement of Allah's wisdom, knowledge, and justice, that there be for every legally responsible person of intellect, perception, and discernment that which will bring him to the sought-after goal: knowledge of Allah, of what He possesses of majesty, grandeur, and perfection, and of what He is exalted and far removed above, of deficiency, resemblance to originated things, likeness to them, and doing what is ugly, and so forth.

5 – What we have mentioned is supported and indicated by His saying, *exalted is He*: *"And by the soul and 'the One' Who fashioned it, then with 'the knowledge of' right and wrong inspired it."* [ash-Shams:7-8] and His saying, *exalted is He*: *"Have We not given them two eyes, a tongue, and two lips, and shown them the two ways 'of right and wrong'?"* [al-Balad:8-10] and His saying, *exalted is He*, addressing those ignorant of Him: *"Will you not then use your reason?"* [al-Baqarah] and *"Will you not then take heed?"* [Yunus]. This indicates that Allah, *exalted is He*, has inspired every legally responsible person – by what He has implanted in him of the fitrah of the intellect – to distinguish between wickedness and piety, truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance, and to know the path of guidance and the path of misguidance. It shows that it suffices the legally responsible person, for knowing the truth and treading its path and knowing falsehood and leaving it, to return to his intellect, for it will inevitably guide him to that. Indeed, he does not need great hardship; it suffices him to return to what is in his memory, and he will find therein that which guides him to truth and restrains him from falsehood.

6 – If there is someone who truly is not able to arrive, by his intellect and thought, at knowing truth from falsehood, then he is not charged with knowing the truth, for: *"Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity."* [al-Baqarah:286]

7 – The reason why error in knowing Allah and ignorance of Him is so great that its possessor deserves thereby the name of disbelief and is enlisted thereby among the ranks of the wicked, the immoral, and the

wrongdoers, is due to several causes:

- 1- That Allah, *exalted is He*, deserves from His servants that they give thanks to Him with the utmost thanks for what He has granted them of tremendous blessings and poured upon them, beyond reckoning, of gifts and favors, and that every blessing that exists or will exist for any of the creatures of Allah is from Him alone, with no partner; that His favor upon them is immense and His beneficence towards them is abundant: *"And He has lavished upon you His blessings, both apparent and hidden."* [Luqman:20] and *"And He gave you from all you asked of Him. And if you should count the favor of Allah, you could not enumerate them."* [Ibrahim:34]
- 2- That Allah, *exalted is He*, along with His favor upon them and His beneficence towards them, has guided them to knowing Him by two great proofs:
 - a) By what He has implanted in the fitrahs of their intellects of the ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and guidance and misguidance.
 - b) By what He has made them know of Himself and indicated to them concerning Himself upon the tongues of His messengers (*May Allah bless them all*) and by what He has sent down in His Books.
- 3- That Allah, *exalted is He*, has sent forth, in the horizons of the heavens and the earth, signs of His greatness and majesty, and signs of His knowledge and power, and so on; indeed, within every human being there are, of the signs of Allah the dazzling and the proofs of His overwhelming power and the traces of His knowledge and mercy, that which suffices any rational person and dispenses him from anything else of the signs.

One of the poets has said:

"So how wondrous it is that the Lord is disobeyed, or how the denier can deny Him,

when in everything there is a sign of His that points out that He is the One."

And Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: *"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?"* [Fussilat:53]

- 4- That Allah, *exalted is He*, has warned His servants and given them notice of what there is, in ignorance of Him and disbelief in Him, of punishment and torment, and of what the one who is ignorant of Allah deserves in this world of calamity and severe retribution.
- 5- That the fitrahs of intellect among all humankind judge that the one who rebels against obedience to the righteous ruler in a land,

who is established over the interests of the servants, deserves punishment, and that his punishment is according to the measure of his rebellion and disobedience.

And that the greatest disobedience to the righteous ruler is that the disobedient one belittles this righteous authority, mocks his state, does not acknowledge it nor affirm it, claims that the rulership belongs to other than him and the authority to someone else, does not listen or obey anything of his commands or prohibitions, but rather opposes and disobeys him and strives with all his efforts to nullify his authority, to corrupt the servants, and to ruin the interests of the land. The laws of human beings, in ancient and modern times, punish such a person with the severest punishment – either death or life imprisonment; thus it is established in human intellects.

And I say: Were it not for caprice and inclining along with the desires and cravings of the soul, the adherents of the false schools would have perceived their right course, left their falsehood, inclined to the truth, and walked upon the straight path. But the whims and desires of the soul are what have driven people far from the clear truth, led them into the valleys of misguidance, and cast them into destruction.

[The Names of Allah and His Attributes That Must Be Known]

Question: What are the Names of Allah, exalted is He, and His attributes that the legally responsible person must know and have knowledge of?

The answer – and Allah is the One who grants success – is that the obligation in that regard is whatever by which the knowledge of Allah, *exalted is He*, is completed in the proper way, and that is:

1. That He, *exalted is He*, exists, is One, and is the Lord of the worlds.
2. That He, *exalted is He*, is Ever-Living, the Sustainer, neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep.
3. That He, *exalted is He*, is All-Powerful, Subduer, Great, Exalted above all.
4. That He, *exalted is He*, is Knower of the unseen and the witnessed.
5. That He, *exalted is He*, is Creator.
6. That He, *exalted is He*, is All-Wise, Forbearing.
7. That He, *exalted is He*, is Self-Sufficient, Free of need.
8. That He, *exalted is He*, is Provider.
9. That He, *exalted is He*, is the Most Merciful, the Ever-Merciful, the Responsive (to supplication).
10. That He, *exalted is He*, is the First and the Last, the Giver of life and the Giver of death.
11. That He, *exalted is He*, “*there is nothing like unto Him, and vision perceives Him not, but He perceives all vision.*”

12. That He, *exalted is He*, “His word is not changed with Him, and He does not fail in His promise.”
13. That He, *exalted is He*, is “Forgiver of sin, Acceptor of repentance, severe in punishment.”

And there are Names other than these whose meaning goes back to something of what we have mentioned, such as: Loving, Kind, Benign, and Protector; their reference in meaning returns to (the meanings of) the Most Merciful and the Ever-Merciful.

And *al-Hamid* and *al-Majid* (the Praiseworthy, the Glorious) are two Names of Allah, *exalted is He*, that have been applied to Him because of what He does of praiseworthy acts and noble and tremendous acts, such as lavishing blessings upon His servants, the vastness of (His) forgiveness, the vastness of (His) forbearance, the vastness of (His) provision, and so on.

And *al-Zahir* (the Manifest): its meaning goes back to the fact that He, *exalted is He*, is manifest to the intellects by His power, so it goes back to the meaning of All-Powerful.

And *al-Batin* (the Hidden): its meaning goes back to the fact that there is nothing like unto Him, and vision does not perceive Him.

And *al-Wakil* (the Disposer of affairs), *al-Shahid* (the Witness), *al-Hafiz* (the Preserver), *al-Raqib* (the Watchful), *al-Sami'* (the All-Hearing), *al-Basir* (the All-Seeing), and *al-Qarib* (the Near): all that returns to the meaning of All-Knowing.

And *al-'Ali* and *al-A'la* (the Most High, the Highest), *al-Mutakabbir* (the Supremely Great), *al-Quddus* (the Most Holy), *al-Salam* (the Source of peace), and *al-Muta'ali* (the Exalted): all this returns to the meaning of the One, the Unique.

And *al-Jabbar* (the Compeller), *al-Bari'* (the Originator), *al-Ma'bud* (the One worshipped), and *al-Muhaymin* (the Guardian) return in meaning to the Creator, the All-Powerful; likewise *al-Ba'ith* (the Resurrector) and *al-Warith* (the Inheritor).

And *al-Mu'min* (the Giver of security) returns in meaning to the Most Merciful, the Ever-Merciful.

And *al-Qawiyy* (the Strong), *al-'Aziz* (the Almighty), and *Shadid al-Mihal* (Severe in might) likewise return to the meaning of All-Powerful.

And *al-'Azim* (the Magnificent): its meaning goes back to the fact that, *exalted is He*, there is no limit to His power, no end to His knowledge, and no limit to the vastness of His mercy and His forgiveness and His dominion and His being the First and His being the Last.

[The Attribute of the Essence]

Question: The scholars and the theologians mention “the attribute of

the Essence,” and they say: “knowing by His Essence, powerful by His Essence,” and so on; and it is difficult for most of the morally responsible people to understand this. Do they have any concession in being ignorant of that?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: What is obligatory in knowing the attributes of Allah, *exalted is He*, is that the morally responsible person know that Allah is powerful over all things, so that no object of power incapacitates Him; and that He is knowing of all things, nothing at all is hidden from Him: He knows the treachery of the eyes and what the breasts conceal, He has encompassed everything in knowledge, and has counted all things in number; and that He is living and existent, there is no beginning to His life and His existence, and no end to that – so He is the Ever-Living who does not die – and that He is the First and the Last.

If he knows from that what we have mentioned, and believes it and his heart is at rest with it, then he has known what is obligatory for him of knowing those attributes. This knowledge which we have mentioned already contains within it the meaning of what the theologians mention when they say that He is “powerful by His Essence,” for the meaning of what we have mentioned and the meaning of what they have mentioned is one and the same.

For “powerful by His Essence” means that no object of power incapacitates Him; rather, He is powerful over all things, and that His Essence is not restricted to one particular object of power to the exclusion of another. This is exactly what we have mentioned, and the same is said concerning the rest (of the attributes).

It also includes the distinction between the power of Allah, *glorified and exalted*, and the power of the human being: the power of the human being is limited by limits which it does not cross, and it is attached to a single object of power which it does not go beyond; whereas the power of Allah, *exalted is He*, is not limited by any limit or by any object of power. This is the meaning of their saying: “Indeed, Allah is over all things competent, and He encompasses all things” – no object of power incapacitates Him.

After all this, there has not come any exposition of what the theologians mention, neither in the Book of Allah, *exalted is He*, nor in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah, *may Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, in the detailed fashion which they have set out.

This is while reflection on the Essence of Allah is forbidden, and there is no way to attain the reality of knowing Him, *exalted is He*; minds are bewildered and understandings go astray: “...and they do not encompass Him in knowledge” [Taha:110]. He, *glorified and exalted*, is greater and

mightier than that His greatness, His majesty, and His glory be encompassed. And Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: "*And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, 'The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little.'*" [Al-Isra:85]

Thus, what has appeared to me is that there is no real fruit in what the theologians mention of detailed analysis, except as a translation and explanation, for example, of His saying, *exalted is He*: "*And Allah is over all things competent*" and [Al-Hashr] "*Allah is, of all things, Knowing*" [At-Taghabun]; there is no way to know what they say and to believe in it except through the knowledge that Allah is powerful over all things and knowing of all things.

Yes, what is required of the morally responsible person is faith and belief that Allah, *exalted is He*, is powerful, knowing, and so forth. As for their saying "by His Essence" (li-dhātihi) or "of His Essence" (bi-dhātihi), this is an additional phrase containing vagueness, because of the many meanings of the letters "lām" and "bā". If the "lām" is taken as causal, then the Essence becomes a cause for "being knowing" and so on; and perhaps this is the meaning intended by the one who speaks of "the more specific attribute that entails the four attributes," namely His being existent, powerful, knowing, living.

And it may be causal in another sense, namely that it is said regarding a human being, for example: "He is able by a power," that is, by virtue of a power which Allah has placed in him, such that if this power were taken away from the human being he would no longer be described as able. So when they applied to Allah, *glorified and exalted*, the name "powerful," they wanted to distinguish between the Creator and the created, and so they said: "powerful by His Essence," meaning that He is powerful not by virtue of some (separate) power, and that His attributes are not caused by anything other than Him.

And perhaps what is meant is that, if there must be causality, in order to differentiate between the power of the Creator and the power of the created, then it is said: "powerful by His Essence" and "knowing by His Essence," meaning that He is powerful because He is Allah.

As for interpreting "lām" with any of its other meanings [besides this], that does not really stand except weakly.

And as for the "bā" in their saying "powerful by His Essence," if it is intended as causal, then the discussion regarding it is the same as the discussion regarding the causal "lām" exactly.

And if it is intended as indicating instrumentality – like "I wrote with the pen" – this is not valid in the case of Allah, *exalted is He*, except by way of metaphor; because Allah, *exalted is He*, creates and provides without any instrument, for only the created being is in need of

instruments. To apply the term “instrument” to His Essence, exalted is He, is metaphorical, brought in order to distinguish between the act and power of the Creator and the act and power of the creation, and to affirm that for Him there is absolutely no instrument at all.

If it is said: If what has preceded is not known, in the detailed manner they mention, then knowledge of Allah is not complete, for it is necessary to know that these are essential attributes, not things added to the Essence or extra meanings, and so on.

We say: Reflection, after what we have presented, is blameworthy, and it suffices the morally responsible person to believe that Allah is powerful over all things, and that there is absolutely no similarity between the Creator and the creation, and that it is obligatory to believe in the Names and attributes of Allah, exalted is He, and to affirm them without (trying to) picture how they are.

And I hold that one of the things that ought to be done is to close the door of detailed and subtle analysis for the common people, the beginners, and those of weak understanding, for that may cast them into confusion, disorder, bewilderment, and doubt.

If it is said: The expression “knowing by His Essence,” and so on, is frequent in the speech of the Imams from the People of the House (*peace be upon them*) and in the speech of their scholars.

We say: Most of what this shows is permissibility, for they do not apply to Allah anything except what it is permissible to apply to Him, not that it is obligatory (to speak in that way).

If it is said: What is meant by their saying “by His Essence,” “of His Essence,” “essential knowledge,” and so on, is explanation, clarification, and interpretation of the knowledge of Allah, exalted is He, and His power, and so forth.

We say: Their saying “by His Essence,” “of His Essence,” “essential,” does not bring about any explanation, clarification, or interpretation; for Allah, exalted is He, says: “...and they do not encompass Him in knowledge” [Taha:110]. Before knowledge of the Divine Essence there are veils and curtains of greatness, majesty, and glory. In that case, explaining and interpreting what has been mentioned by reference to the Essence and “essential-ness” is an explanation and interpretation by means of what cannot be known.

If it is said: Perhaps what they intend is to show that there are no extra meanings (attached to the Essence), so that no one imagines that there is some power added to the Essence of the Powerful.

We say: It is enough to indicate that [by His saying, exalted is He], “*And Allah is over all things competent*” and “*Allah is, of all things, Knowing*”,

and *"There is nothing like unto Him"* [Ash-Shura:11], and the like of that whose meaning is clear and intelligible – as in the report: *"Reflect on the created thing, and do not reflect on the Creator"*; *"Whatever the imagination conceives, Allah is other than that"*; *"Tawhīd is that you do not imagine Him"*; and *"...and they do not encompass Him in knowledge"* [Taha:110] and *"Nor is there to Him any equivalent."* [Al-Ikhlās:4].

In what we have mentioned, and the like of it, there is what suffices in place of what the theologians mention; rather, the exposition of Allah, *exalted is He*, is more beautiful, more complete, and clearer.

[Are "Forbearing" and "All-Forgiving" Attributes of Negation or Attributes of Affirmation?]

Question: What is the practical consequence of the disagreement regarding the two attributes "Forbearing" (Ḥalīm) and "All-Forgiving" (Ghafūr)? Are they attributes of negation or attributes of affirmation?

Answer: Before mentioning the fruit of this disagreement, we will mention the meaning according to the two opinions. Those who said that they are attributes of negation said: the meaning of "Forbearing" is that He does not hasten to exact revenge from the sinners, and the meaning of "All-Forgiving" is that He does not take the sinners to task for their sins, or that He does not hasten to take them to task.

And those who said that they are attributes of affirmation said: "Forbearing," in relation to Allah, means that He spreads good over the sinners and continually bestows blessings upon them, and "All-Forgiving" is similar in meaning.

What appears to me regarding their meaning is to combine both negation and affirmation. Thus the meaning of "Forbearing," in relation to Allah, *exalted is He*, is that He continues to bestow blessings upon the sinners and does not take them to task for their sins, and does not hasten to exact revenge from them. We only said this because Allah, *exalted is He*, spreads blessings over the sinners and does not take them to task for them. Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"And if Allah were to impose blame on the people for what they have earned, He would not leave upon the earth any creature."* [Fatir:45] And we see, with our own eyes, sinners who persist in their sins while they are in continuous blessings and vast good; Allah has not stripped them of those blessings. Rather, He, *glorified and exalted*, continues to extend to them more blessings and good things and to maintain beneficence toward them.

And we have seen in the Noble Qur'an that the two attributes "Forbearing" and "All-Forgiving" are mentioned after things like what we have just mentioned, as in His saying, *exalted is He*: *"The seven heavens and the earth and whatever is in them exalt Him. And there is not a thing except that it exalts [Allah] by His praise, but you do not understand their*

[way of] exalting. Indeed, He is ever Forbearing and Forgiving.” [al-Isra:44]

In that case, the two attributes are attributes of action, and no practical consequence results from the disagreement.

[Are “Owner” and “Lord” Attributes of the Essence or Attributes of Action?]

Question: The theologians have differed regarding “Owner” (Mālik) and “Lord” (Rabb): are they attributes of the Essence or attributes of action? Each side has relied on a proof. Which of the two statements is more correct, and what is the proof for that?

Answer: What appears is that they are attributes of action, as the commentator on *al-Asās* said – his wording being: “Because they are affirmed for Allah, *glorified is He*, in view of an action, namely His creating and bringing into existence the owned and the lorded-over, and His ownership, *majestic and exalted*, of it.” End of quote.

This said, know that both statements are correct if one considers the meaning intended by each of the two groups, and that disagreement in such an issue does no harm. We have no way to a definitive ruling in it, since the evidences they have presented in this chapter are speculative.

[The Meaning of: ‘Allah is a Thing Unlike Things’]

Question: What is the meaning of your statement, “Allah is a thing unlike [other] things”? If Allah is a thing unlike [other] things, then must He not have a place, first of all? And if this “thing” is neither a body nor an accident, then what is it?

Answer: Allah is a “thing,” except that He has no need of a place, because He is not like other things that need a place.

Furthermore, one does not ask about Allah with “What is He?” nor “Where is He?” nor “In what place is He?”; He, *exalted is He*, is only known by His acts – “*There is nothing like unto Him.*”

The word “thing” (shay’) can correctly be applied to:

1. Bodies and accidents; each of them is called a “thing.”
2. That which is impossible may be called a “thing.” For example, you say: “The existence and non-existence of a human being at one and the same time is an impossible thing”; and “A human being sitting in two places at one and the same time is an impossible thing.”
3. Fasting is a thing which Allah has made obligatory, and the days and nights of your past life are things that have gone; each day of them and each night is a thing that has gone, whose return is impossible. Thus fasting and the days and nights that have passed are known “things” that have no place.
4. And Allah, *blessed and exalted*, is a “thing” different from all

things: *"There is nothing like unto Him."* [al-Shura:11]

[What Has Come in the Qur'an of Denying Any Resemblance between Allah, Exalted is He, and His Creation]

What has come in the Qur'an of denying any resemblance between Allah, *exalted is He*, and His creation is:

1. His saying, *exalted is He*: *"There is nothing like unto Him."* [al-Shura:11]
2. *"Say: 'He is Allah, One; Allah, the Self-Sufficient Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, and nor is there to Him any equivalent.'" [al-Ikhlās:1-4]*
3. *"Do you know of any who is similar to Him?" [Maryam:65]*
4. *"His command is only that when He intends a thing, He says to it, 'Be,' and it is." [Ya-Sin 36:82]*
5. *"Knower of the unseen and the witnessed." [al-Zumar:46] – "Nothing is hidden from Allah on the earth or in the heaven." [Al-Imran:5] – "And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear Record." [al-An'am:59]*
6. *"My Lord neither errs nor forgets." [Taha:52] – and His saying: "And your Lord is never forgetful." [Maryam:64]*
7. *"Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep." [al-Baqarah:255]*
8. *"He is the First and the Last, the Most High and the Most Near." [al-Hadid:3]*
9. *"And He is over all things competent." [al-Taghabun:1]*
10. *"The Sovereign, the Most Holy, the Source of Peace..." and so on. [al-Hashr:23]*
11. *"And it is He who feeds and is not fed." [al-An'am:14] – "And your Lord is the Self-Sufficient, possessor of mercy." [al-An'am:133]*
12. *"You will never see Me." [al-A'raf:143] – and "Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Aware." [al-An'am:103] – and "And He is the Most High, the Most Great." [al-Shura:4]*
13. *"And fatigue did not touch Us." [Qaf:38]*

What we have mentioned of the verses clearly indicates that:

- Every created thing that Allah, *exalted is He*, has created does not resemble Allah, *exalted is He*, in any likeness whatsoever, nor does it share with Him, *exalted is He*, in any attribute of His; due to the generality of negation in *"There is nothing like unto Him"*, and in *"Nor is there to Him any equivalent"*, and in *"Do you know of any who is similar to Him?"*

And *"One"* indicates that Allah, *exalted is He*, is unique in His Essence

and His attributes; no partner shares with Him in them, and no equal resembles Him in them. For if any one of the creatures shared with Him in any of that, it would not be correct to describe Allah, *exalted is He*, as "*the One*", and that Name would not truly apply to Him.

- What has preceded is a general negation of resemblance. Then He negated from Himself that He resembles procreated creatures, and He said: "*He neither begets nor is born*"; and He negated from Himself origination (in time), and He said: "*He is the First*"; and He negated from Himself ending and non-existence, and He said: "*and the Last*."

- And He affirmed for Himself that He is exclusively manifest to the inhabitants of His heavens and the inhabitants of His earth, and that is because of what He has spread throughout the horizons of signs of His Oneness, His greatness, His majesty, His knowledge, and His power.

- Then He affirmed for Himself that He is the *Hidden One* who is not perceived by sight, nor by smell, nor by touch, nor by hearing, nor by taste, and is not perceived by mental imagining.

- And He, *exalted is He*, has mentioned that He does not go astray and does not become ignorant as the created beings go astray and become ignorant, and that He does not forget as the created beings forget, and that He does not become inattentive, or grow languid, or sleep, or become tired, as bodies become inattentive, grow languid, sleep, and become tired.

- And He has informed about Himself that He is exalted above the attribute of motion and stillness, which are attributes of bodies. That is because bodies reach their needs and interests by motion and stillness. Motion and stillness are instruments by which created beings reach cultivation and craft, eating and drinking, exchanging benefits, seeking provision on land and sea, and so on. As for the tremendous Creator, then in everything that He has created and in what He creates, He has no need of motion or stillness: "*His command is only that when He intends a thing, He says to it, 'Be,' and it is.*" [Yassin]

So created beings move because of their need for motion, while Allah, *exalted is He*, has no need for motion, and it is neither correct nor fitting that we liken the Creator to the creation in motion and stillness.

- And He, *majestic is His glory*, has informed that He feeds the creatures and provides for them because of their need for food and provision, and He has informed about Himself that He is free from need of food and has no need of it.

- And He, *exalted is He*, has informed, concerning His distinction from His creation, that He perceives created sights, while they do not perceive Him.

– And He has informed about Himself that all things that are known do not escape His knowledge and that nothing of them eludes Him: *“Our Lord has encompassed all things in knowledge.”* [al-A’raf:89]

As for the created being, his knowledge, in any given moment, does not encompass more than a single known thing.

– The created being has two instruments by which he acts, namely the two hands; and he has two instruments, namely the two feet, by which he walks from one place to another, and by which he attacks and retreats, walks and runs; and he has buttocks and two thighs upon which he sits; and he has two instruments for sight, and two instruments for hearing; and he has two nostrils by which he perceives smells; and he has a sense by which he perceives tangible things; and an instrument by which he perceives things that are eaten. By means of these senses the created being acquires information. And the created being has other ways of acquiring information: experiments and observation, drawing analogies between matters, intuition, direct inner awareness, and so on. And the intellect is a judging instrument.

As for the Most High, the Most Exalted, *blessed and exalted is He*, He has no need whatsoever of any instrument by which He might reach what He wills.

He has no need to walk, and no need of two hands and two forearms and two upper arms and muscles and fingers and joints, by which He might reach works that are done with the hands: *“His command is only that when He intends a thing, He says to it, ‘Be,’ and it is.”* And He has no need of an instrument for sight, an instrument for hearing, an instrument for smell, an instrument for taste, an instrument for touch; and He has no need of experiment, nor observation, nor analogy, nor intuition, nor an instrument for speech, nor an instrument for breathing, nor an instrument for digestion, nor an instrument for reproduction, nor an instrument to sit upon. Exalted and sanctified is He above any need for instruments.

– The human being takes a bed so that he may be elevated upon it above the filth and dust of the earth and its insects; but Allah, *exalted and sanctified is He*, has no need for anything that raises Him and distances Him from impurities, filth, and the harm of vermin and insects.

– And Allah, *exalted is He*, has described Himself as *the Sovereign, the Most Holy, the Source of Peace*. The meaning of *al-Quddūs* (the Most Holy) is that He is far exalted above every deficiency, every evil, and every ugly thing. And the meaning of *as-Salām* (the Source of Peace) is that He is free from every defect, deficiency, and ugliness. He is in no need of any instrument, nor of anything other than an instrument; for only one who is deficient in his very essence has need of an instrument.

So it is a great ignorance that we should liken Allah, *exalted is He*, to the human being in body, limbs, senses, speech, laughter, motion, stillness, walking, running, and so on.

– And Allah, *exalted is He*, has said: “*...and they do not encompass Him in knowledge.*” [Taha:110] So whoever imagines Allah, *exalted is He*, in the exact image of a human being, his imagination and fancy have encompassed knowing Allah with complete knowledge.

And after all this, the human being and all the (other) bodies that exist in the universe are signs indicating that they have a Creator who created them, a Former who formed them, and an Originator who originated them from nothing:

*“And in everything there is a sign of His
that points to the fact that He is the One.”*

So if Allah, *exalted is He*, were in the form of a human being, as the ignorant say, then He – *majestic and exalted* – would be, in Himself, a sign pointing to a Creator who created Him, a Former who formed Him, and an Originator who originated Him from nothing.

From this we have come to know that Allah, *exalted is He*, has neither body nor form, because bodies, by their very nature, indicate that they are originated and that they have an Originator who originated them and a Creator who created them.

This indication is essential to bodies; it never leaves a body nor becomes separated from it. So glory be to the Creator who is far exalted above the attributes of the created, and exalted is our great Lord above the attributes of the weak one who is ruled; and sanctified is the One who is Free of all need above resembling the poor and needy, and exalted is He above being of the same kind as the incapable and the ignorant. And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

- And know that what caused groups from the Ummah to affirm limbs and senses for Allah – until they made Him, *exalted is He*, in the form of a human being with two hands, two legs, two shanks, two eyes, and two ears, walking, hurrying, sitting, standing, laughing, and so on – is ignorance of the language of the Qur'an, which Allah, *exalted is He*, sent down in the language of the Arabs: “*In a clear Arabic language.*” [Ash-Shu'ara:195] So they saw in it words which, out of their ignorance, they interpreted contrary to their true interpretation and carried them upon other than their proper meanings.

And here is an example that portrays the cause which led them into misguidance: “*al-wajh*” (the “face”) – this is a single word, and its meaning is clear: it is the human face that includes a nose, mouth, two eyes, two cheeks, two lips, and so on. This meaning is understood by the

elite and the common folk, the intelligent and the dull, the literate and the illiterate, and so on.

However, the people of the Arabic tongue, in whose language the Qur'an was revealed, may intend by "face" another meaning when they place it in connected speech. So you may hear one of them say, for example: "This is the *aspect* of the opinion," and thus they have given "face" in this example a meaning other than its well-known meaning.

[The Book of Justic]

[Does an Act Become Evil in and of Itself?]

Question: Some of the scholars of Baghdad – namely Abū al-Qāsim al-Balḥī and those who agreed with him – and some of the Imāmiyyah, and some jurists of the four (schools), said: “An act is only evil by virtue of itself,” that is, by its very essence and kind. They said: because the original ruling regarding unrestricted acts is prohibition. Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah (*Peace be upon him*) interpreted their words, saying:

“Their statement does not escape three possible meanings:

1. Either they intend by that that the ugliness of an ugly act does not change according to the state of the doer – contrary to what these Ash‘arīs say – and this we do not deny.
2. Or what they mean is that the ugliness of what is ugly is due to a matter particular to it and to an aspect under which it occurs, without the factor producing that ugliness being something external to its essence, such as the agent or a cause – and this is good; we do not deny it.
3. Or what they mean is that ugliness is ascribed to the ugly thing – that is, to the very essence of the act – and this is invalid; for two things that are alike may be such that one of them is ugly and the other beautiful. And it is of the nature of what is firmly attached to an essence that things which are alike do not differ regarding it. Two different things may share in these rulings, so it would follow that they must be identical; thus, ascribing these rulings to the essence is invalid.” End quote.

The question: What is the meaning of the statement of some of the scholars of Baghdad and those who agreed with them, with an example? And what is the meaning of the three possible interpretations mentioned by Imām Yaḥyā (*Peace be upon him*), with examples?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: The meaning of the words of the scholars of Baghdad and those who agreed with them, which you have transmitted from them, is that an act becomes evil without (any) cause or reason. It suffices, in their view, that the name “act” is truly applicable to it; whatever this name applies to is, according to them, ugly (evil). That is because, in their view, the default ruling for acts is prohibition.

As for the interpretations of Imām Yaḥyā ibn Ḥamzah (*Peace be upon him*):

1. Either they intend by their words what we ourselves say, namely that the ugliness of something ugly does not change with the identity of the doer. Take injustice (ẓulm), for example: we say

that injustice is ugly whether it is done by slaves or whether it is done by the Lord of all the worlds – and this is contrary to the doctrine of the Ash‘arīs, for they say that the ugly thing changes into something good if it is done by the Lord of all the worlds. So if this is what they meant, then there is no disagreement between us and them.

2. Or they intend that injustice, for example, is ugly because it occurs under a particular aspect, and that aspect is its being devoid of bringing about any benefit or repelling any harm or (fulfilling any) desert. When an act occurs in this condition, it is ugly. And his saying, “from other than the factor being something external...” – that is, the effect of the agent on the ugliness is something external, just as the Ash‘arīs say: that an act is ugly because its doer is a servant. And the effect of the cause (‘illah) is like what the Ash‘arīs also say: that an act is ugly on account of the prohibition, for prohibition, according to them, is the cause of the ugliness of what is ugly.
3. **The last interpretation:** If what they intend is that an act is ugly because it is an act – that beating is ugly because it is beating, killing is ugly because it is killing, and so on, so that they ascribe the ugliness of killing to its being killing – then this is not valid and we do not agree with them on it. That is because this would entail that killing in retribution (qīṣās) and killing in aggression are equal in ugliness, and likewise that striking the orphan for discipline and striking him in aggression are equal in ugliness – and that is clearly false. So reflect.

[The Diminishing and Corruption of the Children of Oppressors]

Question: There was mention of oppressive transgressors and the belittling (and ill-treatment) of their offspring, and it was said: How did the sin of the father pass over to the child? And how did the child deserve that, when Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another.”* [Al-An‘am:164]

Answer – and Allah is the Protector who grants success: The belittling of the children of oppressors and their corruption is not a punishment or recompense for the oppression of their fathers. Rather, their corruption and their being belittled arose from the side of their upbringing, since they grew up between two corrupt parents and were brought up in their laps. For the upbringing of the parents has an effect on their child: if the parents are righteous, righteousness grows in the child; and if they are corrupt, corruption grows in him. Concerning this came the ḥadīth: *“Every newborn is born upon the natural disposition (fiṭrah), until it is his parents who make him a Jew, or make him a Christian, or make him a Magian.”* So the nature of the parents, their

character, and their religion have an effect on their child: he takes on their natures, adopts their character traits, and follows their religion.

If it is said: The child who is raised in the lap of his corrupt parents may have an excuse before Allah, because his misguidance did not arise from his choice nor from anything on his part.

It is said in answer: Allah, *exalted is He*, has invalidated such an excuse by means of reason, and by means of the Messengers, *may Allah's blessings be upon them*, and by what He sent down of clear proofs and evidences in His Books and upon the tongues of His Messengers.

And Allah, *exalted is He*, did not excuse those who said: *"Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are, in their footsteps, [rightly] guided."* [Az-Zukhruf:22]

If it is said: It has been narrated, the meaning of which is: *"Whose flesh grows from illicit gain, then the Fire has more right to it,"* and from this it is taken that eating what is unlawful has an effect on the misguidance of the children whom their father nourishes with the unlawful.

It is said in answer: What is meant by that is the morally responsible adults who nourish themselves with the unlawful, eating usury, bribes, and the wealth of people without right. Children are not included in that, because of what has come in the authentic ḥadīth: *"The pen has been lifted from three: from the child until he reaches puberty..."* and so on.

As for what has come regarding the child of fornication, the cause of his corruption is his growing up in the lap of the woman who committed fornication, and the cause of his corruption is not that he was created from unlawful semen.

Furthermore, even if we suppose that unlawful semen and unlawful wealth are two causes of the corruption of the child who was created from the semen of fornication, and of the corruption of the child who was nourished with unlawful wealth, that still does not reach the level at which there is no way of escape from it. For such a person, even if he has reached a far degree in corruption, is able – by his intellect, his hearing, and his sight – to know what is true and correct, and to distinguish between right guidance and corruption. He possesses freedom of choice just as the rest of the morally responsible do. And if the matter is thus, then the proof of Allah, *exalted is He*, stands against him.

If it is said: We see that people differ in their natures: among them, is he whose nature inclines toward evil, and among them is he whose nature inclines toward good; this becomes apparent in a person from his childhood, which indicates that this is an innate nature of creation, not a disposition acquired from the parents.

We say: The matter is approximately as you have said, but this does not conflict with moral responsibility (taklīf). It is within the capacity of every person to forbid his soul from its evil and to restrain it from wrongdoing; it is possible for the miser to force himself to be generous; it is possible for the liar to force himself to be truthful; it is possible for the treacherous person to force himself to be loyal; it is possible for the fornicator to force himself to be chaste; it is possible for the one who cuts off kinship ties to force himself to maintain ties and show filial piety, and so on. It is only that giving in charity is easy for the generous person and difficult for the miser, and so forth.

[Discussion with ar-Rāzī Concerning the Creation of the Acts of Those Who Are Morally Responsible]

Among what ar-Rāzī uses as evidence that Allah, *exalted is He*, is the Creator of the acts of those who are morally responsible, both acts of obedience and acts of disobedience, is his statement: "The act depends upon the occurrence of the motive (dāʿī); otherwise, one of the two sides of a possible thing would be preferred over the other without a factor that prefers it, and that is impossible. And the occurrence of that motive is not from the servant, otherwise an infinite regress would follow; rather, it is from Allah, *exalted is He*... and so on." This is from his exegesis of Sūrat at-Tawbah. And he said: this proof is definitive.

I say: this inference of ar-Rāzī is a false inference, and that is because, even if Allah, *exalted is He*, is the One who created the motives, the motive which a person finds within himself does not necessitate that the act must occur.

And the proof of that is what every morally responsible person finds within himself: the morally responsible person finds within himself a motive to eat, yet he does not eat; he finds a motive to marry, yet he does not marry; he finds a motive to travel, yet he does not travel; he finds a motive to speak, yet he does not speak, and so on. And if the motive necessarily entailed the act, eating would occur whenever the motive to eat was present, and so on.

If it is said, or if someone says: what is meant is that the occurrence of the act upon the occurrence of the motive is conditioned on the absence of impediments that prevent the act from occurring; thus, the motive to eat, drink, travel, and so on may arise, while there are impediments that prevent a person from eating, drinking, traveling – such as that he might be fasting, and the like.

It is said in reply: causes that are necessitating never become separated from their effects as long as the cause is a cause; but if the cause becomes separated from its effect, then it is not a cause. Do you not see that, since body is a cause of occupying space, it is impossible that

body should exist while occupation of space does not exist?

Once you know this, ar-Rāzī’s inference that Allah, *exalted is He*, is the One who created the motives does not benefit him.

As for ar-Rāzī’s statement, “otherwise an infinite regress would follow,” its meaning is that, if the occurrence of the motive only came about by the act and choice of the servant, that would itself depend upon a motive calling him to choose that motive... and so on.

We say: before replying to what ar-Rāzī mentioned about the consequence of infinite regress, we ought to mention a preliminary point regarding the motive (dā’i). We say: motives are divided into two categories:

1. A category that arises from the nature of the body and its innate disposition upon which Allah, *exalted is He*, has created it, and this is expressed as the desire (*shahwah*) of the soul and its whim (*hawā*).
2. And the second category arises from the call of the natural disposition of the intellect (*fiṭrat al-‘aql*); and the natural disposition of the intellect calls to doing that in which there is benefit, and leaving that in which there is harm.

Once you know this, you know that motives of desire and whim depend upon the existence of the human nature, and that the occurrence of motives to do that in which there is benefit and wisdom depends upon the existence of the rational human being. And were it not for what Allah, *exalted is He*, has placed in the human being of the nature of desire and the natural disposition of the intellect, there would be in him neither motives of desire nor motives of wisdom.

[The Difference Between “One Who Wills By His Essence” and “For” His Essence”]

Question: It is said in *Sharḥ al-Asās*: “What is in *Sharḥ ‘Aqā’id an-Nasafī* is that the Najjāriyyah say: ‘Allah, *glorified is He*, is One Who wills by His Essence (murīd *bi-dhātihī*) and not by (a) His attribute’ – with the bā’ – and the Ash‘arīs say: ‘He is One Who wills for His Essence (murīd *li-dhātihī*)’ – with the lām. What is the meaning of the two statements, and what is the difference between them?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: The doctrine of the Ash‘arīs, as in the book *al-Qalā’id*, is that Allah, *exalted is He*, is One Who wills (murīd) by a pre-eternal will (*irādah qadīmah*). End.

As for the Najjāriyyah, they say that Allah, *exalted is He*, is One Who wills, but that He, *exalted is He*, does not have an attribute called “will” as the Ash‘arīs say. Rather, in their view, He wills by His Essence (*bi-dhātihī*), just as we, the Zaydiyyah, say: He, *exalted is He*, is Knowing by

His Essence (‘ālim *bi-dhātihī*), *Powerful by His Essence* (qādir *bi-dhātihī*), and *Living by His Essence* (ḥayy *bi-dhātihī*).

This is one of two possibilities. The second possibility is that they – i.e., the Najjāriyyah – intended by the *bā’* (in *bi-dhātihī*) the meaning of causality (as “because of”), and on that basis their doctrine would agree with the doctrine of the Ash‘arīs; because what appears is that the Ash‘arīs intend by the *lām* (in *li-dhātihī*) the meaning of causation (ta‘līl). So, on this reading, there is no difference.

However, on the first possibility, the *bā’* is for the instrument, as in “I wrote *with* the pen (*bi-l-qalam*),” and on this reading the difference is evident.

[The Meanings of “Leading Astray (al-lghwā’)” in the Noble Qur’an]

Question: Allah, *exalted is He*, said, relating [from Nūḥ]: “*And my advice will not benefit you – although I wished to advise you – if Allah should intend to put you in error.*” [Hud:34] The outward sense of this verse supports the statement of the Jabrīyyah [those who affirm compulsion] that Allah wills and intends the acts of disobedience of the servants and that He is the One who does them. So how do you interpret this verse?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: *al-Ghayy* (error, going astray) may be used in the language to mean punishment and chastisement. Upon this is His saying, *exalted is He*: “*so they are going to meet evil.*” [Maryam:59] And the saying of the poet:

*“Whoever encounters good, people will praise his affair,
and whoever goes astray will not lack a blamer to blame his going astray.”*

On this basis, the meaning of “*intends to put you in error (yurīdu an yughwiyakum)*” is: “intends to punish you and chastise you.” According to this interpretation, there is nothing in the verse that supports the words of the Jabrīyyah.

The proof that what we have mentioned of this interpretation is what is meant, and that it is the interpretation which must be adopted, is the context of the verse. For before it is His saying, *exalted is He*: “*They said, ‘O Noah, you have disputed with us and been frequent in disputation with us. So bring us what you threaten us with, if you should be of the truthful.’ He said, ‘Allah will only bring it to you if He wills, and you will not cause Him failure.’ And my advice will not benefit you...*” [Hud:32–34] From the context of the verse as we have mentioned, (it is clear that) the people had hastened the punishment of Allah, *exalted is He*. So Nūḥ informed (them) that his advice would not benefit the one whom Allah wills to send down punishment and chastisement upon.

The Occurrence of the Will of the Morally Responsible Person

For the will of the morally responsible person to arise, in doing something or leaving it, there are causes and motives. When the cause and motive to do something are present, the will to do it comes into being. Two conflicting causes may occur: a cause that calls to doing the thing, and a cause that calls to leaving it; the morally responsible person then inclines toward the stronger of the two causes, and if neither of them overpowers the other, the person is left confused and hesitant.

The Causes and Motives

– The motives and causes that stir up will in the self of the morally responsible person go back to two matters:

1. The morally responsible person's knowledge, or assumption, or expectation that certain benefits and interests will result from a particular action; when he does that action, those benefits and interests come to him.
2. The morally responsible person's knowledge, or assumption, or expectation that specific harmful and hurtful consequences will result from doing that particular act; in that case, he recoils from that act and does not want it, but rather wants to leave it and stay away from it.

- Based on what we have mentioned, Allah, *exalted is He*, has made frequent in His Noble Book and upon the tongue of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) encouragement toward the benefits of the Hereafter and the everlasting happiness in the Gardens of Bliss, and warning against the painful punishment which Allah, *exalted is He*, has prepared for the criminals in Hellfire. Thus, the proper state of the intelligent morally responsible person is that he should desire to seek the bliss of Paradise, and recoil from the causes that lead to the punishment of Hell.

It may be said: If the matter is as you have mentioned, the morally responsible people would have rushed to take hold of the causes of everlasting bliss, and stayed far away from the causes of painful punishment.

It is said in reply: Within the self of every morally responsible person are conflicting motives and causes; some causes outweigh others. So the reason why morally responsible people do not take hold of the causes of everlasting happiness, and do not keep away from the causes of everlasting punishment, is that they choose to adopt the causes of immediate, worldly enjoyment, and give precedence to repelling immediate worldly harm.

Divine Decree and Predestination

People in the earliest period became divided in this matter into two groups:

1. A group of Jabrīyyah [those who affirm compulsion] who say: Allah, *exalted is He*, is the One who created the acts of the servants – both acts of obedience and of disobedience – and that He willed them, intended them, and chose them instead of the servants. Thus, they have no will, no intention, and no choice. This doctrine, in their view, is represented by Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah.
2. A group who are not Jabrīyyah, represented by the Mu'tazilah and groups among the Shī'ah; they say that it is the servant who did the sin by his own choice, will, and intention, independently of Allah, *exalted is He* – so that, regarding it, He has no will, no intention, and no act.

Thus were the Muslims divided in their earliest era.

Then Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, after some time had passed, withdrew from that first doctrine, due to the manifest repulsiveness of it and the clear ugliness of it. They constructed for themselves a doctrine intermediate between their first doctrine and the doctrine of the Mu'tazilah. They said: the servant commits the sin by his choice, his will, and his intention, and Allah, *exalted is He*, is the Only One who created the sin and willed it and intended it.

The view of Ahl al-Sunnah came to be unanimously settled upon this doctrine, and the first to formulate it, adduce proofs for it, and deem it good was Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, in the fifth century after Hijrah.

[Examples of Divine Decree and Predestination]

Question: A man went out from his house driving a new car, with new tires, and everything in the car was in guaranteed sound condition. He was driving at a reasonable speed – the speedometer needle not going beyond 40 km per hour – when one of the car's tires burst and it overturned, and he died. Was his death by Divine decree and predestination or not? Please mention a rule by which we distinguish actions that are by decree and predestination, and the opposite.

Answer – and from Allah is success: There is a rule which states: "The one who performs the cause is the one who performs the effect (result)." This rule is correct, and the evidence for it is what Allah, *exalted is He*, mentioned about the people of the Sabbath and their setting of the nets on Friday.

This driver himself was the cause of what happened. On this basis, whatever comes about due to the act of a human being and is generated from his act proceeds from him. For that reason, Allah, *exalted is He*, commanded the one who kills by mistake to pay the blood-money and perform the expiation, and He, *exalted is He*, said: *"And take your*

precaution...” [An-Nisa:102].

We can say: Allah, *exalted is He*, leaving the driver and the occurrence of the error that led to his death is what is called decree and predestination.

[The Magians of This Ummah – from *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* of al-Bayhaqī]

Al-Bayhaqī narrated in *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* (6/95) that the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to a man who had come to him from Persia: “*Tell me of the most astonishing thing you saw in Persia.*” He said: “I saw people marrying their mothers, their daughters, and their sisters. If it is said to them, ‘Why do you do that?’ they say, ‘Allah decreed it upon us and predestined it.’” So he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “*There will be, at the end of my Ummah, people who say similar to what they said; they are the Magians of my Ummah.*” End quote.

[The Believer Is Tried]

The wisdom of Allah, *exalted is He*, required that He test His believing servant in this worldly life. He tests him in himself with sickness or deformity; He tests him in his provision by constricting it for him and withholding it from him; He tests him in his children; or He tests him in his wife; or He tests him with fear; or with the like of that which spoils his life for him and makes it bitter, so that life hardly ever becomes clear for him or sweet for him for even a single day.

Perhaps the secret and wisdom in that is that the believer should not become at ease with this world. For when life becomes sweet for a servant and free from causes of distress, he becomes at ease with it and forgets what lies beyond it – exactly as Allah, *exalted is He*, said: “*No! Indeed, man transgresses because he sees himself self-sufficient.*” [Al-‘Alaq:6-7]

[Degrees of Faith]

1. The faith of the angels, and it is the highest of degrees of faith.
2. The faith of the prophets and messengers (*May Allah bless them all*).
3. The faith of the scholars who act (upon their knowledge).
4. The faith of the believers who are devoutly humble to Allah, humble, and working (righteous deeds).
5. The faith of the common believers – and it consists of levels (and degrees).

[The Ruling of Islam Concerning One Who Is Born, Grows Up, and Dies in Lands to Which the Call of the Messengers Has Not Reached]

Question: How does Islam rule concerning one who was born, grew

up, and then died in some corner of the earth, far away from the call of the Messengers – one who, throughout his life, never heard any mention of them, and to whom their news and call were never conveyed? Is he judged to abide eternally in the Fire like the rest of the disbelievers, or does he have a different ruling from theirs?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: Allah, *exalted is He*, created the human being and granted him hearing, sight, and a heart (fu’ād). The nature of hearing is the perception of audible things and distinguishing them; the nature of sight is the seeing of visible things and distinguishing them; and the nature of the fu’ād is to think, reflect, feel amazement, reject, approve, find good and find evil, and so on.

Thus, the fu’ād, by its very nature, constantly reflects upon what it sees and hears: “From where did it come? How did it come? Who brought it into being? Where is it going?” and so on; and it does not come to rest until it reaches the truth.

This reflection begins in the human being from the time he becomes discerning – and this is what practically every person finds in himself in his childhood.

On the basis of what we have mentioned, the proof of Allah, *exalted is He*, stands against this person who is far from the call of the Messengers, by virtue of what Allah has placed in him of hearing, sight, and a fu’ād which drive him towards knowledge of Allah, driving him in such a way that he does not need to force himself to engage in reflection; rather, reflection and thinking come to him spontaneously.

If this far-off person responds to what the natural disposition of the intellect drives him to, and affirms it – so that he believes in the great, all-knowing, all-wise Creator – then he is not judged by the rulings of the disbelievers; rather, he is judged to be saved from the Fire, for Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.

But if he does not respond – instead deceiving himself and opposing his intellect and the natural disposition upon which Allah has created people – then he is among the disbelievers, and is judged by their rulings.

Furthermore, the proof for what we have mentioned, namely that reflection and thinking come spontaneously without affectation, is His saying, *exalted is He*: “*We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth.*” [Fussilat:53] and His saying, *exalted is He*: “*Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?*” [Al-Anbiyā’:30] and His saying, *exalted is He*: “*Have We not made the earth a container of the living and the dead?*” [Al-Mursalāt:25-26]

and the like of that is plentiful in the Qur'an.

If it is said: If the matter were as you have mentioned, Allah, *exalted is He*, would not have commanded (people) to reflect, as in His saying: *"Say, 'Observe what is in the heavens and earth.'"* [Yūnus:101]

We say: That comes by way of reinforcing and strengthening what is already settled in the natural disposition of the intellect. Hence, in many places in the Qur'an there comes (the expression): *"Will you not then take heed?"* – indicating the existence of the innate proof within the intellects, and that they need, in order to believe in Allah, only to turn back in remembrance to what is already settled in their minds of affirmation and knowledge.

Yes, what we have mentioned of reflection and thinking is the *initial* reflection which leads to faith in Allah and belief in Him. After that, reflection may become obligatory – and that is in order to remove doubts and misgivings, or to increase one's knowledge of Allah and to strengthen one's belief in Him.

Moreover, Allah, *exalted is He*, has encouraged His remembrance in an unrestricted way, saying: *"O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance, and exalt Him morning and afternoon."* [Al-Aḥzāb:41-42] The prayer is remembrance; recitation of the Qur'an is remembrance; and so on.

If it is said: What is the meaning of the report which states: *"There is no worship like reflection"*?

We say: The reflection intended in this report is:

1. Reflection upon created things, because of what that leads to of feeling the greatness, power, majesty, and awe of Allah.
2. Reflection upon the blessings with which Allah has favoured the human being – both great and small, outward and inward – and listing them and thinking about how many they are, because of what that leads to of thanking and praising Allah, *exalted is He*.
3. Reflection upon sins and their abundance; reflection upon one's negligence in obeying Allah; negligence in remembering Him; little thankfulness to Him; the forbearance of Allah, *exalted is He*, toward him; reflection upon how frequently he forgets and is heedless of feeling the greatness and majesty of Allah; reflection upon how little awe he has of Allah – all because of what that leads to of repentance and seeking forgiveness.
4. Reflection upon the extreme weakness of the human being; upon his poverty, need, and dependence; that he has no power and no strength except through Allah; that he does not possess for himself harm nor benefit; that he is not independent of Allah for

even the blink of an eye; and that he is in extreme need and distress before his Lord, and so on – all of that so that he may rely in all of his affairs upon his Lord, and ask Him and call upon Him with the supplication of one in dire need.

5. Reflection upon the condition of the human being in this world – weakness and strength, poverty and wealth, health and sickness, death and life, and so on – because of what that leads to of safety from being deluded by this world and trusting in it, and so that he may beware of being deluded and of the outcome of those deluded by it.
6. Reflection upon the inevitable end: death, the reckoning, Paradise, and Hellfire – because of what that leads to of less attachment to this world and its adornment, of less greed and covetousness for it, and also of strengthening the motive toward acts of obedience and strengthening what diverts one from desires, and so on.

And [it includes] other kinds of reflection which call to magnifying and exalting Allah, declaring Him holy, praising Him, proclaiming His greatness, affirming His Oneness, obeying Him, and so forth.

Because of the benefits that we have mentioned which result from reflection, it was given that exalted rank above the rest of the acts of worship, and rightly so; for through it the doors of all good things are opened – it is their foundation and their source.

[The Debate of Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari and Abu 'Ali al-Jubba'i Concerning the Acts of the Servants]

There are three brothers:

- A righteous, dutiful believer.
- A wicked, wretched sinner.
- A child.

All three died.

If the child were to say: "If You had kept me alive, O my God, I would have attained the rank of the righteous, dutiful believer,"

Allah would say: "I knew that if I had kept you alive, you would have disobeyed and become deserving of the painful punishment, so I took care of your best interest."

Then if the wicked, wretched sinner were to say: "O my God, just as You knew his state, so You knew my state; so why did You take care of his best interest and not mine?"

It is said: Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari presented this to Shaykh Abu 'Ali al-Jubba'i, the shaykh of the Mu'tazilah, and that Abu 'Ali was bewildered in answering and was silenced, and that these questions were the cause

that led Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari to leave the madhhab of the Mu'tazilah.

I said: This objection applies to those who say that it is obligatory upon Allah, *exalted is He*, to observe what is most beneficial for His servants. Thus, if Allah, *exalted is He*, knows from the state of a servant that he will believe and repent to Allah when his age reaches eighty years, then it becomes obligatory upon Allah, *exalted is He*, to delay his death until he reaches eighty years. And if He knows that when a believer passes sixty years of age he will be tested and fall into acts of disobedience to the Most Merciful, then it becomes obligatory upon Allah, *exalted is He*, to cut off his lifespan before he reaches that point.

And Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari's question can be answered from the Zaydi point of view and according to the principles of their religion by saying:

1. Creating the human being as he is, with completeness, beauty, hearing, sight, and intellect, is among the greatest blessings of Allah – rather, it is the greatest of Allah's blessings upon His servant. This tremendous blessing is pure grace from Allah and pure beneficence from Him.
2. His, *exalted is He*, supplying the human being with health, well-being, and long life is another blessing, and a grace upon grace, and a beneficence upon beneficence.
3. Disobedience occurs from the morally responsible person when health, well-being, and breadth in lifespan are available to him. If breadth in lifespan is not available, disobedience does not occur. As for health and well-being, sins are more numerous with them; yet sin can occur without health and well-being, such as the sin of disbelief and false beliefs.

There is no disagreement among rational people that the one who bestows favors has the right to give from his bounty and beneficence to whomever he wills, and to distribute his bounty and beneficence as he wills: he may give some people much, and give others little. Based on this, the righteous, dutiful believer reached lofty ranks by the grace of Allah and His mercy, and by his own deeds, sincerity, and uprightness; the wicked, wretched sinner entered the Fire by his evil choice; and the child entered Paradise by the grace of Allah and His mercy, not by his deed.

And the bounty of Allah, *exalted is He*, upon the wicked, wretched sinner is tremendous: He bestowed on him the blessing of creation, completeness, beauty, hearing, sight, intellect, health, and well-being; extended his lifespan; and called him, upon the tongues of His Messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) and upon the tongues of His proofs and in His Books, to His good pleasure, His forgiveness, and

everlasting happiness in the Gardens of Bliss; and He warned him against falling into the causes of His wrath and walking upon the paths of misguidance and ruin that lead to the tremendous, unending punishment.

So the blessing of Allah, *exalted is He*, is great upon the believer, the wicked sinner, and the child.

The wickedness of the wicked sinner only came about from his own self.

And the question of Abu al-Hasan is of those that are not befitting, and it does not need any reply after affirmation and belief in His saying, *exalted is He*, relating the words of the angels and His answer to them: *"Will You place upon it one who spreads corruption therein and sheds blood, while we glorify You with praise and sanctify You?" He said, "Indeed, I know what you do not know."* [al-Baqarah:30]

When the angels heard this answer, they declared Allah holy and far above doing what is not befitting of corruption and injustice; they acknowledged their own ignorance, and that if they did not know the aspect of wisdom in what Allah, *exalted is He*, created, then still Allah, *exalted is He*, is All-Knowing, All-Wise – He does not create anything nor do any act except based upon knowledge and wisdom.

From the words of Zayd ibn 'Ali (Peace be upon him) in ar-Risalah al-Muzayyanah:

"Then I am pleased for you that you do not take the sinners out of the power of Allah, *exalted is He*, nor excuse them in disobeying Allah. Whoever says that he has possessed his deeds together with Allah, *exalted is He*, has committed shirk with Allah; and whoever says that he has possessed them independently of Allah, *exalted is He*, has disbelieved in Allah. Rather, the statement that I am pleased with in this chapter is that one follows..." and so on.

I said: The meaning – *and Allah knows best* – is that the sinner is the one who committed the sin by his own power and by his own choice, and Allah, *glorified and exalted is He*, is the One who gave him strength and ability, created in him desire, and did not place a barrier between him and the sin. Had He willed to prevent him from it, He would have prevented him. So whoever says that he is the one who made for himself the power and ability to commit the sin has disbelieved; or says that he made it for himself in partnership with Allah, then he has committed shirk. That is because the creation of powers and abilities is not within the capacity of any human being. Whoever claims that for himself has claimed a divine attribute, and whoever claims that is a disbeliever or a polytheist. And Allah knows best.

[Concerning the Soul (ar-Ruh)]

Question: The soul (ar-ruh) is a matter whose knowledge Allah has kept exclusively to Himself, as He, *exalted is He*, said: *“And they ask you about the soul. Say, ‘The soul is of my Lord’s command.’”* [al-Isra’:85] And claiming to know its reality is close to claiming knowledge of the unseen, since there is no evidence for knowing it. It has been narrated from al-Qasim, al-Hadi, an-Nasir, al-Husayn ibn al-Qasim al-‘Ayyani, al-Mu’ayyad Billah, Ahmad ibn Sulayman, and others from the Imams of the ‘itrah (*Peace be upon them*) that it is a body whose true reality none knows except Allah. So is their affirming it to be a body considered delving into the reality of the soul?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: This is not delving into the reality of the soul. Their statement, “a body whose true reality none knows except Allah,” is not a definition; rather, it is an explanation of His saying, *exalted is He*: *“Say, ‘The soul is of my Lord’s command.’”* [al-Isra’:85] And their calling it a body or an accident is not considered guessing at the unseen, for everything that Allah has created in this universe does not go beyond being either a body or an accident, whether we know the reality of the created thing or are ignorant of it.

[The Difference Between the Taking of the Soul in Sleep and the Taking of the Soul in Death]

Question: Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“And He is the One who takes you in death by night and knows what you earn by day; then He raises you up therein.”* [al-An‘am:60] Is the “taking in death” (wafah) here a complete taking like the death of one who has died, in the sense of the soul leaving? And how do you explain the movements of the sleeping servant if there is no soul in him? And dreams – such as desire, for example – to whom are they ascribed: to Allah, to the servant, or to Satan? And does Satan have any connection to the dead person?

Answer: The “taking in death” mentioned in the verse is not exactly like the death of one who has died; rather, it resembles it in that the sleeper loses the perception of hearing, sight, intellect, smell, taste, and touch; strength and ability depart from him; and he himself is absent from the world and what it contains of worry, grief, joy, and delight. In all of that he is like the dead person – except that his limbs are still alive, fit for the return of consciousness, sensation, and the soul. The movements of the sleeper are non-voluntary movements that arise from the nature of the living body.

As for dreams, when they are good dreams, they are from Allah; and when they are ugly dreams, they are from Satan – this is what has come in the narration from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). And the sleeper is not completely dead, but he resembles the dead person in many of his states.

[Regarding Provision]

Question: It is known that provision is from Allah, and that He has guaranteed it and taken it upon Himself. Yet we see the worker, and he does not receive his wage except through the toil of his hand and his effort, and the one who gives him his wage gives it by his choice, and the worker likewise gives his labor by his choice. So how is the provision of Allah, which is from Him by decree and destiny, to be explained?

The answer – and Allah is the One who grants success – is that Allah, *glorified and exalted*, Who is All-Knowing, All-Wise, has guaranteed the provision of animals and apportioned for them that which suffices them. Hence He, *exalted is He*, said: *“Indeed, all things We created according to a decree.”* [al-Qamar:49] And He said: *“And He apportioned therein its provisions.”* [Fussilat:10] And He said: *“And there is no creature on earth but that upon Allah is its provision.”* [Hud:6]

However, the actual obtaining of provision is, in most cases, tied to seeking it and to the presence of a cause, due to what Allah, *exalted is He*, knows of benefits for His servants in that. Among these benefits are: the obligations and trials related to wealth – such as honesty in buying and selling, refraining from false oaths, abandoning cheating and deception, refraining from usury in that – and also the cultivation of the earth by making some of them subservient to others, the selection of those who are accountable, and distinguishing the treacherous from the trustworthy, and so on, of innumerable great benefits that result from this.

Thus Allah, *glorified is He*, has guaranteed provision for His servants and guided them to its causes and ways. Hence He, *exalted is He*, said: *“Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High, Who created and proportioned, and Who destined and guided.”* [al-A’la:1–3] So for every kind of animal He has decreed its provisions for it and guided it to attain its provision and obtain it. Look at the ant, how it is guided to its provision; and likewise the various kinds of birds and other animals. Then look at the newborns of animals, how they are guided to their provision which Allah, *exalted is He*, has placed for them. Such is the way of Allah in this world. From this comes Allah’s command to Mary to shake the palm tree.

Yes, what we have mentioned is a general statement. As for the worker, he is like other animals: Allah, *exalted is He*, has created him with an innate disposition to walk the path of seeking provision and to engage in the means of attaining it. Thus Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“And indeed he is, in love of wealth, intense.”* [al-Adiyat:8] And He said: *“And you love wealth with immense love.”* [al-Fajr:20] And He said: *“Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire – of women and children and heaped-up sums of gold and silver...”* [Al ‘Imran:14] and so on from other verses.

Therefore, a human being's provision is written for him on condition that he seeks it. Hence Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"Then disperse through the land and seek from the bounty of Allah."* [al-Jumu'ah:10] And He said: *"There is no blame upon you for seeking the bounty of your Lord."* [al-Baqarah:198]

There is, moreover, another type of provision that comes without seeking, such as that which the poor are given from obligatory alms (zakāt), and supererogatory charity, and vows, and grants, and gifts, and hospitality, and maintenance given to children and the like, and other provisions that come spontaneously. And it has been related from the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) that he said: "Provision is of two kinds: a provision that you seek, and a provision that seeks you." So that which you seek is the first, and that which seeks you is what we mentioned secondly.

[Explaining Allah's Guarantee of Provision Along with the Obligation of Earning at Times]

It is also known that Allah has guaranteed provision to His servants, and we find that the Lawgiver has made earning obligatory in some situations, such as when a person has two parents who are incapacitated and in hardship. So is there any contradiction between Allah's guarantee of provision and the obligation of earning?

The answer is that there is no contradiction between the two. Hence Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"And seek what Allah has decreed for you."* [al-Baqarah:187] and *"And seek from the bounty of Allah."* [al-Jumu'ah:10] The farmer casts the seed into the soil and then waits for the provision of Allah, and so on; this is seeking what is with Allah of provision. The worker is the same, and the trader likewise.

So let it always be in the mind of the person seeking provision that provision is from the bounty and grace of Allah, and that He is the One who guided to the way of seeking it and directed to its cause, and that health and well-being and the strength of the hands and feet are from the grace of Allah upon him. On this basis, provision is from the bounty of Allah, and all that is upon a person is to trust in Allah's guarantee. The meaning of the guarantee is not that you abandon walking in search of provision and disable the means of earning which Allah, *exalted is He*, has made for you, O human.

[Allah's Apportioning of Provision Among His Servants]

A question about the hadith: *"Among My servants are those whom nothing would set right except poverty; if I enriched him..."* and so on – we may see some who transgress because of wealth, and some who transgress because of health, and so on. On this basis, the transgressor might argue and say: "My Lord, had You made me poor, I would not have

rebelled nor transgressed,” and the poor person might say: “If only...” and so forth? If and so on.

The answer is that Allah, glorified and exalted, out of His mercy for His servants, has facilitated for them the means of obeying Him. Among those means is what He tests His servants with of wealth and poverty, and health, and so on. All of this Allah, *exalted is He*, has made for great benefits and profound wisdom.

Now, even though Allah, *glorified is He*, has made for each of His servants the means of righteousness and provided them for him, the servant may turn away from that, and choose obstinacy, and walk in the path of corruption. Allah, *exalted is He*, may choose wealth for a servant for the sake of his rectitude, while the servant then employs that wealth in paths of corruption. If the servant then says: “Had You made me poor, O my Lord, I would not have entered into corruption,” the answer to him is that Allah, *exalted is He*, is the One who knows best what benefits His servants.

[Trial and Testing]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, and by Him we seek help. All praise is due to Allah for what He has bestowed; how excellent is what He has bestowed, and how excellent a Master. And may Allah bless our master Muhammad, and his family, and grant them peace, for as long as a morning breathes, and as long as a wing beats, and as long as a lightning flash glitters and shines.

The wisdom of the All-Wise, All-Knowing has decreed that in this abode there be trial and testing for those who are accountable, so that the truthful may become manifest and distinct from the liars: *“Do people think once they say, ‘We believe,’ that they will be left without being put to the test? We certainly tested those before them. And ‘in this way’ Allah will clearly distinguish between those who are truthful and those who are liars.”* [al-‘Ankabut:2-3]

Trials and tests increased greatly for the believers in the time of the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and they were as Allah, *majestic is His glory*, described in His saying in Surat al-Baqarah: *“We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. Give good news to those who patiently endure.”* [al-Baqarah:155] And the tribulations that passed over the first of this community will pass over those after them until accountability ceases. The crier of sedition will not cease crying out, calling to a trial in successive generations, adorning it for them and making it seem fair to them with a bundle of specious doubts he has prepared for his call, beautifying it with the foulness of his craft. Thus has the wisdom of the All-Knowing, All-Wise decreed, so that the vile may be distinguished

from the good, and that the people of sincere faith and the people of false faith may appear in an exposed, manifest way – exactly as He, *exalted is He*, said: *“Alif, Lam, Meem, Do people think once they say, ‘We believe,’ that they will be left without being put to the test? We certainly tested those before them. And ‘in this way’ Allah will clearly distinguish between those who are truthful and those who are liars.”* [al-‘Ankabut:2-3] And He, *exalted is He*, said: *“And so We made for every prophet an enemy from among the wicked.”* [al-Furqan:31]

– The trial and test may be from Allah, *exalted is He*. That is like Allah’s command to the angels to prostrate to Adam, and like the obligation of fighting, and the obligation of burdensome duties which none perform except those who are sincere.

– And the trial may be through the preachers of misguidance and what they adorn of doubtful arguments to promote their trial and beautify it to the people.

[The Meaning of Allah’s Help (Victory)]

Question: Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and make firm your feet.”* [Muhammad:7]

Is this verse general regarding everyone who supports Allah, *exalted is He*, such that he must inevitably be given victory? And how is it to be interpreted in the case of al-Husayn (*Peace be upon him*) and his supporters, and Zayd and his supporters, and many others whose enemies prevailed over them? What is meant?

Answer: *“If you support Allah, He will support you and make firm your feet”* is general in regard to those addressed and others besides them, and what indicates this is His saying, *exalted is He*: *“And Allah will surely support those who support Him.”* [Al-Hajj:40] And Allah’s help, *exalted is He*, comes in many forms:

1. Among them is manifestness and gaining the upper hand over the enemy.
2. And among them is what Allah, *exalted is He*, related in His saying: *“...Allah has already given him victory when those who disbelieved drove him out as one of two, when they were in the cave...”* [At-Tawbah:40]; He, *exalted is He*, named the Prophet’s (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) being kept safe from the polytheists’ capturing him or killing him—by his hiding in the cave and fleeing from Mecca—as “victory”, even though domination and outward authority at that time belonged to the polytheists.
3. And among them is what Allah, *exalted is He*, related in His saying: *“And were it not that Allah checks the people, some by means of*

others, there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of Allah is much mentioned. And Allah will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might.” [Al-Hajj:40]; Allah, exalted is He, thus named the occupation of the wrongdoers in fighting one another “help (victory)” for His friends.

- And the victory of ‘Ali (*Peace be upon him*), al-Husayn, Zayd, Yahya son of Zayd, and others among the callers to Allah, is embodied in the manifestness of the religion for which they fought, and their school of thought for whose life they were patient unto death. For it is still standing and alive until this very day, despite those who strove—of Banū Umayyah, Banū al-‘Abbās, and others—to efface it from existence, eradicate it completely, and erase it from the breasts of the Ummah. After they exaggerated in that and reached the utmost end in attempting what they intended, they returned disappointed, their efforts went to waste, and they died burning with rage, unable to attain what they wanted; and Allah refused except to perfect His light, even if the disbelievers detest it.

And up to this day, oppressive efforts and dominant powers continue trying to efface that madhhab and uproot it from its foundation, but they have not succeeded and have not prospered.

[The Book of Prophethood]

The Messengers of Allah and His Prophets (*May Allah's prayer's be upon them*)

They are the most perfect of human beings in traits and virtues; they have surpassed every record in this field, reaching the utmost degree and the highest rank of human perfection.

There is no human virtue that is known except that they have reached its limit and utmost end—may Allah's prayers, peace, mercy, and blessings be upon them.

And the virtues of every Prophet were not hidden from his people; yet, despite the manifest complete excellence of every Prophet and Messenger, and the manifestness of his rank among his people, each one of them was met with denial, mockery, and ridicule from his people.

And among the most astonishing of astonishing things is what the Messengers of Allah (*May Allah's prayer's be upon them*) encounter of the near-unanimous rejection of their peoples—almost collectively—through disbelieving in them and rejecting their call, even though they know what their Messengers possess of qualities of perfection, honor, trustworthiness, and truthfulness, in addition to what their Lord, *exalted is He*, supports them with of miraculous proofs indicating the truthfulness of their claim to prophethood and messengership.

By this, their peoples know that they are Messengers sent from their Lord to them, yet they do not accept the call and do not believe in it. Rather, they meet it with denial, ridicule, and rejection, then with war against it; it only increases them in transgression and disbelief.

This stance is thus astonishing, and the intellect stands bewildered at it: how is it that they do not accept the call of their great Lord Who has encompassed them with His mercy, showered them with His favors, and encompassed everything with His knowledge and power, while they themselves are in utmost need of their Lord? Concerning this Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"Alas for the servants! There never comes to them a messenger but they ridicule him."* [Yā-Sīn:30]

Today disbelief is almost covering the whole globe, and the disbelievers and people of disbelief today have not been content with what they are upon of rebellion against Allah, debauchery, disobedience, injustice, aggression, corruption, and obstinate defiance upon the face of the earth; they have not been content with that. Rather, they have rolled up their sleeves in earnest to demolish what remains of truth and Islam upon the face of the earth.

Thus disbelief and the disbelievers, together with the Arab states and the Muslim states, have declared war against the Muslims and their

Islam, despite what the Muslims are upon of weakness, poverty, and lack of means of defense.

The Speech (Kalam) of Allah

Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“And Allah spoke to Musa [Moses] with [direct] speech.”* [An-Nisā’:164] There is no disagreement among the Muslims that the Noble Qur’an is the Speech (Kalam) of Allah, *exalted is He*, and that Allah, *exalted is He*, is described as “One who speaks” (al-Mutakallim).

Had the scholars of Islam stopped at this limit, it would have been better and safer for them. But they entered into severe disputes and intense disagreements, to the point that some of them declared others disbelievers, some disavowed others, severe enmities were opened between them, and each faction fanatically clung to its own opinion, and so on.

They made this issue one of the most important issues of the religion, and one of the greatest issues of the fundamentals of the religion. They placed this issue at the forefront of what they presented in the books of creed, multiplied the questions and rulings there, derived upon it foundational branches, and made it among the most important beliefs of Islam and its greatest foundations.

- Yet in truth and in reality, they have overstepped the bounds and entered into tracts with landmarks obliterated and horizons darkened—without knowledge, without guidance, and without an enlightening Book.

- Allah, *exalted is He*, was pleased with less than what they mentioned in this issue for His Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and for the believers. He, *exalted is He*, said: *“Say, ‘We believe in Allah and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Ibrahim [Abraham] and Ismā’īl [Ishmael] and Ishāq [Isaac]...”* [Al-Baqarah:136], and He, *exalted is He*, said: *“The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and so have the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers...”* [Al-Baqarah:285]. And Allah, *exalted is He*, described the Glorious Qur’an with attributes that are recited among what is recited of the Speech of Allah and His revelation, and Allah, *exalted is He*, did not mention in what He mentioned anything of what the mutakallimūn of Ahl al-Sunnah mention and insist upon—such as His saying, *exalted is He*: *“And indeed, it is a mighty Book; falsehood cannot approach it from before it nor from behind it; [it is] a revelation from One Who is Wise and Praiseworthy.”* [Fussilat: 41–42]; and His saying: *“A Qur’an in Arabic, without any deviance...”* [Az-Zumar: 28]; and His saying: *“And with the truth We have sent it down, and with the truth it has descended.”* [Al-Isrā’:105]; and His saying: *“[This is] a Book whose verses are perfected*

and then detailed from One who is Wise and Acquainted.” [Hūd:1]; and His saying: “Indeed, We sent it down during the Night of Decree.” [Al-Qadr:1].

And Allah, *exalted is He*, named it “a spirit”: *“And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command [i.e., a Spirit].” [Ash-Shūrā:52]* And He named it Qur’an, Furqān, and Kitāb, and described it with noble attributes: *“By the wise Qur’an...” [Yā-Sīn:2]; “But it is an honored Qur’an, (inscribed) in a Preserved Tablet.” [Al-Burūj:21–22]; “a mighty Book” [Fussilat:41]; “the Qur’an of Reminder (containing mention).” [Şād:1], and other such praiseworthy attributes.*

Allah, *exalted is He*, did not mention in His Book, nor did His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), nor the Companions, nor the Followers, anything of what the mutakallimūn mentioned. They did not mention:

1. That the Qur’an and all the Speech of Allah, *exalted is He*, is an essential attribute (ṣifah dhātiyyah) of Allah Most High.
2. Nor that it is an attribute of His, *exalted is He*, subsisting in His Essence.
3. Nor that it is an attribute of His, *exalted is He*, that is pre-eternal (qadīmah).
4. Nor that “Being One Who speaks” (al-Mutakallim) is one of His attributes, *exalted is He*, and of His Most Beautiful Names.
5. And they did not mention that the Speech of Allah, *exalted is He*, is something other than letters and sounds.
6. Nor did they mention “internal speech” (al-kalām an-nafsī).
7. And we do not see any indication in the Qur’an, or in the Sunnah, or in the reports, that points to the branches of this issue and the importance of the matters which they mentioned.

[Discussion Concerning Whether the Sacred Laws Are (Pure) Interests]

Question: It is said that the sacred laws (sharā’i‘) are (pure) interests (maṣāliḥ), and it is also said: some of the sacred laws are (based on) interests, and some are devoid of interests. Which of the two opinions is the more correct?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: The sounder view is the first one, namely that the sacred laws are (pure) interests. What indicates this is:

- His saying, *exalted is He*: *“He makes lawful for them the good things and forbids for them the impure.” [al-A‘rāf:157]* and His saying, *exalted is He*: *“Say, ‘My Lord has only forbidden immoralities – what is apparent of them and what is concealed...” [al-A‘rāf:33]*

- And His saying, *exalted is He*: “*Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality, bad conduct, and transgression.*” [an-Naḥl:90]
- And His saying, *exalted is He*: “*He commands them what is right and forbids them what is wrong...*” [al-A‘rāf:157]
- And His saying, *exalted is He*, at the end of the verse of wuḍū’ (ablution): “*Allah does not intend to place upon you any hardship, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you, that you may be grateful.*” [al-Mā’idah:6]
- And it is not hidden that the laws of transactions are built upon intelligible interests.
- And modern science has discovered many of the secrets, wisdoms, and interests upon which the legal rulings were built.

- **And furthermore**, it has been established that Allah, *exalted is He*, is All-Knowing, Just, Wise, Rich (Free of need), not in need of anything. This necessitates that Allah, *exalted is He*, does not burden His servants with acts for which they have no interest or benefit in performing.

Clarification of that:

- Allah, *exalted is He*, is free of need with respect to the acts and deeds of His servants, not in need of them at all, and He knows that He is independent of them.
- And Allah, *exalted is He*, is Wise; and it befits the Wise that no command issues from Him in which there is no wisdom and no interest – otherwise He would not be Wise.

[The Book of Imamate]

[Is Imamate a Probable (Zannī) Matter or a Certain (Qaṭ'ī) One?]

Some people said: Imamate is a probable (zannī) matter. Others said: rather, it is certain (qaṭ'ī).

I said: Imamate, insofar as it is (established) in general, is a certain (qaṭ'ī) matter which the intellect decrees, and mankind in the Age of Ignorance and in Islam alike have unanimously agreed upon its necessity.

As for its details, we say:

1. The Imamate of 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*), al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn (*Peace be upon them*), is, in the view of the Zaydiyyah and others, a certain, inferential (qaṭ'ī istidlālī) matter. Its meaning is that whoever looks properly into the proofs indicating the Imamate of these three will know with certainty their entitlement to Imamate.
2. The Imamate of the People of the House (Ahl al-Bayt) (*Peace be upon them*) in general is also a certain, inferential matter.
3. The conditions of the Imām are certain: such as being male, of the (proper) lineage, possessing knowledge, piety, and so on.
4. If the conditions are fulfilled in an Imām, then he is an Imām with certainty, from the aspect that the certain conditions have been certainly fulfilled in him.

If it is said: The certitude of the conditions is possible in respect of maleness, knowledge, bravery, and generosity, but as for what is besides that, certitude is not so clear.

We say: As for lineage, then public repute (*shuhrah*) suffices and takes the place of certain knowledge. As for asceticism, piety, and religiosity, what is meant is certitude regarding the outward state, and that is sufficient, for the obligation in this matter is based on the outward.

If it is said: This presents a problem in the case where two (claimants) oppose each other, for according to what you have mentioned it would follow that one of them is a fāsiq (openly sinful), and you do not say that.

We say: Opposing what is certain in this field and its likes is an error that does not entail takfīr [declaring someone a disbeliever] or tafsīq [declaring someone an open sinner]. Do you not see that our Imāms (*Peace be upon them*) did not declare those who preceded the Commander of the Faithful ('Alī, *Peace be upon him*) to be disbelievers or fāsiqs? Rather, they referred the ruling about them back by saying: If they knew the entitlement of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) to the caliphate, then they have committed fusuq (sinful

deviation); and if they did not know that, then they erred – and no disbelief and no fusuq is entailed for them, due to His saying, *exalted is He: “And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but (only) for what your hearts intended.”* [al-Aḥzāb:5]

[The Statement of Imām Zayd Regarding the Imāms When None of Them Has (Openly) Called]

Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be upon them*) said in the book *Tathbīt al-Waṣiyyah*: “If none of them calls (to himself)” – meaning, from the People of the House – “then they are Imāms for the Muslims in their affairs, their lawful and their unlawful, their righteous and their God-fearing ones.” End quote.

I said: He (*Peace be upon him*) means that being guided by the guidance of the People of the House, taking them as an example, emulating and following them, is established and obligatory upon the Muslims, whether or not there is a calling Imām standing forth from among them.

If there is someone standing forth from among them, then he is the one intended to be followed; and if there is not, then it is obligatory to follow the scholars of the People of the House who are righteous and God-fearing.

The proof for what Imām Zayd (*Peace be upon him*) mentioned is what has been authentically transmitted from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and become well known of the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things (ḥadīth ath-Thaqalayn). For the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) made the Qur’an and his ‘itrah (family) two successors. This ḥadīth – I mean the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things – indicates that the succession to the Prophethood is specific to the ‘itrah of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), to the exclusion of others among people.

If it is said: It has been authentically transmitted from the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: “*The Imāms are from Quraysh*,” which indicates that Imamate is permissible in all the clans of Quraysh.

We say: The ḥadīth, “*The Imāms are from Quraysh*,” is unrestricted (muṭlaq), while the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things is restricted (muqayyad). The necessary rule is to interpret the unrestricted in light of the restricted. Thus, the intended meaning of “the Imāms from Quraysh” is that they are the ‘itrah of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), to the exclusion of others.

[Hadith: "The Imams Are from Quraysh"]

In *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kāfi* it says: And Muḥammad said: It has reached us from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: “*The Imams are from Quraysh so long as, when they pass judgment, they are just; when they distribute (wealth), they are fair; and when they are asked for mercy, they show mercy. Whoever does not do that, upon him is the curse of Allah, the angels, and all people.*”

And in it: It is narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: “*Quraysh are the leaders of this ummah: its righteous are leaders of its righteous, and its wicked are leaders of its wicked.*”

Al-Bukhārī and Muslim have transmitted from Abū Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “*People are followers of Quraysh in this matter: their Muslim follows their Muslim, and their disbeliever follows their disbeliever. People are like mines; the best of them in the Jāhiliyyah are the best of them in Islam if they gain understanding (in the religion). You will find that those who are best among people are the ones who most dislike this affair until they fall into it.*” End of quote from *Anwār at-Tamām*.

I say: The tribe of Quraysh attained great honor and tremendous worldly exaltation for two reasons:

1. By their dwelling in the Sacred City (Makkah). The Arabs, in the Jāhiliyyah, recognized this for them; no one would confront them except with good. Allah reminded them of that and mentioned this tremendous blessing in many verses, among them His saying, *Exalted is He: “Have they not seen that We made [Makkah] a safe sanctuary while people are being snatched away all around them?”* [al-‘Ankabūt:67].
2. That the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is from Quraysh.

For these two reasons, the Arab tribes look at Quraysh with eyes of glorification and reverence, and acknowledge their nobility and merit. Added to that is what Quraysh possess of completeness of form and precedence in noble character traits. For all of that, people became followers of them: their righteous followed their righteous, and their wicked followed their wicked. The matter remained thus after the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) until the seventh century, when the Arabs weakened and Quraysh weakened; then the non-Arabs gained the upper hand and took control of authority.

[What Happened from the Muslims During the Prophet’s Illness and After His Death]

Question: Among the things that perplex the mind is what occurred

from the Muslims after the death of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and before that during his illness, when he urged them to go forth in the expedition of Usāmah and they were sluggish in responding to him, as though they pitied him more than he pitied himself. Then when he passed away, they left him and busied themselves with the matter of pledging allegiance (bay'ah) for the caliphate.

Here arises a question: Why were the Anṣār alone gathered in the Saqifah? And why did they pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr? Then when 'Alī or Fāṭimah later called them, they said: "If we had heard this statement from you before pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr, not a single man among us would have stayed back."

And where are the hadiths that mention 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) and his entitlement to the caliphate? Did everyone forget them, or did they feign forgetfulness? Even though the Anṣār love 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*).

Likewise the incident of objecting to the writing of the Messenger of Allah's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) document (the "Calamity of Thursday"). All of this is found in the sources of both the Shī'ah and the Sunnis. So how can the situation be depicted in its true form? Is there something in the hadiths that the people of that era did not know? Or was there another hidden factor operating behind the scenes, obstructing and hindering the prophetic commands?

Clarify the matter for us: what excuse is there for those who have an excuse, and what is the truth concerning these events?

Answer: There is no doubt and no ambiguity about the deviation of Quraysh, in general, from 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) and their enmity toward him. In *Nahj al-Balāghah* there is much of his complaint against Quraysh, such as his saying: "O Allah, I seek Your aid against Quraysh, for they have severed my kinship and denied me a right that is mine..." or as he said; and such as his saying: "Quraysh have recompensed me with the worst of recompense..." and so on.

Quraysh seized control of the caliphate after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the caliphate became purely Qurashī. Banū Hāshim and the Anṣār were removed from it; Quraysh did not grant them any share or portion in it at all.

They declared a cold war against 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) and the People of the House, and against the Anṣār. The caliphs forbade narrating hadith from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) altogether, both in transmission and in writing. No one dared to narrate the virtues of 'Alī and the People of the House, or the virtues of the Anṣār. Then they promoted and spread propaganda against the personality of 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) until he (*Peace be*

upon him) became, in the eyes of the generality of Muslims, a symbol of falsehood. This was in the era of the early caliphs.

As for the Anṣār, although their love for 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) was greater than their love for anyone else, they nevertheless coveted the caliphate after the death of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). The majority of them forgot the Prophet's bequests (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and abandoned them, preferring their own desires and longing for worldly gain.

No one from their scholars and people of insight attended the meeting at the Saqīfah. Rather, those who were present were their common folk and their Bedouins. Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī did not attend, nor did Khuzaymah ibn Thābit, the possessor of the "two testimonies". Twelve of their scholars did stand up, however, when Abū Bakr assumed the caliphate, and they made public what they possessed of knowledge; this is well known.

- It is known that the common people are followers of every screamer, and they sway with every wind. Therefore, their gathering in the Saqīfah is not something to be found strange, for it is the very nature of the masses and the ignorant.

Know that the gathering of the common Anṣār in the Saqīfah to seek the caliphate did not come from the opinion of their scholars and people of insight, as is proven by the objection of those twelve scholars who stood up in the Mosque of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and made clear to the people what they had of knowledge concerning 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) and his entitlement to the caliphate over Abū Bakr.

What the Anṣār said to 'Alī and Fāṭimah after the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr is true, because if 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) had been in the place of Abū Bakr and 'Umar on the day of the Saqīfah, they would have pledged allegiance to him. Or, if they had been given a choice between the two men, they would have chosen to pledge allegiance to 'Alī. No choice made by the masses is surprising, for they are ready to pledge allegiance to Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh—and they had been intending that—and to pledge to someone else besides him without concern, just as is the case with the masses in all situations.

- This is the reality of the situation on that day: Quraysh, who were enemies of 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*), gained control of the matter, and the common Anṣār followed them. Nothing remained at the side of 'Alī except Banū Hāshim and the people of knowledge and insight from the Anṣār, and they were few, counted on the fingers.

A benefit regarding general (summary) faith)

His saying, *exalted is He*: “*The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers...*” [al-Baqarah:285], and His saying, *exalted is He*: “*Say, ‘We believe in Allah and in what has been revealed to us...*” to the end of the verse [al-Baqarah:136], and the like.

From this and similar (texts) it may be taken that general (summary) faith is sufficient. On this basis, it is not a condition to know the Imams of the People of the House (Ahl al-Bayt) in detail, except in the case of one about whom evidence has come obligating knowledge of him specifically – such as the Commander of the Faithful, and the two Ḥasans (*Peace be upon them*), and the Imām of the time – for the evidences have judged that it is obligatory to know those we have mentioned by specific designation.

As for those three, the evidences for that are many.

And as for the Imām of the time, then (this is) because of the likes of what is narrated by the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): “*Whoever dies without knowing the Imām of his time dies a death of the Jāhiliyyah,*” or as he said.

What is obligatory is that the legally responsible person then know, in a general way, that the People of the House, after those three who are from the offspring of the two Ḥasans, are the people of truth, the heirs of the Prophet, his successors, and those who stand in his place; that the one who follows them is saved and the one who opposes them is astray; that they are Allah’s chosen and select from this community; that love for them is an obligatory duty; and that Allah has purified them from all impurity with thorough purification.

What we have said is supported by the fact that what the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought from Allah concerning the People of the House is his making the community know the People of the Cloak, specifying them, their virtue, their purity, their precedence, their successorship, and so on; then his clarifying, in a general way, the virtue of the People of the House – that they are the people of truth until the Day of Resurrection, and that they are... etc. – just as it has come from him obligating knowledge of the Imām of the time, as we have mentioned.

As for faith in Allah, *exalted is He*, in a general way, like the faith of the common people – what appears to me is that the general person’s general faith suffices him.

What indicates this is that the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to be satisfied with that.

What we have said is also borne out by the well-known ḥadīth: “*The*

pillars of Islam are: that you bear witness that there is no deity but Allah, and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, that you establish the prayer..." and so on, or as he said.

What we have mentioned is also supported by what Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd mentioned about the Commander of the Faithful's (*Peace be upon him*) being uniquely distinguished with knowledge of kalām (theology). What Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd mentioned is correct, for nothing of the details of the science of kalām has been narrated from any of the Companions, despite the abundance of what has been narrated from them.

Yes, repelling specious arguments is obligatory. Thus it is obligatory – as a communal obligation – to know kalām to a degree that one is able to repel specious arguments and undo deceptive ambiguities.

In the ḥadīth: *"Rather, knowledge is taken away by the death of the scholars..."* and so on. And reality confirms the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) statement. When there is a scholar in a tribe or village, that tribe is further removed from tribulations and misguidance; but when the scholar among them dies, specious arguments and deceptions seep into them.

On enjoining good and forbidding evil

It is of the nature of the believer that he feels at ease with good (ma'rūf), harmonizes with it, and is comfortable with it; and that he is disturbed by evil (munkar), recoils from it, and feels constricted by it.

Such is the nature of the believer into whose heart faith has settled; such are his inner states. This is what is meant by "denouncing evil in the heart." Denunciation of evil by the heart is an obligatory duty from which no legally responsible person is excused, and it is not permissible in any circumstance whatsoever to abandon it.

However, this duty is contingent upon knowledge of what is good and what is evil. After knowledge of that, the believer does not need effort to acquire that inner feeling.

This inner feeling is among the signs of faith and its evidences; rather, it is among its necessary entailments – a believer's faith is not complete without it. This feeling may be less when faith is little and may be more when faith is abundant.

This inner feeling is a gateway to great action, for it has been authentically reported that whoever is pleased with the action of a people shares in their action. In that case, whoever is pleased with a matter has entered into it, and whoever is displeased with it has exited from it.

- When you know this, it becomes obligatory upon the believer to pay the utmost attention to this aspect, by training his inner states upon this

nature and striving to increase that inner feeling, and to avoid being negligent in that.

- After what we have mentioned, enjoining good and forbidding evil have three levels:

1. *The first level* is by silent action, such as turning away from the sinner and boycotting him, cutting off acts of kindness towards him, and the appearance of signs of anger on the face.
2. *The second level* is by speech, such as admonition and reminding (people) of Allah's reward and punishment, urging the doing of good, and scolding and deterring from committing evil.
3. *The third level* is by action, such as punishing for the sin, restraining the sinner by imprisonment or beating, and so on.

These are three levels for enjoining good and forbidding evil. The fourth level is what we opened this discussion with – namely, the inner feeling (of the heart).

The inner feeling of the heart and the first of the three levels are obligatory upon the believer in every situation, without any condition, except knowledge, which is a general condition for all levels.

As for the last two levels, their obligation has conditions in addition to knowledge:

1. That the person [enjoining and forbidding] believes it likely that some benefit will result from his enjoining or forbidding. If the believer thinks that his enjoining or forbidding will have benefit and interest, it becomes obligatory; otherwise, it is not obligatory. The proof of this is rational: intellects judge that an action from which no benefit whatsoever results is repugnant, and regard the one who does that as ignorant and foolish.
2. That the one who enjoins or forbids be safe – in his own person, honor, and wealth. The proof of this is what came in the story of the People of the Cave, and what Allah, *exalted is He*, commanded the Muslims at the beginning, when they were weak, of refraining, turning away, pardoning, overlooking, and concealment. In this regard Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"Except if you fear from them a danger (taqiyyah)."* [Āl 'Imrān:28] and *"Except for one who is compelled [to renounce his religion] while his heart is secure in faith."* [an-Nahl:106]
3. That the enjoining and forbidding not be a cause for the increase of the evil, or for the occurrence of something more evil than it. The proof of this is the intellects and what Allah has instilled in them of disapproving such a thing. Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"Do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah*

in enmity without knowledge.” [al-An‘ām:108]

[The obligation of predominating likelihood of victory for whoever wants to rise to support the religion]

In *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kāfī* it says: al-Ḥasan (*Peace be upon him*) said: “It is incumbent upon one who desires Allah and desires to support the religion that he not expose himself (openly), nor make light of spilling his blood and the blood of the Muslims and making their womenfolk permissible [to the enemy], except when he has with him a group of religious people whose obedience and loyalty can be trusted.” End quote.

I say: What supports this and indicates it is what has been established: that Allah, *exalted is He*, commanded His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the Muslims to refrain from fighting at the beginning of Islam. Then when they migrated to al-Madinah and became a community with a polity, numbers, and equipment, Allah, *exalted is He*, permitted them to fight the polytheists.

On this basis, it is not permissible for a Muslim to expose himself and his Muslim brothers to the spilling of their blood and the violation of their womenfolk, except when they have force, numbers, and equipment with which predominating likelihood of victory is attained, along with preservation of the lives of the Muslims, protection of their womenfolk, and defense of their domain. Allah, *exalted is He*, said: “*And do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction...*” [al-Baqarah:195], and He, *exalted is He*, said: “*And do not kill yourselves. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful.*” [an-Nisā’:29], and He, *exalted is He*, said: “*And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war...*” to the end of the verse [al-Anfāl:60], and He, *exalted is He*, said: “*Now Allah has lightened [the hardship] for you, and He has known that among you is weakness. So if there are from you one hundred steadfast, they will overcome two hundred; and if there are from you one thousand, they will overcome two thousand by permission of Allah. And Allah is with the steadfast.*” [al-Anfāl:66] – so Allah, *exalted is He*, made it obligatory upon the believers to be steadfast and to fight the enemy if the enemy is up to twice their number.

[Book of “The Position Between Two Positions”]

[Good Deeds and Evil Deeds]

Question: Allah, *exalted is He*, has mentioned that a good deed is (rewarded) tenfold, and that an evil deed is (recompensed) with its like, in His saying, *exalted is He*: *"Whoever comes with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof, and whoever comes with an evil deed will not be recompensed except the like thereof..."* [al-An‘ām:160]. And it is established that the recompense of the sinner, on account of his sin, is eternal abiding in the Fire if he does not repent. The outward sense of the verse is that it is informing about Allah’s bounty and mercy toward His servants – for that reason He made the reward of the good deed tenfold, and made the recompense of the evil deed a single evil.

What is requested is to clarify how eternal abiding in the Fire is “the like” of the evil deed, and to clarify Allah’s bounty and mercy in that.

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: It is possible that what is meant by that are the minor sins which do not necessitate eternal abiding in the Fire for the one who commits them. As for the believers, Allah, *exalted is He*, expiates them for them by their performance of acts of obedience and their avoidance of major sins. As for others, they are recompensed for them with their like on the Day of Resurrection, then their punishment for them ceases, then they abide eternally in the Fire because of their disbelief in Allah, their committing major sins and immoralities, and their arrogance toward Allah and His Messenger and His Book.

On this basis, Allah’s bounty and mercy are clear: as for in the recompense of the good deed, then without doubt; and as for in the recompense of the evil deed, then because He does not recompense the one who commits a minor sin among the disbelievers and the openly sinful except according to it, then its punishment ceases, then he remains abiding eternally in the Fire of Hell because of his disbelief and his sinful dissoluteness.

As for with respect to the believer, the minor sin is written against him as an evil deed, but Allah, *exalted is He*, due to the vastness of His mercy and His forgiveness, forgives it and overlooks it on the Day of Resurrection, because of his avoiding major sins and immoralities and his performance of the obligations of the Most Merciful, blessed and exalted. Thus Allah’s bounty in the case of the believer is clearer and more evident. Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *"Those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, except the small faults – indeed, your Lord is vast in forgiveness."* [an-Najm:32] and He said: *"Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds."* [Hūd:114], and the like of that.

Yes, disbelief in Allah, undutifulness toward parents, killing a soul, and all the major sins for which Allah, *exalted is He*, has decreed eternal abiding in the Fire for the one who commits them if he does not repent of them – the recompense of whoever commits any of that is its like, and the “like,” as Allah has informed, is eternal abiding in the punishment of the Fire.

Now, even if we, as human beings, do not perceive and do not understand the equivalence between, for example, fornication and its recompense – which is eternal abiding in the Fire – we do indeed know and perceive that Allah is Just, Wise, and does not wrong even the weight of an atom, and that if there is a good deed, He multiplies it.

The cause of this problematic impression is that the human being evaluates and weighs the sin with the scale of his weak intellect. Concerning this Allah, *exalted is He*, said in the story of the Slander, in Sūrat an-Nūr: *“And you thought it insignificant, while it was, in the sight of Allah, tremendous.”* [an-Nūr:15] And Allah, *exalted is He*, said – depicting for us the sin of killing and its magnitude: *“Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land – it is as if he had killed all mankind.”* [al-Mā'idah:32]

Among that whose aspect of greatness and enormity can be perceived is what came in the ḥadīth: *“Whoever initiates an evil practice (sunnah sayyi'ah) will bear its burden and the burden of whoever acts upon it until the Day of Resurrection.”*

And among that is turning people away from the path of Allah and standing in the way of guidance and faith – because of what results from that of preventing people from guidance, which is the path of happiness.

And in the ḥadīth: *“For Allah to guide a man through you is better for you than whatever the sun rises upon,”* and the opposite is opposite.

[The Balancing (of Deeds)]

Question: It has been authentically transmitted from some of our Imāms (*Peace be upon them*) that they held the view of balancing (al-muwāzanah) between good deeds and evil deeds, using as proof His saying, *exalted is He*: *“So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.”* [az-Zalzalah:7-8] And it has been authentically transmitted from the rest of the People of the House (*Peace be upon them*) that they held the view of nullification (al-iḥbāt). Thus their statements in this issue have appeared to conflict. So is this issue among the foundational issues (uṣūl) in which the truth lies with one (side) and the one who opposes is mistaken and sinful? Or is it among the speculative issues in which every mujtahid is correct?

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success: The one who errs in such an issue is excused, and it is not said that he is “correct,”

because the reality on the Day of Reckoning is one of the two (positions). It appears that this issue is among the speculative matters of the principles (uṣūl) and their branches, and that the truth in it lies with one (side).

[On Nullification (iḥbāt) and Repentance]

[Question]: On the view that the major sins nullify deeds: if a believer commits a major sin and then repents, do the good deeds he had done before the sin return to him, or do they not return?

And if you say that they do return, then it would follow that if there were two believers who both grew up upon obedience to Allah at the same time, then one of them sinned and then repented, it would follow that the two of them would be equal in reward and rank – and that is clearly false. So what is the answer to this issue? May Allah reward you with good.

Answer: On the view that the good deeds return, it does not follow that the two of them are equal, since the interposition of sin in the case of one of them and not the other is a differentiating factor.

As for whether the good deeds of the repentant one return to him or not, we have no way to make a definitive statement and cut off (all doubt) in this matter. The evidences are not explicit on that, and the intellect deems it possible... and deems it possible...

And there is nothing far-fetched in their returning, in view of the vastness of the mercy of the Most Merciful and the vastness of His bounty, pardon, generosity, and richness. When the sinner repents from his sin, He, *exalted is He*, expiates his sin and forgives it for him as though it had not been. When He, *exalted is He*, expiates it and forgives it, then indeed He, *glorified is He*, expiates its traces and its consequences; and nullification (iḥbāt) is among the traces and consequences of the sin. So the closer (view) is that when He, *exalted is He*, forgives the sin, He pardons its traces and expiates them as though they had never been.

[The Meaning of: “Allah will replace their evil deeds with good deeds”]

Allah, *exalted is He*, said: *“Except for those who repent, believe, and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good.”* [al-Furqān:70]

The meaning of Allah’s replacing the evil deeds of those who repent with good deeds is that Allah, *exalted is He*, by His grace, restores to the repentant person the like of what was nullified by the major sin from his good deeds, so that the good deeds of the repentant one after repentance become like his good deeds that had been in his record before he committed the major sin.

What we have mentioned in explaining the verse is one of three interpretations that the scholars have mentioned.

What indicates this interpretation is what is narrated in the well-known ḥadīth: *“The one who repents from a sin is like one who has no sin.”*

And it is narrated that one of the Companions asked the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) about righteous acts of piety he used to perform in the Jāhiliyyah, so the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to him: *“You have accepted Islam along with whatever good you had done before.”* This is the meaning of the narration: that by his accepting Islam, the reward is written for him for the acts of piety he had done in the Jāhiliyyah.

And He, *exalted is He*, said: *“But if they cease, then what has previously occurred will be forgiven for them.”* [al-Anfāl:38] And in the ḥadīth: *“Repentance wipes out what came before it.”* So if repentance erases the sin and removes it until the sinner, through repentance, becomes like one who has no sin, then there remains nothing that necessitates nullifying the good deeds that preceded the sin.

I find this view strongest and incline toward it, because of what has preceded, and because of what is known of the greatness of Allah’s mercy and the vastness of His bounty toward His servants, and that His habitual way with them is mercy and beneficence, and that His anger and punishment only occur due to a contingent consideration required by wisdom. *“And what would Allah do with your punishment if you are grateful and believe? And ever is Allah Appreciative and Knowing.”* [an-Nisā’:147]

What also indicates this is that Allah, *exalted is He*, has called all His servants to tread the path to Paradise, has encouraged them toward it and urged them to it, and has sent His Messengers and revealed His Books so that they might call (people) to the abode of His mercy. Then He warned them from walking the path of His wrath and punishment, and warned them from it and forbade them from it, and so on.

[Minor Sins]

Question: What is requested is the explanation and clarification of minor sins.

Answer – and Allah is the One who grants success and help: The scholars have differed regarding what minor sins are, after agreeing that there are minor and major sins.

The well-known view in the madhhab of our Imāms (*Peace be upon them*) is that every deliberate sin is a major sin. On this basis, minor sins are those sins that occur through mistake and forgetfulness. Among

“mistake” is error in ijtihād and interpretation, as in the sin of Ādam and Yūnus (*Peace be upon them*).

Others have said: major sins are those for which Allah, *exalted is He*, has threatened (their doer) with the Fire, or has described them as “tremendous,” or those for which a prescribed punishment (ḥadd) has been legislated, and so on; and whatever is other than that is minor sins. And it has been said... and it has been said... etc.

I say: There is no doubt that a sin is described as “small” in relation to what is above it, and is described as “great” in relation to what is below it. So kissing a non-maḥram woman is greater than merely looking (at her), and smaller than fornication, and so it is with the rest of sins. However, one ought not to rely upon this method in defining minor sins, nor depend upon this scale, because of:

1. What came in the story of the Slander (al-ifk), when the Muslims passed along the story of the slander with their tongues and circulated it. Then Allah, *exalted is He*, rebuked them for that and condemned them, and said to them: *“And you thought it insignificant, while it was, in the sight of Allah, tremendous.”* [an-Nūr:15]
2. What came in the well-known ḥadīth, that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) passed by two graves and said: *“Indeed, they are being punished, and they are not being punished for something great. As for one of them, he used to walk about spreading talebearing, and as for the other, he did not protect himself from (the impurity of) urine.”*

What appears correct to me is the statement of those who say that there are minor sins other than mistake and forgetfulness, but that Allah, *exalted is He*, did not define them. For if He, *exalted is He*, had defined them, that definition would amount to incitement from Him to commit them, and inciting toward what is evil is something from which Allah, *exalted is He*, must be declared far above.

[A discussion about expiation of minor sins and their types]

The expiators of minor sins:

- The five daily prayers – they expiate what is between them so long as major sins are avoided.
- From Friday to Friday (the Jumu‘ah prayer).
- From Ramaḍān to Ramaḍān.
- Fasting on the Day of ‘Arafah – it expiates the past year.
- The accepted ḥajj and the ‘umrah.
- *“And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds.”*

[Hūd:114]

- *"And if you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your misdeeds."* [An-Nisa:31]
- *"And let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?"* [An-Nur:22]

And, in general, every kind of deed that involves obedience to Allah expiates minor sins—based on: *"Indeed, good deeds do away with bad deeds."* [Hūd:114]

So if it is said: Avoiding major sins expiates minor sins—then what do the five daily prayers expiate? And the five daily prayers expiate what is between them—then what does Friday (Jumu'ah) expiate? And what remains of minor sins for Ramadan fasting to expiate... etc.?

We say: What comes to my mind is that minor sins are of different kinds: among them are those expiated by avoiding major sins; among them are those expiated by the prayers; a type is expiated by Friday (Jumu'ah); a type is expiated by Hajj; a type is expiated by charity... etc.

And what we mentioned may be supported by matters:

- 1- What is narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) meaning: *"O community of merchants, mix your trade with charity; for perhaps lying may occur..."*—so he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) guided merchants to expiate what may occur in their trade, such as a lie in bargaining.
- 2- That Allah (*Most High*) made the expiation for accidental killing to be emancipation and fasting; likewise in *ḡihār* with the addition of feeding; and He made for the pilgrim who shaves his head (in *iḥrām*) fasting or charity or sacrifice; and in the expiation of an oath: feeding, or clothing, or emancipation—then fasting; and He made for the one who cannot fast, for each day the feeding of a poor person.
And it is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), that he guided one who approached his wife while she was menstruating to give charity of a *dīnār* or half a *dīnār*... and so on to the end of what is reported in this chapter. For Allah (*Most High*) has made, for expiating each type of violation, a type of good deed—and there is no doubt it is not expiated by other than it. Accordingly, the expiation of minor sins is in that manner.
- 3- Allah (*Most High*) said: *"And whatever strikes you of disaster—it is for what your hands have earned."* [Ash-Shura:30]

Therefore we say: What afflicts a person in himself, or his child, or his family, or his wealth, or in what he loves—of worldly incidents and contingencies—is the result of a sin his hand has earned. And the

Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) guided, for safety from that, to charity—for it repels affliction; and he guided to maintaining kinship ties—for it increases lifespan.

And it has come—as in the narration of Zayd ibn ‘Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*)—that saying “*Subḥān Allāh, al-ḥamdu lillāh, lā ilāha illā Allāh, Allāhu akbar*” one hundred times repels one hundred kinds of affliction; and reciting al-Fātiḥah and then: “*al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabbil-‘ālamīn ḥamdan kathīran ṭayyiban mubārakan fīh*” repels seventy kinds of affliction; and it has come regarding the recitation of Āyat al-Kursī and the two Mu‘awwidhatayn something similar... and so on. Thus we may say: charity, maintaining kinship ties, saying tasbīḥ one hundred times, reciting al-Fātiḥah, etc.—all of that expiates the sin that causes calamities and affliction... etc.

Therefore we say: rewards differ in their kinds: the reward of prayers is one kind; the reward of charity is one kind; the reward of fasting is one kind; the reward of Hajj is one kind... etc.

[Hadith: “Whoever relieves a remorseful one, Allah will relieve his slip on the Day of Resurrection”]

Question: The hadith: “*Whoever relieves a remorseful one, Allah will relieve his slip on the Day of Resurrection.*” If the “slip” is major, nothing expiates it except repentance—as is known in the principles of the Imams (*Peace be Upon Them*). And if the slip is minor, then minor sins are expiated by acts of obedience—so what is the intended meaning?

Answer (and Allah is the One who grants success): What appears to me—and Allah knows best—is that the meaning is that Allah (*Most High*) grants the doer of “relieving/canceling” (iqālah) an increase of divine gentleness and enabling success in this world, which then calls him to repent and regret what he committed of slips and stumbles. Then, when the Day of Resurrection comes, Allah relieves (removes) his slip—one which he had sought to be relieved from in this world—by Allah’s enabling success and gentle aid He supplied him with in this world, as a recompense for his kindness in relieving the remorseful one by performing iqālah. And similarly, comparable hadiths can be interpreted like this—*Allah knows best*. And praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

[On the joining of a believer’s descendants to him]

Question: Allah (*Most High*) said: “*As for those who believe and whose descendants follow them in faith, We will join their descendants with them, and We will not deprive them of anything of their deeds. Every person, for what he earned, is retained.*” [At-Tur:21]

Will the lower-ranking descendants be joined to their forebear of high rank without doing deeds worthy of that rank?

And will the believer among the descendants of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) be joined to the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in rank and station?

Which is better: the believing person from the Household (Ahl al-Bayt) (*Peace be Upon Them*), or the believing scholar-mujāhid from outside the Household?

And does Allah’s saying: *"And that there is not for man except that for which he strives"* [An-Najm:39] conflict with what preceded? And if it conflicts, how is it reconciled?

Answer (and Allah is the One who grants success): This question contains several questions, and these are the answers arranged according to the order in the question:

1- The righteous descendants will be joined to their righteous forebear of high rank. But this does not mean that the descendants will be joined to their forebear such that they are in his very rank and station with Allah—so that the believer from the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) would be in the station of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and in the station of ‘Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*). For it is known that those two—may Allah’s blessings be upon them—have stations and degrees with Allah (*Most High*) that no one from this Ummah can reach.

And in hadith: it was said, “O Messenger of Allah, what is al-Wasīlah?” He said: “*It is the highest degree in Paradise; none attains it except a Prophet, and I hope that I will be he.*” And in a narration: “*The strike of ‘Ali on the Day of al-Khandaq equals the deeds of my Ummah until the Day of Resurrection,*” or as he said—along with other reports besides that.

Therefore, the meaning is that Allah (*Most High*) will join the righteous descendants to their righteous parents in the general sense of honor—so He grants them of honor what He does not grant others who are like them in faith and deeds. And that added honor and elevation occurred for them because it is part of the completeness of Allah’s reward and honoring of their parents: the parents deserved reward and daragat (ranks) because of their righteous deeds; and among what they deserved is the honoring of righteous descendants. Thus, what the descendants receive of extra ranks and honors is, in reality, by deed—even if they did not do it themselves: their parents did it. And the reward, in truth, belongs to the parents; and honoring the children is honoring the parents—people recognize this and find it within themselves, without doubt or hesitation.

Will a believer from the Prophet’s family (Ahl al-Bayt) reach the Prophet’s (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

rank?

The answer has already been included in the first answer, so there is no need to repeat it. We add here:

We may say that Allah—*Exalted is He*—has joined the Prophet’s descendants, in this worldly life, to their forefather (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in honor, elevation, and nobility. So, in this world, they possess the honor, dignity, and lofty standing connected to Prophethood; and Allah has taken from this Ummah a covenant to observe that.

And it is known that whoever observes this rank for the Prophet’s descendants (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) will not reach the level that is due to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). By the same analogy, what they attain of honor in the Hereafter will also be of varying degrees—though honor itself differs in its levels.

Which is better: a believer from Ahl al-Bayt, or a believing scholar who strives (mujāhid) from outside Ahl al-Bayt?

The answer: each has virtue, and the measures of virtue and what follows from it of reward are known only to Allah—*Exalted is He*.

What seems closer to me is that the striving scholar is better than a believer from Ahl al-Bayt who is neither a scholar nor one who strives:

- Allah—*Exalted is He*—said: *“Allah will raise those of you who believe and those who have been given knowledge in degrees (ranks).”* [Al-Mujādilah:11] (Official Qur’an translation referenced; see note below).
- And He—*Exalted is He*—said: *“Say, ‘O Prophet,’ ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’ Only people of reason take heed.”* [Az-Zumar:9] (Official Qur’an translation referenced; see note below).
 - And He—*Exalted is He*—said: *“He gives wisdom to whom He wills. And whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good.”* [Al-Baqarah:269] And many other verses.

And in the Sunnah there is much—such as his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: *“The superiority of the scholar over the worshipper is like the superiority of the moon on the night of the full moon over the rest of the stars,”* and the ḥadīth: *“The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets,”* and many others.

And among what indicates the nobility of knowledge is what Allah—*Exalted is He*—mentioned about Mūsā (Moses) (*Peace be Upon Him*)—despite his being among the messengers of firm resolve—following al-Khiḍr (*Peace be Upon Him*) in the manner of a servant following one

served.

If it is said: “The child is a part of his father, and there is no doubt that a part of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is superior to one who is not.”

We say: No doubt about that; however, this “being a part” here does not take the ruling of literal/essential “being a part,” because among the offspring are the believing and the immoral and the wrongdoer—whereas in the case of literal/essential “being a part,” infallibility would be established for it.

Allah—*Exalted is He*—said: *“And that each person will only have what they endeavoured towards.”* [An-Najm:39] This does not contradict His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *“And those who believed and whose descendants followed them in faith—We will join their descendants with them...”* [At-Tūr:21] That is because the recompense a legally responsible person deserves *as a matter of entitlement* is only by deed; and there is nothing to prevent Allah—*Exalted is He*—from giving him what he deserves by his deeds, and then giving him what he does not deserve—purely as (grace) and (mercy).

[Is it decisively judged that one who says “major sinners will exit the Fire” is a disbeliever or an immoral sinner?]

Question: Some scholars of Ahl al-Bayt said that one is not decisively judged as a disbeliever or immoral sinner for saying “exiting the Fire,” while it is known that the claim that the people of major sins will leave the Fire is a rejection of Allah’s saying: *“And they will never be absent from it.”* [Al-Infīṭār:16], and His saying: *“It is not by your wishes nor the wishes of the People of the Scripture...”* [An-Nisā’:123], and the like—so why is there no decisive ruling of their immorality or disbelief?

Answer (Allah is the One who grants success): Error in some foundational matters—even decisive ones—does not, by itself, invalidate faith. I will clarify a rule by which issues can be distinguished from one another:

We say: an error that does not entail ignorance of Allah—*Exalted is He*—nor attributing an ugly/evil act to Him: its doer is not declared a disbeliever, nor an immoral sinner, even if he contradicts decisive evidence—such as one who marries a woman in her ‘iddah (waiting period)—due to the generality of His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *“And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred.”* [Al-Aḥzāb:5]. And due to His—*Exalted is He*—teaching His servants to say: *“Our Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make a mistake.”* [Al-Baqarah:286]. And due to the ḥadīth: *“My Ummah has been excused for mistakes and forgetfulness...”*

So their statement “we do not decisively judge him a disbeliever or

immoral sinner” is built on the assumption that they erred—because they did not reach the evidences, or did not understand their meanings. But if they have accessed the evidences and understood their meanings, and know what is sound and unsound, then there is no excuse and no argument for them.

This is what that rule is built upon, and the statement of some of the Imams is built upon it as well. If stubborn defiance and obstinate rejection becomes apparent, then a decisive ruling of disbelief or immorality follows.

[On the immorality (fisq) of the singer and the listener to singing]

I asked some scholars—*may Allah be pleased with them*—about whether the singer or the listener to songs is an immoral sinner, and they hesitated and did not decisively judge him so, even though the evidences for the prohibition of singing are many; and al-Mawlā al-Ḥujjah Majd al-Dīn al-Mu’ayyidī (*Peace be Upon Him*) authored an independent book on that. Also, Imām al-Ḥujjah ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah (*Peace be Upon Him*) narrated the consensus of Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) on its prohibition—and the consensus of Ahl al-Bayt is a decisive proof.

Question: Do these evidences not yield knowledge, such that judging him immoral would be valid? And if they do not yield knowledge, is there a level besides: a “disbeliever by explicit denial” and a “disbeliever by interpretation,” and an “immoral sinner by explicit admission” and an “immoral sinner by interpretation”?

Answer (Allah is the One who grants success): Know, dear brother, that if you asked that scholar about the ruling on approaching women during menstruation, he would answer you with the same type of answer and would hesitate—despite its prohibition being by the explicit text of the Qur’an. The reason is that the scholars of the Ummah agreed that the perpetrator of a major sin is an immoral sinner, and they decisively judged him so; and that the perpetrator of a minor sin is not an immoral sinner.

But they differed in determining which sins are “major” and which are “minor.” It was said... and it was said... and it was said: “Whatever Allah threatened with the Fire or described as great is a major sin; and what is besides that remains open to being major or minor.” So the one who answered you may have answered on the basis of that view. And this answer does not mean that the prohibition of singing is doubtful or questionable; rather, the matter to him is as we described.

And it is obligatory to forbid singing and every act of disobedience—even if one does not decisively judge the doer immoral—such as singing, and approaching women in the anus, and approaching them during

menstruation, and marrying a woman in ‘iddah, and entering homes without permission, and lowering the gaze from a non-maḥram woman, and winking, and kissing, and the like.

And this does not mean making them easy or treating them lightly. No act of disobedience should be treated lightly at all; rather, it should be forbidden with the strongest forbiddance.

If someone deliberately commits something from the minor sins and says: “There is no sin upon me in it,” then he is a disbeliever—on the condition that it has become clear to him that it is among what Allah—*Exalted is He*—and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) forbade.

Now, what the author of *al-Asās* preferred is that “every deliberate sin is major,” based on the general threat against every one who disobeys Allah—*Exalted is He*—of abiding eternally in the Fire. So a believer should build upon this for himself, as a matter of caution; and then deal with people according to the first view—so he neither declares disbelief nor immorality—also as a matter of caution.

And know that a sin being “minor” does not affect the obligation of condemning wrongdoing. Rather, condemning wrongdoing is obligatory absolutely—by speech and action—according to the order (of levels), and Allah is the One who grants success.

[Those Who Are Considered Like the Sinner (Fāsiq)]

Question: The scholars of the madhhab said: The congregational prayer is not valid behind a sinner (fāsiq) or anyone who is considered as such. The sinner is well known, but we want a rule by which we can recognize one who is “in the same ruling as the sinner.” What is that?

Answer (and Allah is the Giver of success): Their discussion about defining who is in the same ruling as the sinner is not clear, but it should be the one who commits a sin that could be either minor or major. However, this does not completely align with their words, for according to them, every deliberate sin is a major one.

Perhaps what we have mentioned is what is meant by the higher class of *al-mukhrijin*¹, for even though this was not their formal view, they formulated the madhhab in a way that accommodates both those who say every deliberate sin is a major one and those who say otherwise. This is what has become clear to me — and Allah is the One who grants success.

[Jihād Against the Hypocrites]

1- Al-Mukhrijin; they are the ones who extracted from the statements of the Imams and their evidences by means of analogy (Qiyas) or implication (mafhum).

Question: Allah the Exalted says: “*O Prophet, strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be harsh upon them.*” [At-Tawbah:73]. It has not been narrated in the Prophet’s (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) biography that he fought the hypocrites; what is narrated is that he (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) only fought the polytheists. So what is meant by this “jihād”?

Answer: The word *jihād* linguistically means to exert effort to the utmost — whether in advice, in battle, or in any action that concerns a person or benefits others.

Thus, one who exerts himself in seeking knowledge is called a *mujāhid* (striver); one who strives earnestly to advise the Muslims is called a *mujāhid*; and one who works diligently to maintain kindness toward his parents and ties of kinship is also called a *mujāhid*, and so on.

Therefore, the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) fulfilled Allah’s command in this verse by striving to his utmost in fighting the polytheists, and also by striving to the utmost in advising the hypocrites, countering their plots, nullifying their corruption, and warning against them. It is upon this understanding that the famous hadith came: “*We have returned from the lesser jihād to the greater jihād,*” meaning the struggle against one’s own self.

As for His saying, Exalted is He: “*Not equal are those believers remaining [at home] – other than the disabled – and the mujahideen [who strive and fight] in the cause of Allah...*” [An-Nisā’:95], the *mujāhidīn* here refers to those who fight with the sword and engage in combat, as indicated by their contrast with those who remain behind.

And His saying, Exalted is He: “*And you strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives...*” [As-Saff:11], also refers to fighting, as the context shows.

In the Sīrah:

Fighting the rebels (*bughāh*) is superior to fighting the disbelievers, for several reasons:

1. The disbelievers attacked Islam from its outer borders, while the rebels attacked it from its very core.
2. The sin of the rebels occurred within the abode of Islam, making it like a sin committed inside a mosque.
3. The rebels, due to their misconceptions, may lead many Muslims into sin — unlike the disbelievers, whom no Muslim believes. It is evident that virtue follows what is more beneficial and righteous; thus, whatever is more beneficial and good for Islam and the Muslims is better than that which is lesser in benefit and righteousness.

Imām Abū Ṭālib narrated with an authentic chain that the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) said: *"By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the Zabāniyah (angels of punishment) hasten more swiftly toward the sinful reciters of the Qur'an than toward the worshippers of fire and idols. They say: 'O Lord, they began with us; they hastened toward us, O Lord, O Lord!' Then the Lord, Blessed and Exalted, says: 'Is one who knows like one who does not know?'"* — end of narration.

Types of Disbelief (Kufr)

1. **Disbelief of Denial (Kufr al-Juhūd):** This is the disbelief of idol-worshippers, Jews, and Christians, and likewise anyone who denies or rejects anything brought by the prophets and messengers (May Allah's blessing be upon them). It also includes the fatalists and anthropomorphists, and anyone who denies that Allah created some of His creation — like the *Muṭrafiyyah* — or claims that he can act as Allah acts in ways that none but Allah can.
2. **Disbelief of Ingratitude (Kufr an-Ni'mah):** This is the failure to show gratitude to Allah the Exalted.
3. **Disbelief of the Limbs (Kufr al-Jawāriḥ):** There is disagreement regarding this type, but the evidence supporting it includes:
 - The Companions used to say regarding the one who committed a major sin that "he has become a hypocrite," and the reality of hypocrisy is to outwardly display Islam while concealing disbelief. Sometimes they said, "He has disbelieved," as when it is narrated that 'Ā'ishah said about 'Uthmān: *"Kill Na'thal, for he has disbelieved."*
 - The famous hadith: *"The adulterer does not commit adultery while he is a believer, and the one who drinks wine does not drink it while he is a believer..."* — and similar to this hadith is His saying: *"And if they had believed in Allah and the Prophet and what was revealed to him, they would not have taken them as allies..."* [Al-Mā'idah:81], and His saying: *"And obey Allah and His Messenger if you should be believers."* [Al-Anfāl:1], and *"The fornicator does not marry except a female fornicator or a polytheist."* [An-Nūr:3]
 - And His saying: *"The fornicatress – none marries her except a fornicator or a polytheist, and that has been made unlawful to the believers."* [An-Nūr:3], shows that the name of "believer" is removed from both the adulterer and the adulteress.
 - The deliberate killer does not inherit — which indicates that the bond of Islam and faith between them has been severed

by the act of killing. Imām Zayd (*Peace be upon him*) used this as evidence.

On Disbelief by Misinterpretation (Kufr at-Ta’wīl)

According to the madhhab: To assert decisively that the sinful Muslims will enter Paradise even if they die persisting in sin and rebellion — this is *kufr at-ta’wīl* [disbelief through misinterpretation], not explicit disbelief. However, merely allowing the possibility that they may enter Paradise is an error that does not reach disbelief or sin. All this is as mentioned in the *Sharḥ* and its commentaries.

I say: The reasoning for the first view (that it is *kufr at-ta’wīl*) is that asserting decisively the entry of the sinful into Paradise without repentance entails denying Allah’s saying: *“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His limits – He will put him into the Fire to abide eternally therein...”* [An-Nisā’:14], and similar verses.

Yet this is called *kufr at-ta’wīl* [interpretive disbelief] rather than explicit disbelief, because their statement does not directly declare the falsity of the verse, but it implies it.

As for the second view, that merely allowing the possibility of their entry into Paradise is not disbelief, it is because it does not imply denial of the verses — it is only an error unbefitting one who believes in the Qur’an.

[The Repentance of the Disbeliever After Death]

“Indeed, those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers – never would the [whole] capacity of the earth in gold be accepted from one of them if he would [seek to] ransom himself with it.” [Āl ‘Imrān:91]

Question: What is the meaning of His saying: *“Even if he should offer it as ransom,”* after His saying; *“Never would the capacity of the earth in gold be accepted from one of them”*?

Answer (and Allah is the Giver of success): We understand that the verse was revealed to clarify that the repentance of the disbeliever after death is not accepted. It is as if Allah *the Exalted* said: If the disbeliever were to seek nearness to Allah after death through repentance or any righteous deed — even if his offering to Allah were the fill of the earth in gold — Allah would not accept it from him. Even if he were to offer the fill of the earth in gold as a ransom to save himself from Hell — just as a captive in this world ransoms himself with wealth to be freed — it would not be accepted. Thus, we understand the difference between the two statements: The first clause refers to seeking Allah’s pleasure and pardon — as when a sinner in this world gives charity to the poor as expiation for his sins.

The second clause, however, refers to a different meaning: that the

disbeliever will not have his ransom accepted. The ransom (*fidya*) is not a means of seeking nearness nor an expiation, as we have previously explained in the meaning of *fidya*. And Allah knows best.

[The Book of Promise and Threat]

[Eternal Abiding in the Fire]

Question: Is it valid that Allah *the Exalted*, out of grace, should show favor to a sinner who persisted (in his sin) after the judgment has been passed that he will abide eternally in the Fire, and then pardon him and thereby prevent him from entering the Fire — just as, in the observable world, it is good for a king to pardon one of his subjects after a sentence of punishment has been passed upon him? Is that which is good from the servant likewise good from Allah *the Exalted*?

Answer (and Allah is the Giver of success):

- Pardoning the criminal is, according to reason, something good, and in general permissible according to its rulings. It is not obligatory upon the one who has a right to take his right in full; rather, he may take or leave (it), whether in presence or in absence. Thus it has been established in the judgments of intellects.
- However, there may arise, in the way of beneficence, an impediment that prevents judging that beneficence to be good, so that beneficence, because of that incidental impediment, becomes ugly (reprehensible). The attribution of ugliness to beneficence in such a case is only an incidental attribution.

If it is said: Goodness (al-ḥusn) and beneficence (al-iḥsān) are among the attributes whose essences do not change. So if an informant were to report and say, “Beneficence is ugly,” or “Goodness is ugly,” his report would be deemed false, and it would be like the statement of one who says, “The motionless is moving,” or “The triangle is a square,” or “The land is a sea.” Such a statement is invalid and unacceptable because it is information about a thing in terms of what is contrary to its very essence, or at odds with it; and what is known to the intellect is that the essence of a thing does not change.

It is said in response: Yes, beneficence does not change, as you have said, and it is impossible for beneficence to be ugly.

What we mean is that beneficence becomes ugly not insofar as it is beneficence, but because of an ugly adjunct that is joined to it and adheres to it, such that performing the act of beneficence entails the occurrence of that ugliness which inseparably accompanies it. Let us strike for that some examples:

First example: Speaking the truth is good, and it is inconceivable that truth, insofar as it is truth, should cease to be characterized by this attribute and become ugly. However, there may be an adjunct that joins to the speaking of truth whereby the truth becomes ugly, not because it

is truth, but because of the supervening adjunct that has joined it and accompanies it. For example, suppose an oppressor is searching for an innocent believing man in order to kill him, or to torture him, or to take his wealth, and you know the man and his whereabouts. Then that oppressor asks you about the man and his location in order to kill him or ... while he is able to seize him and kill him. In such a case, telling the truth to the oppressor would be ugly and a crime for which the speaker deserves Allah's loathing and wrath. This is clear, for any rational person perceives its ugliness by his intellect alone. And there is no doubt that that the ugliness we find in that truthful statement does not arise from the truthfulness itself, but rather the ugliness is due to what has been joined to the telling of truth — namely, the occurrence of the believer's killing, the taking of his wealth, and his torture.

Thus you see in this example what makes clear to you that something good can become ugly due to the occurrence of an incidental factor that stands in the way of that goodness.

Second example: If among the sultan's subjects there is someone who tyrannizes the people through killing, plundering, and harming them, and then the sultan seizes him, knowing from his condition that he will not cease from that conduct, and knowing that pardoning him would only increase him in rebellion and aggression, then the pardon in such a case would be ugly — not because it is pardon, but because of what is joined to that pardon and inseparably linked to it of the occurrence of evil and harm upon the subjects. There is no doubt that all the subjects would be angered with the sultan when he pardons him and would censure him, and their tongues would be loosed in reviling and cursing him. This is not because he pardoned — for pardon is good, and the one who does it deserves praise and commendation — but because of what has been joined to his pardon of the occurrence of ugliness.

So if you, O questioner, have clearly understood what we have mentioned, and it has become evident to you what we have explained, then know that Allah's pardon on the Day of Reckoning of those who died persisting in their disbelief, denial, and defiant disobedience is not good, because of what would accompany that pardon on that day and join to it of ugliness.

The clarification of this is that Allah *the Exalted* has threatened the criminals, the flagrantly disobedient, the disbelievers, and the hypocrites with severe threat and everlasting punishment in Hell — a confirmed threat — and He has repeated that many times in His Book.

And He accompanied that severe threat by describing Himself, *Exalted is He*, as One who does not fail in His promise, and as One with whom there is no changing of the word, and that His word is the truest of all

words and His speech the most truthful of all speech. He has sworn to His servants many oaths in His Wise Book that He will punish the hypocrites, the disbelievers, the wicked, the wrongdoers, and the arrogant with everlasting, eternal torment.

So if we hypothesize and allow that Allah the Exalted will pardon those people or some of them, then there would be joined to this hypothesis and permissibility the accusation of Allah *the Exalted* of lying, of breaking His promise, and of His oaths and pledges in His Book not being truthful.

Thus, allowing for the possibility of pardon from Allah on the Day of Resurrection would entail allowing for the possibility of falsehood in the Qur'an — and there is no doubt that allowing for the possibility of falsehood in the Qur'an is disbelief and hypocrisy.

Furthermore, everything in the Qur'an is truth, *"Falsehood cannot approach it from behind it; [It is] a revelation from a [Lord who is] Wise and Praiseworthy"* [Fussilat:42], and that is a matter of consensus among the Muslims. Truth is the opposite of falsehood, and allowing for the possibility of pardon (in this sense) amounts to allowing that this verse is not true.

[Explanation of His Saying, Exalted is He: "*And there is none of you except he will come to it*"]

Question: What is the appropriate interpretation of His saying, *Exalted is He: "And there is none of you except he will come to it. This is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed. Then We will save those who feared Allah and leave the wrongdoers within it, on their knees"* [Maryam:71-72]?

Answer: The addressees in His saying, *Exalted is He, "And there is none of you except he will come to it"* are those who deny resurrection and recompense, as indicated by the beginning of the discourse, which is His saying, *Exalted is He: "And man [i.e., the disbeliever] says, 'When I have died, am I going to be brought forth alive?'"* [Maryam:66]. And His saying, *Exalted is He: "Then We will save those who feared Allah and leave the wrongdoers within it, on their knees"* [Maryam:72] is information from Allah *the Exalted* about the state of the Allah-fearing after He has mentioned the reports of the deniers. And "then" (*thumma*) has come in this place to indicate how far removed the state of the Allah-fearing is from the state of the deniers; as though He said: Do not fear, O you who are Allah-fearing, when you hear of the state of the deniers, for your state with Allah is not like the state of the deniers. Rather, you are in a place of safety from their threat, and Allah will raise you to a secure station in which nothing of the threat will reach you.

– And His saying, *Exalted is He: "and leave the wrongdoers within it, on*

their knees” [Maryam:72] is information from Allah the Exalted that those who deny resurrection will be brought to Hell, then they will not be brought out of it; rather, they will remain therein for everlasting punishment.

If it is said: What is the secret and wisdom in inserting *“Then We will save those who feared Allah...”* between His saying: *“And there is none of you except he will come to it”* and His saying: *“and leave the wrongdoers within it, on their knees”*?

It is answered: Perhaps the wisdom in that is hastening and speeding to cool the heat of the believers’ fear when they hear the strongly-confirmed verses of threat; for it may be that, if the information about the salvation of the Allah-fearing had been delayed until the mention of the threat was completed, their hearts would have split apart and their souls departed.

Rewards and Punishments in the Noble Qur’an

– The promise of Allah the Exalted of reward and bliss in Paradise has come:

- 1- For the believers who do righteous deeds and guard themselves from falling into disobedience of the Most Merciful until they meet Allah *the Exalted*.
- 2- For those who repent, who return to Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins, then commit themselves to fear of Allah *the Exalted* and obedience to Him.

- And there is nothing in the Book of Allah the Exalted that indicates or alludes to a promise of Paradise and forgiveness for those who commit grave acts of disobedience and die upon that without repenting.

- Rather, what has come in the Qur’an is to cause those who commit major sins to despair of Allah’s mercy in the Hereafter and to cut off their hopes of that, such as His saying, *Exalted is He: “For the wrongdoers there will be no devoted friend and no intercessor [who is] obeyed”* [Ghafir:18], and His saying, *Exalted is He: “Paradise is not [obtained] by your wishful thinking nor by that of the People of the Scripture. Whoever does a wrong will be recompensed for it, and he will not find besides Allah a protector or a helper”* [An-Nisā’:123], and His saying, *Exalted is He: “And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers.”* [Al-Maaida:72], and His saying, *Exalted is He: “And they cannot intercede except on behalf of one whom He approves”* [Al-Anbiyā’:28].

– Rather, there has come a tremendous threat of the Fire and abiding therein for those who commit major sins from this ummah; and it is assumed that the Qur’an takes precedence over the Sunnah when there is an apparent conflict. Therefore, the hadiths that Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā’ah narrate regarding intercession for the people of major sins, and

about their entering Paradise, must not be relied upon or rested upon, because they contradict the verses of the Qur'an.

– His saying, *Exalted is He: “Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills”* [An-Nisā':48] is not a valid proof for Ahl al-Sunnah, because His saying, *Exalted is He: “and He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills”* is general and unspecified — we do not know who are those whom Allah wills to forgive. So if Ahl al-Sunnah say: They are the people of major sins who persist, who died upon that and did not repent from their major sins, we say: Rather, they are those who repent from the major sins, not those who persist; or they are those who commit acts of disobedience by way of mistake and forgetfulness. Allah forgives such people, in contrast to one who commits the major sin of shirk by mistake, or out of ignorance and forgetfulness — for Allah does not forgive that.

From here we said that the verse is general and can have its generality interpreted in several ways, all of which are possible; so relying on the Sunnah in what contradicts the Qur'an is a great error and contains grave danger. For the verses of the Noble Qur'an are truth and reality, without doubt or uncertainty, whereas the reports narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) are open to the possibility of truth and falsehood.

– Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah relied in this chapter upon narrations that their ḥadīth-scholars reported from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), while we relied upon the Qur'an and paid no attention to what the ḥadīth-scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah narrated, due to its opposition to the Qur'an; and we hold that in doing so we are more rightly guided in our path than Ahl al-Sunnah.

[The Reckoning of Those Who Are Legally Responsible According to the Measure of Their Intellects]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. And blessings of Allah and His peace be upon His Prophet and His Chosen One, Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and upon the members of his chosen household, and upon all the prophets and messengers, and the angels brought near, and upon whoever among created beings deserves that. And after that:

What appears to me — *and Allah knows best* — is that Allah *the Exalted* will call those who are legally responsible (*mukallafūn*) to account and take them to task in proportion to their intellects. That is because the intelligent person who is legally responsible perceives, by his intellect, the subtleties of sins and their hidden aspects, and by his intelligence becomes aware of their concealed aspects. Thus he scarcely commits a sin, no matter how subtle, without perceiving that it is a sin;

and no word comes out of his mouth without his being aware of its extent in terms of harm and benefit. In contrast, the dull-witted person who is legally responsible does not perceive except the obvious aspects of matters, not their subtleties, and knows only their great matters, not their fine details. So he speaks a harmful word while assuming it to be beneficial, and he falls into the subtle and hidden aspects of sins without realizing it, and thinks he is engaged in a righteous deed while in reality he is engaged in an evil deed. So it appears to me — *and Allah knows best* — that the reckoning of such a person on the Day of Resurrection will be less than the reckoning of the intelligent one.

The proof for that is His saying, *Exalted is He: "Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity"* [Al-Baqarah:286]. And it is not within the capacity of the dull-witted person who is legally responsible, no matter how keen he is and how much he strives to be cautious, to avoid falling into the fine and hidden aspects of sins. And Allah knows best. And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless Muhammad and his family and grant them peace.

[Questions Regarding the Life of the Soul and Its Relationship to the Body]

Q1/ Is there, for the nearness of one grave to another, any benefit for the dead person other than seeking blessing (*tabarruk*) or being exposed to an abundance of supplication (*du'ā'*)?

Q2/ Does the dead person know who is beside him, and is he made happy by being next to the righteous, and harmed by being next to the corrupt, as in the neighborhood of this worldly life?

Q3/ Since it is necessary to maintain the sanctity of the grave, does the dead person suffer harm from violation of that?

– And if that is so, does he suffer harm from the neighborhood of living people who are corrupt?

– And does he sense singing and corruption, for example, just as he senses greetings of peace and supplication?

– And is his soul beside his grave or inside it? Or is it in another place? So does the greeting of peace (*salām*) reach him whether it is at the grave or when the visitor is far from it?

– And what, then, is the benefit of nearness?

Q4/ Is the life of the *barzakh* (intermediate state) specific to the soul, or does the body have a share in it?

– And if it is for the soul, then what is the difference between martyrs and others?

Q5/ Do the souls of the believers meet one another even if their graves are far apart, or only the souls of those who knew one another (in

the world)? And how, on this basis, is their love for the closeness of their graves to be explained?

Q6/ If the souls are in a place together, and the greeting of peace and supplication reaches them there, and has no connection to the grave — then is visiting, for example, ‘Alī (*Peace be upon him*) by visiting the grave of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) like visiting him at his own grave (*Peace be upon him*)?

Q7/ And after this, is there any benefit in a person thinking about where he will be buried?

– And does his being near someone (in burial) lead to intimacy with him or to meeting him, or is that according to one’s deeds?

One of the students of knowledge presented these questions and requested clarification.

Answer, and with Allah is success:

Answer to the first question:

The benefit of neighboring the righteous friends (*awliyā’*) of Allah in their graves is seeking blessing by being near them; and among the blessing is what reaches him of the supplications of the visitors, and what encompasses him of the mercy of Allah descending upon the friends of Allah there.

And neighborhood is not a cause for intimacy, meeting, mutual visiting, and gathering between the souls of those who are buried next to one another. That is because the inhabitants of the graves are bodies without life: they do not hear, do not see, do not comprehend, do not rejoice, do not grieve, and so on — exactly like inanimate objects; rather, the body by death becomes inanimate.

The proof for what we have mentioned is what we know of the reality of death and its essence.

Answer to the second (question):

It is understood from the first answer, and it is not hidden that the dead body has had the soul removed from it, along with everything besides it of senses, feelings, perceptions, knowledge, suppositions, and so on — because you have come to know that death is the absence of life, and that life is a condition for sensation, perception, and so forth.

Answer to the third (question):

The dead person is not harmed by the violation of the sanctity of his grave, nor by what occurs of acts of disobedience beside his grave, and he does not sense that nor perceive it.

As for his perception of what reaches him of supplication and greetings of peace — and reward — he perceives that by his soul, not by

means of his body; because the instruments of perception which are in his body have become null and corrupted, and the soul does not return to the body except on the Day of Resurrection.

– What has become clearly known is that the soul has departed from the body and that Allah has taken it unto Himself. After that, we do not know the precise determination of its place. What is known in general is that the souls of the righteous friends of Allah are in the place of Allah's honor and mercy, by the proof of His saying, *Exalted is He: "Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision"* [Āl 'Imrān:169].

– And it has been reported that the souls of the believers are in the crops of green birds enjoying bliss in Paradise — *Jannat al-Ma'wā (the Garden of Refuge)* [An-Najm].

– And it is possible that their souls are in the heaven, by the proof of what has been reported that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saw some of the prophets in the heaven on the Night of the Ascension (*al-Mi'rāj*). And it is possible that they are in other than what we have mentioned, where Allah honors them with the gifts of His generosity. In general, there is no conclusive proof for specifying the settled place of the souls of the believers.

– And the blessing of supplication and greetings of peace reaches the souls of those for whom supplication is made and those upon whom peace is bestowed, whether that is at the grave or far from it. Among the well-known supplications of the *tashahhud* is: "*Peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of Allah. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings.*" *Al-Hādī (Peace be upon him)* and others have mentioned it, and it was not legislated except because it reaches those upon whom peace is being bestowed. And it has been reported from the Prophet of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said, in meaning: "*Whoever says: 'Peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of Allah,' it reaches every righteous servant in the heavens and on earth.*" And what is known from the scholars of the People of the House (Ahl al-Bayt) (*Peace be upon them*), their earlier and later ones, is that they say, when mentioning the Imams (*Peace be upon them*) or the Imam (*Peace be upon him*)...

- And visiting the resting places of the righteous friends of Allah has benefits other than the reaching of supplication and greetings of peace. They are:

- 1- Exposing the visitor to the reward of the visitation, and the reward of bearing the hardships of travel. This is a benefit for the visitor, and it is other than the benefit that reaches the dead.
- 2- Making manifest to the people the virtue of the owner of the grave and proclaiming his honor with Allah and his rank with

Him, and reviving that among the people if they had forgotten his standing, or preserving the vitality of his standing if they had not forgotten it. For the common believers infer from what they see of visitations the virtue of the one visited (*al-mazūr*) and his rank with Allah.

And if the owner of the grave is an Imām in religion and an example to be followed, then the continued visitation of his grave and the abundance of visitors to him strengthen the following of his example, fortify the resolve of those who emulate him, and tighten the bond of imitation between them and him.

- 3- In the visitation there is that which strengthens the connection of the successors with the predecessors, and links the past with the present, together with what is in that of calling to mind the life of the one visited, what he encountered in his life, what he attained of noble qualities, and what he presented to the people of benefits. And in calling that to mind there is what stirs the motives of the soul to strive for what he strove for, and to reach what he reached.
- 4- In it there is an honoring of the one visited, which is another benefit for which the visitor is rewarded, and a second act of worship for which he is recompensed.
- 5- In it there is the humiliation of the enemies and the causing of hurt to them through what they see of the honoring of the one visited and the manifestation of his virtue.

And this is in addition to what is in visiting graves in general of greatness and admonition- *“for indeed it reminds (one) of the Hereafter.”*

Answer to the fourth question:

The life of the *barzakh* is a spiritual life that is specific to the soul, and the body has no share in it. All of Allah’s believing friends (*awliyāʾ*) are martyrs (*shuhadāʾ*). Allah the Exalted has described them in Sūrat al-Ḥadīd as the truthful ones (*ṣiddīqūn*) and the martyrs (*shuhadāʾ*). And in the hadith: *“Indeed, whoever dies upon love for the family of Muhammad dies a martyr.”*

And al-Hādī (*Peace be upon him*) has mentioned that whoever dies on his bed while having a sincere intention to support the friends of Allah is like one whose blood is shed in the path of Allah.

And it has been established that one who is pleased with the deed of a people is a partner in their deed. And in the hadith: *“You are with those whom you love.”* And from ‘Alī (*Peace be upon him*): *“Men have shared with us in these battles whom time has not yet brought forth”* — this is the meaning of the narration, and it is in *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

On this basis, all the believers are martyrs, even though one whose blood is poured forth in the path of Allah has a special distinction. This is what the evidences indicate.

Answer to the fifth question:

What appears outwardly is that the souls of the righteous meet one another after their death, whether their resting places are close together or far apart. The proof of that is the narrations that were mentioned in the preamble to the questions.

And the believing soul meets whomever it used to love, and there is no doubt that the believer loves the believers — whether near or far, those he knows and those he does not know: *“And the believing men and believing women are allies of one another.”* [At-Tawbah:71]. And it is well-known that ‘Ammār said on the day he was killed:

“Today I will meet the beloved ones: Muhammad and his party.”

- And the benefit of a believer’s love for his grave being near the graves of the righteous is what he hopes for of the blessing of their nearness, and we have already mentioned that previously.

Answer to the sixth question:

We have mentioned previously that supplication and greetings of peace reach the soul of the dead person even from afar, and we mentioned the proof for that.

And visiting ‘Alī (*Peace be upon him*) and sending peace upon him from near the grave of al-Hādī (*Peace be upon him*) is not the same as visiting him and sending peace upon him from at the head of his own shrine — even though supplication and peace do reach him from here and from there — because of what we mentioned earlier of what occurs of causes of reward and virtue for whoever visits the grave of the believer from close by. So refer back to that.

Answer to the seventh question:

Reflecting upon the place of one’s grave has a benefit — otherwise al-Ḥasan (*Peace be upon him*) would not have thought about the place in which he would be buried, nor would he have made a bequest that he be buried near his grandfather, and that if that were not possible, he be buried near his mother.

And in the narration it is mentioned that when the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) buried ‘Uthmān ibn Maz‘ūn, he marked his grave with a large stone which he placed at his head, then said: *“I will bury by his side whoever from my family dies”* — this is the meaning of the narration, and it is well-known and widely transmitted.

It may be said:

- It is seen or heard that punishment occurs in the graves of some of the criminals, and this has been widely known throughout history.
- Likewise, around the graves of some of Allah's friends and above them there occur signs indicating the honoring and exalting of the owner of the grave. That indicates that the soul of the owner of the grave has an existence near the grave or within it.

It is said in response:

The evidences have indicated that the soul does not return to the body of the dead person after its departure from it except on the Day of Resurrection and Reckoning — such as His saying, *Exalted is He: "Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die. Then indeed you, on the Day of Resurrection, before your Lord, will dispute."* [Az-Zumar:30-31], and His saying, *Exalted is He: "Then indeed, after that you are surely to die. Then indeed you, on the Day of Resurrection, will be resurrected."* [Al-Mu'minūn:15-16].

On that basis, whatever is seen and heard in the graves, or upon them, or around them, of signs of the honor of the dead person or of signs of his punishment — these are but kindnesses for the living, and a publicizing of the rank of the owner of the grave with Allah, and a making manifest of his virtue or of the gravity of his crime; so that the believers, with what they see of marks of honor upon the graves of His friends, grow in certainty and insight, and the criminals are restrained, by what they see of signs of retribution, from committing crimes, and that calls them to repentance and seeking forgiveness.

And making manifest to the people the honor of the owner of the grave is part of the reward for the owner of the grave. Allah *the Exalted* has made good remembrance of the dead person in this world an immediate reward, as Allah has related from Ibrāhīm (*Peace be upon him*) his saying: *"And grant me a reputation of truth among later generations."* [Ash-Shu'arā':84], and His saying, *Exalted is He: "And We gave him his reward in this world, and indeed, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous."* [Al-'Ankabūt:27]. And He said to His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"And mention in the Book, Abraham. Indeed, he was a man of truth and a prophet."* [Maryam:41], *"And mention in the Book, Moses..."* [Maryam:51], *"And mention in the Book, Ismā'īl..."* [Maryam:54], *"And mention in the Book, Idrīs..."* [Maryam:56], and His saying, *Exalted is He: "And We left for him [a favorable mention] among later generations: 'Peace upon Noah among the worlds.'"* [As-Şaffāt:78-79].

If it is said: How can what you have mentioned be a reward, when the one who is receiving the reward is dead — he neither perceives that

reward, nor finds delight in it, nor enjoys it?

It is said: The reward of this world is received by the children and descendants after the death of the one who earned it. They are, in this respect, in the position of the father, and the ruling of the father is their ruling in this regard, by the proof of His saying, *Exalted is He: "Say, I do not ask you for it any reward, except love for [my] near relatives."* [Ash-Shūrā:23].

And in the hadith: *"Their war is my war, and their peace is my peace."* And: *"Love my household for my sake."* And his saying (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in the hadith about visiting the graves of the People of the House (*Peace be upon them*), despite their distance from one another and their being scattered: *"They intend by that to show devotion to me and to maintain ties with me..."* and so on. And the hadith: *"Whoever loves them has loved me, and whoever hates them has hated me..."* — and the hadiths in this chapter are many.

Moreover, a person loves good for his children and descendants, and in his lifetime strives to do the causes that lead to good reaching them after his death. He is extremely keen to realize that for them and strives to repel from them the causes of evil.

When that is realized, and he has arranged for them those causes, and firmly established them, he rejoices and is filled with joy and happiness. It may be that what occurs in the future of good for a man's offspring is more pleasing to his eye than if it had occurred for him in his own life. Indeed, he may give precedence to the joy and future happiness of his descendants after his death over the joy and happiness of his own self during his life, and prefer them over himself in that.

- And it is not far-fetched that Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, makes the pure souls aware of what He has granted them, after their death, among the people of this world — of good remembrance, beautiful praise, exalted honor, fame, and high rank.
- As for the Day of Resurrection, Allah *the Exalted* will make His righteous friends aware of what He favored them with in the life of this world after their death — of good praise, lofty honor, glorification, and elevation — for that is part of the reward of the believers. There is no doubt that the believer will rejoice when he learns what befell him after his death in the life of this world — of good remembrance, great honor, and the signs of honor that Allah the Exalted manifested at his grave, and so on.
- Likewise, the believer will rejoice on the Day of Resurrection when he knows that Allah *the Exalted* disgraced his enemy in this world and subjected him therein to various kinds of punishment.
- And among what indicates that the descendants, in the matter of

reward, are in the position of their father is His saying, *Exalted is He: "And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and beneath it was a treasure for them, and their father had been righteous. So your Lord intended that they reach maturity and extract their treasure, as a mercy from your Lord."* [Al-Kahf:82].

Rules and Rulings

[Repelling Harm from the Self]

Repelling harm from oneself is a rational obligation, when one has the ability, whether the harm is known, or presumed, or doubted. And by "doubted" we mean that the likelihood of its occurrence and its non-occurrence are equal.

As for imagined harm — that is, when the likelihood of its occurrence is less than fifty percent — the intellect recommends precaution against it and taking care regarding it, but does not make that obligatory.

If someone informs another of something that contains danger for the listener, then the listener is obliged to examine that matter; it is not permissible for him to turn away from it and deny it from the very first moment. Thus does the intellect require this of the rational person.

Precaution and Caution

Precaution and caution are obligatory in general, and their obligation is even more emphatically confirmed in the case of those in authority. It is not permissible to make a decision to enter a war or a battle except after examining what positive and negative results will follow from entering it, and after considering what circumstances and possibilities will occur, and then preparing to ward off what is expected to arise from that.

The Intellect

The intellect is a perceiving faculty by which the rational person distinguishes between truth and falsehood, and between good and evil. By it he is guided to the sound and the corrupt ways of reasoning, and to knowing the results that follow from an act of reasoning. By it he moves from the realm of what is sensed to what lies beyond what is sensed, and from particulars to universals. By it the rational person discovers the secrets of matter and what Allah the Exalted has placed in it of benefits for people.

The Function of the Intellect

The function of the intellect, in which it is necessarily required of the rational person that he employ it, is: to bring benefits to its owner and ward off harms from him. The very first thing that is necessarily required of him is to show gratitude to the One who has bestowed favor upon the rational person with the blessing of creation, intellect, hearing, sight, and

so on — so that by this gratitude he may draw to himself further bounty from the Bestower, and ward off, by gratitude, the harms of ungratefulness for the blessing. For there is no obscurity among intelligent people that being ungrateful for the blessing is itself a wrong done to the Bestower of the blessing.

If it is said: How does the intellect find its way to that? And from where does it know this?

It is said: The intellect, by its very nature, finds its way to the obligation of showing gratitude to the Bestower, and it perceives this at the outset of its reflection, without the toil of long consideration and deep thought. Indeed, many animals perceive something of that: they distinguish between one who has done good to them and one who has done evil to them, and they deal with the benefactor with good treatment. Some animals even sacrifice their lives for the sake of those who have done good to them.

If it is said: The Creator of the intellect, *Glorified is His Majesty*, is Rich, in no need; the gratitude of those who show gratitude does not benefit Him, and the disbelief of those who disbelieve does not harm Him.

It is said: The cause that stirs gratitude and calls to its obligation is the presence of a blessing granted to the servant, without regard to whether its Giver is rich or in need. Indeed, His being rich is even more of a reason for the obligation of gratitude and greater in confirming it. But if the Bestower were in need, perhaps his bestowal upon a person would be for the sake of seeking a return and recompense in like measure or more; then that would be from the realm of mutual dealing. That does not take it out of the realm of bestowal that calls for gratitude, but it is not like the one who gives purely for the sake of goodness and bestowal.

Thus, what has been mentioned — namely, the richness of the Bestower and His lack of need — is not a cause for the non-obligation of gratitude, nor a barrier preventing its obligation.

The Human Intellect as One of Allah's Signs

The intellect is a tremendous effect of the effects of Allah's power and a sign from the signs of His knowledge and wisdom. It has capacities without limit, and within it is a vastness that does not become constricted by what is in it; rather, it expands and increases and develops. By the capacities of the intellect, the human being has placed his foot upon the surface of the moon and has ventured to the planets that revolve around the sun. By its capacities, the human being has flown in the sky and dived to the bottoms of oceans and seas. By means of it, mankind has advanced in the manufacture of means of transportation on land, sea, and in the air; and in means of communication, both heard and seen; and in various kinds of media, both seen and heard. By it, they have

advanced in the field of atomic science, and in various fields such as medicine, engineering, construction, chemistry, physics, and in both the military and civilian spheres — and on to all that we see and hear of the development of industry and civilization. All of that is the result of the capacities of human intellects and their reflection on the secrets of matter that Allah the Exalted has placed in His creations.

What we have mentioned is proof of the greatness of the human intellect and its capacities in discovering the secrets of matter, developing industry, and providing the means for worldly happiness. In that is a clear sign of the greatness of the Creator of the intellect, and the vastness of His knowledge, power, and wisdom.

And the intellect has another field which mankind has been heedless of and has not opened its door. Allah *the Exalted* sent prophets and messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) to awaken people from their heedlessness and to open the eyes of their hearts to this field.

This field is the field of knowledge of Allah — of His majesty, greatness, power, and might — and the knowledge of His Books, His messengers, and His angels; and the knowledge of the Last Day and what is in it of reckoning, recompense, reward and punishment, bliss and torment.

Allah *the Exalted* has called upon the intellects to reflect in this field so that they may come to know the causes of happiness in the abode of the Hereafter, and thereby combine the two kinds of happiness: worldly and other-worldly.

Allah *the Exalted* wanted what human beings have invented by their intellects and reached by their theories — of worldly means of happiness — to be a cause and a path that leads them to happiness in the abode of the Hereafter. But they have erred in understanding that and in using it. They have made from that development a cause of corruption on earth, the destruction of tillage and progeny, devastation and ruin: *"They know what is apparent of the worldly life, but they, of the Hereafter, are unaware."* [Ar-Rūm:7]

– **Yes**, the primary function of the intellect, for which Allah *the Exalted* created it, is that it be a means for its possessor to believe in the unseen. What is meant by "the unseen" is that which lies beyond tangible matter.

And the One who is beyond matter is the Creator of matter, and the knowledge of what He possesses of majesty, perfection, power, and knowledge; and what He deserves of glorification, sanctification, gratitude, praise, and commendation, in view of the effects of His mercy and the vastness of His blessings and their encompassing of His

creatures. Also included is the knowledge of what His wisdom necessitates in what He has created of resurrection, reckoning, rewarding those who do good, punishing those who do evil, and justice and fairness between oppressors and those oppressed.

– Allah the *Exalted* has spread throughout the tangible material things scattered in the heavens and the earth that which clearly indicates, to the intellects, all of that unseen which Allah has made it obligatory upon the possessors of intellects to believe in and affirm.

He reinforced that by sending prophets and messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) to call the rational to believe in it. He sent down to them the Books and explained therein the manifest proofs and enlightening signs. He diversified for them the evidences and varied the proofs, and guided them therein to that which removes doubt and eliminates uncertainty, so that no proof remains for them and their excuses are cut off. Allah the Exalted said: *"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?"* [Fussilat:53]

– This knowledge of the unseen that we have mentioned is the obligatory function of the intellect, which Allah the Exalted has made emphatically obligatory and binding. He has not granted any permission to abandon it; rather, He has imposed it upon the possessors of intellects as an obligation, decreed it upon them as a decree, affirmed and stressed it, promised and threatened, repeated the command to it and reiterated it — and so on, to the end of what Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an, emphasizing, detailing, clarifying, sometimes summarizing and sometimes spelling out, specifying and generalizing — all of that as an intensification from Him, *Glorified and Exalted*, in establishing the obligation and in cutting off excuses: *"So that those who perished [through disbelief] would perish upon evidence and those who lived [in faith] would live upon evidence. And indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing."* [Al-Anfāl:42]

– As for the reflection of the intellects upon the secrets of matter, extracting from it material benefits, and making use of it in the affairs of worldly life — Allah has not made that an absolute obligation nor imposed it, nor has He forbidden it; rather, He has permitted that to His servants: *"Say, 'Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants and the good [lawful] things of provision?' Say, 'They are for those who believe during the worldly life...'"* [Al-A'rāf:32] *"It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth, altogether..."* [Al-Baqarah:29] *"Eat from the good things and do righteous deeds..."* [Al-Mu'minūn:51]

And of Allah's grace upon His servants is that He has subjected for them the sun and the moon and the stars, and the night and the day, and the seas and the winds and the clouds; and He has subjected the cattle and made them manageable; and He has smoothed out the earth for them and made it subservient; and He has sent down for them iron and the minerals of the earth; and He has made easy for them journeying in the earth and upon its pathways, and so on. *"And if you should count the favor of Allah, you could not enumerate it. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful."* [Ibrāhīm:34]

- The indication of what we have mentioned of the Wise Creator, and of His greatness and majesty and the all-encompassing nature of His bounty and His favor, and His exclusive worthiness of gratitude and worship to the exclusion of all others, is an indication that is clear and does not require exertion and strain of thought. Rather, the intellect perceives it by its very nature and at the first outset of reflection.

- As for the indication of that (what we mentioned) of the Last Day, and of reckoning and recompense, then it is from two paths:

- 1- *The first path*: its indication of the possibility of resurrection of the dead. This indication is also clear to the intellects. Allah *the Exalted* said, in refutation of those who deemed the resurrection of the dead far-fetched, at the end of Sūrat Yā Sīn: *"He says, 'Who will give life to bones while they are disintegrated?' Say, 'He will give them life who produced them the first time; and He is, of all creation, Knowing.'"* [Yā Sīn:78-79] ... to the end of Sūrat Yā Sīn.
- 2- *The second path*: its indication of the inevitability of resurrection, reckoning, and recompense, and that it is a truth that must surely occur. Its indication of that requires applying the intellect and giving more consideration. Allah *the Exalted* has alerted those who possess intellects and turned the eyes of their inner vision toward the path which, if they extend to it their insights and let their sights roam in it, they will arrive at belief in the inevitability of resurrection and recompense. He, *majestic is His station*, said: *"Then did you think that We created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned?"* [Al-Mu'minūn:115] And He *the Exalted* said: *"And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in play. We did not create them except in truth..."* [Ad-Dukhān:38-39] And verses similar to these two are many in the Qur'an.

For when the rational person lets his thought roam through worldly life and reflects upon its events with true reflection, he is certain by his intellect that there must be another life which is an extension of this worldly life and consequent upon it.

The manner of reflection and its order

Thought proceeds step by step in reflection in this way:

1- The signs scattered throughout the universe — including the human being and the animal — indicate a Creator who is Powerful, Knowing, Wise, Rich, Praiseworthy; There is nothing like unto Him, He is Hearing, Seeing; He is the Owner of the heavens and the earth and what is between them; the Withholder and the Expander; the Provider; the Giver of life and the Giver of death; the Ever-Living, the Sustainer; the Most High, the Supreme. And He has encompassed all things in knowledge and enumerated all things in number; He does not wrong nor deal unjustly nor do anything ugly; all His acts are good; He does not will corruption and does not love the corrupters; and so on to the end of what the chapters of Divine Oneness and Justice contain, of what thought arrives at, as is mentioned in the books of the principles of religion (*uṣūl ad-dīn*).

This is the first step and the first level.

2 – *The second step*: From what preceded in the first step, it is known that Allah is Knowing — nothing is hidden from Him — and that He is Wise, in the sense that all His acts are acts of wisdom: He does not create any created thing except for a purpose, a benefit, and a wisdom; and that He is Rich, untouched by need in His Essence. When thought becomes certain of that, realizes it, and its knowledge of it is firmly established, and then lets its thought roam in the creation of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and in the creation of human beings and what they are upon of disparity in lifespans and provisions, in strength and weakness, in security and fear; and (reflects) upon what occurs of mutual wronging and aggression, killing of children, women, and men, seizing of wealth, violation of honors, trampling of dignities, prisons and torture, coercion and enslavement, and so on — to the end of what continually exists and occurs among nations, groups, and individuals.

That is from the side of what occurs among human beings from some of them to others. And from the side of what occurs from Allah the Exalted of illnesses and the cutting short of lifetimes: we see the newborn born sickly, then his illness leads him to death after a year from his birth, or less or more. And we see death cutting off the healthy child before or after reaching puberty: some of them reach twenty years, then death cuts them off; some reach thirty or forty or eighty, then death cuts them off; and some are overtaken by affliction for most of their life, then they die.

If thought prolongs its reflection and contemplation of what people are upon in their lives, and prolongs its reflection upon what we have

mentioned, while accompanying that with its (prior) knowledge of Allah's wisdom, knowledge, richness, and justice — it becomes certain of the inevitability of another life consequent upon this worldly life, wherein the one who does good is rewarded for his good and the one who does evil is recompensed for his evil; wherein Allah exacts full justice for the oppressed against the oppressor; wherein compensations are made and so on to the end.

This is because when thought pauses at what is said by those who claim that worldly life ends with death and that there is no life after death — as the polytheists say: *"There is not but our worldly life; we die and live, and we will not be resurrected."* [Al-An'ām:29] it finds that wisdom requires another life, because the course of this worldly life is devoid of wisdom, justice, fairness, and recompense. From here Allah the Exalted said: *"And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth..."* [Al-Hijr:85] that is, Allah the Exalted created all that for a sublime wisdom and a great purpose. This verse and what is similar to it is an answer to the polytheists who deny resurrection and reckoning, from the angle that their denial of resurrection and reckoning entails ascribing to the Creator, *Glorified is He*, play and frivolity in His creating of the heavens and the earth and what is between them.

This is because worldly life ends with the death of the one who does good and the one who does evil; the oppressor and the oppressed; the strong and the weak; the secure and the frightened; the tyrannical overbearing one and the downtrodden captive; the jailer and the imprisoned; the corrupter on earth and the reformer; the healthy and the afflicted — and so on and so forth — while knowing that Allah the Exalted, Who is the Wise, the Knowing, the Rich, is the One who gave the oppressor strength, enabled him with the instruments of oppression, left him free between himself and the oppressed, did not prevent him from him, and did not stand between them — though He is able to do so, and while He knows what the oppressor does, and while He has no need whatsoever of what is there of oppression. He, *Glorified is He*, is the One who gave the arrogant their wealth and enabled them to dominate; and He is the One who impoverished the poor, turned wealth away from him and removed it from him, and prevented strength and domination from reaching him.

He, *Glorified and Exalted*, is the One who afflicted those with chronic illnesses and diseases and attached pains to them; and He is the One who cuts off lifetimes and causes children to suffer pain. He is the One who leaves harmful vermin and beasts free among people, and leaves fears to surround people. He is the One who unleashes plagues and calamities upon people: *"And that it is He who makes [one] laugh and weep, and that*

it is He who causes death and gives life, and that He created the two mates – the male and female – from a sperm-drop when it is emitted, and that upon Him is the next creation, and that it is He who enriches and suffices.” [An-Najm:43-48]

In sum, a person is accompanied, from his birth until his death, by various kinds of afflictions, harms, pains, sorrows, worries, fears, and anxiety; and by different sorts of calamities in bodies, children, and wealth; and by extensive experiencing of the hardships of poverty, need, fear, hardship, and adversity — all of that in short lifespans.

A person is created weak; he grows and is nurtured, and weakness accompanies him until he enters the third seven (the third set of seven years) of his life, when his back becomes firm, his arm strong, and he is at the peak of his strength. Then his bodily strength progresses with his age until he reaches forty years, then his strength gradually diminishes until he reaches the end of his life. Allah the Exalted said: *“Then He makes after strength weakness and grey hair.”* [Ar-Rūm:54] And He said: *“And he to whom We grant long life We reverse in creation.”* [Yā Sīn:68] Then people die — the oppressor and the oppressed, the defrauder and the defrauded, and so on. Here, thought stands bewildered, searching for the wisdom and secret wrapped up in this worldly life that ends with death, and finds no trace of it.

This is while thought has already become certain that the Creator of this worldly life is Rich, in no need of His creations; Knowing, Wise, from whom no play or frivolity issues forth; and that all His acts are good, founded upon justice and wisdom. For that reason, after deep reflection and long contemplation, thought concludes the inevitability of another life built upon this worldly life, wherein the wisdom of the first creation appears, and the secret for which Allah created worldly life becomes unveiled.

Allah *the Exalted* said, addressing deniers of resurrection and recompense: *“Does man think that he will be left neglected?”* [Al-Qiyāmah:36] *“Then did you think that We created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned?”* [Al-Mu’minūn:115] *“Then will We treat the Muslims like the criminals? What is [the matter] with you? How do you judge?”* [Al-Qalam:35-36]

The Noble Qur’an is full of this kind of reasoning, especially the Meccan sūrahs.

Allah *the Exalted* denounces the polytheists for their denial of resurrection and recompense, because of what it entails of ascribing play and frivolity to Allah in what He has created in this worldly life, and because of what it entails of equating the one who is upon the truth and the one who is upon falsehood, the oppressor and the oppressed, the

Muslim and the criminal, the grateful and the ungrateful, the afflicted and the healthy, the rich and the poor, and so on.

And it is not hidden that this invalidates and destroys the wisdom of the Wise Creator. Otherwise, He — *Exalted and Sanctified is He* — would become, *far exalted is He above that*, unjust, frivolous, and one who plays; and that is ugly, and the Wise, Rich, Knowing Lord is far exalted above doing such a thing.

This is clarified by the fact that Allah the Exalted is rich, in no need of what He created in this worldly life. He, *exalted is He*, knows that He is rich and in no need, and He is Knowing of all things. And when He, *mighty and majestic*, is both Rich and Knowing, then no act issues from Him except motivated by wisdom. As for doing that in which there is no wisdom, that only issues from one who is ignorant, heedless, or in need.

And from another angle we say: Allah *the Exalted* created the human being upon the surface of this earthly planet, and subjected to him the sun and the moon, the night and the day, and the stars; and subjected the sea, the winds, and the clouds; and subjected to him the animals and the air; and sent down for him the blessings of the heaven and brought forth for him the blessings of the earth; and granted him hearing, sight, and a heart; and gave him strength in his body, intellect, and senses; and granted him freedom and dominion upon the earth — while He, *exalted is He*, has no need of any of that, and has no benefit from anything He created.

Then, despite that, He gives death and life, removes one nation and brings another, annihilates a people and brings others after them. He punishes generations and brings a successor after a predecessor.

A person does not live in his life upon the surface of this planet more than about seventy years, in most cases, then he dies and another takes his place, and so on. The wisdom in creating the sun and the moon, the night and the day, and so on, is manifest — namely, the benefit that accrues to the human being. But what is the wisdom in creating the human being who benefits, upon the surface of this earth, from what Allah has created within it?

When thought perceives that a person's life in this worldly life ends with death before the wisdom entailed by his creation has appeared, it becomes certain and decides upon the inevitability of another life in which the wisdom behind the creation of the human being will appear.

Further Clarification

- 1- After we have come to know Allah's justice, wisdom, knowledge, and richness, we know that Allah *the Exalted* did not create the human being so that he may spread corruption upon the earth, shed blood, wrong people, violate their honors, and plunder

wealth, such that when he reaches the end of his lifespan Allah then causes him to die.

- 2- Nor did He create the one who is wronged for his honor to be violated, his wealth plundered, his back and stomach flogged, his family and children killed, and then his soul seized under the feet of the oppressors. For the intellect is certain that no wisdom appears in the creation of the oppressor and the oppressed if death is the end. Rather, the creation of the human being in this worldly life would then be futile and invalid, play and ugly injustice. Exalted is Allah far above what the ignorant say, with great exaltation.

Those of pure intellects in the Age of Ignorance (before Islam) realized the inevitability of resurrection after death for recompense and reckoning, even before the call of the messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) reached them. Reporters of historical accounts have transmitted this from az-Zubayr ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib and from Quss ibn Sā‘idah al-Iyādī, and others.

Then the messengers of Allah (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) came, affirming resurrection, recompense, and reckoning; magnifying its matter; instilling fear of it; warning of its coming; and advising people to prepare for it and guard themselves against its terrors. Mention of this is abundant in the Noble Book of Allah, especially in the Makkan sūrahs.

What has been mentioned in the Qur’an in this regard came to the intellect and struck thought from three paths:

The First Path

Clarifying Allah’s power to give life to the dead, because the polytheists held the revival of the dead to be far-fetched: *“He says, ‘Who will give life to bones while they are disintegrated?’ Say, ‘He will give them life who produced them the first time; and He is, of all creation, Knowing – who made for you from the green tree fire...’”* to the end of the verses in Sūrat Yā Sīn. Allah has diversified the proofs and signs in this field.

The Second Path

The necessity of resurrection and reckoning — a necessity entailed by wisdom and justice, and by declaring Allah *the Exalted* far above and sanctified from leaving (creation) without that, for leaving it would entail play and a breach of justice and wisdom.

We have already detailed this path in what has preceded, and Allah has multiplied and diversified the indications and their explanations in the Wise Qur’an in this respect — such as His saying, *Exalted is He: “Does man think that he will be left neglected?”* [Al-Qiyāmah:36] and His saying, *Exalted is He: “Then did you think that We created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned?”* [Al-Mu’minūn:115] and His saying: *“Our*

Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You..." [Āl 'Imrān:191] and His saying, *Exalted is He: "And We did not create the heaven and earth and what is between them in falsehood. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve, so woe to those who disbelieve from the Fire. Or should We treat those who believe and do righteous deeds like corrupters in the land? Or should We treat the righteous like the wicked? [This is] a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded."* [Ṣād:27-29] and His saying, *Exalted is He: "Then will We treat the Muslims like the criminals? What is [the matter] with you? How do you judge?"* [Al-Qalam:35-36] and His saying, *Exalted is He: "And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, that He may recompense those who do evil with what they have done and recompense those who do good with the best [reward]."* [An-Najm:31] and His saying, *Exalted is He: "And We did not create the heavens and earth and what is between them in play. We did not create them except in truth, but most of them do not know. Indeed, the Day of Judgement is the appointed time for them all."* [Ad-Dukhān:38-40] and other verses besides these, which are many but require more reflection and contemplation.

The Third Path:

That the intellect rules the necessity of caution and taking precautions when hearing a warning of an approaching, destructive danger whose occurrence and encirclement of people is expected. The rational person takes his guard and protects himself, especially when the informer is among the people of truthfulness. Upon this path comes His saying, *Exalted is He: "Say, 'Have you considered: if it (the Qur'an) is from Allah and you disbelieved in it, while a witness from the Children of Israel has testified to something similar and believed, while you were arrogant... indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.'"* [Al-Aḥqāf:10] With this verse, Allah has alerted those with intellect and awakened them from their heedlessness. For when a rational person hears (such a warning), he takes precautions and hastens to the causes of protection.

As for the one who ignores the warner, belittles him, or denies him; who does not clarify the report of the warner, nor takes his guard nor is cautious — such a person wrongs himself, manages his affairs badly, is ignorant, outside the circle of rational people, deserving of blame and censure in their sight. From this, the Believer of the family of Pharaoh said to his people: *"Would you kill a man [merely] because he says, 'My Lord is Allah' while he has brought you clear proofs from your Lord? And if he should be lying, then upon him is [the consequence of] his lie; but if he should be truthful, there will strike you some of what he promises you. Indeed, Allah does not guide one who is a transgressor and a liar."* [Ghāfir:28]

The poet looked to this third path when he said:

The teacher and the doctor both have said:

"There is no resurrection of the dead," so I said to them both:

If what you say is true, then I am not harmed;

But if what I say is true, then woe is upon you.

- Thus, the truly prudent one is he who takes his guard and is cautious for himself in seeking protection from the danger of the Day of Resurrection, even if all that reaches him (regarding it) is only a presumption of its occurrence.

Allah *the Exalted* has pointed to this in His saying: *"[They are] those who are certain (or think firmly) that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him."* [Al-Baqarah:46] and His saying, *Exalted is He: "Indeed, I was certain that I would be meeting my account. So he will be in a pleasant life, in an elevated Garden."* [Al-Ḥāqqah:20-22]

- And Allah *the Exalted* has described those who turn away from the warnings of the messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*) with His saying: *"They are not except like cattle; rather, they are [even] more astray in [their] way."* [Al-Furqān:44]

- In this third path there is sufficient sufficiency to awaken the intellects and alert them to the great danger that awaits them. The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) sufficed with this third path in the very first proclamation that came from him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to Quraysh when he gathered them and (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to them, in meaning: *"I am a warner to you in the face of a severe punishment."*

Allah *the Exalted* has frequently mentioned in the Qur'an sayings of this kind, such as His saying, *Exalted is He: "So I have warned you of a Fire which is blazing."* [Al-Layl:14] and His saying: *"O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe..."* [At-Tahrim:6]

and His saying, *Exalted is He: "Indeed, with Us are shackles and a burning Fire and food that chokes and a painful punishment, on the Day the earth and the mountains will convulse..."* [Al-Muzzammil:12-14]

and His saying: *"The Striking Calamity — what is the Striking Calamity..."* to the end of the sūrah [Al-Qāri'ah:1-11]

and His saying: *"The command of Allah is coming, so do not hasten it."* [An-Nahl:1]

and His saying: *"The Hour has come near, and the moon has split."* [Al-Qamar:1]

and His saying: *"When the sun is wrapped up..."* to the end of the verses [At-Takwīr:1-14]

and His saying: *"When the sky breaks apart..."* to the end of the sūrah [Al-Infīṭār:1-19]

In sum, the sūrahs that were revealed in Makkah revolve around Divine Oneness (*tawhīd*), the negation of partners (for Allah), and warning and frightening (people) of the punishment which Allah has prepared in the abode of the Hereafter.

It is among the strange things that the polytheists of Quraysh met the warning with denial and mockery, without any reflection or contemplation concerning that with which they were warned. Such conduct is the conduct of one who has no intellect. From here comes His saying, *Exalted is He: "Only those of understanding will be reminded."* [Ar-Ra'd] And His saying, *Exalted is He, regarding them: "Deaf, dumb and blind – so they do not reason."* [Al-Baqarah] And His saying, *Exalted is He: "Those are like livestock; rather, they are [even] more astray. It is they who are the heedless."* [Al-A'rāf]

And among the things that arouse amazement is mankind's turning away from the calls of Allah's messengers and prophets (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*), and their responding instead to the callers to falsehood, and their eagerness to cling to superstitions and to what the devils inspire of idol-worship, and the committing of shameful and sinful acts.

Indeed, it did not suffice them what they were already in of ignorance, injustice, and aggression; they even mobilized themselves and their wealth for fighting Allah's prophets and messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*), and devoted themselves to extinguishing the light of Allah and obliterating the call of the messengers (*May Allah's blessing be upon them*).

Annihilation

What appears — *and Allah knows best* — concerning annihilation before the Resurrection is the annihilation of living beings from among the angels, the jinn, human beings, and animals; the shattering of the earth and the mountains and what is in them; the ruin of the heavens and their stars and planets and suns and moons; and the vanishing of night and day: *"On the Day when the earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens [as well]..."* [Ibrāhīm]. What is not meant is annihilation in the sense of pure extinction and absolute non-existence, because Allah the Exalted has mentioned, in many places in the Qur'an, that people will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection from their graves: *"The Day they will emerge from the graves rapidly."* [Al-Ma'ārij]

[How People Will Be Called to Account on the Day of Resurrection]

Salman al-Fārisi wrote, asking Amīr al-Mu'minīn (*Peace be upon him*): "How will people be taken to account on the Day of Resurrection?" So he wrote in the letter: "*They will be called to account just as they are provided for.*" End.

I say: In this there is proof that the reckoning of all creatures will take place at one time, just as He *the Exalted* provides for them all at one time.

[An Important Discussion Concerning the Zaydīs and Their Foundations]

The Zaydiyyah

This attribution (i.e., “Zaydī”) is intended for everyone who agrees with Imām Zayd (*Peace be upon him*) in his creed (the fundamentals of religion – *uṣūl ad-dīn*), just as it is said: “Ash‘arī” for one who agrees with Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī in his creed.

As for the jurisprudential branches of religion (*furū‘ ad-dīn*), the opinion of the Zaydīs, in past and present, has agreed on the permissibility and validity of following (*taqlīd*) any imām from among the Zaydī imams, or any scholar among their mujtahid scholars. There is no harm for the Zaydī in following a mujtahid scholar from among the scholars of his own time. Indeed, they have established that following a living authority is preferable to following one who is dead.

That is because the Zaydīs have opened the gate of independent reasoning (*ijtihād*) for everyone who is able to exercise it, and have obligated the mujtahid to act according to his own *ijtihād*, and forbidden him to imitate anyone else while he is capable of *ijtihād*.

When you know this, then those who say that the attribution “Zaydī” to Zayd is not correct, and that they are in fact “Hādawiyyah” because they follow al-Hādī - are mistaken in that. The attribution to Zayd is, as we said at first, intended to mean their attribution to him in the fundamentals of religion. It is exactly like saying “Ash‘arī,” an attribution to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī for whoever follows him in the fundamentals of religion; he is called “Ash‘arī,” even if he is a follower, in the branches, of Abū Ḥanīfah, or ash-Shāfi‘ī, or Mālik, or ... etc., and that does not invalidate the correctness of his being called “Ash‘arī.”

[The Imamate According to the Zaydīs]

Question: Some followers of (other) madhabs direct criticism at the Zaydī position on the Imamate, saying: How can it be correct for us to have confidence in the Zaydī imams when we see, in a single era, more than one imām, each disputing with the other over the Imamate and differing concerning it, and their disagreement may end up in fighting?

Answer, and with Allah is success: If the question and objection is coming from the Imāmiyyah, then the answer to them is:

The evidences that the ummah has narrated and agreed upon the soundness of, such as the ḥadīth of the Two Weighty Things (*ḥadīth ath-thaqalayn*), indicate that the People of the House (Ahl al-Bayt) are the successors of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and those who stand in his place, and so on. The Imāmiyyah

claimed explicit textual designation (*naṣṣ*) of the Imamate for twelve imams, named individually, whose last is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (Peace be upon him), who — according to their claim — was born and went into concealment in the middle of the third century. Then they did not bring, for their claim, any conclusive proof; rather, they rely upon narrations which they alone relate, without others.

So we rejected their claim and we, the Zaydīs, held fast instead to the evidences whose soundness the entire ummah has agreed upon, and we paid no heed to the statement of the Imāmiyyah, because of its lack of proof and evidence.

- At that point, nothing remains but that we profess the Imamate of the People of the House (Ahl al-Bayt) until the Day of Resurrection. What is meant by “the Imamate of the People of the House” is the Imamate of their scholars. Whoever their scholars appoint as imām, bear witness to his Imamate, and declare obedience to him, then he is the imām whose obedience Allah has made obligatory.
- It was obligatory upon the believers to gather under his banner and to worship Allah by professing loyalty to him and his Imamate. To this conclusion the evidences that the various sects have agreed upon in their soundness have led us, and we saw no alternative but to submit to them and stop at them.
- It is not hidden that the Zaydīs do not profess the Imamate of an imām from the People of the House (*Peace be upon them*) unless he fills the place which the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to fill, in the domain of authority, of abundant knowledge, humility, justice, fairness, asceticism, scrupulousness, perfection of intellect, soundness of opinion, good governance, gentleness, discernment, generosity, and courage. If the imām is such, and the scholars of the People of the House bear witness to that about him and appoint him as imām, then he is (indeed) the imām.
- Indeed, if the imām gathers in himself the qualities we have mentioned and calls the people to give him allegiance, then he is the imām, and it is not a condition that the scholars of the People of the House appoint him.
- Our saying earlier that the People of the House bear witness to his Imamate and appoint him as imām is only for the sake of enabling people to come to know his Imamate. The generality of Muslims only infer the Imamate of an imām from the testimony of the scholars, their legal opinions, and the like.
- If some of the scholars give allegiance (*bayʿah*) to a man for the Imamate, and other scholars give allegiance to another man for the Imamate, and then each of them insists on his own Imamate and disputes

and hostilities arise between them, etc.; then it is obligatory upon the believer to withhold judgment until the true Imam becomes clear to him.

- If the Imam does not become clear to him, then he must withhold judgment, and it is not permissible for him to invalidate the Imamate of either of them without proof.

- And the fighting of the two Imams is not evidence for the invalidity of both of their Imamate, and that is because:

it is assumed that each one of them possesses the qualities of Imamate in the most complete manner, since the scholars of the Zaydiyyah do not appoint to the Imamate except one who is such. And if each one of them is so, then the true Imam among them is the one whose pledge of allegiance preceded the pledge of the other, while the other Imam is mistaken in disputing his companion.

- Moreover, dispute and fighting between the two Imams only occurs when each of them believes that he is more complete than the other, more encompassing of the qualities of Imamate, sounder in opinion, more perfect in intellect, more abundant in knowledge, and more insightful in managing the affairs of authority, etc.

In any case, the one whose pledge preceded is the Imam, and the other is mistaken yet excused, because he sees himself as the most complete and the most encompassing of the qualities of Imamate.

- In all cases, the reality is that the call of the two Imams is one, their school is one, and the principles of their beliefs and their branches are one. They do not differ in their doctrines, nor do they call to anything other than what those before them from the Imams called to.

- The disagreement between the two Imams is only regarding which of them is more entitled to stand at the head of that call, and that does not harm the Imamate of either of them; the one who opposes is mistaken yet excused.

- This is with the rarity of fighting between the Imams of the Zaydiyyah. What occurred of that was between al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim al-ʿAyyānī and al-Zaydī. As for others besides them from the Imams of the Zaydiyyah, fighting did not occur between them, even if disagreement occurred over who deserved the Imamate.

As for Imam Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, the (Ṣāhib Dhībīn), the fighting was between him and one who was not an Imam.

As for what is mentioned in the history of the Imams of the Zaydiyyah regarding fighting, it is between two who are not Imams, or between an Imam and one who is not an Imam. And if we were to examine carefully and investigate thoroughly what occurred between al-Zaydī and al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim, we would know that one of them was an Imam and

the other was not an Imam.

From here, we can say that no fighting ever occurred between two Imams from among the Imams of the Zaydiyyah at all.

[Principles of Religion and Principles of Jurisprudence according to the Zaydiyyah]

A question was presented to me stating that it is said: *The science of the principles of religion is not from the sciences of the Ahl al-Bayt, rather the Zaydiyyah took it from the Mu'tazilah; and likewise the science of the principles of jurisprudence, rather the Zaydiyyah took it from the Ash'ariyyah.* Is that correct, and what is the answer?

I answered with an oral answer in a public gathering, and the summary of the answer was:

1- That this is a false propaganda intended to turn people away from studying these two sciences and to distance them from knowing the rulings of Allah, *Exalted is He*, with which He charged His servants, namely:

- a) doctrinal rulings (the principles of religion),
- b) practical rulings (acts of worship and transactions). And knowing these properly depends upon knowing the principles of jurisprudence.

2- The one who laid the foundations of the science of the principles of religion and the science of the principles of jurisprudence is Imam 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*). Whoever wishes to know the soundness of what we have mentioned should consult the book *Nahj al-Balāghah*, which contains much of the speech, sermons, letters, and wisdom of the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), and the book *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah* by Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, for he will find therein confirmation of what we have stated.

This is in addition to the fact that the scholars of the Mu'tazilah attribute the science of the principles of religion to the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) through their connected chains of transmission to al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, from his father, from his grandfather.

And 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*) mentioned all the chapters of the principles of jurisprudence in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and he (*Peace be Upon Him*) mentioned therein the conditions of narrators, which is the foundation of the science of ḥadīth.

3- Imam Zayd ibn 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) has books and epistles in the science of the principles of religion, printed within the collected works of Imam Zayd ibn 'Alī, in which he mentioned the greatest chapters of the principles of religion. The books of Imam Zayd ibn 'Alī

were among the earliest works compiled and written in Islam, and the Mu'tazilah at his time had no books or writings; rather, the Mu'tazilah had not yet been born nor come into existence.

4- The science of the principles of religion exists in its entirety in the Noble Qur'an, from its beginning to its end. The reason for the disagreement of Muslim scholars in many of the principles of religion is their disagreement in interpreting the clear (muḥkam) and the ambiguous (mutashābih) of the Qur'an. Their disagreement arises either from differences in understanding or from inclinations of desire.

5- The science of the principles of jurisprudence also exists potentially within the Wise Qur'an, for the Qur'an contains the general and the specific, the absolute and the restricted, the concise and the elaborated, the explicit text and the apparent and the interpreted, the expressed meaning and the implied meaning, the literal and the metaphorical, the clear and the ambiguous, command and prohibition, abrogating and abrogated, concession and strict rule, individual obligation and collective obligation, specified obligation and optional obligation, absolute and time-bound, restricted and expansive, performance and make-up, ijtihād and taqlīd, and that the Qur'an is a proof, and that the statements, actions, and omissions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) are a proof, etc.

- The student of the Qur'an, even if he reaches the utmost degree of intelligence, acumen, and memorization, cannot, by his intelligence and acumen alone, reach the intent of Allah, *Exalted is He*, regarding the rulings with which Allah charged His servants, unless he has firm grounding in the knowledge of the principles of jurisprudence; otherwise, he will stumble in his understanding and stray far from the intended meaning.

6- The science of the principles of jurisprudence is not sought for its own sake; rather, it is an instrument by which one reaches knowledge of the rulings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. It may be likened to a lens that reveals and clarifies what cannot be clearly seen by the naked eye.

7- If the science of the principles of jurisprudence were from the sciences of the Ash'ariyyah, all the other schools would not have accepted it from them, such as the Imāmiyyah, the Zaydiyyah, the Salafiyyah, the Zāhiriyyah, and the Ibāḍiyyah. Likewise, if the science of the principles of religion were from the sciences of the Mu'tazilah, the other sects—such as the Imāmiyyah, the Zaydiyyah, the Ibāḍiyyah, etc.—would not have accepted it, due to the enmity between them.

8- There is no doubt that Muslim scholars differed regarding divine doctrines. Some of them said that the legally responsible person is free in his actions, whether obedience or disobedience; and some of them said

rather that the servant has no action in obedience or disobedience, nor any will therein, but that Allah, *Exalted is He*, is the One who performs obedience and disobedience in the servant by His power, will, and decree. These differences were debates in which each group presented what it could of proofs and arguments, and each group attempted to invalidate what the other group presented of proofs and evidences.

9- Likewise were the disagreements among Muslim scholars in the rest of the divine sciences. Those disagreements, along with the proofs, evidences, doubts, rebuttals, and answers involved in them, were written down, because of the insight they give to the observer, the strengthening of knowledge of truth over falsehood, and the reassurance of the soul—such that no one can mislead the student regarding his religion or confuse him regarding his beliefs.

- Knowledge in all its types is praiseworthy and good to learn, and its bearer is praised, including the science of the principles of religion and the science of the principles of jurisprudence—except for the science of magic, the science of astrology, and the science of soothsaying. The scholars of the Muslims, from all sects, have not differed on this throughout Islamic history until today. Therefore, there is no consideration for the condemnation of those who condemn these two sciences, nor any weight to their blame, for it contradicts the consensus of the Muslims—rather, the consensus of the majority of the scholars.

- I have also heard from others besides this questioner that these two sciences are misguidance, and they justify that by claiming that they are not from the sciences of the Ahl al-Bayt, but rather from the science of the Mu‘tazilah and the science of the Ash‘ariyyah.

Among their justifications is that the science of the principles of jurisprudence is a cause of people’s disagreement, in that within the science of the principles of jurisprudence there is a rule which states: “*Every mujtahid among the scholars is correct.*” This rule, according to them, justifies disagreement, encourages it, deems it correct, and admits it into the truth—despite the fact that Allah, *Exalted is He*, has forbidden division and disagreement in the Qur’an.

The response to this justification is that it was incumbent upon them to direct their criticism to this rule alone, and not to generalize their criticism to everything contained in the science of the principles of jurisprudence. This is the logical principle followed by scholars.

- What is meant by that rule among Muslim scholars is the validation of the mujtahids regarding the matters in which they exercised ijtihād for issues whose rulings are not explicitly stated by a text from the Book, nor from the Sunnah, nor from those upon whom consensus has been established—such as newly emerging issues that did not occur in the

time of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) but arose later or in our time. Examples of this include:

1. One who travels by air from China to Yemen after having prayed *ẓuhr* and *‘aṣr* there, then arrives at Sana’a airport before the time of *ẓuhr* for that day has entered—does he have to pray *ẓuhr* and *‘aṣr* again when the time enters, or not?
2. How does a Muslim pray the five daily prayers in the Arctic Circle, where the sun may rise and then set after minutes, or remain shining and then set briefly, then rise again, depending on the seasons there?
3. Buying and selling by means of the telephone.
4. Dissecting corpses in medical colleges, or for determining the cause of death.
5. Do intravenous nutrition and injections invalidate the fast?
6. Is a person suffering from asthma required to make up the fast if he uses an inhaler?
7. What is the legal ruling regarding what various insurance companies do?

Such issues require the consideration of the mujtahids to derive their rulings from the sources of legislation.

[The Status of the Zaydiyyah and Their Role in the Sciences]

The Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*), is the Imam of the Zaydiyyah. He (*Peace be Upon Him*) was the first to open for people the door of the science of theology (*kalām*), and that is through his book *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Before the magnificence of its philosophy—if the expression may be used—the foreheads of the philosophers of Rome and Greece bow down, and their philosophies appear insignificant by comparison. From him (*Peace be Upon Him*) the scholars of *kalām* took their theological philosophy.

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd said in volume 1, page 17, while speaking about the origin of the science of theology: “From his (*Peace be Upon Him*) words it was derived, from him it was transmitted, to him it returned, and from him it began. For the Mu‘tazilah, who are the people of *tawḥīd* and justice and the masters of rational inquiry, are his students—because Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’, the leader of the Mu‘tazilah, took knowledge from Abū Hāshim ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah; Abū Hāshim was a student of his father, and his father was a student of ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).”

As for the Ash‘ariyyah, their leader is Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Abī Bisr al-Ash‘arī, and he was a student of Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā‘ī, and Abū ‘Alī was one of the shaykhs of the Mu‘tazilah.

As for the Zaydiyyah and the Imāmiyyah, their affiliation to him is manifest. End quote.

Then he said on page 18: “Among the sciences is the science of jurisprudence, and he (*Peace be Upon Him*) is its origin and foundation. Every jurist in Islam is dependent upon him and benefits from his jurisprudence. Abū Ḥanīfah took jurisprudence from Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad (*Peace be Upon Him*), and al-Shāfi‘ī took jurisprudence from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, the companion of Abū Ḥanīfah...” End quote.

Then he said on page 19: “Among the sciences is the science of Qur’anic exegesis. From him it was taken and from him it branched. If you return to the books of tafsīr, you will know the soundness of this, because most of it is from him and from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās. And people know the state of Ibn ‘Abbās in his close companionship with him (*Peace be Upon Him*), his devotion to him, and that he was his student and graduate. It was said to him: ‘Where is your knowledge compared to the knowledge of your cousin?’ He replied: ‘Like a drop of rain compared to the surrounding ocean.’”

And among the sciences is the science of the spiritual path and inner reality, and the states of Sufism. And you had known that the masters of this discipline in all the lands of Islam ultimately trace back to him and stop with him. This has been explicitly stated by al-Shiblī, al-Junayd, Sarī, Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī, Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī, and others. End of the words of *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*.

I say: The Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) spoke the truth when he said: “*I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate; whoever wishes to enter the city must come through the gate,*” or as he said.

Then we say after that: History has wronged the Zaydiyyah by neglecting to mention them in this field—their great share, their advancement, and their precedence in establishing the philosophy of kalām, the principles of jurisprudence, and the sciences of fiqh, ḥadīth, and tafsīr, etc. You scarcely hear for them, in the books of history in this field, any sound or movement at all.

Distinctive Features and Differences

The Imams of the Zaydiyyah distinguished themselves from their earliest era—beginning with the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*peace be upon him*)—and continuing through the renewer of the call, Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*peace be upon him*), and his son Yaḥyā (*peace be upon him*), down to the last of their callers and Imams (*peace be upon them*), by clear and manifest characteristics, as follows:

1. Justice toward the subjects at its utmost limit. This quality is found in none of the other caliphs whatsoever. Because of this just conduct,

many of the Companions resented the Commander of the Faithful (*peace be upon him*), repudiated their pledge to him, and historical evidence for this is abundant and recurrent.

Among their well-known sayings is: “*We give you precedence in stipends, and we precede you when meeting [the enemy].*” This was their way from the Commander of the Faithful to the last of their callers (*peace be upon them*).

We have not found this noble trait in any of the caliphs—not even the earliest caliphs.

2. The Imams of the Zaydiyyah were distinguished by a lofty Islamic policy that none of the other caliphs followed at all, namely, complete dedication to spreading knowledge. Hence, you find that each of their Imams authored several works in various Islamic sciences.

Imam al-Hādī (*peace be upon him*) would dictate scholarly issues while mounted on horseback during jihad, and they regarded this as among the greatest forms of jihad and among the duties most deserving of attention, and as an obligation upon the Imams. For this reason, there has been transmitted from them in this field what has not been transmitted from others: an immense abundance in their scientific and cultural legacy, and what their writings carry of astonishing creativity that indicates the richness of material behind it, the strength of thought, and the brilliance of intellect.

Whoever wishes to verify what we have said need only consult the books of Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm (*peace be upon him*), which are a collection of works in various branches of knowledge; or the books of his grandson, Imam al-Hādī (*peace be upon him*), which are also printed and available in Yemeni libraries; or the books of Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm; or the books of Imam al-Mu’ayyad bi-llāh Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Hārūnī (*peace be upon him*). Among what has been printed of his works is *Ithbāt Nubuwwat al-Nabī* (Establishing the Prophethood of the Prophet, *(May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace)*), and it is my strong belief that nothing comparable to it had been authored in its field before it.

In sum, no group among the Muslim sects reached what the Zaydiyyah reached in this domain.

It is my strong belief that the *Musnad* of Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*peace be upon him*) is the first book authored and compiled in ḥadīth and jurisprudence, since the martyrdom of Zayd (*peace be upon him*) occurred in the year 121 AH, and this date precedes the era of the codification and organization of ḥadīth.

Imam Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh, known as al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah, has a well-known book called *al-Sīrah*, excerpts of which are found in books of

jurisprudence under various chapters. It has been said that Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī derived his book *al-Muwattaʿ* in jurisprudence from it. Al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah was martyred at the beginning of the caliphate of Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr, and this was before Mālik compiled *al-Muwattaʿ*.

[The Principles of the Zaydiyyah]

The principles upon which the religion of the Zaydiyyah is built are:

- The proof of reason.
- The proof of the Qurʾan.
- The proof of the Sunnah whose authenticity is agreed upon among the Muslim sects.
- The proof of consensus (ijmāʿ).

Upon these principles the religion of the Zaydiyyah is founded, and any intellectual doctrine that arises from other than these principles, the Zaydiyyah do not pay attention to nor rely upon.

Let us begin explaining these four principles, and we say—by Allah’s help:

1. The Proof of Reason

The proof of reason is the first of the proofs among the Zaydiyyah and the strongest of them. We shall discuss here two matters:

1. Clarifying the proof for the validity of their claim that reason is a decisive proof in religion.
2. Clarifying that the proof of reason is the strongest of proofs.

We say: the proof for what we have claimed—that reason is a decisive proof in religion—is a necessary, intuitive proof, were it not for the contamination of many natural dispositions of minds by inherited, traditional, superstitious doctrines that successors receive from predecessors, upon which the young grow up and the old grow gray.

If someone were to say: Necessary judgments are not nullified by doubt or deception; the rational person does not accept nor believe one who promotes to him that night is day or the opposite; therefore, if the judgment of reason were necessary as you claim, disagreement would not have occurred among the Muslim sects,

We reply: the matter is not as you have stated. Do you not see that the Arab polytheists, including Quraysh—despite their sound natural disposition and sharp intelligence—used to worship stones, swear by them, fight in their defense, and address them, and yet they would sometimes throw them away and replace them with others—along with the rest of their superstitious doctrines that natural disposition detests and reason, by its necessity, rejects?

Another answer is that illusion may dominate and, by its dominance, weaken the necessary judgment of reason. This is an intuitive matter. Do you not see that a man may be in an open place or in a room of his house during the daytime, then when darkness comes, illusion and imagination depict to him shapes and terrors from which his skin shudders—yet reason judges in that situation that the place is empty of those frightening shapes. Nevertheless, the fearful person does not heed its judgment, due to the dominance of illusion and imagination.

Likewise, superstitious doctrines that clash with the decisive, necessary judgment of natural disposition may dominate. For this reason, it should not be necessary to set up proofs in such matters; rather, it would suffice for the morally responsible person to return to himself and his inner awareness to know right from wrong here. Nonetheless, there is no harm in further clarification, so we say:

Indeed, Allah—*Glorified and Exalted*—has condemned a people who neglected reflection and thinking with their minds. He, *Mighty and Majestic*, said: *“They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like cattle—rather, they are more astray; those are the heedless.”* [al-A‘rāf:179] Thus Allah, *Exalted is He*, condemned them here when they neglected the instruments and tools of thought that would inevitably lead them to knowledge of the truth and to distinguishing it from falsehood.

The instruments of thought mentioned here are: the sight of the eye, the hearing of the ear, and the thinking of the heart. What is meant by the sight of the eye is the sight of reflection, not mere physical sight—for they indeed had eyesight. The same applies to hearing. Through the pathways of sight and hearing, the heart perceives and hears, then deduces and judges. Through this intellectual activity, the human being is distinguished from other animals.

If a person neglects this function, then in Allah’s estimation and judgment he is like cattle—indeed, more astray than them—as you have heard in the preceding verse.

And He, *Glorified and Exalted*, says: *“And Allah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and He made for you hearing and vision and hearts that you might give thanks.”* [An-Nahl:78] In this verse, Allah the Exalted clarifies the purpose for which He granted the human being hearing, sight, and the heart. This purpose is gratitude to Allah, and gratitude to Allah is realized through faith, then righteous action.

And He, *Glorified and Exalted*, says: *“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are*

signs for those of understanding.” [Āl ‘Imrān:190] Those of understanding are people of intellect. Whoever neglects reflection upon the signs of Allah is, in the judgment of Allah, like cattle—rather, even more astray.

Thus, Allah has commanded reflection and contemplation upon His signs spread throughout the horizons, so that through them people may arrive at faith in Allah and affirmation of His Messenger and His Book. He, *Glorified be His Majesty*, says: *“Say, ‘Observe what is in the heavens and the earth.’”* [Yūnus:101] And how many verses like this are there in the Qur’an.

And He, *Exalted*, says in describing the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *“He enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong, and makes lawful for them the good things and forbids them the evil.”* [Al-A‘rāf:157] From this verse and others like it in the Qur’an, it is understood that the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) only commands them with what their intellects recognize, find familiar, and are inclined toward, and that he forbids them from what their intellects reject, feel estranged from, and are repelled by.

Likewise, he permits for them what their souls find wholesome, incline toward, and approve of, and he forbids for them what their souls deem repugnant, their intellects reject, and find ugly.

The proof for the correctness of this interpretation is what has been established in Islam: that no consideration is given to the inclinations of desire and lust, nor to their approval or disapproval. Thus Allah the Exalted says: *“Have you seen he who has taken as his god his own desire...”* [Al-Jāthiyah:23] And He, *Glorified*, says: *“But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and restrained the soul from desire, then indeed, Paradise will be the refuge.”* [An-Nāzi‘āt:40–41] Therefore, what is intended is what the intellect recognizes and rejects, and what it deems wholesome or repugnant.

Clarifying That Reason Is the Strongest Proof

The clarification of this is that reason is the only path to affirming the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding what he brought from Allah the Exalted in the Book and the Sunnah.

That is because the disbelievers to whom the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) came did not believe in the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), nor in the Book, nor in the Sunnah, nor were they convinced by them. Therefore, the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) came to them with another proof, namely the miracle, which is a rational proof.

Hence, one of the polytheists said when they heard the verses of the Qur'an: "Indeed, it has sweetness, and upon it is elegance; it rises and nothing rises above it; by Allah, it is not the speech of humans," or words to that effect.

Likewise were all the other Prophets—*may Allah's blessings and peace be upon them*. Mūsā (*Peace be upon him*) came with the staff, and so on; 'Īsā (*Peace be upon him*) came with reviving the dead, curing the blind and the leper, and informing them of what they ate and what they stored in their homes; Šāliḥ (*Peace be upon him*) came with the she-camel, and so forth.

Through the miracle, by means of reflecting upon it, the legally responsible person reaches faith and affirmation in the Prophets and Messengers, and in what they brought from Allah.

For this reason we said: reason is the strongest proof, since it is the path to faith in Allah, His Messengers, and His Books.

2 – The Proof of the Qur'an

The Qur'an is the foremost of the legal proofs and the strongest of them. The proof of reason is the foremost proof absolutely, as previously mentioned. The Sunnah occupies the second rank after the Qur'an. There is no general disagreement among Muslims regarding this order between the Book and the Sunnah.

There is no doubt that the Qur'an is the Book of Allah, falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it; it is a revelation from One who is Wise and Praiseworthy.

It contains two categories: decisive (*muḥkam*) and ambiguous (*mutashābih*), exactly as He, *Glorified*, says: *"It is He who has sent down to you the Book; in it are verses that are precise—they are the foundation of the Book—and others ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow that which is ambiguous, seeking discord and seeking its interpretation. And no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firmly grounded in knowledge..."* [Āl 'Imrān:7] It also contains the general and the specific, the concise and the clarified, the abrogating and the abrogated, the absolute and the restricted, the implicit and the explicit, and so forth.

And it was revealed in the language of the Arabs: *"An Arabic Qur'an, without any deviance."* [Az-Zumar:28] And: *"In a clear Arabic language."* [Ash-Shu'arā':195]

For this reason, the Zaydiyyah did not derive their religion from the Qur'an except after thorough preparation:

1. Mastery of the Arabic language, represented by knowledge of grammar, morphology, rhetoric, and vocabulary.

2. Knowledge of the principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*).
3. Accompanying all of that with the indication of reason.

Thus, the creed of the Zaydiyyah was safeguarded from superstitious beliefs and from contradiction and disagreement found in some Islamic schools. They distinguished the decisive from the ambiguous, returned the ambiguous to the decisive, built the general upon the specific, and the absolute upon the restricted, and so forth.

Clarifying the Meaning of the Decisive and the Ambiguous

The Decisive (*al-Muḥkam*):

In the Arabic language, *muḥkam* means perfected, and *iḥkām* means perfection. Perfection may be in wording or in meaning. There is no doubt that what is intended here is perfection in meaning rather than wording, because if perfection in wording were intended, the division mentioned in the verse—into decisive and ambiguous—would not be valid.

Moreover, all the words of the Qur'an are perfected, including the ambiguous ones mentioned in the verse of Āl 'Imrān. Allah *the Exalted* says: "*A Book whose verses have been perfected, then explained in detail, from One who is Wise and All-Aware.*" [Hūd:1] And He says: "*Yā Sīn. By the wise Qur'an.*" [Yā Sīn:1-2] And many others besides these.

The meaning of perfection in meaning is clarity in indication, such that it does not become confused or ambiguous to one knowledgeable of the Arabic language. For this reason, Allah *the Exalted* named the decisive verses the foundation of the Book.

The benefit of this designation and its implication is that it is obligatory upon the legally responsible person to refer what is unclear and ambiguous in its interpretation back to the decisive, and to interpret the ambiguous in a manner that accords with the decisive.

Arabic composed speech comes in three distinct styles:

1. Literal expression.
2. Metonymical expression.
3. Figurative expression.

These styles are known to scholars of the Arabic language. Therefore, it is not permissible to interpret the Qur'an except by one who is acquainted with these various styles, together with what we have mentioned previously.

The Mutashābih

The intended meaning of *al-Mutashābih* is similarity in meaning, as we previously explained regarding *al-Muḥkam*.

The *Mutashābih* in meaning is that a single word has two or more

similar meanings; that is, a *mutashābih* word is used in the Arabic language for two or more meanings. An example of this is the word “ayn,” for it is used to mean the human eye by which one sees, and it is also used to mean a spring of water emerging from the earth.

The evidence for what we have mentioned in this interpretation is that the word *mutashābih* in the verse is an active participle derived from *tashābuh* (similarity), and similarity can only exist between two things or more. Thus, if a Qur’anic word has several different meanings, it is called *mutashābih*, because the word may correctly be applied to each one of them, and they are similar in the validity of that application.

It is not correct to interpret *al-Mutashābih* in any way other than what we have mentioned, because this interpretation conforms to reality. Indeed, the disagreement of the Ummah and the deviation of many of its sects are based on interpreting many verses according to one of the possible meanings in each verse.

Among the examples of this is the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: “Allah sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills.” [Ad-Dīr:231].

The proponents of compulsion (*al-jabr*) say in interpreting this verse that Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, causes whom He wills to enter into misguidance and whom He wills to enter into guidance. They made this verse and others like it evidence for their belief that the servant has no will or choice in committing sins or acts of obedience, and that Allah the Exalted is the One who creates disobedience or obedience within the servant.

Others interpreted the verse differently and said that what is meant in the verse is judgment and designation, meaning that Allah the Exalted judges whom He wills as misguided and names him so, and judges whom He wills as guided and names him so. They argued for the correctness of this interpretation by the fact that the Arabs, in their language, say: “So-and-so led me astray,” “declared me a disbeliever,” or “declared me immoral,” meaning that he attributed misguidance to me and named me misguided. Among this is the poet’s statement concerning ‘Alī (*Peace be upon him*)

*“He never ceased guiding his people, while leading us astray
Out of ignorance, and attributing us to the wicked.”*

This interpretation may also be supported by the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: “And Allah would not let a people go astray after He has guided them until He makes clear to them what they should avoid.” [At-Tawbah: 115] For the meaning of misguidance here cannot be correct except according to what we have mentioned regarding judgment and designation.

Another example is the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: “*Looking toward their Lord.*” [Al-Qiyāmah:23] One group interpreted it as vision by sight, while another interpreted it as waiting, and the word in the Arabic language is used for both meanings.

Indeed, what further clarifies what we have mentioned is that interpretations other than ours did not lead to the deviation of sects of the Ummah, nor did they play any role in the misguidance of deviant groups. We have never heard of any of the people of deviation and misguidance basing their deviation on the disconnected letters at the beginnings of the chapters, such as (*Alif-Lām-Mīm*), (*Alif-Lām-Rā'*), (*Ṭā'-Sīn-Mīm*), and the like.

Likewise, those who say that *al-Mutashābih* refers to matters such as the number of the guards of Hell and the bearers of the Throne in the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: “*Over it are nineteen.*” [Al-Muddaththir:30] And His saying: “*And there will bear the Throne of your Lord above them, that Day, eight.*” [Al-Ḥāqqah:17] No one from this Ummah has been reported to have based his deviation or misguidance on interpreting the numbers in these two verses. The same applies to the rest of what is mentioned regarding *al-Mutashābih* other than what we have stated. This view has been reported from some of the Imams, such as Zayd ibn 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*), except that the misguidance resulting from that interpretation was for the polytheists, not for the Muslims, as it did not cause the misguidance of Muslims.

Knowing the Meaning of the Mutashābih

The *Mutashābih* can be known, and it is known by those firmly grounded in knowledge.

The evidence for this is that all sects of the Ummah interpret all the verses of the Noble Qur'an in their books of exegesis without exception, except for matters whose knowledge is not a religious obligation, such as the disconnected letters.

We have not seen any exegete stop at a verse and refrain from interpreting it on the grounds that it is *mutashābih*. Moreover, we have not found any scholar of the Ummah who objected to this practice from the beginning of the era of compilation and tafsīr until our present day.

If it is said: Allah *the Exalted* has said: “*And no one knows its interpretation except Allah.*” [Āl 'Imrān:7] And the early and later scholars stopped at this point, making the sentence after it a new beginning, thus establishing that no one knows the *Mutashābih* except Allah alone, excluding human beings.

We reply: stopping here does not indicate what you claim, because stopping at the object of conjunction is permissible, and its examples in the Qur'an are countless. Moreover, there is a reason for stopping here,

which is etiquette, for stopping at the Divine Name increases reverence and glorification of Allah in a way that is not achieved without stopping.

Additionally, the conjunction "wa" is clearly for coordination, and it is not permissible to depart from this apparent meaning except with evidence, and stopping is not evidence.

[Consensus of All Islamic Schools on the Qur'an]

- The Noble Qur'an is the Book of Allah *the Exalted*:
- The Qur'an has been distinguished among the heavenly books by preservation and protection from alteration, substitution, and distortion until the Day of Resurrection.
- All followers of the Islamic schools unanimously agree upon this, with no disagreement regarding the correctness of a single word or a single letter of it.
- They also agree that it holds the highest rank in terms of proof and evidence, and that the Sunnah occupies the second rank.
- Despite this agreement, disagreement and division in the religion of Islam have increased, sects have multiplied, some declaring others disbelievers, some cursing others, and some deeming the blood of others lawful.
- The school of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah is a large school distinguished by the large number of its followers, the many scholars who support it, and the abundance of writings and compilations in all branches of Islamic sciences and linguistic works, with extensive engagement in verification and meticulous examination.
- The Zaydī school is a school of limited scope, confined to a small region in the south of the Arabian Peninsula, and is distinguished by the strength of its evidences and proofs regarding the soundness of its doctrines.
- The Imāmī Shī'ī (Ja'farī) school ranks second after Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah in terms of the number of followers.
- The Ibādī school is centered in the Sultanate of Oman and is distinguished by strictness in loyalty and disassociation.

The Caliphate of Prophethood

The Islamic schools differed regarding this matter, and the greatest disagreement concerns the position of the Caliphate.

One group said: the position of the Caliphate belongs to Quraysh, and it is not permissible for anyone outside them.

Another group said: rather, it belongs to all Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs alike.

The Imāmiyyah said: rather, it belongs to twelve Imams.

The Zaydiyyah said: it belongs to the Household of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*); whoever among them is suitable for the Caliphate and fulfills its conditions is the Caliph.

[The Explicit Text on the Imamate of 'Alī (Peace be upon him)]

Question: It is said that the explicit text (*naṣṣ*) affirming the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) is a hidden text (*naṣṣ khafī*). What does that mean? And what is the difference between explicit (*jalī*) and hidden (*khafī*) text with respect to religious obligation?

Answer—and Allah is the One who grants success and assistance:

The meaning of hiddenness in the explicit text affirming the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful is that the texts indicating his Imamate are clothed in a subtle covering, such that what lies beneath it is not perceived except after some reflection and careful consideration. This is like the saying of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): “*‘Alī is to me as Hārūn was to Mūsā, except that there is no prophet after me.*” And the saying of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): “*Whoever I am his master, then ‘Alī is his master. O Allah, befriend whoever befriends him, oppose whoever opposes him, support whoever supports him, and forsake whoever forsakes him.*”

These two traditions explicitly affirm the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) and his succession. However, recognizing the explicit text within these two traditions requires a degree of reflection and inference. In the first tradition, the observer must pay attention to the ranks of Hārūn in relation to Mūsā that are known from the Qur’an, namely: prophethood, brotherhood, ministry, and succession: “*And We granted him from Our mercy his brother Hārūn as a prophet.*” [Maryam:53] “*And appoint for me a minister from my family—Hārūn, my brother. Strengthen through him my back, and let him share my task.*” [Tā-Hā:29-32] “*Take my place among my people, do right, and do not follow the way of the corrupters.*” [Al A’rāf:142]

After knowing the ranks of Hārūn in relation to Mūsā, it becomes clear to the observer that these ranks are affirmed for 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*) by the explicit text of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), with nothing excluded from them passed Ali (*Peace be upon him*) except prophethood.

When the observer reaches this level of understanding, he will undoubtedly comprehend from the text the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful.

Likewise, the second tradition—the tradition of Ghadīr—requires reflection and inference. This is because the word *mawlā* in the Prophet's statement, "*Whoever I am his master, then 'Alī is his master,*" is used in the Arabic language in several literal meanings. It is linguistically assigned to the emancipator, the emancipated, the cousin, the supporter, the one most entitled to authority, and other meanings.

Thus, the listener to the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) address in this tradition needs some interpretation and reflection in order to clarify the intended meaning. With contemplation, the observer will undoubtedly understand the explicit designation of the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*).

This is because it is not correct for *mawlā* in this tradition to mean the emancipator or the emancipated, since not everyone whom the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) emancipated from among the slaves was emancipated by 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*). Moreover, there is no benefit in conveying such a meaning to a great multitude in such a momentous gathering on the Day of Ghadīr.

Likewise, it is meaningless for the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to say: "Whoever I am his cousin, then 'Alī is his cousin," and similarly with the meaning of supporter. Thus, nothing remains except that the intended meaning of *mawlā* in the tradition is the one vested with authority over affairs. The rest of the texts reported concerning the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) follow this same pattern.

The Difference Between Explicit and Hidden Text With Respect to Obligation in the Issue of the Imamate

As for the difference between explicit and hidden text with respect to obligation, the scholars of the Household of the Prophet (*Peace be upon them*) and their followers—*may Allah be pleased with them*—have pointed to it in their works on the principles of religion when mentioning those who preceded 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*). They stated that those who preceded him—if they knew of his entitlement (*Peace be upon him*) to the Caliphate, and that he was more deserving of it after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) than themselves—then they are oppressors and sinners. But if they reflected and erred, failing to recognize his exclusive entitlement, then they are excused, due to the saying of Allah the Exalted: "*And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but only for what your hearts intended.*" [Al-Aḥzāb:5]

From this statement, the distinction between explicit and hidden text becomes known. The hidden text is that whose (contradiction) due to

error after reflection excuses the legally responsible person.

As for the explicit text, understanding its meaning does not require reflection; rather, knowledge of the wording yields immediate knowledge of the meaning without any intermediary of reasoning or inference. Therefore, error in understanding explicit texts cannot be claimed, and one who abandons acting upon them is not excused.

If it is said: al-Hādī (*Peace be upon him*) said in the introduction to *al-Aḥkām*, when mentioning the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*), that the name of faith is not complete for one who does not know his Imamate after the Prophet (*Peace be upon them*)—or words to that effect.

We say: indeed, the name of faith is not complete except by affirmation and belief in everything that the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought. Whoever rejects anything that he knows the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought has disbelieved. Among what the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought is the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī (*Peace be upon him*). However, Allah *the Exalted* pardons those who were unable to know this, such as many Bedouins far removed from cities, non-Arabs, and some women. For such people, general belief suffices. Likewise, whoever's reasoning and intellect did not lead him to knowledge of the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful after he reflected with his intellect and sincerely sought the truth, without personal desire, is excused, due to the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: "*Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.*" [Al-Baqarah:286] And His saying: "*And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but only for what your hearts intended.*" [Al-Aḥzāb:5] Accordingly, the statement of Imam al-Hādī (*Peace be upon him*) applies to those who were certain of his Imamate yet refused to submit to affirming it, and to those who were able and invited to examine the evidences but turned away.

Furthermore, what appears to me is that the Companions are not excused in the matter of the Caliphate under the assumption of error or ignorance in understanding the texts that came in the Book and the Sunnah. This is because the actual reality contradicts that assumption, for the following reasons:

1. Because it would necessitate the Ummah's consensus upon misguidance, whereas it has been narrated: "*My Ummah will not agree upon misguidance,*" along with the implication of disobedience by the scholars among the Companions who concealed the truth.
2. Along with what is apparent and well-known from the

Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be upon him*) of lamentation and complaint against those who preceded him, as found in *Nahj al-Balāghah* and other sources.

3. Also what is authentically reported and well-known regarding preventing the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) from writing the document during his final illness, and the Companions' delay in dispatching the army of Usāmah—clear indications that they were planning to seize the Caliphate.
4. And what actually occurred of harm inflicted upon the Household of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) after his death.

Indeed, to further clarify the difference between explicit and hidden text, we say: the indication of both the explicit and the hidden is definitive; however, they differ in that the indication of the explicit is necessary and immediate for one knowledgeable of the language, while the indication of the hidden is theoretical and inferential.

[Supporting Evidences Indicating that the Zaydīs Are the People of Truth]

The followers of the Zaydī school have supporting evidences that testify that they are most entitled to the truth, among them:

1. That they did not associate with the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, nor with the rulers after them. They did not sit with them, reside among them, assume any office under them, or enlist with them.
2. That they rose against the oppressors, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and fought them for that cause. They remained in a state of conflict with them throughout history.
3. That they endured fear and displacement, left their homes and homelands, and bore the harshness of rulers and their subjects—all so as not to enter into that which incurs the displeasure of Allah *the Exalted*.
- 4- They do not permit obedience to a sinful usurper who has seized the caliphate, nor supporting him, nor assisting him, nor socializing with him—except in what Allah *the Exalted* has permitted regarding dissimulation (taqiyyah): *"Except that you fear from them a threat"* [Āl 'Imrān:28].
- 5- They do not hold that the testimony *"There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace)"* is sufficient on its own for entering Paradise, as held by Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. Rather, along

with it, it is necessary to carry out all that Allah the Exalted has made obligatory and to refrain from all that He has forbidden—each according to one's ability: *"So fear Allah as much as you are able"* [At-Taghābun:16].

- 6- They hold that what is narrated from the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), such as: *"Whoever says 'There is no Allah but Allah' will enter Paradise, even if he steals and commits adultery"* and *"My intercession is for the major sinners of my Ummah"*—they consider these to be false hopes that were not authentically transmitted from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), for several reasons:
 - Because they contradict the Qur'an: *"For the wrongdoers there will be no devoted friend and no intercessor who is obeyed"* [Ghāfir:18], and: *"By time, indeed mankind is in loss, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds and advise each other to truth and advise each other to patience"* [Al-'Aṣr:1-3]. The verses in this regard are numerous.
 - Because they encourage and entice people to commit major sins, crimes, and acts of disobedience, and to abandon righteous deeds.
 - Because they lead to the destruction of Islamic law and the spread of chaos and corruption.
- 7- They maintain that the people of major sins from the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), if they die without repentance, are among the people of Hell, abiding therein eternally and never exiting it. They hold that what is narrated regarding their eventual (exit) from Hell are false hopes that must not be relied upon nor given attention, for several reasons:
 - a- Because the Jews said something similar, and Allah condemned and denounced them for it in the strongest terms, saying: *"And they say, 'Never will the Fire touch us, except for a few days.' Say, 'Have you taken a covenant with Allah? For Allah will never break His covenant. Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?' Yes—whoever earns evil and his sin has encompassed him—those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally"* [Al-Baqarah:80-81]. Thus Allah the Exalted cut off the hopes of those who entertain false hopes—among the Jews and among this Ummah—by saying: *"Yes—whoever earns evil..."*, in a general and all-inclusive manner, without excluding anyone from this wise

Qur'anic ruling.

- b- Allah *the Exalted* has threatened with eternal punishment in Hell the adulterer, the murderer of a sanctified soul, and the one who returns to usury, in Sūrat al-Furqān, al-Nisā', and al-Baqarah. He also threatened sinners in general with eternal punishment, saying in Sūrat al-Nisā'—after mentioning the laws of inheritance and addressing the Muslims: "*Allah instructs you concerning your children: for the male, what is equal to the share of two females...*", then at its conclusion: "*These are the limits of Allah...*", and: "*And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His limits—He will put him into the Fire, abiding therein eternally, and for him is a humiliating punishment*" [An-Nisā':13–14].
 - c- Because the nature of narration, even if authentic, yields probability, not certainty. In matters of belief, what is required is knowledge and certainty—and this is among the most serious matters of creed, upon which grave consequences depend.
 - d- Even if we assume that both positions are equal in credibility, precaution lies in what we—the Zaydīs—hold. For if it is revealed on the Day of Resurrection that there is an exit from Hell, our denial of it would not harm us; and if it is revealed that there is no exit, then we would have taken proper caution and safeguarded ourselves.
- 8- The Zaydīs do not exaggerate regarding the Companions nor do they sanctify them. Rather, they view them with justice: that they and others are equal under Allah's justice—"*whoever does good, it is for himself; and whoever does evil, it is against himself.*" The companionship of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is a virtue, not an immunity that prevents harm from sin. Whoever commits a major sin—whether from the Companions or from others—is equal in Allah's judgment. Indeed, the Companion may be more deserving of Allah's anger and wrath due to the abundance of Allah's favors upon him. Hence Allah *the Exalted* said regarding the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), if they were to disobey Allah and His Messenger: "*The punishment would be doubled for her twice*" [An-Nisā':30].
- 9- The Zaydīs declare Allah *the Exalted* free from committing the sins of the servants, from willing them, and from intending them. They say that the sinners alone are characterized by performing them, intending them, and willing them; that they committed them by

choice, not compulsion; and that Allah the Exalted did nothing in this regard except grant them capacity and power, instill in them natural disposition, and enable them to act as they choose.

They say that had Allah willed, He could have compelled them to obedience, but His wisdom required that they be given choice: *"So whoever wills—let him believe; and whoever wills—let him disbelieve"* [Al-Kahf:29], so that reward and punishment would be deserved: *"That He may recompense those who do evil with what they have done and recompense those who do good with the best"* [An-Najm:31].

- 10- Reason, according to the Zaydīs, is among the strongest proofs. Therefore, they declare Allah the Exalted free from corporeality, bodily organs, indwelling in a place, and from being seen—because indwelling in a place and vision are attributes of bodies.
- 11- The narrations of the two Ṣaḥīḥs are not all authentic, nor are they all false. Rather, they contain both sound and unsound reports. The Zaydīs do not permit blind imitation of the scholars of ḥadīth in their ruling that the two Ṣaḥīḥs are entirely authentic, nor in their grading of other collections. They have methods for distinguishing the authentic from the inauthentic:
 - 1- Reason—by which fabricated and mythical narrations are recognized, such as the narration of the Beast reported in Muslim; and there is much of this in the two Ṣaḥīḥs.
 - 2- The Qur'an—any narration that contradicts the Qur'an is rejected and not considered.
 - 3- Narrations agreed upon as authentic—any narration that contradicts them is not accepted.
 - 4- Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)—any narration that contradicts what Ahl al-Bayt hold is not accepted, due to the evidences reported concerning them, such as the ḥadīth of al-Thaḳalayn.
- 12- They hold that 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) was the most rightful and most deserving of the caliphate after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and that 'Alī himself held this view.
- 13- They hold that the caliphate of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is a right belonging to his Household.
- 14- They hold that Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) are the saved sect, and that the truth is with them—it does not depart from them, nor do they depart from it.

- 15- They hold that the caliphate of a sinful person is not permissible.
- 16- They maintain that Allah *the Exalted* is transcendent and free from all attributes of created beings; therefore they say:
 - 1- Allah *the Exalted* is not a body.
 - 2- He is not subject to accidents such as motion and rest, union and separation, colors, going and coming, ascending and descending, joy and pleasure, laughter and crying, worry and sorrow, will and aversion, love, and so on.
 - 3- He is exalted above indwelling in a place—He is neither above nor below, neither right nor left, nor above the Throne, and so on.
 - 4- He is exalted above being seen by the eyes—neither in this world nor in the Hereafter.
 - 5- He has no face, no hands, no side, no foot, and so on.
- 17- They hold that Allah *the Exalted* is free from injustice toward His servants, as the Qur'an has clearly stated. Accordingly, they say:
 - 1- Allah *the Exalted* did not create disbelief in the disbeliever, nor wickedness in the wicked, nor disobedience in the disobedient. For if Allah had created disbelief, wickedness, and disobedience in them and then punished them for what He created within them, He would have been unjust. Allah *the Exalted* has declared Himself free from injustice: *"And Allah does not wrong even as much as an atom's weight"* [An-Nisā': 40].
 - 2- Those who are morally responsible are the ones who commit acts of disobedience by their own choice, will, and intention. Allah's will and intention have no role in bringing those acts into existence; for if the matter were otherwise—as claimed by Ahl al-Sunnah—then Allah *the Exalted* would be unjust.
 - 3- Allah *the Exalted* does not decree disbelief, wickedness, or disobedience, nor does He predetermine them. For if He did so, He would be unjust—exalted and far above that is He.
- 18- The Zaydīs do not declare the Companions disbelievers, nor do they label them sinners, nor do they attribute to them impermissible acts of insult or abuse—especially since Allah has elevated their status in the Qur'an and praised them in clear terms. However, they judge whoever commits a major sin according to the ruling Allah *the Exalted* has given for the people of major sins—whether the individual is a Companion or not. They do not believe that any morally responsible person

possesses immunity that protects him from Allah's punishment if he commits major sins and dies without repentance.

- 19- The Zaydīs hold that the people of major sins from the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), if they die persisting in disobedience, will abide eternally in the Fire, and that no one exits the Fire after entering it.
- 20- The Zaydīs hold that the name *īmān* (faith) is a noble designation that none deserves except one who believes in Allah, His Messenger, His prophets, what Allah revealed to them, and the Last Day—then remains upright in obedience, complying with what Allah and His Messenger commanded and avoiding what Allah and His Messenger forbade.
- 21- One who commits a major sin is not called a believer nor a disbeliever according to them. Rather, he occupies an intermediate position between disbelief and faith. They refer to the one in this position as a sinful, unjust criminal. At the same time, he is called a Muslim, because he has not committed a sin that expels him from Islam. The proof for this is the saying of Allah the Exalted: "*The Bedouins say, 'We have believed.' Say, 'You have not believed; but say, 'We have submitted,'*" [Al-Ḥujurāt:14]. The Zaydīs do not refrain from condemning and detesting the one who occupies this position, nor do they consider him inviolable so long as he persists in wickedness and disobedience.
- 22- There is nothing in the Zaydī doctrine of myths, delusions, or the kind of excess found among other schools. The Imāmiyyah exaggerated regarding their Imams and attributed to them things that reason cannot accept, while Ahl al-Sunnah exaggerated regarding the Companions and innovated in their doctrine of divine oneness by claiming that every movement or stillness, obedience or disobedience that exists in the universe is solely the act and creation of Allah—excluding all others—and that whoever says that disobedience occurs by the act of the morally responsible person has made Allah a partner. In this claim is the utmost disparagement of Allah, *the Most High*, the Most Great—*glorified is He*—since they attributed to Him the commission of the servants' sins.

Many of Ahl al-Sunnah also liken Allah *the Exalted* to His creation by affirming for Him bodily organs and limbs, and so on.

[Meaning of: "*There will continue to be a group from my Ummah manifest upon the truth*"]

"There will continue to be a group from my Ummah manifest upon the

truth..." — the ḥadīth:

Manifestation here means manifestation through proof and evidence—such that no era is devoid of a group that openly proclaims the truth and manifests its proofs and evidences until the Day of Resurrection. It does not mean manifestation through political authority, rule, dominance, or coercive power—for two reasons:

- 1- The word *tāʾifah* (group) refers to a small number.
- 2- The majority of people are averse to the truth: *"But most of them do not know"* [Al-Anʿām:116], along with many other verses indicating that the majority and the dominant masses turn away from religion and the truth.

Today, the followers of every school claim that they are the group upon the truth, and that all other groups are upon falsehood.

If the adherents of the schools were to sit at the table of discussion, detach themselves from whim, fanaticism, and blind imitation, and then examine the proofs and evidences presented by each group, they would perceive the truth clearly and recognize its people and its group—because the truth is manifest and exposed through its proofs and evidences.

Had the truth become indistinguishable from falsehood, hidden from the people, with no remaining path to knowing it, then Allah's proofs against His servants would be invalidated and moral responsibility would collapse.

Consensus and agreement have occurred that Allah's proofs and evidences remain continuous and unbroken until the Day of Resurrection, based on many evidences—such as the ḥadīth: *"There will continue to be a group from my Ummah manifest upon the truth until the Day of Resurrection"* and the ḥadīth: *"My Ummah will not agree upon misguidance"*; and His saying, *the Exalted*: *"And among those We created is a community which guides by the truth and by it establishes justice"* [Al-Aʿrāf:181], and His saying: *"And from the people of Moses is a community which guides by the truth and by it establishes justice"* [Al-Aʿrāf:159], as well as the ḥadīth of al-Thaqalayn, the ḥadīth of the Ark, the ḥadīth of the Stars, and others.

The Group of Truth

We say: after examining the foundational principles and creeds of the various schools, it becomes clear that the Zaydīs are the group uniquely characterized by manifest proofs and strong evidences, unlike the other major schools present in the religious landscape.

[The Zaydis Are the Group of Truth, Even If Their Number Is Small]

It may be said: How can the Zaydīs be the saved group—the group of truth—when they are small in number, few in count, confined to a small corner of the land of Yemen? And if one counts the sects of the Muslims, they are hardly mentioned due to their small number and lack of fame. Their recognition is limited to those who mix with them or live adjacent to them among the other sects. As for the Muslims in general in the eastern and western parts of the earth, they have no knowledge of the Zaydīs at all.

It may be said in response: The Zaydīs, even if they are a small minority confined to one corner of Yemen, are nevertheless known throughout history by their Imam, Zayd ibn ‘Alī, and by their doctrines and schools among all Muslim scholars.

If the scholars of the various sects know the Zaydīs, their doctrines, and their schools, then the proof has been established against them.

It is not required of the rightful group to convey the truth and its proofs to every individual Muslim. Rather, it is sufficient that the scholars know it. The Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to teach people the foundations of their religion, then he would say: “*Let the one who is present convey to the one who is absent*”. And Allah the Exalted said: “*So why did not a group from every faction among them go forth to gain understanding in the religion and warn their people when they return to them, that they might beware?*” [At-Tawbah:122]

- Allah the Exalted has also condemned the scholars of the Children of Israel for concealing the truth and remaining silent about conveying it to the people, in many verses of the Qur’an. This indicates that the scholars of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) are obligated to convey to the people the truth they know, and that Allah’s proof against the people does not fall away due to the silence of scholars about disseminating and spreading it.

- It is astonishing that the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) turns away from the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) and their schools, practicing religiosity through hatred of them, aversion toward them, and intense hostility against them—and so on. This phenomenon has appeared in the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) from the moment our chosen Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) passed away, until today.

- What is well known is that the Ummah acknowledges the authentic hadiths concerning the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), knows that they are authentically reported from their Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), admits their authenticity from the

Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and that scholars and students study them. Yet this knowledge does not deter them from the hatred and hostility they harbor toward the family of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Rather, despite all this, they profess religiously that loving the family of Muhammad is a grave sin that is not forgiven, and they hold that hostility and hatred toward them is part of faith and one of its pillars.

- You see them maintaining the prayers, paying zakāh, fasting, performing pilgrimage, and so on. In their outward religiosity, they appear to hope for Allah's mercy, the intercession of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), entry into Paradise, and attainment of Allah's pleasure—and they believe themselves to be the people of truth.

- And I do not know how this notion became acceptable to them, despite their firmly established knowledge of what their Prophet—the Prophet of Islam (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—brought regarding the precedence of the Ahl al-Bayt (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in virtue, the obligation of loyalty to them and love for them, and that they are the people of truth who neither depart from it nor does it depart from them until the Day of Resurrection, and that they... and that they... and so on.

The Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)

- The Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) are the successors of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), those who stand in his place, and they are Allah's proofs over His servants until the Day of Resurrection. This is what the well-known texts from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) indicate.

- Knowing the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) is obligatory, because knowledge of them leads to knowledge of the truth.

What is meant by knowing them is knowledge of two matters:

- 1- To know that the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) are the people of truth and the successors of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) who stand in his place, and that the first of them is 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*), and that he is the legitimate successor and the one who stands in place of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).
- 2- To know, in every era, the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt of that era. It is not required of the people of this era, for example, to know the Imams and scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt who lived in past centuries in detail; rather, a general knowledge of them suffices. However, it

should not be hidden that mere knowledge of them is not sufficient—rather, following them in religion is necessary.

Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon them*)

The Zaydīs are attributed to Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).

It is said today: Those who call themselves Zaydīs today are not truly Zaydīs; rather, they are Hādawīs, not Zaydīs. And Zayd ibn ‘Alī is not as the Zaydīs imagine him to be; rather, he is from Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā‘ah—so they claim—because he did not approve of the Rāfiḍah declaring disassociation from the two Shaykhs, and because his school is like the school of Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā‘ah.

We, the Zaydīs, say in response: The Zaydī school is a well-known doctrine among scholars of theology from Ahl al-Sunnah, in ancient times and modern times alike. They transmit it in their books from generation to generation, concerning tawḥīd, justice, imamate, promise and threat.

We, the Zaydīs, do not deny this doctrine that Ahl al-Sunnah mention about us in their books, and our predecessors did not deny it—neither in ancient times nor in later times.

Moreover, Imam Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) has a collected corpus containing epistles and writings attributed to him that confirm the authenticity of the doctrine that Ahl al-Sunnah transmit in their books. As for Zaydī theological writings, they are too numerous to be counted, containing clarification of their doctrine and the explicit statements of their Imams.

In summary, the Zaydī doctrine in theology is well-known and famous, even among circles of Ahl al-Sunnah scholars.

- If it were possible to cast doubt on attributing the Zaydīs to Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī in their theological doctrine, then it would also be possible to cast doubt on attributing the Ash‘arīs to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī in theology, the Ḥanbalīs to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and the Jahmiyyah to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān, and so on. These attributions pertain to theology—that is, tawḥīd, justice, prophethood, imamate, promise, and threat.

- As for their claim that Zayd ibn ‘Alī belonged to Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā‘ah, it is refuted by the uprising of Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) in jihad against Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. Had he been as they claim, he would not have risen against him, because the doctrine of Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamā‘ah prohibits rising against the ruler. Imam Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) was martyred in this uprising. After him, his son Yaḥyā (*Peace be Upon Him*) rose, by the instruction of his father.

Yaḥyā ibn Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) said in poetry:

*O son of Zayd, did Zayd not say:
Whoever loves life shall live humiliated.
Be like Zayd, for you are the soul of Zayd;
You will take in Paradise a lasting shade.*

As for the Zaydī school in jurisprudence, it is a broad and expansive school. It does not obligate adherence to a specific Imam, nor does it require strict conformity to the school of a particular jurist. Rather, it is obligatory according to the Zaydīs that a mujtahid act according to his own *ijtihād*, and it is forbidden for him to engage in *taqlīd* when he is capable of *ijtihād*. They permit the muqallid to follow whichever mujtahid he wishes if they are equal in his estimation. He may move from following one mujtahid to another, and he may follow one mujtahid in one issue, another in a second issue, and a third in yet another issue, and so on.

It is well known in this regard the saying of Imam Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*): “*Our disagreement is a mercy for you; if we were to agree...*”—by which he (*Peace be Upon Him*) meant that the disagreement of the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt is a mercy for their followers, meaning: breadth and facilitation, so that each may adopt the opinion of whichever of them he wishes, or whichever contains ease and concession.

The scholars of the Zaydiyyah hold that the *ḥadīth* corpus of Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) is the most authentic body of *ḥadīth* transmitted from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), comparable—among the Sunnis—to al-Bukhārī. They do have other *ḥadīth* transmissions as well, but these occupy a secondary rank. Thus, the Zaydī jurist relies upon the transmissions of the Zaydī Imams, foremost among them the corpus of Imam Zayd.

Accordingly, the school of al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*), after the Qur’an, relies upon these transmissions; likewise the school of Imam al-Nāṣir, the school of al-Qāsim, the school of al-Mu’ayyad bi-Allāh, and the school of Abū Ṭālib. Each Imam from the Ahl al-Bayt and from among the Zaydī scholars has a position that he follows in certain juristic issues, yet this is little compared to what they agree upon.

– They do not regard this as disagreement, nor as dispute, nor do they deem one another mistaken because of it, nor do they denounce one another for it. Rather, if one of them is asked for a legal opinion in an issue, he directs the questioner to another jurist whose position contains ease and concession, so that the questioner is not placed in hardship if he were to issue a ruling according to his own view.

– The Zaydiyyah gathered the jurisprudence of Imam al-Qāsim and the jurisprudence of his sons, the jurisprudence of al-Hādī and his two sons,

and the jurisprudence of al-Nāṣir; they derived principles from it, branched from them, verified and scrutinized them, and produced from them a school to which the general body of the Zaydiyyah refers.

The first to compile this were Abū al-‘Abbās al-Ḥasanī, al-Mu‘ayyad bi-Allāh, and Abū Ṭālib in the fourth century AH... This school has remained the authoritative school of the Zaydiyyah in all their lands: it is taught in their schools; the young and the old, males and females, learn it; it is relied upon in judiciary matters and transactions. This school is analogous to what the Shāfi‘īs formulated for the school of Imam al-Shāfi‘ī, what the Ḥanafīs formulated for the school of Abū Ḥanīfah, and what the Mālikīs formulated for the school of Mālik, and so on.

However, the adherents of those schools obligated their followers to adhere to them, prohibited *ijtihād* for jurists, and compelled them to imitation; whereas we, the Zaydiyyah, neither oblige nor compel the follower to adhere to the school. Rather, we permit him to follow whichever Zaydī jurist he wishes, and we say to him: imitation of the living is preferable to imitation of the dead. We prohibit imitation for the *mujtahid* and obligate him to follow his own juristic reasoning.

This, then, is the reality of the Zaydī school in fundamentals and branches.

Thereafter, disputation over names has no meaning, except that the enemies of the Zaydiyyah accuse the Zaydiyyah with whatever they can in order to confuse the people and to distort the Zaydī school.

– As for the reason for relying upon the schools of al-Qāsim, al-Nāṣir, al-Hādī and his sons, and adopting these in jurisprudence for the general body of the Zaydiyyah: it is because these Imams were the first to author works in jurisprudence, the first to arrange its chapters, and to complete its issues—unlike those who preceded them from among the Zaydī Imams.

As for those who preceded them among the Imams, they did not author works in jurisprudence; rather, they confined what they wrote to narration, such as Imam Zayd, Imam al-Bāqir, al-Ṣādiq, Aḥmad ibn ‘Īsā, Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr al-Murādī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mūsā ibn ‘Abd Allāh, and Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn from among the sons of Zayd ibn ‘Alī, and Aḥmad ibn ‘Īsā al-‘Alawī, and so on.

[Invalidating the Division of the Zaydiyyah into Jārūdiyyah, Baṭriyyah, and Ṣāliḥiyyah]

– As for dividing the Zaydiyyah into three schools—the Jārūdiyyah, the Baṭriyyah, and the Ṣāliḥiyyah—we do not know these schools nor their adherents except for what we see in the books of sects. What we know is what the Zaydiyyah are upon today. Their school today is well known; its old and new books are found in the lands; their heritage

works fill the heritage libraries of the world, and there is nothing therein of the school except what the Zaydiyyah are upon today.

– **Furthermore**, our school in creed and jurisprudence is known and famous; it cannot be concealed or covered up. Perhaps its heritage books, in terms of abundance and worldwide spread, are at the forefront, for European libraries are replete with Zaydī heritage works.

Despite the large number of manuscript heritage books that were plundered from Yemen, the public and private Yemeni libraries are still rich with heritage works.

The Zaydī school today in jurisprudence is famously known as the school of al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*). As we previously stated, all Zaydī Imams rely in their jurisprudence—after the Qur’an—first upon the transmissions of Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), second upon the transmissions of his grandson Aḥmad ibn ‘Īsā ibn Zayd, and upon the transmissions of others among the narrators of reports from our Imams (*Peace be Upon Them*). Thus, we are Hādawī Zaydīs.

This is our response to those who cast doubt upon our school.

[The Imams of the Zaydiyyah and Their Principles]

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)—the first of them after ‘Alī and the two grandsons being Zayd ibn ‘Alī, and the last of them being Majd al-Dīn ibn Muḥammad al-Mu’ayyadī, then his successor Ḥusayn ibn Yaḥyā al-Ḥūthī—are Imams who are followed and whose guidance is taken. Each Imam among them is the proof of Allah over the people of his time—known by those who know him and unknown by those who are ignorant of him—and each of them possesses the qualification to be imitated and followed.

Whoever among the followers is guided by the school of any one of them is a Zaydī, because the Zaydī school has foundational principles upon which all the earlier and later Imams agree. Whoever contradicts any of those principles is not a Zaydī.

The principles upon which all Zaydī Imams and scholars agree are:

1. Affirmation of *tawḥīd* and justice: *tawḥīd* is that you do not imagine Him, and justice is that you do not accuse Him.
2. Affirmation of giving precedence to ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) in virtue and in the caliphate.
3. Affirmation of the Imamate of the Ahl al-Bayt and their entitlement to the caliphate, truth, and guidance. Whoever among them bears the qualification for the caliphate is the caliph, the proof, and the guiding beacon. What is meant by this is the caliphate of prophethood: the caliph stands in the place of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

in clarifying the truth and conveying it to the people, calling to it with wisdom and good admonition, guiding people to the true religion, warning them against falsehood, teaching them the Book and wisdom, purifying them, refining their character, and so on.

This is what is intended primarily and essentially: *“that he who perishes may perish upon clear proof, and he who lives may live upon clear proof; and indeed Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing”* [al-Anfāl:42]. Political authority and general governance are not an original objective nor a primary goal.

[Ranks of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be upon them*)]

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) up to the time of al-Hādī and his two sons Muḥammad and Aḥmad (*Peace be Upon Them*) appear to me to be of one rank. The second rank consists of the Imams who came after them up to the time of Imam al-Manṣūr bi-Allāh ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah (*Peace be Upon Him*).

Then follows the third rank, extending to the time of Imam Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Murtaḍā and Imam ‘Alī ibn al-Mu’ayyad.

Then follows the fourth rank, extending to the time of Imam al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and his two sons al-Mu’ayyad bi-Allāh and al-Mutawakkil ‘alā Allāh.

Then follows the fifth rank, extending to our own time; and the people of each rank follow the people of the rank above them.

The Ranks of the Zaydī Imams

The First Rank: Its beginning is Imam Zayd ibn ‘Alī and its end is Imam al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn and his two sons Muḥammad and Aḥmad. Those who shone in this rank include Imam Zayd; Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq; his father Muḥammad al-Bāqir; Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm and his sons; Imam Aḥmad ibn ‘Īsā; Imam ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mūsā; Imam Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn; al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Fakhkhī; the Imams Muḥammad, Ibrāhīm, Yaḥyā, and Idrīs—the sons of ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan al-Kāmil; Imam al-Nāṣir al-Uṭrūsh; and Imam al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn and his two sons Muḥammad and Aḥmad.

The Second Rank: It begins where the first rank ended and ends with the martyred Imam Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, the Companion of Dhībīn. Those who shone in this rank include Imam Abū al-‘Abbās al-Ḥasanī, Imam al-Mu’ayyad bi-Allāh, Imam Abū Ṭālib, al-Qāsim al-‘Ayyānī and his son al-Ḥusayn, Aḥmad ibn Sulaymān, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah, and the martyred Imam Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn, the Companion of Dhībīn.

The Third Rank: It begins where the second rank ended and ends with Imam al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and his two sons al-Mu’ayyad bi-Allāh and al-Mutawakkil ‘alā Allāh.

Those who shone in this rank include al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, the two sons of Badr al-Dīn; al-Muṭahhar ibn Yaḥyā and his son Muḥammad; al-Mu'ayyad ibn Aḥmad; 'Alī ibn al-Mu'ayyad; 'Izz al-Dīn ibn al-Ḥasan and his son al-Ḥasan; Sharaf al-Dīn; and al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad and his two sons al-Mu'ayyad and al-Mutawakkil.

The Fourth Rank: It begins where the third rank ended and ends with 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-'Ajrī, Majd al-Dīn al-Mu'ayyadī, and Ḥusayn ibn Yaḥyā al-Ḥūthī.

I lived during the time of these three, knew them with true knowledge, and learned from all of them. These three were among those who shone in their rank. Before them in this rank shone Imam Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim al-Ḥūthī, al-Manṣūr, al-Mutawakkil, and Aḥmad ibn Hāshim.

The circumstances of this rank were harsh, due to the tyranny of the Turkish occupation over the lands of the Zaydiyyah, followed by the establishment of the republican revolution; the suffocating conditions did not allow for the emergence and prominence of the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt.

– The classification of these four ranks is according to my own conception. Others may classify differently, arrange them otherwise, or include in each rank more than what I have listed—and they would be correct. The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) are all shining stars guiding to the straight truth. Each of them rose in his own era; his matter became renowned and his proof clear—may Allah's blessings, mercy, and benedictions be upon them. They are the people of virtue and merits, Allah's chosen elite from His creation, the bearers of Allah's religion, and the successors of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—those from whom Allah removed impurity and purified with a thorough purification.

Although I have mentioned only some of them, this is not due to any deficiency in their ranks. In my view, and in the view of the righteous, they occupy the highest human ranks after Allah's prophets and messengers—*may Allah's blessings and peace be upon them*. Rather, it is because those I mentioned stood out by name in my memory due to the frequent occurrence and repetition of their names therein.

Thus, each of these ranks follows the path of those who preceded them, is guided by their guidance, finds comfort in their method, seeks direction through their counsel, and walks in their footsteps.

– The Imam of all these ranks is the Imam, the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*); by him they take leadership, by his guidance they are guided, and by his religion they practice their faith.

– We began the classification of the Zaydī ranks with Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) because the Shī‘ah before Zayd were a single community following one school without disagreement. When Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) rose, they differed and became two groups after having been one: a group that supported Zayd, aligned with him, and strove alongside him—thus they were called Zaydiyyah; and a group that refused to rise with Zayd in his struggle and held back from him—thus they were called Imāmiyyah. Zayd called them al-Rāfiḍah, based on reports he narrated from the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, concerning them.

– From that time, the ranks of the Zaydiyyah were born and their history began. This does not mean that the Zaydī school is a newly invented school, for the school of Zayd is the school of his righteous predecessors, which he took from his father ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, from his grandfather al-Ḥusayn, from the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Them*), from the Prophet *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*.

– Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) left for us that methodology transmitted from ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) and from the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*.

– The Zaydiyyah continue to this day to rely upon that methodology after the Qur‘ān, considering it the most authentic transmitted *ḥadīth* from the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and from ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).

It is said that the Zaydiyyah took *‘ilm al-kalām* from the Mu‘tazilah, and that Zayd studied under Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’.

We say: this claim is false. The Zaydiyyah learned the foundations of their religion from their Imam, the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*). He was the first to speak on the foundations of religion, the first to present to people the philosophy of justice and *tawḥīd*. This is evident in his words in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, which left no chapter of *‘ilm al-kalām* without laying down its broad outlines, establishing its philosophical foundations, and opening its doors.

– From him the Zaydiyyah took the foundations of their religion; upon his foundations they built its principles and established its structure.

– Rather, it was the Mu‘tazilah who took from the Zaydiyyah and learned from them the foundations of their philosophical thought and the principles and rules of *‘ilm al-kalām*. Trustworthy narrators have reported that Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’ took the foundations of philosophical knowledge from al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah; al-Ḥasan took from his father Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah; and Muḥammad ibn

al-Ḥanafīyyah took from his father, the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*). From Wāṣil the Mu‘tazilah took their doctrine, and he is their first Imam.

– This was mentioned by the Mu‘tazilī scholar Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd in his commentary on *Nahj al-Balāghah*. This statement is the most deserving of acceptance and the closest to the truth for two reasons:

1. Its narrator is one of the scholars of the Mu‘tazilah.
2. The Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) was the first to speak on the discussions of *‘ilm al-kalām*, to refine and verify them using logical methods. This knowledge has not been transmitted from anyone other than him—neither from the Companions nor from the Followers. Thus, it is most fitting and sound that ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) be the Imam of all people in this wise philosophical science.

Some have said that the Zaydī jurisprudence existing today was taken from Ḥanafī jurisprudence. This claim is false like the previous one, and those who make it have no evidence upon which to rely. Perhaps their basis is what they find of similarity in some juristic principles and some issues. This is not a valid proof, because there is also similarity between the Shāfi‘ī and Mālikī schools, between Mālikī and Ḥanafī jurisprudence, and between Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī jurisprudence in many juristic principles and many legal issues. Yet no one has said that this is evidence that one took from another.

There is no deficiency among the Zaydī Imams in their knowledge or acumen compared to the scholars of the Ḥanafīs, Shāfi‘īs, or Mālikīs that would justify dismissing what they produced in jurisprudence. How could that be dismissed, when they were granted the understanding and knowledge of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) by the explicit statement of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)?

It is authentically reported that the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, supplicated for them: “O Allah, place knowledge in my progeny and the progeny of my progeny.”

The Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, appointed them for the Ummah after him and made them his successors, to fill the void after his death—speaking with his tongue, guiding by his guidance, and clarifying for the people the truth at times of disagreement, as testified by the *ḥadīth* of al-Thaqalayn and others.

Therefore, we say: they are the Imams of the people; the people take knowledge from them, and they do not take from anyone else.

- Know that those two claims were only put forward to undermine

the virtue of the Zaydī Imams, to diminish their honor, to belittle their status, and to lower their ranks below those of others among the Islamic schools in fundamentals and branches—so that people would turn away from their knowledge and sciences and incline toward others.

Key Figures in the History of the Zaydī School

There are notable figures in the history of the Zaydī school who played an effective role in reviving the school and sustaining its life after the era of ‘Alī and the two grandsons (al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (*Peace be Upon Him*)). The principal figures, as it appears to me, are:

1. Zayd ibn ‘Alī
2. al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm
3. al-Nāṣir al-Uṭrūsh
4. al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn
5. Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn and his brother Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Hārūn
6. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamzah
7. al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad
8. Majd al-Dīn al-Mu’ayyadī

These are figures of the first rank; those besides them among the Imams are figures of the second rank.

We have stated this in accordance with what we observe from the historical traces and effects that indicate what we have mentioned.

All the other Imams also played an effective role in the life of the school, but their impact was less than that of those we have named. This does not imply any deficiency in their ranks; rather, they are all—*may Allah’s blessings be upon them*—Allah’s proofs over His servants, the successors of His Prophet, the inheritors of His Book, the bearers of His knowledge, the standards of His guidance, and the Ark of Salvation.

If it is said: How did you come to know this, and how were you able to judge that those you mentioned deserve these ranks, when the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt are many? Among them are numerous scholars within the Ja‘farī Ithnā ‘Asharī school; indeed, they are the pillars and foundations of that school, possessing vast knowledge and firmly established expertise in verification and critical analysis. Likewise, many of them are found within the Shāfi‘ī, Ḥanafī, and Mālikī schools, all of whom are deeply rooted and accomplished scholars. Why, then, are those you mentioned singled out for these descriptions?

And what is it that placed them, in your view, in these ranks rather than other scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt found within other schools, even though they are not inferior to them in knowledge, verification, and

critical analysis?

The answer—by Allah’s grace and guidance—comes from several perspectives:

The first perspective: We first came to know the truth, and through knowing it we were able to know the people of the truth. Our knowledge of the truth itself came through the innate faculty of reason. When we examined the Islamic schools—both the Sunni schools and the Shi‘i schools—we found that the Zaydī school is the only one that has been free from myths and contradictions of reason, free from excess and negligence, and in harmony with rational disposition and wisdom. This is known to anyone who has studied the schools carefully.

The second perspective: The Zaydī school relied in its proofs and built its doctrine upon evidences agreed upon by the various Islamic groups, unlike the followers of other schools.

There are prophetic traditions whose narration and authenticity have been agreed upon by both Shi‘i and Sunni groups. The Zaydiyyah took these traditions as principles and foundations upon which they built their doctrines.

As for the Sunnis, the Ja‘farīs, and others, each school built its doctrine upon narrations that they alone transmitted and authenticated, without the agreement of other schools. There is no doubt that a school built upon evidences whose authenticity and transmission are agreed upon by all groups is closer to the truth than a school built upon narrations whose authenticity is disputed.

The third perspective: The scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt who follow the Shāfi‘ī, Ḥanafī, Mālikī, or Ḥanbalī schools do not have an independent school to which they call people. Rather, they are followers and imitators of al-Shāfi‘ī, Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, or Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. When they call others, they only call to following one of these four Imams.

From this angle, the existence of these scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt within other schools is effectively negligible with regard to independent authority, and it is not correct to describe them as Imams, because they are followers, not leaders. The scholars of all schools have agreed that it is not permissible to imitate one who is himself an imitator, nor to follow him in legal rulings—and these scholars are imitators.

The fourth perspective: The Ja‘farī school adopted doctrines for which they have no proof except narrations that they alone transmitted, and which were not transmitted by other Muslim groups—neither the Zaydiyyah nor others.

As for the doctrines of the Zaydiyyah, their proofs are narrations whose authenticity is agreed upon by the Ja‘farīs, the Sunnis, and the

Zaydiyyah alike. From this, we say that the Ahl al-Bayt—namely the Zaydiyyah—are those intended by what has come from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding his Household. The Commander of the Faithful said, as reported in *Nahj al-Balāghah*: “Know the truth, and you will know its people.”

Taqiyyah

- **Taqiyyah** is to outwardly show agreement with the enemy in his opinion or religion when one fears for one's life from killing, beating, or torture—an agreement expressed by the tongue without the heart.
- Allah, *Exalted is He*, has permitted and allowed *taqiyyah* in His Noble Book, saying: *“Except for one who is forced [to renounce his religion] while his heart is secure in faith.”* [An-Nahl:106], and saying: *“Except that you protect yourselves from them with prudence.”* [Al 'Imrān:28].

And He, *Exalted is He*, related about the Companions of the Cave their saying: *“So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the city and let him look to which is the purest food and bring you provision from it, and let him be discreet and not make anyone aware of you. Indeed, if they come to know of you, they will stone you or return you to their religion, and you will never succeed—ever.”* [Al-Kahf:19–20].

Taqiyyah comes in several forms:

1. That a legally responsible person is compelled to utter a word of disbelief; it is permitted for him to utter it if he fears killing or torture by flogging, amputation of a limb, or the like.
2. It is permissible for the legally responsible person to conceal his madhhab and show people that he follows their madhhab if he fears killing or the like, as mentioned previously.

The proof for the first form is: *“Except for one who is forced ...”* and the proof for the second form is the verse of the Companions of the Cave. From these two forms it follows that it is permissible to abandon enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong if the legally responsible person fears for himself killing or torture.

3. It is permissible for the legally responsible person to leave prayer and fasting if he fears for himself killing or torture.
- If a legally responsible person is compelled to kill a believer or a Muslim, it is not permissible for him to kill him even if he fears being killed himself.
- If a scholar is compelled to issue a false fatwā and fears being killed if he does not issue it, then it is permissible for him to issue

the fatwā under conditions:

1. That it does not involve deeming lawful the blood of a Muslim or usurping his wealth.
 2. That he be safe from misleading the believers in their religion; such as there being among the believers those who know that the fatwā was issued under compulsion and therefore it is not to be relied upon; or that the mufti can inform those who follow him that it is a fatwā issued under compulsion so that no one is deceived by it; or that the fatwā be in a subsidiary, speculative, disputed issue—such as compelling a mujtahid to issue a fatwā that zakāh is obligatory on vegetables, fruits, and everything that the earth produces.
- Some *taqiyyah* is permissible for Allah's proofs over His creation—such as the Imams—and some of it is not permissible. Thus, it is not permissible for him to teach the people and convey to them except the pure truth, nor is it permissible for him to distort, add, or subtract out of fear for himself.
 - And it is permissible for him to delay clarification of some legal rulings until the last time, due to fear for himself, as the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did in conveying the wilāyah of 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).

[The Saved Sect and Its View of the Companions]

It is reported in the narration: "*My community will split into seventy-three sects, all of them doomed except one sect.*" It was said: Who is it, O Messenger of Allah? He said: "*Those who are upon what I and my Companions are upon.*" This report indicates the soundness of the religion of the Zaydiyyah.

That is because the Zaydiyyah, just as the Companions were, do not ascribe to the Companions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) what the Companions themselves did not ascribe to themselves; thus they did not go beyond the opinion of the Companions with their own opinion.

Therefore, the condition of the Zaydiyyah is like the condition of the Companions: they did not sanctify the Companions. Rather, they said: They are people among people; they have what people have and upon them is what is upon people. Whoever among them did wrong, we censure him; and whoever among them did good, we praise him.

[A Statement by Imam al-Hādī al-Ḥoqīnī on the Imamate of the Commander of the Faithful]

From the testament of Imam al-Hādī al-Ḥoqīnī (*Peace be Upon Him*)—

and he is ‘Alī ibn Ja‘far ibn al-Ḥasan, from the descendants of Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (*Peace be Upon Him*):

“I bear witness that the Commander of the Faithful is the Imam of the Muslims after the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds, because Allah, *Exalted is He*, singled him out with the totality of virtues and merits and placed him in the noblest of stations by an explicit text of revelation—one that is exposed to interpretation due to the meeting of similars and counterparts and the opposition of meanings and forms. Thus we named it a hidden text, even though its meaning, for those firmly grounded, is clear and manifest.

As for the senior Companions who assumed leadership and rose to the caliphate, so, I do not belittle them, nor do I insult or curse them, even if I am angry with them and disapprove of what they have done, due to their clinging to possibilities and attachment to interpretations, and I consign their affair to Allah, *Exalted is He*.” End of the citation from *Al-Ḥadā’iq al-Wardiyyah*.

[Reasoning by the Noble Qur’an and the Prophetic Sunnah]

From the words of ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) that he said to Ibn ‘Abbās when he sent him to argue against the Khārijites before fighting them—meaning: (*Do not argue with them by the Qur’an, for it has many faces; rather, argue with them by the Sunnah*).

Thus spoke the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*): that the Qur’an has many faces. The meaning is that many verses of the Qur’an can be interpreted in two or more ways, so Ibn ‘Abbās would not be able to convince them; because if Ibn ‘Abbās said to them regarding a verse such-and-such, they would say: No, rather the meaning is such-and-such. Therefore, the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) directed him to argue by the Sunnah.

Perhaps someone may say: What is the wisdom and purpose that led the Wise, *Exalted is He*, to make the verses of the Noble Book possess multiple faces that can be interpreted from each face with an interpretation that contradicts the interpretation from the other face?

We say: The answer can be that Allah, Glorified and *Exalted*, intended those possible faces of the verse to be a place of testing and trial for the Muslims. The true believer in his faith approaches the interpretation of the verse from the correct face once he knows it and verifies it.

As for the Muslim who is not truthful in his faith, when he sees the verse as bearing several interpretations, he adopts the interpretation that accords with his desire and abandons the correct interpretation.

Allah, *Exalted is He*, has said: *“Alif Lām Mīm. Do the people think that they will be left to say, ‘We believe,’ and they will not be tested?”* ... the

verses [Al-‘Ankabūt:1–2]. Therefore, Allah, *Exalted is He*, made the possibility of a single verse bearing several interpretations a test for the believers—especially the scholars.

Those verses that bear several interpretations Allah, *Exalted is He*, named mutashābihāt (*ambiguous*), because the intended meaning becomes confused to the observer. Regarding this, Allah, *Exalted is He*, says: *“It is He who sent down to you the Book; in it are verses that are precise—they are the foundation of the Book—and others are ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow what is ambiguous thereof, seeking discord and seeking its interpretation; but none knows its interpretation except Allah and those firmly grounded in knowledge ...”* [Al-‘Imrān:7].

From here you see the scholars of the inferential schools, each interpreting from the verses of the Qur’an what accords with his madhhab. You will not find a person of misguidance among the people of Islam except that he interprets from the Qur’an what supports his misguidance.

If you say: If the verses of the Qur’an are like this, then how can the believer know the correct interpretation that Allah, *Exalted is He*, intends?

We say: The Messenger of Allah, (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), clarified for his Ummah the path of safety that leads the Muslim to knowing the truth. He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) emphasized the clarification and made the indication clear. Thus, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) made his Household a sign of the truth and a proof pointing to it until the Day of Resurrection. He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said in the well-known, mass-transmitted (mutawātir) hadith narrated by the groups of Muslims, upon whose authenticity they agreed—and it is in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: *“Indeed, I am leaving among you that which, if you hold fast to it, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my progeny, my Household. Indeed, the Subtle, the All-Aware, has informed me that they will never separate until they return to me at the Pond”*.

The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) clarified who his Household are in the Hadith of the Cloak, narrated by Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ, and the groups agreed upon its authenticity. He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) further emphasized this when he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said in the authentic hadith narrated by al-Bukhārī in his Ṣaḥīḥ—upon whose authenticity the groups agreed: *“... Say: O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and upon the family of Muhammad ...”*—the

hadith.

Thus the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) taught them how to send blessings upon him, and he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) made that a lasting legislation until the Day of Resurrection. This indicates that the family of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) do not part, in their religion, from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) so long as obligation remains.

The Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) teaching his Ummah how to send blessings upon him was not from himself; rather, it is from Allah, *Exalted is He*: "*Nor does he speak from desire; it is nothing but revelation revealed.*" [An-Najm:3-4], and "*Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, abstain from it.*" [Al-Hashr:7].

Had Allah, *Exalted is He*, known that the family of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) would oppose the truth after the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) death or in future times, He would not have paired them with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), nor legislated sending blessings upon them together with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) so long as obligation remains.

But the Ummah of Muhammad turned away from his Household after his death, shunned them, even fought and killed them. Then it made cursing them upon the pulpits of Friday a sunnah. That accursed practice continued from the time of Mu'āwiyah until 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz assumed authority and removed it. And love for 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and the Household was made an unforgivable sin (heresy).

The enmity toward the Household has remained to this day a religion by which people profess faith; and love for them and being guided by their guidance has remained a grave sin and a crime that nearly expels its possessor from Islam.

The people of this madhhab are the overwhelming majority of Muslims, and they are Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamā'ah.

Accordingly, Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamā'ah have closed upon themselves the path that leads to knowing the truth that Allah, *Exalted is He*, intended and willed from the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an. Thus they can never know it, nor is there for them any way to reach it.

Therefore, it is not permissible to rely upon their madhhab and doctrines, because they turned away from the correct path leading to the true madhhabs and took them from a dubious path.

Difference (Disagreement)

The people of a single madhhab do not remain for a period of time without disagreement arising among them, so they divide into two madhhabs; then, after a period of time, each of the two madhhabs divides into two, and so on. If you look at the madhhabs of the Muslims, you will find them to be so.

Allah, *Exalted is He*, said: “*And they will continue to differ, except those upon whom your Lord has mercy—and for that He created them.*” [Hūd: 118]. Allah, *Exalted is He*, informed that disagreement in religion among human beings will not cease until the Day of Resurrection.

The Determinists (al-Mujabbirah) infer from this verse that Allah, *Exalted is He*, wills and desires disagreement. The Zaydīs say: the indication does not return to disagreement as the Determinists imagined; rather, it returns to mercy—meaning: and for mercy He created them—because mercy is closer, and this is the apparent meaning.

I hold that it is also valid for the indication to return to disagreement, with the meaning that Allah, *Exalted is He*, created them for the purpose that they be given choice regarding what they are charged with—whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve. Thus Allah, *Exalted is He*, has willed and intended that the morally responsible person choose either path. If the responsible persons are like this, then disagreement among them must occur, due to the difference of their inclinations and aims, and their differences in intelligence and acumen.

Accordingly, the meaning of “*and for that He created them*” is: and for the obligation whose nature entails the occurrence of disagreement He created them. This is figurative (majāz mursal), whose relation is the use of the name of the effect for the cause.

The contextual indicator for this figurative usage is His saying, *Exalted is He*: “*And I did not create the jinn and mankind except that they worship Me.*” [Adh-Dhāriyāt:56]. Here He emphasized, by restriction and exclusivity, that He did not create jinn and humans for any purpose whatsoever except the purpose that they worship Him. Thus, in this verse He decisively negated that He created them for disagreement or for anything else, and affirmed that He created them only for His worship.

Causes of Disagreement

Disagreement arises from human dispositions. Some disagreement results from reflection, opinion, and thinking; and some arises from differences in inclinations and desires.

This disagreement is general with respect to worldly matters and

religious matters alike. There are causes that bind people together and unite them, namely:

1. Shared interests.
2. A common enemy.
3. A religious creed.

The strongest and truest bond is the religious creed. For the continuation of bonding, cohesion, and unity, sincerity of individuals and their loyalty to one another are required, along with sincere counsel, mercy, compassion, and love. Bonds are severed by betrayal, greed, avarice, exclusivism, and the like.

Allah, *Exalted is He*, guided— in His Book and upon the tongue of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)— to performing the causes that strengthen bonds, and forbade the causes that lead to their severance. Enumerating all of that would be lengthy.

Allah, *Exalted is He*, forbade disagreement and division in an all-encompassing, general manner, and warned against it with severe punishment, as in Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān. However, Allah, *Exalted is He*, excused some disagreement—namely, that which occurs in practical particulars and arises through error and forgetfulness. He, *Glorified is He*, said: *“There is no blame upon you for that in which you err, but only for what your hearts intend.”* [Al-Aḥzāb:5]. And in the well-known hadith: *“My Ummah has been excused for error and forgetfulness”*. Likewise, some subsidiary branches of theological discourse (‘ilm al-kalām).

Interpretation of the Noble Qur’an

Severe warnings have come from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and from the scholars of the Islamic Ummah against interpreting the Qur’an by opinion—meaning, interpreting it without knowledge or interpreting it in accordance with desire. As for interpreting it according to what the Arabic language requires, there is no objection; likewise, interpreting it according to transmitted reports from those firmly grounded in knowledge, there is no objection.

There has also come a warning against striking the Qur’an against itself—such as when someone says: this verse contradicts that verse, or the meaning of such-and-such a verse conflicts with such-and-such a verse, and so on. The duty of the believer, if he imagines such a thing, is to believe that there is no contradiction or conflict in reality among the verses of the Qur’an, and that the illusion arose only from ignorance and poor understanding.

Perhaps the wisdom behind the occurrence of what gives the impression of contradiction or conflict in the Noble Book is manifested

in:

1. Trial and testing; and this category is attached to the ambiguous (mutashābih), and its wisdom is the wisdom of the ambiguous.
2. Drawing the ears of the polytheists—who turned away from listening to the Qur’an—back to listening to it anew. For the presence of what gives the impression of contradiction and conflict drew them to listen to it and reflect upon it, hoping to find in it a point of attack; but when they verified and reflected upon what they initially thought to be a contradiction, they found it free of contradiction.

[Some Narrations Regarding Intercession (Tawassul)]

Question: What do you say regarding what has been narrated about the prophets (*Peace be Upon Them*) of seeking intercession by the Five—namely, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn—such as what is narrated in the interpretation of: *“Then Adam received from his Lord words ...”* [Al-Baqarah:37], and what is narrated about Ibrāhīm and Mūsā (*Peace be Upon Them*) and other prophets (*Peace be Upon Them*)? And what is your view regarding the statement of one who seeks intercession saying: *O ‘Alī or O Ḥusayn, help, help; I seek refuge with you from such-and-such and from Satan the accursed?*

Answer— and Allah is the Grantor of success: What has been narrated regarding the prophets’ seeking intercession by the Five—*may Allah’s blessings be upon them*—is sound; numerous narrations from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) have come regarding it, especially the intercession of Adam. Ibn Taymiyyah, despite his strictness in this chapter, acknowledged its authenticity in some of his books. I heard this from my master, the Proof, Majd al-Dīn al-Mu’ayyidī—*may Allah, Exalted is He, support him*.

Yes, seeking intercession by the right of the Five, and by the rest of the Imams from the Household, and by all righteous servants of Allah, is legislated—contrary to what the ignorant claim, that it is a polytheistic innovation that places its doer among the idolaters. The scholars of the Muslims have answered the proponents of this view and cited what has come regarding intercession from the Prophet, (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

The legislated intercession is for the supplicant to say: *O Allah, I ask You by the right of Muhammad and his family*, or by the right of other righteous servants of Allah, or the like. As for expressions such as: *I ask you, O ‘Alī, or O so-and-so, relieve me, or I seek refuge with you from Satan the accursed*—these have not been transmitted in this wording and the like; rather, what is transmitted is as we have mentioned.

As for the ruling on this matter: it is not permissible to judge the one who says such words as a polytheist or an innovator. That is because seeking refuge and requesting aid from other than Allah, *Exalted is He*, is permissible.

The proof for this is His saying, *Exalted is He*: “*And if they seek your help in the matter of religion, then upon you is help ...*” [Al-Anfāl:72]; and His saying, *Exalted is He*: “*So the one who was from his faction sought his help against the one who was from his enemy ...*” [Al-Qaṣaṣ:15]; and His saying, *Exalted is He*, as a narrative: “*If only I had against you some power, or could take refuge in a strong support.*” [Hūd:80]. The Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) sought protection, upon his return to Makkah, with al-Muṭ‘im ibn ‘Adī, and he granted him protection. This is a matter well known in Islam and before Islam; the Messenger (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) came with Islam and affirmed it, not rejecting it—rather, as we have mentioned, he (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) sought protection from a polytheist, al-Muṭ‘im ibn ‘Adī.

It is rationally and legally permissible for a person to seek refuge from his enemy by a mountain, a fortress, or the like. Based on this, it is not said of one who seeks aid, protection, or refuge from a living or a dead person that he is an innovator or a polytheist. At most, what one who seeks aid from the dead has done is to request what does not occur, or from one who lacks the ability; and requesting that from a living or a dead person is not shirk.

If it is said: Then what is shirk?

We say: Shirk is the worship of other than Allah, *Exalted is He*. What was mentioned previously is not worship; rather, it is a request and a supplication. It is not permissible to construe it otherwise with respect to Muslims.

[The Foundations of Kalām and Its Source]

Kalām (theology) is, in reality, among the sciences encompassed by the Qur’an and extensively discussed therein. The Qur’an has spoken about:

1. Affirming the existence of Allah, *Exalted is He*, His power and His knowledge, and so forth; it has diversified the verses, types of indications, reflection, and reasoning in affirming this.
2. Monotheism, negating any partner, consort, or child, and affirming that there is no deity but Him; it has refuted the doubts of the polytheists, the Christians, and others, all through varied and abundant evidences.
3. Declaring Allah, *Exalted is He*, transcendent above resemblance to

created beings and above attributes of deficiency.

4. Justice in His rulings and actions.
5. Compulsion and choice, will and volition, pleasure and displeasure, decree and destiny, and so on.
6. Promise and threat, resurrection and reckoning, Paradise and Hellfire, faith and disbelief, hypocrisy, immorality, misguidance and guidance, abiding eternally in Hellfire, minor and major sins, nullification and expiation, and the weighing (of deeds).
7. The mention of the prophets and messengers, miracles and signs.
8. The mention of caliphate, ministry, kingship, choice and selection, and the verses, proofs, signs, and indications thereof.
9. The mention of the deeds of the prophets and messengers and their responsibilities.
10. The mention of commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and its conditions.
11. The mention of provisions and lifespans—those made fixed and those cut short.
12. The mention of religions, creeds, and sects; the mention of superstitious doctrines and heavenly doctrines; the mention of doubts; disputation and debate; objections and responses; doubts and resolutions in divinity, promise and threat, and so on.

Thus, the Qur'an is the foundation of the science of Kalām and its abundant source. Likewise, the Noble Qur'an encompasses numerous branches of other sciences, including: the principles of jurisprudence, medicine, logic, philosophy, social sciences, political science, war and peace, economics, jurisprudence, ethics, Sufism, asceticism, piety, and many others—up to what al-Suyūṭī enumerated in *al-Itqān* as one hundred sciences.

When you know this, you realize that only a few of the most intelligent individuals can perceive these many sciences and fully encompass the knowledge of each discipline as it deserves. Therefore, from the time compilation and authorship began, the scholars of Islam exerted themselves and extracted from their Noble Book: the science of Kalām, the science of the principles of jurisprudence, the science of jurisprudence, the sciences of ethics, and so on—up to the rest of the Islamic sciences.

By doing so, they made the paths to knowing the sciences of the Qur'an easy. Had it not been for this, it would have been extremely difficult for seekers to reach what they sought.

Accordingly, those sciences which the scholars of Islam brought forth

for people are nothing but a translation of what the Qur'an contains of types of sciences, their secrets, depths, and subtleties. All of that was done in fulfillment of the duty of clarification which Allah took upon the scholars: *"You must surely make it clear to the people and not conceal it."* [Āl 'Imrān:187]

[Disagreement in Religion]

Disagreement in religion is a human norm and natural disposition since mankind existed and will remain so—exactly as the All-Knowing, All-Wise said: *"And if your Lord had willed, He would have made mankind one community; but they will continue to differ, except those upon whom your Lord has mercy."* [Hūd:118]

The Children of Israel split into many sects, as borne out by their historical reality, and as stated in the Noble Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah. The Muslims also divided after the death of the Prophet, *May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*, and differed—before the era of compilation and authorship in Kalām and the principles of jurisprudence, and so on—into innumerable sects.

Then they authored and classified the sciences into principles of jurisprudence, principles of religion, and so forth; yet no additional disagreement or division occurred beyond what already existed before. This is a historical, inductive proof that indicates without doubt that the science of Kalām and the science of the principles of jurisprudence were never, at any time, a cause of disagreement.

[From Whom Knowledge Is Taken]

Wisdom is the lost property of the believer—wherever he finds it, he takes it. There is no restriction or confinement upon the seeker of knowledge to take knowledge from wherever he finds it.

However, when he observes the disagreement of the Ummah, he must know that the truth is what the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) say, not what others say. If the seeker of knowledge accompanies his pursuit with this principle, then there is no harm in taking knowledge from any place.

Thus were the scholars of the Zaydiyyah throughout all periods of history: they possessed complete knowledge of the Sunni schools and the schools of the various Shi'i sects, with wide familiarity with their principles, branches, and the statements of their scholars. Whoever has knowledge of the science of the Imams knows this and is certain of it.

Imam al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*), when he censured the one who takes his religion from other than his forefathers, intended thereby the one who adheres to a religion other than the religion of his forefathers and abandons their religion.

As for the one who adheres to the religion of his forefathers (*Peace be Upon Them*) and follows them, then exposure to the doctrines of others only increases him in insight and guidance.

Accordingly, it is incumbent upon the seeker of knowledge, first, to learn the landmarks of Islam from the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) and from the scholars of the Zaydiyyah. Once his knowledge of their sciences is firmly established, then there is no harm in acquainting himself with what others possess among the other schools.

When It Is Obligatory to Refer to the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)

It is obligatory to refer to the knowledge of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) in matters in which the Ummah has differed. As for matters in which no disagreement has occurred, referral to them is not obligatory—such as: grammar, morphology, the sciences of rhetoric, logic, the interpretation of lexical meanings, and the interpretation of the vocabulary of the Qur'an, its syntax, rhetoric, and eloquence, such as *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf*.

As for the interpretation of the ambiguous (*mutashābih*), it is obligatory to refer therein to the interpretations of the Imams from the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*). Likewise, it is obligatory to refer to their doctrines and adopt them in the science of Kalām and the principles of jurisprudence.

[For Whom Is the Qur'an?]

Allah, Exalted is He, revealed the Glorious Qur'an for all people; He did not single out anyone to the exclusion of others. Allah, *Exalted is He*, took a covenant upon the scholars to clarify for the people what the Qur'an contains of laws, rulings, and so forth—because the scholars are the heirs of the prophets (*May Allah's blessings be Upon Them*). The Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) himself was the one who clarified to the people what was revealed to them of the Qur'an.

Among what he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) clarified and explained to his Ummah was that if they differ regarding any matter of the laws of the Qur'an, its rulings, its interpretation or its exegesis, then they must refer for judgment to the scholars of the Household of their Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—for the truth is with them and within them; it does not depart from them, nor do they depart from it, until the Day of Resurrection.

[The Role of Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace Be Upon Them*) in Clarifying the Truth]

And Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace Be Upon Them*) fulfilled their role in this field. From the very first day, they examined all that existed among the scholars of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in terms of knowledge and the disagreements found therein. They then issued decisive judgments regarding those disagreements and clarified the truth in all the sciences of the Qur'an. Thus, they wrote on the doctrines of tawḥīd (divine unity), 'adl (divine justice), wa'd wa-wa'id (promise and threat), imāmah, and so forth.

They also wrote on the sciences of inference and ijtihād and what is connected to them, and they authored works in the science of ḥadīth, jurisprudence (fiqh), biography (siyar), Sufism, gnosis ('irfān), history, and other fields.

In all of this, they clarified the truth and supported it with proofs and evidences, and they refuted the statements of all who opposed the truth with clear arguments. All of that was in fulfillment of the right of the caliphate which the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) entrusted to them in the ḥadīth of al-Thaqalayn.

Among their most prominent works throughout history in this field was their refutation of what the Mu'tazilah introduced in the science of kalām of statements that departed from the truth. As for what agreed with the truth, they did not seek to invalidate it; rather, they supported and upheld it.

Likewise, they examined what the People of Ḥadīth transmitted in their narrations from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), rejecting what departed from the truth while accepting what did not. In the same manner, they examined the principles of jurisprudence brought by the Mu'tazilah and the Ash'ariyyah, rejecting what was false therein and endorsing what accorded with the truth.

They authored, concerning all of this, innumerable works in which they detailed the doctrines of the people, mentioned the proof for each opinion, and then set forth the truth held by Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace Be Upon Them*), supporting it with clear evidences and refuting whatever contradicted it with manifest proofs.

The Islamic Sciences and Their Books

The Qur'an is the source of the Islamic sciences and the first book among the books of Islam. In the era of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the chests of the believers were their books, for they relied upon memorization to preserve knowledge. They did not compile the Noble Qur'an into a single codex until after the death of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), when the Companions saw the memorizers of the Qur'an falling

as martyrs in the wars of apostasy.

As for the Sunnah, it was not written down until the second century, and the first book written in the Sunnah was the compilation of Imām Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace Be Upon Him*). Thereafter, people wrote on the Sunnah and authored works in tafsīr, history, kalām, and other sciences—all of that in the second century.

[Section: Uṣūl al-Fiqh]

[Uṣūl al-Fiqh in the Noble Qur'an]

The Qur'an contains the following:

1. Commands intended for guidance and recommendation, not obligation, such as: *"Eat and drink"* [Al-Haqqah:24], *"So walk among its slopes"* [Tubarak: 15], *"And when you have completed the state of iḥrām, then hunt"* [Al-Ma'idah: 2], *"When you contract a debt for a fixed term, write it down"* [Al-Baqarah:282].
2. Commands intended as obligations, such as: *"Establish the prayer and give the zakāh"* [Al-Nur:56], *"Wash your faces and your hands"* [Al-Ma'idah:6], *"Then perform tayammum with clean earth"*
3. Command forms intended as threats, such as: *"Eat and enjoy yourselves a little; indeed, you are criminals"* [Al-Mursalat], *"Do whatever you will"* [Fussilat:40].

Likewise, the forms of prohibition occur in the Qur'an. Sometimes they come for guidance and recommendation, such as: *"Do not grow weary of writing it down, whether small or large, until its term"* [Al-Baqarah:282], and sometimes they come for prohibition, such as: *"Do not eat of that over which the name of Allah has not been mentioned"* [Al-An'am:121].

4. Commands of obligation whose intended meaning is not known, such as: *"Establish the prayer and give the zakāh."* The legally responsible person does not know from this text alone how to establish the prayer or how to perform the zakāh.
 5. Commands of obligation that are clear in meaning and need no further explanation, such as: *"Wash your faces..."* the verse [Al-Ma'ida:6].
 6. Commands that address both men and women, such as: *"Wash your faces..."*, and commands specific to men, such as: *"When the call is made for prayer on the day of Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off trade"* [Juma'a:9], as well as commands concerning jihād, fighting the polytheists and the People of the Book, and enjoining good and forbidding evil.
 7. Commands obligatory upon every legally responsible person, male and female, and commands that, if some perform them, the obligation is lifted from the rest, such as fighting in the path of Allah and enjoining good and forbidding evil.
- There may come in a verse a command indicating a general ruling, such as: *"So marry those that please you of women—two, three, or four"*

[Al-Nisa: 3]. This verse permits the believer to marry of women whatever pleases him, without excluding in this verse a sister, daughter, paternal aunt, maternal aunt, niece, a married woman, or a woman in waiting period.

It also permits marrying two, three, or four, without excluding the combination of two sisters.

- Then, in other verses or other sūrahs, there comes what indicates the exclusion of some of what was mentioned from the generality of the verse cited above.

Thus, other verses explicitly prohibit marriage to one's mother, daughter, sister, niece, paternal aunt, maternal aunt, mother-in-law, step-daughter, wife of the father, wife of the son, the married woman, and the woman in waiting period; and there came a prohibition against combining marriage to two sisters.

The first verse is called general (‘āmm), while the verses that prohibit the marriages mentioned are called specific (khāṣṣ), and the specific verses function as exceptions from the general.

This type occurs frequently in the Noble Qur'an and in the Prophetic Sunnah. Because of the occurrence of this type in the Book and the Sunnah, it was necessary for the scholar to know the many expressions that indicate generality, and it was incumbent upon him to refrain from acting upon the general ruling and its scope until he searches the entire Qur'an to see whether there is a verse that excludes some of that generality.

Then the examiner must consider whether it is valid for an exception to the generality of the Qur'an to occur through the Prophetic ḥadīth, or through the consensus of the Companions, or through the consensus of Ahl al-Bayt, and whether it is valid for an exception to the generality of the Qur'an to occur through various types of implications, indications, and the like.

Know also that the form of command may indicate an explicit ruling (maṭṭūq) and an implicit ruling (mafhūm), such as: *"Then perform tayammum with clean earth"* [Al-Ma'idah:6]. This indicates the obligation of performing tayammum with pure earth, and it also indicates that tayammum with impure earth is not permissible. The first is explicit, the second implicit, and the explicit is stronger than the implicit.

- And know that the word *"clean (ṭayyiban)"* in the verse can be interpreted in two ways:

1. That it means pure.
2. That it means suitable for cultivation.

If that is the case, then one must investigate and consider whether

both meanings can be intended, or whether only one of them is valid.

[The Chapters of Uṣūl al-Fiqh Are Present in the Qur'an]

The chapters of Uṣūl al-Fiqh are implicitly present in the Noble Qur'an. The explanation is as follows:

- It contains commands intended for obligation, such as: *"Establish the prayer and give the zakāh"* [An-Nūr,56], and *"And strive in His cause"* [Al-Mā'idah,35].
- It contains commands intended as threat, such as: *"Eat and enjoy yourselves a little; indeed, you are criminals"* [Al-Mursalāt].
- It contains commands intended for permissibility, such as: *"Eat of the good things We have provided for you"* [Al-Baqarah,57].
- It contains commands intended for guidance and recommendation, such as: *"When you contract a debt for a specified term, write it down"* [Al-Baqarah,282].
- It contains prohibitions intended for unlawfulness, such as: *"Do not approach adultery"* [Al-Isrā',32], and *"Do not kill yourselves"* [An-Nisā', 29], and so on.
- It contains absolute commands, such as: *"Establish the prayer"*, and restricted commands, such as: *"And if you are in a state of major ritual impurity, then purify yourselves"* [Al-Mā'idah,6].
- It contains the absolute, such as: *"Forbidden to you are carrion and blood"* [Al-Mā'idah,3].
- And it contains the restricted, such as: *"Or blood poured forth"* [Al-An'ām,145].
- It contains the general, such as: *"He created for you all that is on the earth"* [Al-Baqarah,29].
- And it contains the specific, such as: *"Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, and the flesh of swine"* [Al-Mā'idah,3].
- It contains the ambiguous (mujmal), such as: *"Lawful to you is the livestock of grazing animals, except what is recited to you"* [Al-Mā'idah, 1].
- And it contains the clarified (mubayyan), such as: *"Forbidden to you are carrion..."* the verse [Al-Mā'idah,3].
- It contains the abrogated, such as: *"And those of you who die and leave wives behind—a bequest for their wives, provision for a year without being expelled"* [Al-Baqarah,240].
- And it contains the abrogating, such as: *"They shall wait by themselves for four months and ten days"* [Al-Baqarah,234].
- It contains the ruling of strict obligation (‘azimah), such as the verse of ablution.

- And it contains the concession (rukhsah), such as the verse of dry ablution (tayammum).
- It contains performance (adā'), such as fasting the month of Ramaḍān.
- And it contains make-up (qaḍā'), such as: *"Then a number of other days"* [Al-Baqarah, 184].
- It contains the decisive (muḥkam) and the allegorical (mutashābih), as in the verse of Āl 'Imrān.
- It contains explicit textual indications, apparent indications, necessary implications, indications by allusion, indications by gesture, and implicative indications (mafhum)—and the types of implication are many, and these indications differ in strength.
- It contains causally-reasoned rulings and non-causally-reasoned rulings.
- It contains the legal causes considered by the Lawgiver for granting concessions, such as illness and travel in fasting, rain and travel in the prayer of fear, and necessity in His saying: *"Except what you are compelled to"* [Al-An'ām, 119].
- In the Qur'an there are commands addressed to rulers, commands addressed to individual believers, commands limited to specific times, commands conditional upon conditions, and unconditional commands.
- There are commands in the Noble Qur'an that appear in the form of statements for rhetorical purposes known to scholars of the Arabic language, and there are prohibitions that appear in the form of questions.
- It contains negation intended as affirmation, and likewise affirmation intended as negation, for purposes known to those firmly grounded in the sciences of the Arabic language.
- It contains additional words for rhetorical purposes, and omitted words for the same purpose.
- It contains linguistic realities, legal (shar'ī) realities, and religious realities; it contains linguistic, legal, and religious metaphors; it contains metonymy, symbolism, and allusion; it contains the apparent and the interpreted, and so on.

The Arabs to whom the Qur'an was revealed knew all of this without difficulty, and they needed for its understanding only intelligence, sound comprehension, clarity of mind, and deep reflection.

With the passage of time, the Arabic language—the language of the Qur'an—became weakened, so scholars authored many books to preserve the knowledge of the language of the Arabs, classifying it into

categories:

- The science of grammar, inflection, and morphology.
- The science of rhetoric.
- The science of lexical meanings.

They established these sciences because proper knowledge of the Noble Book and the Prophetic Sunnah cannot be attained as it should be except through firm grounding in these sciences.

- Then they extracted from the three Arabic linguistic sciences mentioned what was urgently needed for deriving Qur'anic and Prophetic rulings, devoted it to independent authorship to make it easier for students, and named it Uṣūl al-Fiqh.

[The Science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh Is Required by the Qur'an]

The science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh is required by the Qur'an, because it contains:

1. General rulings, such as: *"Eat of what is on the earth"* [Al-Baqarah,168], which includes everything on the earth of animals and plants.
2. Specific exceptional rulings, such as the prohibition of eating carrion, blood, and the flesh of swine; the prohibition of consuming people's wealth unjustly; the prohibition of drinking wine; and so on. These are rulings that Allah, *the Exalted*, excluded from what He permitted in His saying: *"Eat of what is on the earth."*
3. Ambiguous rulings, such as: *"Establish the prayer and give the zakāh"*, for the addressees did not know what was meant by prayer or zakāh until the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) clarified that for them.
4. Clarified rulings, such as those contained in the verse of inheritance.
5. Rulings derived from the explicit wording, such as: *"Forbidden to you are carrion and blood"* [Al-Mā'idah,3].
6. Rulings derived from the implication of wording rather than its explicit meaning, some derived from literal meaning and some from metaphorical meaning.
7. Absolute rulings and restricted rulings.
8. Obligatory rulings, recommended rulings, prohibited rulings, disliked rulings, permissible rulings, rulings of strict obligation, and rulings of concession, and so on.
9. Abrogated rulings and abrogating rulings.
10. Decisive expressions and allegorical expressions.

11. Apparent meanings and implications in which contradiction may be imagined, requiring examination and preference.
12. In the Qur'an and the Sunnah there are expressions that may denote two different meanings in the Arabic language, which is called lexical homonymy, expressions that denote only one meaning, which is called naṣṣ, and expressions that denote one meaning predominantly but may denote another in certain cases, which is called zāhir.
13. It contains commands, some indicating obligation, some recommendation, some permissibility, and some threat; and it contains prohibitions, some indicating unlawfulness, some dislike, and some threat; and it contains interrogatives, some indicating denunciation and if so, the inquired matter is unlawful, some indicating affirmation, that means seeking acknowledgment, and some seeking understanding, and so on.
14. There are new occurrences for which no specific ruling is found in the Book and the Sunnah; rather, the ruling is determined by analogy (qiyās) with what resembles them. Therefore, scholars needed to clarify analogy upon which legal rulings are based.

Yes, this is with respect to one of the sciences encompassed by the Qur'an, namely the science of jurisprudence (fiqh). It is neither possible nor correct for one who seeks to derive juristic rulings from the Qur'an and the Sunnah unless he possesses insight and firmly established grounding in knowing how derivation (istinbāṭ) is carried out, which is what we call Uṣūl al-Fiqh.

As for the one who attempts to derive legal rulings from the Book and the Sunnah without knowledge of the science of derivation, he is attempting what is neither attainable nor possible; his likeness is nothing but that of one who tries to write without a pen, or to fly without wings.

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) spoke about this science—meaning the science of derivation (the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh)—in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, where he mentioned nearly all of its chapters. This occurs at the beginning of the sermons of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and in a discourse of his in which he explains the methods of narrating ḥadīth; in these two passages, he (*Peace be Upon Him*) mentioned most of the chapters of Uṣūl al-Fiqh.

Imam Zayd ibn 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) also mentioned some of the chapters of Uṣūl al-Fiqh in some of his epistles contained in the book that compiled his letters and writings, which is published.

In reality, the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh is a part of the sciences of the Arabic language, but scholars singled it out independently due to the

intense need for it in the science of derivation.

We will present an example from the Qur'an that demonstrates the correctness of what we mentioned earlier.

Allah, *the Exalted*, says: "*It is He who created for you all that is on the earth, all together*" [Al-Baqarah:29]. Scholars use this verse as evidence for the permissibility of everything that Allah, *the Exalted*, created on the earth—both the entities of things and their benefits—by way of total inclusion and generality.

If we wish to understand this from the verse, it is necessary for us to have complete knowledge and firmly established understanding of the vocabulary of this verse and of its structure. The one who knows the styles of Arabic speech and the structures of their language understands from this verse that Allah, *the Exalted*, mentions to people the greatness, abundance, and vastness of His blessings, and reminds them of them, and that He alone granted them these blessings—not the idols they worship.

This is the meaning conveyed by this construction, and it is understood by everyone who belonged to the Arabic tongue at the time of revelation. Thus, we needed to know the language in order to understand this meaning.

After acquiring knowledge of the language, the one who derives rulings extracts another meaning beyond what linguists understood, through his intelligence and sound reasoning. He says in his reasoning: everything on the earth—of benefits and entities—is lawful, not unlawful, because Allah, *the Exalted*, bestowed it upon His servants as a favor, and He does not bestow as a favor the creation of what is unlawful. This is the first consideration of the juristic derivation.

The one who derives rulings also benefits from the comprehensive-ness of everything on the earth from the word "*what (mā)*", for the Imams of the Arabic language have stated that it indicates generality and total inclusion for rational and non-rational beings alike. Then from the word "*all together (jamī'an)*", which emphasizes the generality already understood from the word "*what.*"

Types of Indication

- Textual indication (dalālat al-naṣṣ).
- Apparent indication (dalālat al-ẓāhir).
- Indicative implication (dalālat al-mafhum), which has various forms.
- Indication by allusion (dalālat al-īmā').
- Indication by necessity (dalālat al-iqtidā').
- Indication by sign (dalālat al-ishārah).

- It also contains literal meanings, metaphors, and metonymy in their various forms.
- It contains synonymous terms and homonymous terms.
- It contains general texts that are specified, and general texts that are not specified, and general expressions intended to mean the specific.
 - In the Qur'an there are also:
 - Legal rulings with stated causes.
 - Legal rulings without stated causes.
 - In it there is an indication of the use of analogy and reliance upon it in deriving legal rulings.
 - In it there is proof that the Mighty Qur'an is the first, greatest, and strongest of evidences, and that the verbal and practical Sunnah of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) must be followed.
- In it there is classification of believers into two categories:
 - Scholars.
 - Non-scholars.

And that the duty of scholars is to act upon what they know, and the duty of others is to ask the scholars and seek legal verdicts from them.

- The verses of the Noble Qur'an indicate that evidences pointing to legal rulings are divided into definitive (qaṭ'ī) and probabilistic (ẓannī), and that legal rulings correspondingly are divided into definitive and probabilistic,
- and that each of the two categories has rulings specific to it.
- It also indicates that probabilistic rulings vary in strength and weakness,
- and that following what is more probable is preferable to following what is less probable,
- and that error in probabilistic rulings—after exhaustive research and investigation—is excused.
- The verses of the Qur'an speak of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) as including scholars and non-scholars. Allah, the Exalted, says: "*When it is said to you, 'Make room in the assemblies,' then make room; Allah will make room for you. And when it is said, 'Rise,' then rise. Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who have been given knowledge in degrees ...*" [Al-Mujādilah:11]. And He, the Exalted, says: "*And none knows its interpretation except Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge*" [Āl 'Imrān:7]. And He, the Exalted, says: "*Allah bears witness that*

there is no deity except Him—and the angels and those endowed with knowledge—standing firmly for justice ...” [Āl ‘Imrān:18].

- Knowledge is divided into innate and acquired. Innate knowledge does not require effort to seek or acquire it, whereas acquired knowledge is attained only through seeking and learning. Allah, *the Exalted*, sent the prophets and messengers to people in order to teach them this acquired knowledge. He, *the Exalted*, says: *“It is He who sent among the unlettered a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom, although before that they were in clear misguidance” [Al-Jumu‘ah].*

In this verse, Allah, *the Exalted*, states that He sent Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to people for several purposes:

1. To recite His verses to them.
2. To purify them.
3. To teach them the Book and the Wisdom.

The first matter is the recitation of the Qur’an to people.

The second is purifying them from the filth of polytheism, immoralities, and disobedience to Allah, and elevating them through obedience to Allah.

In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, in his description (*Peace be Upon Him*) of the Wise Qur’an, he says: (*Clarifying its lawful and unlawful, its obligations and its virtues, its abrogating and abrogated, its concessions and its strict rulings, its specific and its general, its lessons and its parables, its unrestricted and its restricted, its decisive and its allegorical; explaining—meaning the Prophet—its ambiguous parts and clarifying its obscurities; between that whose covenant of knowledge is taken, and that whose ignorance is given latitude to the servants; between what is affirmed in the Book as obligatory and what is known in the Sunnah to be abrogated; between what is obligatory in the Sunnah to be taken and what is permitted in the Book to be left; between what is obligatory at its time and ceases thereafter; and distinguishing between its prohibitions ... etc.*)

From the Book of Qiyās (Analogical Reasoning) from the Compilation of al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*)

“If the scholar knows that, and attains knowledge of its ranks, and recognizes its general and decisive meanings, its branches and its ambiguous matters ... up to his saying: or by an analogy that is valid from the Sunnah ... up to his saying: the foundational general principle has judged it, and the detailed branch has clarified it ...

... up to his saying: thus the scholar, in his knowledge and his

extraction of what he needs of rulings from the Book of Allah and His Sunnah, is according to the purity of his mind, the excellence of his discernment, the firmness of his intellect, the fairness of his heart, the strength of the establishment of the science of principles in his heart, and the firmness of the knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah in his chest ...

... up to his saying: so when the scholar's knowledge of the foundations of knowledge is complete, and his understanding of the subtle meanings of the comprehended legislations is sound, and his mastery of them, his recovery of their subtleties, the excellence of his study, and his encompassing of their inner and outer meanings overpower—by the power and ability of Allah—whatever ambiguous matters come to him, knowing what he needs of analogy, aware through distinguishing its branches, insightful in branching its matters ...

... up to his saying: so whenever a branch comes to him from among the branches, he returns it to its root, and whenever something ambiguous comes to him, he clarifies it by returning it to its decisive meaning ...

... up to his saying: his likeness is like the people of crafts such as building and painting; when among them is a craftsman perfect in his work, encompassing the foundation of his craft, knowing its beginning and its end, knowledgeable of its composition and its perfection ... etc.

Until he (*Peace be Upon Him*) said: "Then know, O questioner, that the truth is not taken except from one of three ways: a speaking Book, or a consensus of the Ummah regarding what it transmitted from the Prophet (*Peace be Upon Him*) from the Sunnah which he brought from Allah, or a matter clarified and validated by intellects." [End from the Book of Qiyās by Imam al-Hādī].

In summary, the Book of Qiyās by Imam al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) indicates that there exists a knowledge upon which the extraction of legal rulings from the Book and the Sunnah depends, and that such extraction is not possible except through it.

He (*Peace be Upon Him*) clarified in this book many chapters of the principles of jurisprudence; thus he mentioned the sources of legislation, which are the Book, the Sunnah, consensus, and analogy.

- He mentioned the conditions for accepting the narrated hadith from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), including presenting it to the Book of Allah.

- He mentioned therein the conditions for the validity of analogy.

[From the Statements of Imam Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) in the Principles of Jurisprudence]

From the words of Imam Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) in a sermon to his

companions before the commencement of battle: “By Allah, I did not rise among you until I knew interpretation and revelation, the decisive and the ambiguous, and the abrogating and the abrogated.”

And from his words regarding the description of the Imam: “It is not befitting for any of us to call to this matter until he knows revelation and interpretation, the decisive and the ambiguous, the abrogating and the abrogated, the knowledge of lawful and unlawful, the Sunnah that abrogates what came before it, and whatever newly arises—how to return it to what has already been, due to what resembles it and corresponds to it.”

Clarification

1- Revelation (Tanzīl) such as His saying, *the Exalted*: “*Do not consume one another’s wealth unjustly, but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent.*” [An-Nisa:29] The revelation of this verse indicates that the wealth of Muslims is forbidden, and it is not lawful for anyone to take another’s wealth except what is taken through buying and selling. This is revelation because it is a meaning understood from the apparent wording, and its understanding does not require deep contemplation or exertion.

2- Interpretation (Ta’wīl) in the preceding verse

1. It establishes for the buyer the option of inspection; if he purchases a commodity he has not seen, he has the option upon seeing it—if he is satisfied, he keeps it; otherwise, he returns it to the seller.
2. The option of absence of a described quality; if the sold item matches the described quality, then so be it; otherwise, the buyer has the right of return.
3. It establishes for the buyer the option due to inability to deliver the sold item, such as when the item is absent; he has the choice—if he wishes, he takes it and waits for its return, and if he wishes, he returns it to the seller.
4. Likewise is the option of inability to deliver the price, which belongs to the seller.
5. The option due to uncertainty (gharar), such as when a man buys a sheep whose milk has been retained.
6. The option due to deception in a murābahah sale.
7. The buyer has the option if he is ignorant of the amount of the price or the sold item.
8. The option of stipulation.
9. The option due to defect.

From the interpretation of this verse also

- There must be verbal exchange between the seller and the buyer, because mutual consent is an inner matter that must be indicated by words from both parties.
 - It is stipulated that the sold commodity be known and specified, because it is inconceivable that the buyer would consent to paying a price for something unknown.
 - It is stipulated that the price be known.
 - And that it is not valid to sell by someone who is forced to sell, and likewise purchase.
- And since the Noble Qur'an addresses rational beings, as evidenced by His saying: *"And fear Me, O you of understanding."* [Al-Baqarah:197]
- The sale and purchase of a child or an insane person are invalid.
 - The sale and purchase of a woman are valid.
 - The buyer's option is nullified if he becomes aware of a defect in the commodity and then pays the price, uses it, seeks preemption through it, repairs the defect, or the like—anything that customarily, habitually, or rationally indicates his satisfaction.
 - From its interpretation is that seeking livelihood through trade is a legislated and lawful matter in Islam.
 - From the interpretation of the verse is that it is permissible for Muslims to transact with one another through buying and selling and the like without inquiry or investigation into the seller's ownership of the sold item or the buyer's ownership of the price.
 - Branching from this is that possession of an item is evidence of ownership, derived from the attribution *"your wealth."*
 - Branching from this is that the ruler must judge in favor of the possessor regarding what is under his possession, unless stronger evidence contradicts it.
 - Since the Wise Qur'an has made mutual consent the cause for exchange between seller and buyer, it is derived from the verse that it is permissible to accept gifts, charity, presents, grants, and the like, if the soul of the giver, donor, and bestower are content.
 - From its interpretation is the prohibition of consuming what is taken out of shame without the good pleasure of its owner.
 - From its interpretation is that it is not permissible for the ruler to fix prices for sellers, prevent them from increasing prices, and then compel them to sell at that price, due to the absence of consent and good will.
 - In light of the revelation and interpretation of this verse, if the

ruler wishes to impose pricing, then he should provide traders and sellers with the commodities whose prices are to be fixed, agree with them to sell those commodities at a specific price, and they, in turn, sell them to the citizens at a specific price.

If you have understood that, then know that the science of Qur'anic interpretation (ta'wīl) is attained only by one whose footing is firmly grounded in the science of fundamentals (uṣūl), who is, along with that, possessed of intelligence and insight, and endowed with piety and divine success. Allah the Exalted has said: *"And no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firmly grounded in knowledge"* [Āl 'Imrān:7].

– The first to establish this science was the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*). In the book *Nahj al-Balāghah* it is stated: "Indeed, in the hands of the people there is truth and falsehood, truthfulness and falsehood, abrogating and abrogated, general and specific, memorization and illusion ..." And at the end of his words (*Peace be Upon Him*) he clarifies the categories of people: "And one preserved the abrogating and acted upon it, and preserved the abrogated and avoided it; and recognized the specific and the general, placing each matter in its proper place; and recognized the ambiguous and the clear-cut ... etc."

From here we can know that among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) there were those whose footing was firmly established in the science of interpretation and inference. However, the science of juridical inference (istinbāṭ) was not written down in their era, nor in the era of the Followers (al-tābi'īn); rather, they relied upon memorization.

– Muslim scholars realized the importance of this science and therefore codified it during the era of systematic compilation.

– The importance of this science does not lie in itself, but rather in that it is a means for extracting the jurisprudence of the Qur'an and the rulings of the lawful and the unlawful.

– This science does not differ according to its authors, for it consists mostly of linguistic rules, such as: commands and prohibitions, general and specific, concise and clarified, explicit and implicit, text, apparent, and interpreted meaning, absolute and restricted, literal and metaphorical ... etc.

– The disagreement of Muslim scholars within this science is minimal, and the points of disagreement are limited to specific issues:

1. The probative authority of the consensus of the Ahl al-Bayt.
2. The probative authority of the statement of a Companion and the justice of the Companions.

3. The probative authority of the statement of ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).
4. The probative authority of the consensus of the Ummah.
5. The probative authority of reason.
6. Unrestricted public interests (al-maṣāliḥ al-mursalah).
7. Analogical reasoning (qiyās) in causes and measures.

There are also a few disagreements in subsidiary branches of this science that do not result in corruption.

– Scholars of uṣūl unanimously agree that the Noble Qur’an is the foremost proof, and that the Sunnah holds the second rank, even though they differ thereafter regarding which solitary reports are acted upon.

[The Ruling on Differences in Juristic Opinions]

Indeed, the disagreement of jurists in ijtihād-based legal opinions is a scholarly difference that Islam permits, and the Qur’an explicitly provides leniency regarding it. Muslim scholars—including the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)—are unanimously agreed upon this.

The evidence for this is inductive. For instance, the Imām of the Hādawī school, Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Hādī ilā al-Ḥaqq (*Peace be Upon Him*), differed with his grandfather al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm (*Peace be Upon Him*) in certain juristic issues, and he differed with the Imām of the Zaydīs, Zayd ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), in other matters, as is well known. He even differed with himself (*Peace be Upon Him*), such that you find him expressing one view in *al-Aḥkām* and another view in *al-Muntaḥab* that contradicts the view stated in *al-Aḥkām*.

You also see Imām al-Nāṣir al-Uṭrūsh (*Peace be Upon Him*) differing with al-Hādī in juristic matters, and differing with Zayd in other issues. Thus are the Imāms of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)—it is rare that any two of them agree on every single juristic issue.

Whoever wishes to learn more about the differences among the Imāms in juristic matters should refer to the book *al-Baḥr al-Zakḥkhār*, *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kāfī*, and other juristic works that expand upon this research. Despite these differences, none of them declared another to be misguided, nor did they make such differences a reason to sever the bonds of faith-based brotherhood and Islamic affection. Rather, each of them fulfilled in full the rights mandated by faith and imposed by Islam.

This was only because they understood the texts of the Qur’an that guided them to such conduct. Allah *the Exalted* has said: *"And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but [only] for what your hearts intended"* [al-Aḥzāb:5]. From here, the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*)—in general—held that if a mujtahid exhausts due consideration in an issue, whether he is correct or mistaken, it is not permissible to

declare him misguided or sinful. His adoption of his juristic opinion does not remove him from the protection of faith, the sanctity of Islam, or the domain of piety, nor does it contradict holding firmly to the rope of Allah *the Exalted*.

Among the chapters of uṣūl al-fiqh

is the chapter of ijtihād and taqlīd, and among its issues is the statement: "Every mujtahid is correct."

This applies only to subsidiary, speculative matters for which no decisive proof from the Book or the Sunnah exists, such as the issue of rinsing the mouth and inhaling water during ablution. Some of our scholars say that these are obligatory and among the essentials of ablution, while others say they are recommended acts of ablution.

– The scholars of the Zaydī school have unanimously agreed that such disagreement is not religiously objectionable and does not entail sin. Indeed, Muslim scholars in general—except those whose opinion carries no weight—say the same as the Zaydīs. They have cited as evidence the saying of Allah the Exalted: *"And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but [only] for what your hearts intended"* [al-Aḥzāb:5].

– Allah *the Exalted* approved the ijtihād of the Prophet of Allah, Dāwūd (*Peace be Upon Him*), and the ijtihād of the Prophet of Allah, Sulaymān (*Peace be Upon Him*), when each of them judged according to his own reasoning. Allah did not object to their disagreement, and He related this to us in the Qur’an, saying: *"And [mention] David and Solomon, when they judged concerning the field when the sheep of a people overran it [at night], and We were witness to their judgment. And We gave understanding of it to Solomon, and to each We gave judgment and knowledge"* [al-Anbiyā’:78–79]. Thus, Allah informed us that Sulaymān (*Peace be Upon Him*) was granted divine success in his ijtihād, yet He did not condemn the ijtihād of Dāwūd. Rather, Allah praised them both, described them both as possessing knowledge and wisdom, and declared them among the doers of good who deserved Allah’s reward and honor in this world and the Hereafter.

– Allah the Exalted also related to us the disagreement of the Muslims on the day of Banū al-Naḍīr. Some said: "We should cut down the palm trees to enrage their owners," while others said: "Rather, we should leave them so that the Muslims may benefit from them." Some cut them down and others left them. Then the Qur’an was revealed validating both groups, as Allah the Exalted said: *"Whatever you cut down of palm trees or leave standing upon their trunks—it is by permission of Allah and so that He may disgrace the defiantly disobedient"* [al-Ḥaṣhr:5].

– It is well known in the books of sīrah and among the scholars of

ḥadīth that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) ordered the Muslims, upon their return from the Battle of the Trench, saying: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not pray 'Aṣr except in Banū Qurayẓah." So the Muslims set out, after returning from the Battle of the Trench, toward Banū Qurayẓah. Some of them prayed along the way, while others did not pray 'Aṣr until after 'Ishā' in Banū Qurayẓah. Those who delayed said: "The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) forbade us from praying 'Aṣr except in Banū Qurayẓah." Those who prayed on the road said: "The Prophet of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did not intend for us to delay the 'Aṣr prayer beyond its time; rather, he intended that we hasten immediately to Banū Qurayẓah without delay."

When they informed the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he did not object to either group. This is the meaning of the report, and it is well known.

[Deriving Legal Rulings from the Book and the Sunnah and What Is Connected to Them]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad and upon his pure family. To proceed:

Indeed, deriving the legal ruling from the Book and the Sunnah and what is connected to them depends upon the attainment of several indispensable matters:

1 – Complete knowledge of the speech of the Arabs:

a. Knowledge of the vocabulary of the language—especially the vocabulary of the Book and the Sunnah. Thus, it is necessary that the examiner be knowledgeable about nouns, verbs, particles, and adverbs, and about the meanings carried by each word.

b. That he be knowledgeable of the structures of Arab speech and its subtleties. This is a vast domain and a formidable obstacle that none can cross except the rare, intelligent, and patient individuals upon whom divine care bestows success, rectitude, assistance, increased understanding, intelligence, memorization, illumination of the heart, and support.

[From Where Were the Rules of Uṣūl al-Fiqh Taken?]

We say: Uṣūl al-Fiqh consists of universal rules derived from the Arabic language, from the Qur'an, and from rational principles. It is not taken from the Sunnis themselves.

And I shall enumerate for you, dear reader, rules from Uṣūl al-Fiqh so that you may know the correctness of this claim:

1. A command indicates obligation, and it does not depart from that meaning except with an accompanying indicator. Derived from language.
2. A prohibition indicates prohibition (taḥrīm) unless there is an indicator. Derived from language.
3. A prohibition indicates the invalidity of the prohibited act in acts of worship and transactions. This is derived from the Sacred Law.
4. A term of generality indicates inclusion of all its individuals, either by way of explicit text or by way of apparent meaning. The terms of generality are many. This is taken from language.
5. The term “specific” is contrary to “general,” and its indication is clearer and stronger than that of the general. Taken from language.
6. The specific is acted upon with respect to what it covers, and the general is acted upon with respect to what remains. Taken from language and reason.
7. Evidence is of two kinds: definitive and speculative. The definitive is divided into: definitive in indication and transmission, and definitive in transmission but speculative in indication.
8. They then attached rulings to this division, saying: evidence that is definitive in indication and transmission is acted upon in doctrinal matters and speculative matters alike, whereas the remaining categories are acted upon only in speculative matters. These two divisions are taken from reason and the Sacred Law.
9. If the general and the specific conflict, the specific is given precedence. Derived from language.
10. If the unrestricted and the restricted conflict, the unrestricted is interpreted in light of the restricted. Derived from language.
11. If prohibition and command conflict, prohibition is given precedence. Derived from reason.
12. The consensus of the Ummah is authoritative and a proof. Derived from the Sacred Law.
13. The consensus of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) is authoritative and a proof. Derived from the Sacred Law.
14. Analogical reasoning (qiyās) is authoritative and a proof. Derived from the Sacred Law and reason.
15. Presumption of continuity (istiṣḥāb) is authoritative and a proof. Derived from reason and the Sacred Law.
16. Repelling harms takes precedence over procuring benefits. Derived from reason.
17. An unrestricted command does not indicate one occurrence or

repetition, whereas a prohibition indicates repetition. Derived from language.

18. A command does not linguistically indicate immediacy, whereas a prohibition does indicate immediacy linguistically; however, the Sacred Law may indicate immediacy in either of them.
19. A textual statement (naṣṣ) has definitive indication. Derived from language.
20. Implicit meanings (mafāhīm) have speculative indication. Derived from language.
21. Implicit meanings are evidences that must be acted upon according to their implications. Derived from language.
22. Verbal evidence is divided into: explicit text (naṣṣ), apparent meaning (ẓāhir), and interpreted meaning (mu'awwal). Derived from language.
23. If explicit text and apparent meaning conflict, explicit text is given precedence. Taken from language and reason.
24. Verbal evidence is also divided into categories:
 - literal expression,
 - metaphorical expression,
 - shared (homonymous) expression,
 - customary expression,
 - linguistic expression,
 - legal (shar'ī) expression.

Each of these six categories is either by way of explicit textuality or by way of apparent meaning. All of this is taken from the sciences of semantics and rhetoric, and each of these categories has a specific ruling that applies to it in cases of conflict.

25. A command may come in the form of a declarative statement at times, in the form of an interrogative at other times, in the form of an offer, or in the form of a wish. It may also come by way of allusion (kināyah). Allusion is a broad domain, including: allusion by threat, allusion by blame, allusion by representation, allusion by praise, and allusion by rebuking negation or invalidating negation, and so on. All of this is taken from the sciences of semantics and rhetoric.
26. There are also conceptual evidences subordinate to verbal evidences, such as: meanings of precedence and delay, definiteness and indefiniteness, meanings of attributes and limits, restriction and exclusivity, meanings of priority and equality, symbolism, indication and implication and allusion, necessity and correlation. All of this is taken from the sciences of semantics and rhetoric.
27. Giving preference to some evidences over others. Taken from

reason and the Sacred Law.

28. Knowledge of the abrogating and the abrogated. Taken from transmitted reports of the people of the Sacred Law.
29. Conditions of abrogation. Taken from reason and the Sacred Law.
30. The obligation of ijtihād or taqlīd. Taken from the Sacred Law and reason.
31. In Uṣūl al-Fiqh there is clarification of the meanings of: obligation, prohibition, recommendation, permissibility, dislike, validity, invalidity, corruption, concession (rukhsah), strict ruling (‘azīmah), definitive evidence, speculative evidence, weak evidence, preponderant, outweighed, solitary reports (āḥād), mass-transmitted (mutawātir), accepted by scholarly reception, well-known, integrity, disparagement, decisive (muḥkam), ambiguous (mutashābih), concise (mujmal), clarified (mubayyan), explicit text, apparent meaning, interpreted meaning, general, specific, unrestricted, restricted, explicit meaning (maṭṭūq), implicit meaning (mafhum), and so on. All of this is taken from language and the Sacred Law.

Through this it becomes clear that the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh is, for the most part, derived from the Arabic language—and the Arabic language is the language of the Qur’an: *"An Arabic Qur’an, without any crookedness"* [al-Zumar:28].

The Arabic language is not attributed to any one group to the exclusion of another. Accordingly, those linguistic sciences are not part of the knowledge specific to the Sunnis. Rather, what truly belongs to the doctrinal knowledge of the Sunnis is: predestination and compulsion (al-jabr wa-l-qadar), anthropomorphism and postponement (tashbīh wa-l-irjā’), the vision of Allah—*Glorified and Exalted is He*—on the Day of Resurrection, intercession for sinners who died without repentance from the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and their eventual exit from the Fire, giving precedence to the three caliphs over the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*) in caliphate and merit, loyalty to Mu‘āwiyah and Yazīd, general hostility toward the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), hostility toward their Shi‘a, and so on. These are the sciences about which it is said: they are from the knowledge of the Sunnis.

To proceed: the Qur’an is a clear Arabic discourse revealed in the pure Arabic tongue. Consequently, knowing its rulings, meanings, secrets, wisdoms, wonders, marvels, subtleties, and so forth necessarily requires complete, firm, comprehensive, and all-encompassing mastery of the Arabic language. This cannot be achieved except through thorough proficiency in the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, the science of grammar (naḥw),

and the science of lexical vocabulary. As for the sciences of semantics and rhetoric (al-maʿānī wa-l-bayān), they have been encompassed by the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh.

Hence, whoever undertakes the interpretation of the Qurʾān without these prerequisites has plunged himself into destruction, gone astray and led others astray, and spoken falsely about Allah the Exalted. This is a matter that is clear and firmly established among people of sound reason.

Yes—those are the works of Uṣūl al-Fiqh authored by the Zaydīs. The most comprehensive of them is the book *Sharḥ al-Ghāyah* by al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Qāsim (*May Allah have mercy on him*). It is a book in which he mentions every issue of Uṣūl al-Fiqh and says: “Our Imāms (*Peace be Upon Them*) said such-and-such; the Ashʿarīs said such-and-such; the Muʿtazilīs said such-and-such.” He then says: “Al-Hādī, al-Muʿayyad bi-llāh, Abū Ṭālib, and al-Manṣūr bi-llāh (*Peace be Upon Them*) said such-and-such; al-Juwaynī and al-Ghazālī said such-and-such; so-and-so said such-and-such.” Then he says: “The proof for what we have adopted is such-and-such, and the response to al-Juwaynī and al-Ghazālī is such-and-such.”

In this manner he presents the various opinions, the evidence for each opinion, and the response to each, and then he upholds the doctrine of our Imāms (*Peace be Upon Them*).

Accordingly, that which possesses this character cannot be said to be from the knowledge of Ahl al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamāʿah. How could it be from the knowledge of the Sunnis when it states: “Imām al-Qāsim al-Rassī, Imām al-Nāṣir al-Uṭrūsh, and al-Hādī ilā al-Ḥaqq say that the command implies immediacy,” and he says ... and so on?

Al-Muʿayyad bi-llāh (*Peace be Upon Him*) does not have a dedicated book authored specifically in the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh; however, he mentioned all the rules of Uṣūl al-Fiqh from beginning to end in his large juristic work *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*. Likewise, al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) does not have a separate book devoted exclusively to Uṣūl al-Fiqh, yet he mentioned the principles of Uṣūl in his books *al-Aḥkām*, *al-Muntaḥab*, and his other works.

Similarly, the rules of Uṣūl al-Fiqh exist in full detail in the book *Sharḥ al-Aḥkām* by ʿAlī ibn Bilāl, and in *Sharḥ al-Taḥrīr* by Imām Abū Ṭālib.

Thus, the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh has long existed among the scholars of the Zaydīs who engage in the science of jurisprudence from ancient times. They used to combine the science of fiqh with the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh. Then al-Shāfiʿī came and separated the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh from the science of fiqh, and he was the first to distinguish one from the other. Thereafter, people followed Imām al-Shāfiʿī, placing the science of

Uṣūl al-Fiqh in a separate book for ease and facilitation.

This is a general reality known to all Muslim scholars who are acquainted with the development of classification and authorship.

The Prohibited Disagreement in Islam

The prohibited disagreement in Islam—the disagreement whose prohibition and warning are established by Qur'anic texts—is disagreement in the fundamental, definitive doctrinal matters, such as the issue of the beatific vision, the issue of compulsion, the issue of anthropomorphism and corporealism, and the issue of the Imamate. Such matters are those regarding which Allah *the Exalted* has forbidden disagreement and divergence.

The evidence for this consists of several points:

- That these matters and those similar to them are what divided the Muslims and caused them to become divergent sects because of them—among them: Ash'arīs, Mu'tazilīs, Jabriyyah, Murji'ah, Ḥashwiyyah, Zaydīs, Imāmiyyah, and so on.

- That they declare one another misguided because of disagreement in those matters, whereas they do not declare one another misguided in speculative issues.

[The Principle: Every Mujtahid Is Correct]

"*Every mujtahid is correct*" is a universal principle upon which we comment as follows:

The scholars of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—including the scholars of the Zaydīs—are agreed that differences in the views of mujtahids regarding ijtihād-based matters are not a cause of misguidance, and that such differences do not contradict the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: "*And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided*" [Āl 'Imrān:103]. The Imāms of the Zaydīs, like others, frequently differ in ijtihād-based issues without mutual repudiation or declaring one another misguided.

Indeed, many Imāms even differ with themselves. The closest example of this is the difference between the ijtihād of al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) in *al-Aḥkāṁ* and his ijtihād in *al-Muntaḥab* in many ijtihād-based issues.

There is no disagreement among the scholars of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in this regard; all of them agree upon what we have stated. They differ only into two groups: a group that says, "Every mujtahid is correct," and a group that says, "Rather, the one who attains the truth is correct, and the one who misses it is excused."

Centuries passed upon this understanding and generations followed

one another—predecessors followed by successors, Zaydīs and others—and the Ummah did not see in this practice anything that contradicts the saying of Allah the Exalted: *"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided"* [Āl 'Imrān:103]. Rather, what the scholars of the Ummah understood is that His saying—*"And hold firmly ..."*—obliges every individual to adhere to the Qur'an and rely upon it in all his affairs to the extent of his ability: *"So fear Allah as much as you are able"* [al-Taghābun:16]. Thus, they held fast to the Qur'an and derived from it the rulings of Islam according to the extent of their knowledge. They agreed on many juristic rulings and differed in a few matters whose sources were obscure and whose derivation was subtle.

Such difference was inevitable due to the nature upon which Allah has created human beings—error and correctness. Allah the Exalted has said regarding this: *"And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but [only] for what your hearts intended"* [al-Aḥzāb:5].

Accordingly, error in ijtihād is excused by the explicit text of the Qur'an, by the consensus of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), by the consensus of the Zaydīs, and by the consensus of the Ummah.

Allah the Exalted has narrated, mentioned, and affirmed ijtihād in a religion other than Islam—namely, in the law of Dāwūd and Sulaymān (*Peace be Upon Them*). They both adjudicated a case and differed in their judgments. Allah the Exalted did not censure them for that difference; rather, He praised them and commended them in His Noble Book with fine praise to be remembered until the Day of Resurrection. He—*Glorious and Exalted*—is He—said while narrating this story: *"And [mention] David and Solomon, when they judged concerning the field when the sheep of a people overran it [at night], and We were witness to their judgment. And We gave understanding of it to Solomon, and to each We gave judgment and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains to exalt [Us], along with David, and the birds. And We were doers [of that]"* [al-Anbiyā':78–79]. Thus, that was not a prohibited disagreement, nor a sin, nor a cause of division.

[Uṣūl al-Fiqh Is Derived from the Qur'an]

Uṣūl al-Fiqh is derived from the Qur'an.

- 1- The rule (a command indicates obligation) is one of the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh proven by the Qur'an in many verses, and likewise the rule (a prohibition indicates prohibition /forbiddance).
- 2- The authority (ḥujjiyyah) of the Qur'an, and the authority of the statements, actions, and tacit approvals of the Messenger Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—all of this is derived from the Qur'an.

- 3- Accepting the report of a trustworthy believing person and rejecting the reports of the openly sinful is established by the Qur’an.
- 4- Interpreting the decisive (*muḥkam*) and the ambiguous (*mutashābih*), and the general (*mujmal*) and the clarified (*mubayyan*), is guided by the Qur’an.
- 5- The mujmal (general) and the mubayyan (*clarified*) are guided by the Qur’an.
- 6- Generalization and specification, unrestricted and restricted expressions, are guided by the Qur’an.
- 7- Abrogation and abrogated rulings (*al-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh*) are indicated by the Qur’an.
- 8- Ijtihād and taqlīd are indicated by the Qur’an.
- 9- Pardoning the erring mujtahid after due investigation is indicated by the Qur’an, based on the general meaning of His saying: *“There is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but [only] for what your hearts intended.”* [Al-Aḥzāb:5].
- 10- Concessions (*rukhsah*) and strict rulings (*‘azimah*) are mentioned in the Qur’an.
- 11- The rule (*preventing harm takes precedence over procuring benefit*) is indicated by the Qur’an in His saying: *“And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge.”* [Al-An‘ām:108], and in other verses.
- 12- The rule (*necessities permit prohibitions*) is indicated by the Qur’an in His saying: *“Except what you are compelled to [do].”* [Al-An‘ām:119], and in other verses.
- 13- The permissibility of ijtiḥād for one who is qualified for independent reasoning, and the permissibility of taqlīd for one who is not qualified for such reasoning—all of this is in the Qur’an in His saying: *“So ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.”* [An-Naḥl:43].

If we were to review all the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, we would find that every principle has evidence from the Qur’an that explicitly affirms its validity.

Someone might say: If the Qur’an already contains the foundations of theology (‘ilm al-kalām) and the knowledge of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, then what is the benefit of codifying these sciences, given that the Qur’an itself is sufficient? In that case, there would be no benefit except lengthening the path for the student of knowledge and diverting him from the Qur’an.

We respond: Extracting the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh from the Qur’an and clarifying them brings them closer to students and makes them easier for those who seek them. It is extremely difficult—indeed, practically impossible—for a student of knowledge to encompass the

science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh directly from the Qur'an alone. At the same time, there must be interpreters of the Qur'an who translate what it contains, explain it, and clarify its secrets, treasures, wonders, and marvels.

The sciences of theology, Uṣūl al-Fiqh, jurisprudence (fiqh), and Sufism and gnosis are nothing but a flow from its ocean, and a translation of what scholars have uncovered of the secrets of its sciences.

Scholars will continue until the Day of Resurrection to draw from the ocean of its knowledge, bring it forth for people, explain it, and clarify it—because it is the Book whose secrets never end and whose wonders never cease.

[The Legal Rulings with Which Allah Has Charged the Legally Responsible]

- The legal rulings with which Allah the Exalted has charged the legally responsible are divided into two categories: definitive (qaṭʿī) and speculative (ẓannī). The Muslim scholars—including the Zaydīs—are unanimously agreed that acting upon both categories is obligatory. They only differentiated between them in that whoever denies a definitive ruling becomes, by denying it, a disbeliever and apostate; whereas whoever denies a speculative ruling is not judged to be a disbeliever or apostate.
- The scholars of the Zaydī school and the scholars of the Ummah unanimously agree that ijtihād is not permissible when there exists evidence in the Book, the Sunnah, or the consensus of the Ummah. The permissibility of ijtihād applies only when there is no evidence from the Book, the Sunnah, or consensus. As for deriving legal rulings from the Noble Qur'an, this is the extraction of existing rulings and is not ijtihād in its true sense; even if they call it ijtihād, this is only by way of broad usage. Nevertheless, no one is able to extract the rulings of the Qur'an except a mujtahid.
- Today there are new occurrences that require mujtahid scholars to renew their rulings in light of what they have understood and known of Allah's rulings. Examples include medical fertilization for the infertile, lending a woman's womb to carry a fertilized ovum for a specified period, test-tube babies, human cloning, and the use of contraceptives along with what follows from them such as bleeding, neurological diseases, and exposure of the private parts. The enumeration of such cases is lengthy. Regarding such matters it is said: according to some scholars, every mujtahid is correct; while according to others, only one is correct and the other is mistaken but excused.

[The Science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh Is among the Duties of the Scholars]

The science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh is not among the pillars of faith, nor among

the five foundational principles; therefore, ignorance of it does not harm the general body of Muslims. However, it is among the conditional pillars required for knowing the subtle and precise Qurʾanic rulings whose knowledge is attainable only by those firmly grounded in knowledge through the tools of Uṣūl. For this reason, they have said that it is among the obligations of the scholars, not the common people. It is an obligation upon the scholars rather than upon the laypeople because the scholars are the heirs of the prophets: they teach people the laws of their religion and clarify for them what Allah has sent down to them in the Qurʾan and upon the tongue of their Messenger. (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) From here, the Exalted said: *“So ask the people of remembrance if you do not know.”* [Al-Anbiyā’:7].

If all people were to abandon the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, knowledge of the rulings of their religion would be closed to them; everyone would speak about the Qurʾan according to his own opinion and interpret it according to the desires of his soul. Then misguidances would spread throughout the Ummah, and ignorances would prevail over them.

- We do not deny that reflecting upon the verses of the Qurʾan and pondering over their meanings is the guiding path to acquiring Islamic knowledge and legislative rulings. However, no one reaches that knowledge nor is able to attain it except one who possesses the sound methodology that has undergone testing by the Imams of the Zaydī school and its scholars, and by the scholars of the Islamic schools of law—generation after generation, century after century, Imam after Imam and scholar after scholar—across successive centuries until today. The ears of the world have not heard, throughout those centuries, any criticism of the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh from the scholars of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). If there is any criticism by some scholars of the Ummah against others, it is only in specific, limited issues—and that is all. Such criticism is recorded in the detailed books authored in this discipline.

And after all this, every principle among the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh calls out for its own validity and carries its proof upon its back.

[Chapters of Uṣūl al-Fiqh]

The chapters of Uṣūl al-Fiqh are few, namely:

- 1- Forms of commands, prohibitions, and statements, and what is connected to them.
- 2- The general and the specific, and the absolute and the restricted.
- 3- The mujmal (*general*) and the mubayyan (*clarified*).
- 4- The explicit (*maṭṭūq*) and the implied (*mafhum*), and the types of indications.
- 5- The abrogating and the abrogated (*al-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh*).

6- Ijtihād and taqlīd.

When Did the Science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh Appear?

Question: When did the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh appear? And likewise the science of Uṣūl al-Dīn?

Answer (and Allah is the Grantor of success): The science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh has been manifest since the era of the Companions. As for the science of Uṣūl al-Dīn, the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*) spoke about the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh, as found in *Nahj al-Balāghah*. He mentioned the narrators of ḥadīth and divided them into several categories, and he mentioned the general and the specific, the abrogating and the abrogated, and he said: “Let no one give fatwā to the people except one who knows the abrogating and the abrogated, and the general and the specific, and so on.”

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt mentioned the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh in their books. Al-Hādī Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn spoke about analogical reasoning (qiyās), causes (‘ilal), and the conditions for the validity of analogy in *al-Majmū‘ah al-Fākhirah*. He also spoke about the Sunnah, the mass-transmitted (mutawātir) reports, and solitary (āḥād) reports; he spoke about consensus (ijmā‘), about definitive and speculative issues, about the consensus of the Ahl al-Bayt, and about the authority of the Commander of the Faithful Imam ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).

Likewise, with respect to Uṣūl al-Dīn, the book *Nahj al-Balāghah*—most of it—consists of the foundations of religion.

Yes, the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh were scattered. When the era of codification arrived, the scholars recorded them and gathered them into a book. The first to codify them, as they say, was Imām al-Shāfi‘ī, may Allah have mercy on him.

And after that, it is impossible for one ignorant of the principles of Uṣūl al-Fiqh to know the laws of what is lawful and unlawful and the rest of the rulings. How can one ignorant of the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh and its principles know that the form of command in one place indicates obligation, in another recommendation, in another permissibility, or threat, and so on?

The forms of prohibition are likewise: he cannot distinguish between one form and another. Whoever does not know the specific and the general—how can he distinguish between general and specific laws? Whoever does not know specification—what will he do when the general and the specific conflict?

Whoever does not know preference (tarjīḥ) and its causes—what will he do when evidences and indications conflict? Whoever does not know abrogation and what is connected to it—what will he do when the

abrogating and the abrogated conflict?

Whoever does not know linguistic subjects—how will he be guided to the meanings of metaphor and literal usage, explicit texts and apparent meanings, indications by implication and allusion, and the concepts of discourse?

Whoever does not know the mujmal and the mubayyan and what is connected to them—how will he be guided to acting upon them?

Whoever does not know the rulings of analogy—how will he be guided to knowing rulings that are almost countless?

And so on, and so on.

And after all this, the reference point of most principles of Uṣūl goes back to language: the chapter of generality and specificity is linguistic; likewise the absolute and the restricted; the chapter of explicit and implied meaning is linguistic; the mujmal and the mubayyan are linguistic; the chapter of literal and metaphorical usage is linguistic; and the chapter of commands and prohibitions is linguistic.

The Science of Logic

- The science of logic was introduced into the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh insofar as the subject matter of logic and Uṣūl al-Fiqh is related to evidence and inference.
- Nevertheless, logic is not necessary nor indispensable, and legal rulings can be derived without it.

It was only introduced into the science of Uṣūl because the scholars of Uṣūl built their arguments in Uṣūl al-Fiqh upon the terminology of the logicians, spoke about them in their language, and proceeded according to their method. Therefore, the authors of Uṣūl needed to mention an introduction to the science of logic so that the student of this science might, through it, understand the arguments and proofs.

- The scholars of mathematics also introduced logic into their science. For example, you see them saying: “(A B = C D, and C D = E F).” These are called premises in the science of logic, and in mathematics they are called givens. Through these premises or givens, they arrive at knowledge of another matter, namely that “(A B = E F),” because what is equal to an equal is equal.

The benefit of this logical inference is to arrive, by such means, at knowledge of the unknown.

[The Five Senses and the Beginning of the Codification of the Sciences]

A person acquires knowledge by means of the five senses, for the five senses are instruments for obtaining knowledge. Through hearing and

sight, most information is obtained:

- Through the eye, earthly and celestial bodies are perceived, along with their various shapes—long and short, square and rectangular, triangular and circular, and so on—and their different colors and characteristics: moving and still, inanimate, animal, and plant, and so on.
- Through the eye and the ear, information displayed on television screens is perceived, and through the ear, information broadcast by radio is perceived.
- Through the eye, written information in books, magazines, and newspapers is perceived, or that which appears on television, computer, and internet screens.
- Through the ear, the student receives knowledge from his teacher.
- As for the deaf and mute, they today receive knowledge through sign language by means of sight.
- As for the blind, today they have books which they read by means of touch; they read the Noble Qur'an and other texts through touch.
- The people of the first generation—the Companions and the Followers—used to receive knowledge through listening and memorization, and they did not write down knowledge. People only began to write it down in the second century after Hijrah. Perhaps the first to codify knowledge in books was Abū Khālid al-Wāsiṭī, the narrator from Imām Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*), who compiled *the jurisprudential and ḥadīth collection*. Thereafter, the scholars continued one after another in codifying knowledge.
- Thus, the scholars recorded what they used to preserve of knowledge by memorization.

[Do Legal Obligations Differ According to People's Dispositions?]

Question: Do legal obligations differ from one person to another due to differences in people's dispositions or other factors?

Answer: There are causes that serve as reasons for differences in some legal rulings from one person to another, among them:

- 1- The sick person and the traveler differ in their rulings from the healthy resident, such as shortening the prayer and the permissibility of breaking the fast during the day of Ramaḍān. Likewise are the nursing woman and the pregnant woman if they fear for the infant or the pregnancy—regarding the permissibility of breaking the fast, but not shortening the prayer.
- 2- A woman differs from a man in many legal rulings: Friday prayer

is not obligatory upon a woman, nor is jihād; it is not permissible for a woman to undertake the marriage contract, nor any general authority such as leadership or judiciary, and the like. There is no adhān or iqāmah upon a woman, and she is required to conceal her adornments and her voice, unlike a man, and so on.

- 3- The obligation of the scholar differs from that of the ignorant person in some duties. Judging between people is among the obligations of scholars, not the ignorant; likewise issuing legal verdicts (fatwā), calling to Allah, conveying His rulings, clarifying the truth, refuting doubts, and teaching knowledge and religion. The ignorant person may be excused in many legal rulings in which the scholar is not excused.

As for human dispositions, they are not, in general, a cause for differences in legal obligation. Likewise, if human dispositions are not a cause for differences in legal obligation, then differences of times are also not a cause for that—and this too is in general terms.

[The Wisdom Behind the Variation of the Evidences of Obligatory Rulings]

Question: What is the wisdom behind the variation of the evidences of obligatory rulings in terms of clarity and obscurity, strength and weakness, certainty and probability, nearness and remoteness, and so on?

Answer (and Allah is the Grantor of success): The wisdom behind that includes:

- 1- Increasing the burden of responsibility, for reward is in proportion to hardship.
- 2- Trial and testing—*“the believers halt at doubtful matters.”*
- 3- Manifesting the virtue of the scholars and distinguishing their ranks.
- 4- Clarifying that the obligation to know some rulings is general, while the obligation to know others is specific.
- 5- Indicating the difference in importance between some rulings and others, for that varies according to the strength or weakness of the evidence.

[Categories of Subsidiary Legal Rulings]

The subsidiary legal rulings (*the jurisprudential rulings*) are divided into categories:

- 1- Those that are established definitively by the text of the Qur'an, or by a mass-transmitted Sunnah, or by consensus.
- 2- Those established by the apparent meanings of the Qur'an, or by a ḥadīth whose chain is probabilistic, or by the implication of the Qur'an, or by the implication of the Sunnah, or by a near or

distant indication.

3- Those established by analogical reasoning (qiyās).

Yes, the apparent meanings of the Qur'an occupy the second rank, and attached to them are the indications and implications of the Qur'an and all its recognized forms of indication.

The probabilistic texts of the Sunnah come in the third rank, and in the fourth rank come the apparent meanings of authentic Sunnah, along with their indications, implications, and all their recognized forms of indication.

Analogy has various types: some of it is attached to the first category, some to the second, some to the third, some to the fourth, and some comes in the fifth rank.

- The apparent meanings of the Qur'an may conflict with one another, and likewise its implications.

- The probabilistic texts of the Sunnah may conflict with one another, or with the apparent meanings of the Qur'an, its implications, its indications, or with something from among its meanings.

- Analogies may conflict with one another, or with the apparent meanings of the Qur'an or the Sunnah, or with other evidences.

[The Science of Fiqh and Its Derivation]

The Imams of fiqh take the science of fiqh and derive it from the Book, the Sunnah, and analogy. Each of them derives the jurisprudential ruling according to his knowledge, understanding, and strength of intellect. There is no doubt that the understandings of jurists and the strength of their intellects vary.

It is obligatory upon the scholar to exert all his effort and capacity in researching and examining the evidences of jurisprudential rulings and their indications.

[The Legal Evidences]

Evidences

The evidences are four: the Book, the Sunnah, consensus, and analogy.

Speculation (Al.Zann)

As for the strong preponderant probability, what is meant by it is the probability that results from indications and contextual clues; its ruling, in acting upon it, is like the ruling of certainty in many fields.

What has come in the Qur’an censuring acting upon probability refers to probability that consists of mere illusions not based on indications or clues, but rather on pure imaginings and unfounded assumptions.

Among what has come in the Sharī‘ah regarding acting upon the probability we have mentioned are:

- 1- The testimony of two just witnesses, from which only probability is derived.
- 2- The report of a just person, which by itself yields nothing but probability.
- 3- The legal verdict of the mufti: the questioner and the follower derive nothing but probability. Likewise is the ruling of the judge—it is obligatory to act upon it even if it yields nothing but probability. The mujtahid likewise acts upon his probability.

Among the clues that produce probability are: if the praying person is confused regarding the direction of the qiblah, he acts upon clues such as the prayer niches of mosques, the compass, and so on.

Among the evidences for acting upon clues is His saying, *Exalted*, regarding the attributes of the poor: *“You will recognize them by their signs.”* [Al-Baqarah:273]. And His saying, *Exalted*, regarding the attributes of the hypocrites: *“And you will surely recognize them by the tone of their speech.”* [Muḥammad:30]. And His saying, *Exalted*, in the story of Joseph: *“If his shirt is torn from the front, then she has spoken the truth and he is of the liars. But if his shirt is torn from the back, then she has lied and he is of the truthful.”* [Yūsuf:26–27].

Jurisprudential Rulings

The Sharī‘ah jurisprudential rulings, with respect to their basis, are divided into categories:

- 1- Those taken by way of a definitive text from the Book or from the Sunnah, such as: *“So wash your faces”* [Al-Mā’idah:6], and the saying: *“The child belongs to the marital bed, and for the adulterer is the stone.”*
- 2- Those taken from a probabilistic basis, such as the apparent meanings of the Book and the ḥadīth whose transmission is

probabilistic.

3- Those taken by way of analogical reasoning (qiyās).

4- Those taken by way of consensus (ijmā’).

The science of fiqh is a vast discipline with far-reaching horizons; even the most skilled scholar never reaches its end nor stands upon its ultimate limit. Nevertheless, it is a science that requires a high degree of intelligence and understanding. The scholars of the various legal schools have codified fiqh, each according to the school of his Imam.

The Ruling on One Who Opposes the Apparent Meanings of the Qur’an

Question: It is said that the indication of apparent meanings is not definitive; therefore, one who opposes the apparent meanings of the Qur’an and the mass-transmitted Sunnah is not judged to be immoral (fāsiq). This is despite knowing that most rulings are established only through apparent meanings. What, then, is the correct view on this issue?

Answer (and Allah is the Grantor of success): It has been definitively established that it is obligatory to act upon the apparent meanings of the Qur’an and the known Sunnah. Accordingly, they are like explicit texts in that it is forbidden to oppose them, and they may be relied upon in matters of declaring disbelief, declaring immorality, criticism and validation, loyalty and disavowal. Upon this path proceeded the early and later scholars of this Ummah. They infer particular rulings from general verses: they cut off the hand of the thief, flog the fornicator and the slanderer, kill the apostate, the polytheist, and the rebellious aggressor, and so on—all of that by relying upon general verses.

They also infer the impermissibility of marrying a woman in her waiting period from His saying, *Exalted: “And do not resolve upon the bond of marriage until the prescribed term reaches its end.”* [Al-Baqarah: 235], and its indication of the intended meaning is from the indication of metaphor.

If it is said: There is a difference between an explicit text (naṣṣ) and an apparent meaning (ẓāhir), in that the apparent meaning allows the possibility of intending something else, unlike the explicit text. Therefore, certainty regarding the intended meaning of the apparent is not possible, and thus certainty regarding the immorality, sinfulness, or disobedience of one who opposes it is not possible—unlike the explicit text.

We say: Mere possibility does not prevent certainty. As evidence for this, the explicit text itself allows interpretation, and there is no disagreement that this possibility does not prevent certainty regarding its meaning. Thus, the explicit text and the apparent meaning are equal

in what we have mentioned.

Based on this, it is not permissible to give attention to or rely upon the mere possibility present in either the apparent meaning or the explicit text—except when evidence arises that necessitates doing so. In that case, interpretation of the text or departure from the apparent meaning becomes obligatory.

If it is said: Your statement is a departure from the very nature of the apparent meaning, for knowledge and certainty belong to the nature of the explicit text, not the apparent meaning. Your equating the two contradicts what is well-known among the scholars.

We say: We do not deny that scholars have differentiated between the two, and that the scholars of Uṣūl have designated a specific chapter for each. However, this differentiation and categorization is a technical, terminological one that arose after combining them in what we have mentioned.

We further strengthen our argument by saying: The proof of Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, is established by both. This is a matter over which there is no disagreement. Its meaning is that no argument will benefit before Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, from one who seeks to justify abandoning action upon the apparent meaning; rather, his argument is invalidated.

Yes, there are rare matters in which illusion may occur for some regarding their inclusion under a general rule, or there may be subtle meanings for some that are more apparent to others, or the like. Such cases are what should be intended by saying that their indication is probabilistic, and that it is not permissible to rely upon them in declaring disbelief, immorality, and so on.

This is because perspectives differ in understanding apparent meanings, and the one who errs is excused, due to His saying, *Exalted*: “Allah does not burden a soul except according to its capacity.” [Al-Baqarah:286], and His saying: “So fear Allah as much as you are able.” [At-Taghābun:16], and similar verses.

Among what further supports what we have stated is the consensus that the Shari‘ah of Islam is general for every legally accountable person in every time and place.

The Clear and the Ambiguous (al-Muḥkam wa-l-Mutashābih)

- One who does not know the clear and the ambiguous and cannot distinguish between them becomes lost in his understanding, his thought becomes disturbed, and he does not know the way out—thus he goes astray and leads others astray.
- This is the state of one who wishes to take his religion from the

Qur'an without knowledge of the principles and rules of derivation.

- The knowledge of the clear and the ambiguous is a chapter among the chapters of the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh. If we close the door of the science of Uṣūl al-Fiqh and erase its rules, we thereby place, before the sciences of the Qur'an and its lights, an impenetrable barrier and a concealed veil that cannot be breached. The rulings of the Qur'an then remain imprisoned behind the sealed barrier and imposed veil. At that point, the laws and rulings of the Qur'an become obscured, ignorance and misguidance take hold of nations, and what befell previous nations rightfully befalls them.

[The Prohibition of Following the Ambiguous of the Qur'an]

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, in the Book of Knowledge, the chapter: *The Prohibition of Following the Ambiguous of the Qur'an*, there is the ḥadīth: "Those before you were destroyed only because of their (differences) concerning the Book."

And the ḥadīth: "Recite the Qur'an as long as your hearts are united over it; when you differ, then rise."

I say: This necessitates that the Ḥashwiyyah abandon using as evidence the verses over whose meanings disagreement has occurred—such as the verses they use to argue for anthropomorphism, and those they use to argue for divine decree and predestination, and so on—due to these two ḥadīths narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

Ḥadīth

The ḥadīth narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is one of the sources of Sharī'ah rulings, and it ranks second after the Noble Qur'an. There is no disagreement regarding this statement.

There is also no disagreement regarding the acceptance of authentic ḥadīth, acting upon its implication, and that it is a binding proof. Consensus has been reached upon accepting mass-transmitted ḥadīths and those ḥadīths that the Ummah has received with acceptance.

Thereafter, disagreement occurred regarding the authentication of solitary ḥadīths. The Ahl al-Sunnah have authentic ḥadīths, the Zaydiyyah have authentic ḥadīths, the Imāmiyyah have authentic ḥadīths, and so on.

Thus, a ḥadīth may be authentic according to the Ahl al-Sunnah and not authentic according to the Zaydiyyah or the Imāmiyyah, and likewise the opposite. A ḥadīth may be authentic according to the Imāmiyyah and weak according to the Zaydiyyah, and so on.

Each of these groups has foundations and principles upon which the

authenticity or weakness of a ḥadīth is built. Hence, disagreement regarding authentic ḥadīth arose due to disagreement in foundations and principles. According to all of them, a ḥadīth is neither a proof nor evidence unless it is authentic.

- ***If the groups differ*** regarding the authenticity of a ḥadīth—such that, for example, the Ahl al-Sunnah judge it to be authentic, while the Zaydiyyah or the Imāmiyyah judge it to be weak—upon which of the two views should the examiner rely?

- ***It may be said:*** It is not permissible for the examiner to rely upon either of the two views, because each of the two claims requires a proof that brings reassurance to the soul.

[The Ḥadīth That Must Be Accepted]

The truth is that the authentic ḥadīth which must be accepted is as follows:

- 1- The ḥadīth upon whose authenticity the groups of scholars unanimously agree; whatever is so is an authentic ḥadīth, because the proof of its authenticity is established by consensus.
- 2- The ḥadīth whose authenticity is unanimously agreed upon by the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), due to the establishment of evidence for the authority of their consensus.

The groups have agreed upon accepting the report of a just, trustworthy believer under certain conditions; however, they differed thereafter: among them are those who declare a person trustworthy, and among them are those who criticize him. Thus, Ahl al-Sunnah criticize the narrator if he is Shi'i, and they deem trustworthy the Nāṣibīs, whereas the Zaydīs and the Imāmīs hold the opposite view.

It is known that the truth does not depart from the hands of the Ummah, and that it does not agree upon misguidance, and there is no disagreement concerning this. Yet every group claims that it alone is upon the truth to the exclusion of others. The principle is that a claim is not accepted except with proof that indicates its correctness; otherwise, it is to be rejected.

- Accordingly, what is the solution? And what is the path that leads to knowing the truth?

The solution and the path are: to take first what the groups of the Ummah have unanimously agreed upon regarding the interpretation of a verse from the Book of Allah, *Exalted is He*, or regarding a ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Whatever the groups have unanimously agreed upon as to the soundness of the interpretation of a verse, or the authenticity of a ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant*

them peace), the examiner should take it. For if he does so and adheres to it, the doors that lead to knowing the truth will be opened for him. This is what Allah, *Exalted is He*, meant by His saying: *"So if you dispute about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger ..."* [al-Nisā':59]. Referring to Allah, *Exalted is He*, is referring to His Book, and referring to the Messenger is referring to his Sunnah that is unanimously agreed upon as authentic by all.

If those who differed were to do that, disagreement would be removed. And Allah is the One whose help is sought, and to Him all matters return.

It is not hidden that the Zaydīs are the only group that calls to such a method: arbitrating by the Noble Book and the Sunnah that is unanimously agreed upon.

- It is also not hidden that the ḥadīth of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) has been tampered with by whims, passed through political circumstances that subjected it to their interests, was exposed to the plotting of hypocrites, the schemes of corrupters, and the mistakes of narrators and their delusions, and so on. Therefore, there must be a path to distinguish the authentic ḥadīth from others.

Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah attempted that, and they laid down foundations, rules, and standards, and they investigated and scrutinized, and they expended great efforts in this path. However, this attempt and that great effort were biased in service of the doctrine of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, which is a product of the policy of Mu'āwiyah.

[The Influence of the Umayyad State on the Science of Ḥadīth]

There is no doubt that the Muslims were divided into two groups during the time of 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah, and wars and tribulations occurred between the two parties, and so on.

Those who were with 'Alī, his supporters and advocates, were called the Shi'a, while those who were with Mu'āwiyah, his supporters and advocates, were called Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. The enmity between the two parties was severe, and it has remained to this day.

Thus, when Ahl al-Sunnah laid down the foundations and rules for the science of ḥadīth, they were influenced by that historical enmity and were extremely fanatical in support of the policy and doctrines of Mu'āwiyah, and hostile to the policy and doctrines of 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*).

Among the examples of what we have mentioned are:

- 1- In Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, which is their foremost book in authenticity: when al-Bukhārī mentioned Ziyād, he said: Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān.

- 2- Al-Bukhārī relied, in narrating ḥadīth in his Ṣaḥīḥ, upon men who were notorious for cursing ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*), such as Ḥarīz ibn ‘Uthmān, and such as ‘Umar ibn Sa’d, the killer of al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*). Accordingly, it is not permissible to rely upon what they did, nor to trust what they authenticated.

[Conditions for the Authenticity of a Ḥadīth]

What I hold is that the authenticity of a ḥadīth requires the following conditions:

- 1- That the ḥadīth not be contrary to reason.
- 2- That it not be contrary to the Book of Allah, *Exalted is He*, or to what has been unanimously agreed upon as authentic, or to what is stronger than it.
- 3- That the ḥadīth be well-known and circulated among all the Islamic groups without objection—this is stronger than what follows—or that it be well-known and circulated among the Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) without objection.

[Signs of Weakness in a Ḥadīth]

Weak ḥadīths have signs and indications that point to their weakness:

- 1- Among them is the excessive length of a ḥadīth narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), such as the long ḥadīth of intercession narrated by al-Bukhārī and others, and the ḥadīth of the Night Journey and Ascension.
As for what is like the ḥadīth of Jābir regarding the description of the Prophet’s (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) pilgrimage, then no; for Jābir is merely recounting the actions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) during the pilgrimage and its events.
 - 2- That the ḥadīth contains unnatural matters that reason finds objectionable or deems far-fetched, such as the ḥadīth of Tamīm al-Dārī and his story narrated by Muslim, in which he reported that he saw the Beast and described what was between its eyes, and so on; and such as the ḥadīths in the Ṣaḥīḥ collections that state that Moses (*Peace be Upon Him*) struck the Angel of Death and gouged out his eye, and so on.
- And such as the ḥadīths that mention exaggerated numerical figures, like saying: seventy thousand angels, for each angel seventy thousand heads, for each head seventy thousand tongues, and each tongue remembers Allah in seventy thousand languages.

[The Authentication of One Group’s Ḥadīth Books Is Not Binding upon Another]

Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah judge the ḥadīths of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, and so on, to be authentic. The Zaydīs have ḥadīths that they judge to be authentic, and the Imāmīs have ḥadīths that they judge to be authentic.

It is not binding upon every group to accept what another group has judged to be authentic, because merely judging a ḥadīth to be authentic by a group is not evidence of its authenticity. Nor is, for example, the consensus of Ahl al-Sunnah upon the authenticity of a ḥadīth evidence of its authenticity, and so on.

[A Response to an Article Denying Tawātur]

I came across an article on Facebook whose subject was: that the claim of tawātur is a false claim that it is not permissible to rely upon.

Those who establish the five daily prayers by tawātur, it is not permissible to rely upon their statement, for they have no proof except the claim of tawātur, and the claim of tawātur is the claim of one who is incapable; whoever lacks proof claims tawātur... He went on at length in this topic and concluded that the prayers are only two during the day and night: a prayer at dawn and a prayer at dusk.

He added that the Friday prayer has no specific day, and that it may be prayed on any day in which a gathering occurs. This is the summary of the topic that I read on Facebook.

In any case, the intent is not to know the author here; rather, the aim is to respond to this without regard to who said or wrote it. **Thus we say:**

Tawātur is one of the paths of necessary knowledge that does not admit doubt or skepticism. Speech such as what we have mentioned in content does not gain currency except among the ignorant who are like cattle; skepticism regarding necessities is accepted only by that degraded class.

Let us suffice, in responding to this article, by directing a number of questions—perhaps they will awaken him from his ignorance and return him to correctness. Thus we say:

- Do you know, O skeptic, that in ancient times there was a man named Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim? And that he belonged to a tribe called Quraysh? And that he was in Mecca? And that he claimed that he was the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)?
- You must say: Yes, I know that. Then by what path did you come to know this?
- Did this knowledge come to you through direct observation, or through something else? And what is that path?
- From where did you know that in history there was a man named

‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who had a wife named Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and that he had two sons from her named al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn?

- And do you know that Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought the religion of Islam and brought the Qur’an? And that the Qur’an contains many sūrahs? And that each sūrah among them contains a number of verses? From where did you obtain this knowledge?
- And in recent history, do you know that Yemen was ruled by Imām Yaḥyā, then his son Imām Aḥmad, then his son al-Badr for some days, then a coup and a revolution occurred as a result of which a man named ‘AbduAllāh al-Sallāl assumed rule over Yemen, then he was followed in rule by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Iryānī, then after him Ibrāhīm al-Ḥamdī? If you know that, from where did you obtain this knowledge?
- Indeed, do you know that among the countries of Africa there is a state called Somalia, a state called Mauritania, and a state called South Africa? If you know that, then by which path did you obtain this knowledge?

[Tawātur and Āḥād]

Question: Is it valid that a ḥadīth, in the early eras, be mutawātir and known, then in later eras become āḥād and presumptive?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that the matter involves detail: namely, that if the ḥadīth concerns a subsidiary (far‘ī) issue, then it is permissible that it be mutawātir for the people of the first era and not mutawātir for the people of the second era.

But if it concerns a doctrinal matter with which one is legally charged, and there is no path to knowledge of it except that mutawātir ḥadīth, then it is not permissible for the ḥadīth to become presumptive in later eras.

What indicates this is that if the ḥadīth were to become presumptive in a doctrinal matter, the proof of Allah against His creation in that matter would be nullified. It is known that the proofs of Allah, *Exalted is He*, are established against His servants; as evidenced by His saying: *“So that there may be no argument for people against Allah after the messengers.”* [al-Nisā’:165].

As for subsidiary matters, if the ḥadīth becomes presumptive after having been mutawātir, the proof remains established by it, and acting upon it is obligatory.

[Acting upon the Report of a Single Narrator (Khabar al-Āḥād)]

Question: The scholars of uṣūl have said: the report of a single narrator does not yield more than presumption, so it is not acted upon

except in subsidiary matters; and matters such as the obligation of prayer and the like—among the matters of widespread affliction in knowledge and practice—are not accepted therein except by a report that yields knowledge.

However, the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) sent to Yemen Imām ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal to call the people to Islam, and he commanded them that if the people embrace Islam, they are to teach them the obligation of prayer upon them, and zakāh, and the like. The people of Yemen acted upon their statements despite the fact that their reports were presumptive. What is the reason for that?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to send individuals; however, those individuals would recite the Qur’an to the people, and the people were Arabs who understood the miracle, and through it they attained knowledge of tawḥīd and the negation of any partner, justice and wisdom, the Names of Allah, *Exalted is He*, faith, the angels, the prophets and messengers, the books, the resurrection after death, the reckoning, Paradise and Hellfire, and knowledge of the obligation of prayer and zakāh, and so on.

This is in addition to the fact that the matter of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) had become well known in the lands, and his religion which he called to had become famous—that he commands five prayers in the day and night and commands such-and-such, and so on.

Accordingly, knowledge of the sum total of the religion and its fundamentals was attained by the people either from the Qur’an or from fame and tawātur. Nothing remained except detailing what was known in summary, and that is among what the report of a single narrator is accepted in.

This is in addition to the possibility of the existence of contextual indicators and corroborating signs that testify for those sent by the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), such as their recitation of the inimitable Qur’an, the appearance of piety, the marks of righteousness, and the light of Islam upon their faces, and that what they were sent with of the religion only commands good and forbids obscenity and evil, and the testimony of those who accompanied them and traveled with them, and other than that.

As for the solitary report by itself, it does not yield knowledge and certainty. This is what has appeared to me—and *Allah knows best*.

[The Evidence for Accepting the Report of a Just Person in Takfir and Tafsīq]

It is narrated that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) accepted the report of al-Walīd ibn 'Uqbah regarding a people, claiming that they had withheld the alms, so he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) prepared to raid them and punish them. Then the saying of Allah, *Exalted is He*, was revealed: "*O you who believe, if a defiantly disobedient one comes to you with news, then verify it...*" [al-Ḥujūrāt:6]. Thus he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) stopped and verified until it became clear to him that the report of al-Walīd was contrary to reality. The Qur'an came with a warning against accepting only the report of a sinful person;

1. Thus, the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) accepted the report of a single individual in takfīr and tafsīq, and the prohibition came from Allah only against accepting the report of the sinful person. This indicates that the guidance of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is to accept the report of a single just person in takfīr and tafsīq.
2. What is understood from the descriptive attribute is that the report of a believing person is accepted in takfīr and tafsīq. These, then, are two proofs for accepting the report of a just person in takfīr and tafsīq, and the situation does not require more demonstration than this.

Yes, accepting the report of a just person in takfīr and tafsīq is not from the category of imitation, but rather from the category of narration or testimony, according to a difference among the scholars of uṣūl. To my knowledge, none of them has said that it is from the category of imitation.

A Benefit in Responding to *al-Jalāl*

Al-Jalāl said in the introduction of *Ḍaw' al-Nahār*, speaking about the later Imams from among our Imams (*Peace be Upon Them*): that they neglected verifying the proof from the perspective of the chain, the text, and the indication, and discarded consideration of the possibility of reconciling conflicting evidences or the impossibility thereof, due to their being deceived by the mursal reports of unreliable transmitters.

Commentary: Al-Jalāl built this statement upon no foundation, and I do not know whether this issued from him out of ignorance or deliberate disregard. What I believe is that he sees and believes that the Sunnah upon which rulings are built is what he has crowded into his commentary, and that it alone is the source of rulings with respect to the Sunnah. Whereas our Imams—*Peace Be Upon Them*—do not give that Sunnah any consideration at all, nor do they see acting upon it as guidance, even if the two Shaykhs agreed upon its authentication.

Perhaps he was deceived by the evidences cited by the later Zaydīs, as in the takhrij of the ḥadīths of *al-Baḥr*, so he assumed that they were the source of those rulings, and that they were built upon those evidences, among which are weak and outweighed reports. Upon this deception he built his commentary *Ḍaw’ al-Nahār* upon *al-Azhār*, inclining in his ijtihād toward what appeared strong from the evidences, and falsifying by his opinion what opposed them from what the fathers and forefathers had established—according to his claim.

Thus al-Jalāl imagined that those juristic rulings contained in *al-Azhār* were built upon those ḥadīths cited by the later scholars without consideration or distinction between the sound and the weak, the preponderant and the outweighed. Hence he was ignorant, confused, and went far astray.

What clarifies this is that each of the Islamic schools has a method upon which it proceeds. The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah have a path other than the path of the Ja’farīs, and the Zaydīs have a path other than the path of those. Each group holds that the truth lies in what it narrates of ḥadīths and reports in its books.

Thus, the Ahl al-Sunnah see the truth in what they possess of ḥadīths and reports; the Zaydīs see the truth in what they possess of narrations and reports; and likewise the Imāmīs.

Therefore, the criticism of al-Jalāl in this book of his is futile. The Zaydīs are not from the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah, nor are they dependent upon their Ṣaḥīḥs and Musnads, nor do they trust their reports—whether they authenticate or weaken them, declare a narrator just or impugn him, connect or send the chain. Their reliance is upon their Imams, in narration and in understanding.

As for the statements of the Ahl al-Sunnah with which al-Jalāl stuffed *Ḍaw’ al-Nahār*—“Aḥmad said such-and-such,” “So-and-so said such-and-such,” “So-and-so connected it,” “So-and-so suspended it”—all of these statements do not weigh, in the estimation of a Zaydī, the wing of a mosquito, and it is not permissible to accept them or to rely upon them.

Does al-Jalāl not see that the chains of transmission which have filled his heart with love and infatuation are impugned with respect to integrity?!! Such as ‘Amr ibn Shu‘ayb from his father from his grandfather; and al-Zuhrī from so-and-so; and ‘Ikrimah from...; and Samurah, al-Mughīrah, and Abū Mūsā; and how many among their transmitters are like Ḥorīz ibn ‘Uthmān, who used to harbor hatred for the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (*Peace be Upon Him*) and curse him.

And the Imams of ḥadīth—such as the compilers of the Ṣaḥīḥs and Musnads—regarding their integrity, there is consideration and scrutiny

among the Zaydīs.

Perhaps someone will say: If the matter is as you have mentioned, then where is the Sunnah that the Zaydīs take and rely upon?

We say: They [the Zaydīs] have well-known and famous books among them, even if they are not as numerous as the books of the so-called Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. Among them are: *The Majmū'* of Imām Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*), the *Amālī* of his grandson Aḥmad ibn 'Īsā, *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, the *Amālī* of Abū Ṭālib, the *Amālī* of al-Murshid bi-Allāh, and many others that are musnad [with continuous chains of transmission].

If you say: Do the Zaydīs have books in al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl (impugning and accrediting narrators)?

We say: The Zaydī transmitters from whom knowledge is taken are well known among the people of learning; they have mention and history in the biographies of the Imams and in the books of authorizations (ijāzāt). Among that are the men of the chain of *al-Majmū'*. Its transmitters are accepted by the Zaydī Imams and scholars, known for integrity, and no attention is paid to what has been alleged against some of its transmitters, because that is mere falsehood, as has been verified in the introduction of *al-Rawḍ*. Moreover, it is known that they (i.e., Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah) impugn the Shī'a for being Shī'a, impugn the Mu'tazila for being Mu'tazila, and impugn everyone who differs from their school with accusations of lying and fabrication.

Furthermore, know that the Zaydīs exercise caution regarding ḥadīth. They hardly rely except upon what is received with acceptance, or what is well known, or mutawātir, or unanimously agreed upon as authentic—on the condition that it does not contradict the Noble Book. If they do not find in an issue evidence from the Book or from the Sunnah as described, they return to the statements of their Imams, acting upon the implication of the proof indicating that, namely his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: “*I am leaving among you that which, if you hold fast to it...*” the ḥadīth.

This is the very method from which al-Jalāl departed, claiming to incline toward evidence, whereas in reality he departed from evidence and inclined toward imitation (taqlīd).

This is clarified by the fact that evidence is either the Book—about which there is no dispute—or the Sunnah. If it is as we described, there is no disagreement in accepting it. But if it is otherwise—such as when transmitters and scholars differ regarding its authenticity, some authenticating and others weakening it—then here the Zaydīs refrain regarding such reports and return to the Book of Allah and the progeny of His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), acting upon the bequest of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his*

family and grant them peace) when he said: “*I am leaving among you that which, if you hold fast to it, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my progeny, the People of my Household. Indeed, the Subtle, the All-Aware, informed me that they will never separate until they return to me at the Pond.*”

And the Zaydīs had no need for that dross of statements with which al-Jalāl stuffed his commentary *Ḍaw’ al-Nahār*, such as: “Aḥmad weakened it,” “Ibn Zur‘ah considered it soft,” “in its chain is an unknown narrator,” “its chain is disputed,” “Ibn Abī Ḥātim said it is fabricated,” “it was narrated by Ibn Mājah and al-Nasā’ī,” “but it is opposed by what is in the agreed-upon collections from the ḥadīth of ‘Amr ibn Shu‘ayb from his father from his grandfather,” and the rest of his narrations from those figures—imitating them in criticizing ḥadīth and reporting their statements, imagining that this is the very essence of ijtihād.

The deluded one did not realize that by this so-called ijtihād he is submerged in the mire of imitation and the darkness of misguidance, drowned in seas of ignorance.

The reality is that al-Jalāl did not examine himself as he should have. Had he done so, he would have known that the truth at the time of disagreement lies with the progeny of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), according to the ḥadīth: “*I am leaving among you...*”

Moreover, Al-Jalāl was followed upon this path by Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Amīr and al-Shawkānī. They denounced imitation of the Imams and called for ijtihād—yet ijtihād with them, as we have said, means reliance upon al-Dāraqūṭnī, Abū Zur‘ah, Ibn Abī Shaybah, the Six [authors of the six books], and Ibn Ḥanbal, and accepting their statements regarding ḥadīth. If they say, “It is authentic,” he says, “Authentic”; and if they say, “Weak,” he says, “Weak.” The utmost of his ijtihād is to give preference among their statements when they differ.

Indeed, I wish I knew what drove al-Jalāl, al-Amīr, al-Shawkānī, and those who followed them to depart from the Zaydī school to the method of the Ḥanbalīs?! Did the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) say: “If the Ummah differs, then adhere to the Sunnah of the Ḥanbalīs; whatever they judge to be from me is from me, and whatever they do not judge to be from me is not from me”?!

Finally, we say: The issues of *al-Azhār* were built upon the evidences of the Book and the evidences of the Sunnah received with acceptance, then upon the statements of the Imams (*Peace be Upon Them*), foremost among them al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*), and likewise the Imams of the Household. Upon this al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) proceeded in his books upon which *al-Azhār* was built. If evidence from the Book and the

unanimously accepted Sunnah was lacking, he returned to the statements of the Imams.

As for solitary reports (aḥād) over which disagreement occurred and which al-Jalāl and al-Amīr relied upon, al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) did not pay them any attention. This is the method of the People of the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*).

The proof that it is not permissible to accept them is what appears in the Qurʾan regarding the prohibition of following conjecture, such as His saying: *“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge”* [al-Isrāʾ:36], and His saying: *“Indeed, conjecture avails nothing against the truth”* [al-Najm].

As for what later Imams cite from the books of the Ḥanbalīs in support of the issues of the school, that is merely to engage the opponent, silence him, and cite for the school by what the opponent himself accepts—not because those are the sources of those rulings, as al-Jalāl and those who followed his path imagine.

All praise is due to Allah who guided us to this; and we would not have been guided had Allah not guided us. And may Allah bless and grant peace upon our master Muhammad and his family.

The Ruling on Leniency Regarding Ḥadīths of Virtues

Question: We found problematic the statement of the author of *al-Fuṣūl*: “It is forbidden to be lenient regarding ḥadīths of virtues and the like without clarifying their weakness or falsity,” etc.

Answer: What has appeared to me regarding the ḥadīths you mentioned is that if a ḥadīth is as described—narrated by our ḥadīth scholars without objection, and not opposed by a decisive proof, nor by the apparent meaning of a verse or an authentic ḥadīth—then there is no harm in mentioning it for encouragement and warning, while saying: “So-and-so narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*),” or “It is narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*),” without asserting certainty.

What is such among the ḥadīths is closer to authenticity than to non-authenticity. Imām Aḥmad ibn Hāshim (*Peace be Upon Him*) defended the authenticity of the ḥadīths concerning the virtues of the Qurʾanic sūrahs, sūrah by sūrah, in the book *al-Safīnah*.

Even if the chain is weak and its transmitters are not trusted regarding integrity, the ḥadīth may have corroborating indications that distance it from fabrication and weakness—such as what you mentioned of it being from the narrations of the People of the Household and their ḥadīth scholars, like what appears in the *Amālī*, and of it being free from

contradiction with a decisive proof, and so on. In such a case, there is no cause for concern.

The ḥadīth narrated from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace):

- Either it is authentic by mutawātir transmission, or by acceptance, or by the trustworthiness of its transmitters, etc.—and there is no dispute or doubt regarding that.
- Or it is fabricated, decisively or presumptively. Such must not be relied upon in admonition or otherwise, due to the well-known ḥadīth: “*Whoever lies upon me intentionally...*”, and due to what is known of the ugliness of lying—especially lying about Allah, *Exalted is He*, or about His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).
- Or it is a ḥadīth in which the possibility of truth and the possibility of falsehood are equal; such should not be relied upon, due to His saying: “*And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge*” [al-Isrā’:36].
- Or it is like what you mentioned, in which case it is permissible, due to the presence of indications that justify narrating it.

Weakness of a ḥadīth may be from two aspects:

- From the chain of transmission.
- From the text (matn).
- Or from both together.

As for weakness from both aspects—such as when its text contradicts a decisive proof, or what is more authentic than it, or the apparent meaning of the Qur’an, etc., along with weakness in its chain due to untrustworthy transmitters—then it is absolutely impermissible to rely upon such a ḥadīth, neither in admonition nor in anything else.

If its weakness is due to the text (matn) rather than the chain (sānd), then it is obligatory upon the one who narrates or mentions it to clarify its interpretation; otherwise, it is not permissible to mention it, because its corruption outweighs its benefit.

If its weakness is due to the chain rather than the text, then it is not relied upon for establishing legal rulings. However, mentioning it in the context of supporting evidence and corroboration (shawāhid and istizhār) is, apparently, agreed to be permissible. Al-Hādī, *peace be upon him*, mentioned in *al-Muntakhab* several narrations that he used to support the permissibility of combining prayers, and he reflects the utmost caution and prudence.

Al-Hādī mentioned and narrated them only because they conformed

to sound evidence, and it is almost unanimously accepted among our Imams, *peace be upon them*, that such use is permissible without explicit clarification, due to their conformity with authentic proofs. This is indicated by their works in the jurisprudence of ḥadīth, such as *al-Tajrīd*, *al-Shifā’*, and *Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*.

The ḥadīths of encouragement and warning (targhīb wa tarhīb), about which the question raised doubts, fall under the same ruling we mentioned—if not being even more deserving of permissibility.

It is likely that the author of *al-Fuṣūl* intended the ḥadīth whose weakness dominates from both aspects (chain and text), because that is what leads to corruption and thus requires caution, lest the listener fall into false belief or corrupt practice.

As for what the questioner mentioned, no corruption results from narrating or mentioning such a ḥadīth.

Narration of Scholarly Books

Attributing books of knowledge to their authors falls into two cases:

1. If the attribution of the book to its author is well known, then there is no need for narration or audition. Examples include: *al-Aḥkām*, *al-Muntakhab*, *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, *al-Shāfī*, *al-Shifā’*, *Majmū‘ al-Imām Zayd*, *Uṣūl al-Aḥkām*, *al-I‘tiṣām*, as well as *al-Bukhārī*, *Muslim*, *al-Muwatṭa’*, *Musnad Aḥmad*, *al-Tirmidhī*, *al-Nasā’ī*, *Abū Dāwūd*, and *Ibn Mājah*. This is because widespread recognition is stronger than narration in reassuring the soul regarding the authenticity of attribution. The presumption arising from fame is stronger than that arising from narration.
2. If the attribution of the book is not well known, then it is necessary to authenticate the attribution through a continuous chain of narration back to the author. Otherwise, it is not permissible to attribute the book to anyone without evidence, and it is not permissible to say “So-and-so said” without proof, whether by fame or narration.

This concerns attributing the book to its author. As for acting upon what is in the book, there are two cases:

1. If the subject of the book is transmitted material, such as historical reports or narrations attributed to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) or scholars, then it is not permissible to act upon it or rely on it unless the attribution of the book to its author is established, either by fame or by a sound chain of narration.
2. If the subject of the book is non-transmitted, such as theology (uṣūl al-dīn), legal theory (uṣūl al-fiqh), and linguistic sciences

like grammar, morphology, rhetoric, logic, philosophy, and similar fields, then it is permissible to benefit from and examine what is contained therein.

The most widely known contemporary book of jurisprudence that extensively addresses detailed legal branches is *Sharḥ al-Azhār* by Ibn Miftāḥ. Along with its marginal notes, this book has encompassed what preceded it from works on juristic branches among the Zaydīs, which are extremely numerous, yet Ibn Miftāḥ's commentary eclipsed them and nearly caused them to be forgotten.

Among the books that preceded it are: *al-Luma'*, *al-Tadhkira*, *al-Kāfī*, *Sharḥ al-Ibāna*, *al-Burhān*, *al-Dībāj*, *al-Kawākib*, *al-Ḥafīẓ*, *al-Bustān*, *al-Bayān*, *al-Ṣa'ītārī*, *Ḥāshiyat al-Saḥūlī*, *al-Ghayth*, *Sharḥ al-Athmār*, *al-Yawāqīt*, *al-Taqrīr*, *al-Lum'a*, *al-Faṭḥ*, *al-Hidāya*, *al-Zuhūr*, *Sharḥ Margham*, *Raw'*, *al-Mudhākara*, *al-Kifāya*, *Ibn Ma'rriḥ*, and *al-Najrī*.

The Sunnah

The Zaydīs possess many well-known books in ḥadīth transmission. However, scrutiny and examination of what is narrated therein are necessary. Whatever fulfills the conditions of authenticity is acted upon. The most reliable of these is what is contained in *Majmū' al-Imām Zayd*, *peace be upon him*, due to the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt, *peace be upon them*, and all Zaydīs accepting it, along with the trustworthiness, uprightness, and well-known status of its narrators. Likewise, what is contained in *al-Aḥkām* and the other books of al-Hādī, *peace be upon him*, of ḥadīth is accepted, due to what is known of his precision and strict conditions in this field.

As for other ḥadīths, the condition for acting upon them, according to us, is that their narrators be trustworthy, upright, and precise, that they do not contradict rational proofs, the Book of Allah Almighty, or what the Imams of the Zaydīs have unanimously deemed authentic.

As for ḥadīths narrated in the books of Ahl al-Sunnah or others, what is accepted from them is that which agrees with what the Zaydīs possess, or that which has multiple routes among them, with numerous chains of transmission, and does not contradict what is authentic according to us—then it is acted upon.

[Discourse on What Is Acted Upon from Hadith]

That which I incline to, in my opinion, regarding acting upon hadith:

- 1- The primary relied-upon basis is that which is narrated by the Imams of the Zaydiyya and the trustworthy transmitters among their hadith scholars, such as the hadiths of *Majmū' al-Imām Zayd* (*Peace be Upon Him*), and that which Imam al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) mentioned of hadith in his well-known books, which is relied

upon, and likewise that whose chain is sound from the *Amālī* of Aḥmad ibn ‘Īsā (*Peace be Upon Him*), from *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd*, from the *Amālī* of Abū Ṭālib and the *Amālī* of al-Murshid bi-llāh, from *Sharḥ al-Aḥkām*, and from other works.

This material was compiled by the father, the eminent scholar Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-‘Ajrī, in a book he named *al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtār*, which has not been printed until now. It was abridged by the father, the eminent scholar Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Ḥūthī, into a book which is now printed.

2- The books of the people of hadith: that which is relied upon from their hadiths and narrations, in my view, is as follows:

- a- The hadith whose transmission routes and chains are numerous, whose text does not contradict the Qur’an, nor the narrations of the Zaydiyya, and does not oppose the doctrines of the Imams of the Zaydiyya—such a hadith is acted upon, due to its widespread fame, not due to the trustworthiness of the men of its chain according to them.
- b- From their hadiths, those that agree in meaning with the narrations of the Zaydiyya are accepted, and those that contradict the narrations of the Zaydiyya are not accepted.

Yes, if al-Hādī stated an opinion in rulings, or Imam Zayd, and neither of them mentioned the basis for that opinion, then we find in the books of the hadith scholars narrated hadiths that indicate what al-Hādī or Imam Zayd said—does that indicate the authenticity of those hadiths or not?

We can say: it should not be asserted decisively that such hadiths are authentic such that we make them a basis upon which we arrange legal rulings; however, we may cite them as evidence supporting the correctness of the opinion of al-Hādī or Zayd (*Peace be Upon Them*).

We say this because al-Hādī and Zayd (*Peace be Upon Them*) may each have derived the ruling they adopted from a Qur’anic proof or a Prophetic hadith, and examples of this are many in legal rulings. An example is his statement (*Peace be Upon Him*) regarding one who divorces his wife three times in a single utterance—that it is counted as one divorce; for he relied in that upon the statement of *the Exalted: “Divorce is twice ...”* [al-Baqarah:229], and he did not rely upon the narrations reported on that matter except as corroboration.

Yes, there may come in legal rulings—such as the description of the Prayer of Fear—and likewise in *Majmū‘ al-Imām Zayd*, matters for which there is no scope for rational inference without mention of a basis; then we find in the narrations of the hadith scholars reports concerning the Prayer of Fear in that very description which al-Hādī mentioned. In such

a case, we may say the hadith is authentic according to al-Hādī.

And the authenticity of that hadith according to al-Hādī is only due to its widespread fame, not due to the trustworthiness of the transmitters of the hadith; for al-Hādī does not give consideration to the transmitters of the hadith scholars, nor does he rely upon them.

3- We may benefit from the narrations of the hadith scholars in the chapter of preference (tarjīḥ) when the narrations of the Zaydiyya conflict, such that the jurist makes what agrees with one of the two conflicting positions from the narrations of the hadith scholars a means for preferring it from the aspect of the chain.

4- We benefit from the narrations of the hadith scholars in compelling an opponent to accept the correctness of what we hold in subsidiary and foundational disputed issues, according to those among them who deem solitary hadith to be a proof—and they are the Ḥashwiyya.

Authorization (Ijāzah)

Question: We hear that so-and-so was granted authorization by such-and-such a scholar. What does authorization mean? Is it like a testimony that the one authorized is qualified to issue legal verdicts, or does it have another meaning?

Answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success:

Authorization is one of the methods of transmission. It is not permissible for anyone to narrate from a scholar and report from him unless he has heard from him; in that case, it is permissible for him to report from him and narrate what he heard from him. If he did not hear from him, it is not permissible for him to say, “So-and-so said such-and-such,” unless the scholar permitted him to report from him what is contained in such-and-such a book. This permission is called authorization.

Yes, there are well-known books that do not require hearing or authorization, such as *Kitāb al-Aḥkām* and *al-Muntakhab* of al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*). They have reached such a level of fame that they nearly became among the mutawātir works. Thus, whatever books are of this status, it is permissible to narrate them from their author without authorization and without mentioning a chain of transmission.

[A Benefit Regarding Matters of Religion]

From the words of Mūsā ibn Ja‘far, as found in *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*:

All matters of religion are four:

A matter in which there is no disagreement, and that is the consensus of the Ummah upon necessity.

And a matter that admits doubt and denial; its path is to seek clarification from those who claim it, with a proof from the Book of Allah whose interpretation is unanimously agreed upon, or a Sunnah unanimously agreed upon with no disagreement in it, or an analogy whose justice the intellects recognize, and in which there is no room for doubt or denial.

Thus, this is what is presented for examining a matter of religion: whatever proof thereof is established for you, you adopt it; and whatever correctness thereof is obscure to you, you reject it. Whoever brings one of these three¹, then it is the conclusive proof which Allah clarified in His statement to His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"Say: To Allah belongs the conclusive proof; and had He willed, He would have guided you all."* [al-An'ām].

A Benefit (Regarding Consensus)

It is said: Establishing consensus in reality is something that can hardly be achieved, due to the dispersion of scholars and their large numbers; thus, consensus is nothing but a name without a referent, and an imagined matter with no reality.

We say: The books of the Islamic sects are available, and in them are accounts of the doctrines of the mujtahids of the earlier and later generations from the People of the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) and others; accordingly, consensuses can be known through these books.

If it is said: It is possible that there were mujtahids whose doctrines were not recorded—either due to their lack of fame, or due to the absence of knowledge of their doctrines, or for other reasons.

We say: It suffices, for the establishment of consensus, the agreement of those Imams and mujtahids whose statements and ijtihād became manifest. As for one whose doctrine is not known for one reason or another, then his doctrine is for himself alone; his existence is like his non-existence, and the proof of Allah stands by those who proclaim the truth and spread it among the people.

If it is said: It is possible that the truth is with those whose doctrines were not known.

We say: If that were the case, then the truth would be lost and the proof of Allah would be nullified—and that is not permissible. Indeed, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

1- The three are: a proof from the Book of Allah..., or a Sunnah unanimously agreed upon..., or an analogy whose justice the intellects recognize...; and the first is the consensus of the Ummah. These are what he intended by his statement: "The matters of religion are four." And Allah knows best. (Editor).

said: “*There will not cease to be a group from my Ummah manifest upon the truth ...*” the hadith.

Furthermore, the doctrines of the Muslims have become established and settled. The Shāfi‘īs have a well-known school which their mujtahids do not contradict, and likewise the Ḥanafīs, the Mālikīs, and the Ḥanbalīs. The Imāmī Shi‘a have doctrines mentioned in their books which can be consulted with ease. The Zaydiyya have a known doctrine, and their individual scholars have recorded doctrines that can be identified. The Ṣāḥiriyya and those who followed their path have documented doctrines which a mujtahid can easily know when books are available.

Based on what we have mentioned, it is not permissible for a mujtahid to oppose what has appeared of agreement and consensus. From here, the scholars of legal theory mention among the conditions of ijtihād the knowledge of issues of consensus.

Based on what we have mentioned, the meaning of what the scholars of legal theory stated regarding the reality of consensus—that it is the agreement of the mujtahids of the Ummah of Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in an era ... etc.—should be understood as the agreement of those whose doctrine is known and whose ijtihād is known. As for the obscure individual who is not given consideration, or the one who conceals his doctrine, there is no weight to him; they are not witnesses over the people, as we have stated earlier. From here, Allah the Exalted cursed the concealers of knowledge and guidance in His Noble Book, saying: *“Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear to the people in the Book—those are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse, except those who repent and rectify and make clear; those I will accept their repentance, and I am the Ever-Returning, the Most Merciful.”* [al-Baqarah].

Yes, the scholars of jurisprudence frequently mention inference by consensus and agreement in their books, such as Imam al-Mahdī and others. In my view, what they intend is what we have mentioned.

If it is said: This claim of yours has not been claimed by anyone among the people of knowledge, nor mentioned by the scholars of legal theory; therefore, it is a rejected claim due to its oddity.

We say: The very state of affairs of the Imams of jurisprudence and the transmitters of doctrines confirms what we have mentioned and leads to it. The evidence for what we say is their frequent inference by consensus and agreement. We almost assert with certainty that what they intend is the agreement and consensus of those we have mentioned—no others. Far be it from them to intend the consensus of those whose doctrines are known and those whose doctrines are

unknown, of those whose doctrines were transmitted and those whose doctrines were not transmitted.

Yes, just as they expressed doubt regarding the establishment of consensus, as we mentioned earlier, they also expressed doubt regarding the proofs indicating the authority of consensus, as is mentioned in the marginal notes of *Sharḥ al-Ghāyah*.

This is a general answer to those doubts. We say—and by Allah is success:

Allah the Exalted said: *“Today I have perfected for you your religion”* [al-Mā'idah:3]. Religion is the proof of Allah over His creation. This proof has remained in every era until today, and it will continue as Allah wills. The scholars of the Ummah in every era are the bearers of this perfected religion and its interpreters. If they agree upon a specific ruling in an issue and concur that it is the ruling of Allah, then what they ruled and agreed upon is truly the ruling of Allah. Otherwise, the proof of Allah in that issue would be nullified, the truth would be lost, and that perfection which Allah spoke of would be diminished.

If it is said: What you mentioned does not necessarily follow, for they may agree upon an error while a proof exists indicating the opposite of what they agreed upon.

We say: This existing proof which they agreed against must be either from the Book, or the Sunnah, or analogy. If it is from analogy, and they did not arrive at the unifying effective cause, then there is no proof against them in that. It is not permissible that later mujtahids arrive at the effective cause of the ruling, because that would entail a deficiency in the religion in earlier eras.

If the proof they agreed against is from the Sunnah, then either that was from them intentionally, or from complete ignorance of it, or due to their belief in its weakness or falsity, or due to the weakness of their understanding in deriving the ruling from it, or due to another proof that outweighed it in their view.

As for abandoning it intentionally, that is inconceivable, and I do not think anyone would assume or posit it, in light of what has come regarding the Ummah in general, such as His statement, the Exalted: *“You are the best Ummah brought forth for mankind”* [Āl 'Imrān:110], and His statement, the Exalted: *“And thus We have made you a middle Ummah”* [al-Baqarah:143], and his (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) saying: *“My Ummah will not agree upon misguidance,”* and many others.

If they abandoned acting upon the Sunnah due to ignorance of it—such that had they known it they would not have opposed it—this is an assumption extremely far-fetched. Accordingly, it would follow that the

proof of Allah would not be established against them in that issue, along with the other implications we previously mentioned. Moreover, from where would the people of ijtihād in later times come to know that Sunnah?

If that were due to a deficiency in their understanding, then that is not permissible from Allah, for it would be charging with what is beyond capacity.

If what they opposed was the Book, then that would only be conceivable by assuming a deficiency in understanding—and therein is what has already been stated.

Thus, if that was due to a proof that outweighed it in their view, then that proof is the one established against them, and there is no proof against them other than it.

It may be said: It is permissible for the Ummah to err in a ruling or rulings, and it is not taken to task for that, due to His statement, *the Exalted*: “*There is no blame upon you for that in which you erred, but only for what your hearts intended.*” [al-Aḥzāb].

We say: That allowance is false, because of what it leads to of doubt concerning the mutawātir reports. Based on that, it would be permissible that the Ummah is in error in its transmission of the details of the prayers, the zakāh, the ḥajj, and other matters.

Analogy (Qiyās)

In *al-I’tiṣām*, the obligation of acting upon analogy is argued from the statement of *the Exalted*: “*And whatever you differ over in anything—its judgment is to Allah.*” [al-Shūrā:10], and His statement, *the Exalted*: “*And if you dispute over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger.*” [al-Nisā’: 59]. It is also argued from the hadith of the *Majmū’*: “If that is not found in the Book of Allah, nor in the Sunnah, nor in what the righteous have agreed upon, the Imam exerts his ijtihād therein, sparing no effort in precaution, and considers and compares matters with one another; then, when the truth becomes clear to him, he carries it out ...” the hadith. And from the hadith of Mu’ādh, in which it is stated: “... I exert my opinion, sparing no effort,” then he struck his chest. It was mentioned that it is narrated in the books of the Imams of hadith.

I say: The argument for the obligation of acting upon analogy, and that it is a proof which must be acted upon, is not sufficient, because the issue is definitive and analogy is one of the foundations of legal rulings. We only said it is not sufficient because those evidences that were mentioned are not clear in what is intended—except for the hadith of the *Majmū’*, for it is clear, though it is solitary.

That which indicates the consideration of analogy as a proof is reason.

For reason, by its innate disposition, proceeds to attach the like to its like due to sharing the same effective cause. Do you not see that if a physician says to a patient, “Do not eat grapes because of their sweetness,” the patient will avoid sweets and the like of what contains sweetness? And the like of this.

Allah *the Exalted* has reasoned by analogy in the Qur’an, such as His statement, *the Exalted*: “... Say: He will give them life Who produced them the first time ...” [Yā-Sīn:79]; “... Thus is the resurrection.” [Fāṭir:9]; and “So when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells and produces from every beautiful pair. That is because Allah is the Truth, and that He gives life to the dead, and that He is over all things Powerful.” [al-Ḥajj:5-6].

Allah *the Exalted* has also related in His Book the accounts of the deniers and how their end was, and He commanded taking admonition from that. In this is the meaning of analogy; for the meaning is: Do not act like their deeds, lest what befell them befall you.

On the Authoritativeness of Analogy

His statement, *the Exalted*: “Allah has not placed for any man two hearts within him; nor has He made your wives whom you declare unlawful by *ḡihār* your mothers; nor has He made your adopted sons your sons. That is your saying with your mouths, while Allah speaks the truth and He guides to the way.” [al-Aḥzāb]. In this verse there is what supports the view of the authoritativeness of analogy. That is because Allah *the Exalted* brought this verse in the context of invalidating adoption, so He mentioned that the wife does not become a mother by mere utterance of the tongue, and likewise the adopted son does not become a son by mere utterance of the tongue.

A Benefit in Establishing Analogy

In the hadith of ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), when he debated the Anṣār regarding the obligation of ritual bathing when the two circumcised parts meet, whether ejaculation occurred or not, after his statement: “Does it necessitate the prescribed punishment? Does it necessitate the dowry?” They said in all of that: “Yes.” He said: “Then why is it that what necessitates the prescribed punishment and the dowry does not necessitate the water (*ghusl*)?!”

In this there is evidence for the principle of analogy and that it is a legal proof, because the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) analogized the obligation of ritual bathing to two foundational cases.

If it is said: This is not from the chapter of analogy, for what is customary in analogy is to establish the same ruling of the original case for the subsidiary case; whereas here the ruling is different—the ruling of the original is the obligation of the prescribed punishment or the dowry, and in the subsidiary case the obligation of ritual bathing.

We say: This type of analogy is what is called *qiyās al-awlā* (analogy of priority), and it is a type of analogy. Thus, the hadith then indicates the principle of analogy and that it is a path to establishing legal rulings.

A Benefit for Definition

“Contrary to the principles”: an expression referring to a specification of the text.

“Contrary to the analogy of the principles”: an expression referring to what excludes some subsidiary cases from being attached to the principles.

A Benefit: (Definition of the Obligatoriness of the Obligatory and the Ugliness of the Ugly)

In *al-Majmū‘ al-Manṣūrī*: The definition of the obligatoriness of the obligatory and the ugliness of the ugly is the certainty of commanding the good and forbidding the evil; because the legally responsible person is not the one who makes something obligatory nor the one who deems it ugly. So if he defines about the the obligated or ugly from Allah, *Glorified be He*, and no objection is raised, then he has indeed commanded and prohibited on behalf of Allah. End.

[Explicit Meaning (Manṭūq), Implicit Meaning (Mafhūm), and the Remaining Discussions Related to Words]

Discussions on Verbal Evidence from the Book and the Sunnah

- 1- **Text (Naṣṣ):** That the evidence contains a word which bears only one meaning.
- 2- **Apparent Meaning (Ẓāhir):** That the evidence contains a word which bears two meanings, one of which is preponderant.

Verbal Evidence

It is divided into:

- 1- Explicit meaning (Manṭūq).
- 2- Implicit meaning (Mafhūm).
 - a- Implicit meaning of agreement (Mafhūm al-Muwāfaqa): priority, equality.
 - b- Implicit meaning of opposition (Mafhūm al-Mukhālafa): six types.

And the explicit meaning (Manṭūq) is divided into:

- a- Text (Naṣṣ): that which indicates a meaning that admits no other.
- b- Apparent (Ẓāhir): that which indicates a meaning that readily comes to mind, while admitting another meaning that does not readily come to mind.

And the text (Naṣṣ) is divided into:

- Explicit (Ṣarīḥ), that is by correspondence (muṭābaqa) or inclusion (taḍammun).
- Non-explicit, but by implication (iltizām), and that is of three kinds:
 - 1- That which indicates by necessity (iqtidā').
 - 2- That which indicates by allusion (īmā').
 - 3- That which indicates by indication (ishāra).

- The indication of metaphor and metonymy is from the apparent meanings.

- The indication of the general term is disputed: it is said to be from the apparent, and it is said to be from the text.

- The text is stronger than the apparent; the explicit meaning is stronger than the implicit; the explicit is stronger than the non-explicit; the implicit meanings vary in strength, and likewise the apparent meanings.

- They have said: the indication of the apparent is probabilistic, yet acting upon it is a definitive obligation.

- **Thus**, the interpreted (mu'awwal) is a counterpart of the text and the apparent; and interpretation is to carry the word to the distant meaning rather than its apparent, near meaning—and this is not permissible except with evidence.

[There Is No Derivation Without Knowledge of the Arabic Language]

Allah *the Exalted* revealed the Qur'an in the language of the Arabs, and the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is from the very core of the Arabs, and he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) spread his message in the language of the Arabs. Therefore, if a person wishes to know the legal rulings by himself from the Book and the Sunnah, he must know the Arabic language.

Knowing it today is not achieved except through study and learning of the linguistic sciences: grammar and morphology, sections of the sciences of rhetoric, and vocabulary.

When a person knows that and masters what is there, let him know that there are linguistic chapters beyond what has preceded that must be known due to their strong connection to extracting legal rulings. Legal rulings are not extracted as they ought to be except by realizing their knowledge.

[Information Related to the Subject of This Science]

- If a speaker from the people of language says: "Honor Zayd," while you know that this Zayd is one of the scholars; and if another says: "Honor the scholars," while Zayd is one of them—then both statements indicate a request to honor Zayd. However, the first example is stronger in indicating honoring Zayd than the second, because it indicates by text and specification the honoring of a specific person by name. As for the second example, although it indicates honoring Zayd, its indication is not by text and specification, but rather by his inclusion under the comprehensiveness indicated by the word "the scholars," which includes Zayd and others among the scholars. By this you know that the indication of some words of the language is stronger than that of others.
- If a speaker from the people of language says: "Honor the scholars," it indicates two meanings, one of which is stronger and clearer than the other:
 - 1- It indicates the obligation of honoring the scholars; this meaning is indicated by the word in its explicit sense.
 - 2- It indicates leaving the honoring of the ignorant; this meaning

is indicated by the word by its implicit sense.

Another example: Allah *the Exalted* said: *"And do not kill game while you are in a state of consecration."* [al-Mā'idah:95]. It indicates two meanings:

- 1- The prohibition of the one in a state of consecration killing game; this is indicated by the word in its explicit sense.
 - 2- The permissibility of killing game for one not in a state of consecration; this is indicated by the word by its implicit sense.
- And the first meaning is stronger than the second.

[Acting Upon the Indication of Allusion]

Issue: Acting upon the indication of allusion is obligatory according to the scholars, and the evidence for its obligation is that the Qur'an is a discourse from Allah, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. He, *the Exalted*, knows what His discourse yields of primary meanings and necessary meanings. If Allah is All-Knowing and All-Wise, and His discourse is precise, then what the discourse yields of primary and subsidiary meanings must be intended by the Wise; otherwise, His discourse would cease to be precise.

Immediacy and Delay

The school holds that unrestricted obligations are to be fulfilled immediately. The evidence for that is His statement, *the Exalted*: *"Hasten to forgiveness from your Lord."* [Āl 'Imrān:133]; *"So race to good deeds."* [al-Mā'idah:48]; *"What is wrong with you that when it is said to you, 'Go forth in the path of Allah,' you cling heavily to the earth?"* [al-Tawbah:38].

The proponents of delay said: Allah *the Exalted* revealed the obligation of ḥajj, yet the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did not perform ḥajj until several years later.

It was answered that the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) delay was not without an excuse, and the excuse was intercalation (naṣī'); for they used to perform ḥajj outside its proper time.

Moreover, the polytheists were in control of Mecca and of all the sacred sites, and the idols were upon the Ka'bah, inside it, around it, and upon Ṣafā and Marwah.

The General ('Āmm)

1 – Examples from the Qur'an of some general expressions:

- **"All (kull)":** *"Every soul shall taste death"* [al-Anbiyā':35].
- **The conditional "whoever (man)":** *"Whoever comes with a good deed shall have ten times the like thereof"* [al-An'ām:160], and *"Whoever does righteousness, it is for himself"* [Fuṣṣilat:46].

- **The generic definite article (al-):** *“Indeed, mankind is surely in loss”* [al-‘Aṣr].
- **The relative “who (man)”**, which is general with respect to all rational beings: *“There is none in the heavens and the earth but that he comes to the Most Merciful as a servant”* [Maryam].
- **The relative “what (mā)”**, which is general for rational and non-rational beings alike: *“And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth”* [al-Najm:31].
- **The conditional “what (mā)”**: *“Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it”* [al-Ḥashr:7].
- **“Wherever (aynā mā, ḥaythu mā)”**, which are general with respect to place, and so on.

It is predominant that every general expression in the Book and the Sunnah has an exceptional case.

[The Need for One Who Clarifies the Verses of the Qur’an]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, says: *“And We revealed to you the Reminder so that you may clarify to the people what has been sent down to them ...”* [al-Nahl:44]. This verse may indicate that the Qur’an requires one who clarifies the intended meanings and the intended rulings, and that what it contains is not fully understood without a clarifier.

The Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to clarify the Qur’anic rulings. Among his well-known statements (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to his Companions are: *“Pray as you have seen me pray”*, and *“Take from me your rites (of ḥajj)”*.

Allah, *Mighty and Majestic*, says: *“We have neglected nothing in the Book”* [al-An‘ām:38] and similar this verse.

The meaning indicates—*Allah knows best*—that the Noble Qur’an encompasses all that the Ummah needs in matters of the knowledge of tawḥīd, jurisprudence, and other Islamic sciences.

If it is said: The manner of performing the prayers, their pillars, and their obligations were not known from the Qur’an, but rather were known from the Sunnah of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

We respond: The command to establish prayer came in the Qur’an in a general form, and the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) clarified the details of that general command through his statements and actions. However, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) took that detailed clarification and derived it from the Noble Qur’an itself. This is evident in such verses as:

"O you who believe, bow and prostrate" [al-Ḥajj:77]. And: "And stand before Allah devoutly" [al-Baqarah]. And: "So recite what is easy from the Qur'an" [al-Muzzammil:20]. And: "And say: Praise be to Allah, who has not taken a son, and who has no partner in sovereignty, nor has He any protector out of weakness; and magnify Him with great magnification" [al-Isrā']. Preceding this verse is His saying: "And do not recite your prayer loudly, nor silently, but seek a way between that" [al-Isrā'].

Likewise His saying: *"Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High" (al-A'lā). And His saying: "So glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most Great" [al-Raḥmān]. And His saying: "Wherever you may be, turn your faces toward it" [al-Baqarah:144].*

The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) also knew the times of prayer from such verses as: *"Establish prayer at the decline of the sun until the darkness of the night, and the recitation of dawn ..." [al-Isrā':78]. And: "And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and in the early hours of the night" [Hūd:114].* The verses in the Qur'an that mention the details of prayer are many.

Allah, *Exalted*, commanded in the Qur'an the utterance of takbīr, tasbīḥ, and taḥmīd, recitation, bowing and prostration, standing and sitting, audible and silent recitation, facing the qiblah, and the purity of clothing, body, and place, and so on.

Allah, *Blessed and Exalted*, says: *"You are the best nation brought forth for mankind: you enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in Allah ..." [Āl 'Imrān: 110].* This verse indicates that the Ummah of Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), characterized by these three qualities, is the best of nations, and thus superior to the nation of the Children of Israel.

It attained this merit over other nations by establishing the enjoining of what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.

Its establishment of these duties is evidence of strength of intellect, clarity of insight, and firmness of resolve, and so on.

Whoever among the Ummah of Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) abandons carrying this trust has no share in the mentioned excellence and no portion of it. Rather, he is among the worst of creation.

The address in this verse is to all Muslims; however, what is intended and meant are those among them who actually establish enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah, to the exclusion of others.

Abrogation

Knowing the Abrogating and the Abrogated

Question: How can we know the abrogating text from the abrogated one if there is no explicit indication of it in a text from the Book, the Sunnah, or consensus, and the date of its revelation is not known? Is it by following the scholars who have authored works on the subject, or by what means?

Answer: If the matter is as described, then what is required with speculative evidences is to refer to contextual indicators (qarā'in). Conflicting evidences are, in most cases, not devoid of such indicators. An example of this is the hadith: *"Is there ablution (wuḍū') due to touching the private part?"* For within the question there is some indication that the questioner had heard among the people that ablution is required from touching the private part.

If neither of the two indicators contains anything that points to which is earlier or later, then what appears to me is that the examiner must take the stronger of the two indicators. The aspects of preponderance are many, among them the statement of scholars: this is abrogating, and that is abrogated.

Ijtihād

Ijtihād and Taqlīd

The field in which the perspectives of the mujtahids roam to discover a legal ruling is a limited field surrounded by strong barriers that do not permit the mujtahid to prevail them.

Despite the narrowness of the field of ijtihād, they have unanimously agreed that ijtihād is not permissible except in one case, namely: when, in reality, a new matter or a new incident occurs that has not been mentioned in the verses of the Qur'an, and nothing has been narrated concerning it from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), nor from the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Alī, nor from the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt. In that case, it becomes obligatory upon the scholars of the Muslims to exert ijtihād to extract a ruling for it.

An example of this is what has been established today: that there are residential areas in the northern hemisphere around the Arctic Circle, and likewise around the Antarctic Circle, where the night in some seasons of the year is twenty-three hours and the day is one hour; and conversely, the day may be twenty-three hours and the night one hour or less than one hour. In such regions, the Muslim needs to know what is obligatory upon him regarding prayer and fasting.

Furthermore, Allah the Exalted has mentioned ijtihād in the Noble Qur'an in His saying: *"And David and Solomon, when they judged concerning the field when the sheep of a people strayed therein by night, and We were Witnesses to their judgment. So We gave Solomon understanding of it; and to each We gave judgment and knowledge."* [Al-

Anbiyā':79] As you see in this verse, David (*peace be upon him*) judged with one ruling, and Solomon (*peace be upon him*) judged with another ruling different from that of David. Allah *the Exalted* supported the ruling of Solomon (*peace be upon him*) without declaring David (*peace be upon him*) to be in error; rather, He praised them both, saying: "*And to each We gave judgment and knowledge.*" There is no doubt and no uncertainty that they both (*peace be upon them*) exercised *ijtihād* in a matter concerning which no ruling had been revealed from Allah *the Exalted*; for had a ruling been revealed from Allah regarding it, they would not have differed from it.

The Importance of the Sciences of Ma'ānī and Bayān for Ijtihād

Question: Are the sciences of Ma'ānī and Bayān necessary for *ijtihād*? Clarify this for us, even with some examples, may Allah reward you well.

Answer: What is required for *ijtihād* is mentioned in the principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*): such as commands and prohibitions, literal and metaphorical usage, general and specific expressions, and so on. Most chapters of *uṣūl* are linguistic, and in *uṣūl al-fiqh* they have laid down the fundamentals that the *mujtahid* must necessarily know.

What I see is that, even though they have placed within it everything the *mujtahid* needs, full comprehension of what it contains, as it ought to be understood, is not achieved except through firm grounding in the sciences of the Arabic language.

That is because the Qur'an and the Sunnah are Arabic, and proper knowledge of what is intended cannot be attained except by one who is knowledgeable in the language. For the structures of Arabic speech contain secrets that none can grasp except one firmly grounded in the sciences of the Arabic language, including the sciences of Ma'ānī and Bayān.

Nothing caused the literalists to fall into adhering strictly to outward meanings except their ignorance of the secrets of the eloquence of the Arabic language.

In summary: the Qur'an and the Sunnah came in the language of the Arabs, and understanding what is intended by them depends upon knowing the Arabic language in all its aspects: vocabulary, grammar, and rhetoric.

[The Permissibility of Disagreement in Subsidiary Ijtihād-Based Issues]

Question: What is the evidence that disagreement in subsidiary *ijtihād*-based issues is permissible?

Answer: The evidence for that is the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: "*Allah does not burden any soul except with what it can bear.*" [Al-Baqarah:286] If

a mujtahid scholar researches, exhausts his examination and reflection, and his consideration and ijtihād lead him to a ruling, while another mujtahid's ijtihād in the same issue leads him to a ruling contrary to that of the first mujtahid, then it is obligatory upon each of them to state what his consideration and ijtihād have led him to.

The error of one of them in reaching the correct ruling is an excused error, as indicated by the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: "*And there is no blame upon you for that in which you have erred, but only for what your hearts intended.*" [Al-Aḥzāb:5]

If it is said: Is it permissible for someone to claim that those who differ must abandon ijtihād in disputed issues and turn away from their ijtihād-based schools, given what is known of Allah's condemnation of disagreement and those who differ in the Noble Qur'an, and given what is known that Allah *the Exalted* has perfected His religion in His Noble Book and upon the tongue of His trustworthy Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)? And if Allah the Exalted had obligated His servants with the rulings that the mujtahids exerted themselves to obtain and over which disagreement occurred, He would have clarified them in His Book or upon the tongue of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), as He clarified other subsidiary rulings explained in the Book or in the Sunnah?

It is said in reply — and from Allah is success — that what has been mentioned is not permissible. For events occur that necessitate ijtihād to obtain rulings for them.

An example of this is what occurred at the end of the days of the Companions: the birth of a child who possessed a sexual organ like that of a male and a sexual organ like that of a female, without any indicator that would give preference to his masculinity or femininity. There is no clarification in the Book of Allah *the Exalted* nor in the Sunnah of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding what share of inheritance this newborn deserves. If we were to say that ijtihād should be abandoned regarding the ruling of this case and refrain from addressing it, we would deprive him of inheritance — and it is not permissible to deprive the child of the deceased of inheritance.

[Is the Ignorant Imitator of Those Who Are in Error Excused?]

Question: Is the ignorant person who follows, in his religion, scholars who are in error — whether from the Companions or others — excused due to his good intention and his seeking, by following them, the pleasure and forgiveness of Allah, or is he not excused?

Answer — and from Allah is success: One deeply immersed in common ignorance may be excused, as well as the common people of the

non-Arabs who are unable to understand the details of the Sharī'ah. Whoever is like that, then general faith is sufficient for him, and following the one whose perfection he deems most likely is sufficient.

The evidence for this is the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: "*Allah does not burden any soul except with what it can bear.*" [Al-Baqarah:286] As for the common person who is aware of disagreements and possesses the ability to know the truth and those who are upon it, he is not excused before Allah.

[The Disagreement of Judges That Was Condemned by the Commander of the Faithful (Peace be Upon Him)]

A question was asked concerning the criticism of the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Alī (Peace be Upon Him) toward governors, where judges rule in a single case with different judgments, yet the governor approves all of them, while their God is One, their Prophet is one, and their Book is one. *The questioner said*: Is this not a denunciation of the saying: "Every mujtahid is correct"?

The answer was: The Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Alī (Peace be Upon Him) denounced the judges for each of them issuing a judgment in the case based on his bare personal opinion, not grounded in what is indicated by the Book and the Sunnah. He also denounced the governor for approving all of them despite the divergence of their judgments in a single case.

This denunciation by Imam 'Alī (Peace be Upon Him) was appropriate and directed at those deserving of it. For the judges were not qualified for judging due to their ignorance of it, and the governor was no better than them in this matter; rather, he shared with them in ignorance and lack of knowledge of decisive judgment. For had the judges and their governor been among those knowledgeable in judging, they would have reconsidered the case, reviewed the evidences relied upon by each judge, and the governor would have examined them in that regard until the stronger evidence became clear and the correct ruling became apparent to all. However, since the governor and the judges were not among those knowledgeable in judging, the governor did not denounce them, nor did some of them denounce others.

As for the people of knowledge and verification, they do denounce one another in the issues in which they differ, in ancient times and modern times alike. They reconsider such issues, review the evidences from the Book, the Sunnah, and analogy, and what is attached to that of aspects of preponderance.

Accordingly, the denunciation of Imam 'Alī (Peace be Upon Him) contains nothing that contradicts the statement that every mujtahid is correct.

- What supports what we have mentioned — that what is intended by the words of Imam ‘Alī (Peace be Upon Him) is the denunciation of the ignorance of the judges and their governor regarding judging — is what has been narrated in the biography of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, concerning errors in his judgments that he issued based on his bare opinion, without relying upon a legal proof. The Companions would review many of his judgments, mention the evidence to him, and he would retract. Imam ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) would also review his judgments, mention the evidence to him, and he would retract.

A woman once reviewed him in a case, so he retracted and said: “All people are more knowledgeable than ‘Umar, even the secluded women in their houses.” Among his well-known statements in this regard is: “Were it not for ‘Alī, ‘Umar would have perished.” And ‘Uthmān was no better than ‘Umar in knowledge of judging.

- For in this there is evidence for what we have stated: that the denunciation of Imam ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) was only for what we have mentioned regarding the ignorance of the governor and the judges.

- As for Abū Bakr, the days of his governance were not long; nevertheless, he was no better than the two men in knowledge of judging. The evidence for that is what has been narrated in the biography of Abū Bakr regarding his statements about al-kalālah, the inheritance of the grandfather, and other matters.

In summary, the three were not among those knowledgeable in judging. Some of them used to say, acknowledging his ignorance: “Bargaining in the markets distracted me from acquiring knowledge.” This is the meaning of the narration¹. By that he meant that his pursuit of profit through buying and selling in the markets of Madinah distracted him from accompanying the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and listening to his words. Thus, he missed the knowledge and wisdom that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to impart to his companions and associates.

Taqlīd

Taqlīd has a linguistic meaning and a legal meaning. Legal taqlīd is of two types:

1. Taqlīd in doctrinal beliefs: the principles of religion and the principles of jurisprudence.
2. Taqlīd in subsidiary practical legal rulings.

1- Its wording, as recorded in al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth no. (2062) and no. (7353): “*Bargaining in the markets distracted me.*”

The first type is prohibited, and the second type is not prohibited.

The reality of taqlīd is: following the statement, action, or school of another without proof.

Or you may say: Taqlīd is reliance upon the statements of a mujtahid scholar or his religious opinions devoid of evidences, based solely on having good opinion of him and believing in his trustworthiness.

We have said that the first type of taqlīd is prohibited — namely, taqlīd in the principles and doctrinal beliefs,

- because the attainment of reassurance of the heart regarding the soundness of beliefs depends upon knowledge of their soundness. Knowledge is not attained through taqlīd, for the utmost that taqlīd yields and produces is conjecture, not knowledge.

- It is well known that Allah *the Exalted* has demanded knowledge from His accountable servants, saying: *“So know that there is no god except Allah.”* [Muḥammad:19] He forbade following conjecture, condemned those who rely on conjecture and those who imitate blindly, and commanded reflection and contemplation upon His signs spread throughout the universe — a general command for all accountable servants. Allah *the Exalted* also denounced those who turn away from reflection and contemplation, saying: *“Do they not look at the camel — how it was created?”* [Al-Ghāshiyah:17] and: *“Say: Look at what is in the heavens and the earth...”* [Yūnus]

- And because the imitator in principles and doctrinal beliefs is in great danger, insofar as error and correctness are both possible in his imitation. We have seen Allah *the Exalted* condemn those who fell into misguidance through taqlīd in many verses, such as His saying: *“...and of the burdens of those whom they mislead without knowledge.”* [An-Naḥl:25]

The second type of taqlīd is reliance upon the statement of the mujtahid scholar in subsidiary practical legal rulings. This type, as we have mentioned, is permissible; rather, it is obligatory upon the accountable layperson who has no ability to derive and extract legal rulings from the Book and the Sunnah.

As for the one who is capable of derivation and extracting legal rulings from the evidences of the Book and the Sunnah, it is not permissible for him, despite that, to practice taqlīd. This is due to the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: *“So ask the people of remembrance if you do not know.”* [An-Naḥl] Thus Allah *the Exalted* obligated those accountable servants who do not know to ask the people of knowledge.

Allah *the Exalted* has divided the Muslims into two categories in His saying: *“Allah raises those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge by degrees.”* [Al-Mujādilah:11] So He made the

scholars who were given knowledge a category that He raised in degrees, and He made the believers another category.

If it is said: Why was taqlid permitted in this category and not in the other?

We say: It was permitted in this category and not in the other for the following reasons:

1. Because knowing Allah *the Exalted* with true knowledge, and knowing what is connected to that of beliefs and principles, is possible for every rational person. Every rational person does not need great effort to reach the required level of knowledge and understanding, nor does he need reading and writing to attain this knowledge. Rather, it is accessible to the illiterate and the literate alike, to the learned and the ignorant, to the Bedouin and the urban dweller. What is required to attain this knowledge is directing the intellect and thought toward reflection and contemplation upon the signs of Allah spread throughout the horizons and within souls, and in all created beings.
2. Since attaining divine knowledge is, to this degree, easy and accessible to every rational person, taqlid therein has been prohibited, because it is deficiency and humiliation. It is not permissible for an accountable person to enter into that except out of necessity, and there is no necessity in attaining this knowledge due to its ease and accessibility, as we have mentioned.
3. Subsidiary practical legal rulings are many and almost innumerable. Reaching and attaining them is neither easy nor possible for every accountable person; rather, it is attained only by rare individuals among the accountable — those whose feet are firmly grounded in knowledge of the sciences of the Arabic language, whose understandings have been realized and established in the science of the principles of jurisprudence, then in knowledge of the Book of Allah the Exalted and knowledge of the Sunnahs narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the reports narrated from the scholars of the Ummah among the Ahl al-Bayt, the Companions, the Followers, and those who came after them. Along with all of that, it is necessary that the accountable person possess sharp intelligence and keen insight. When that is attained and available to the accountable person, he becomes able to recognize the subsidiary rulings.
4. Subsidiary rulings are derived from subtle and hidden evidences that are not reached except by one who has been granted success, guidance, and assistance from Allah.

For all of these reasons, necessity has called, in practical rulings, for the ignorant person to imitate the knowledgeable scholar and to follow him in acting upon them.

It is incumbent upon the ignorant person to follow one who possesses the following:

1. Piety and scrupulousness. If scholars differ in this regard, then he should adopt the one who is, in his view, the most firmly established in that.
2. That the scholar be complete in knowledge in the view of the ignorant person. If scholars differ in the view of the ignorant person, then he should choose the one he considers the most knowledgeable.

Knowledge of these two matters is easy and accessible to the ignorant person, for he recognizes that through reputation among scholars, among students of knowledge, and among the general people.

If two or three scholars are equal in the view of the layperson — such that their reputations are equal or close in his estimation — then he has the choice to imitate whichever of them he wishes.

[Benefits in Acts of Worship]**[Commentary on the ḥadīth narrated in *al-Shifā'* from al-Mughīrah regarding concealment]**

The ḥadīth of al-Mughīrah that he narrated in *al-Shifā'* concerns the concealment of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and his distancing himself from people. This is a matter firmly established in rational minds. Thus, the ḥadīth of al-Mughīrah did not establish a new legal ruling; rather, it came to affirm a ruling already established in rational understanding.

Concealment when relieving oneself and distancing oneself from people is among the rulings firmly established in rational minds and embedded in innate disposition (fiṭrah), such as covering the major private parts, the impurity of feces and urine, and the like.

[Deputization in Bodily Acts of Worship]

It is characteristic of bodily acts of worship that deputization is not valid in them. Thus, it is not valid for one person to pray on behalf of another absolutely, whether due to an excuse or without an excuse. The secret in that is that Allah the Exalted legislated prayer, for example, for a wisdom and interest connected to the very person who prays, which is not attained except if the person himself performs it. So the benefit of prayer is specific to the one who prays, and the benefit of fasting is specific to the one who fasts.

An exception has been made for ḥajj. Although it is a bodily act of worship, evidence has been established that deputization in it is valid in the case of a hopeless excuse, such as an elderly person who is unable to ride a mount. Evidence has also been established for the validity of deputization on behalf of the deceased, whether by a bequest or without a bequest.

Evidence has also come regarding deputization in fasting, though it is not as strong as the evidence for deputization in ḥajj. That is when a person dies while owing fasts; then his guardian fasts on his behalf.

Evidence has also been established for the validity of deputization in visiting the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the visitation of the righteous has been analogized to visiting him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding the validity of deputization.

Evidence has come for the validity of deputization in conveying salutations to the living.

Evidence has also been established for the validity of deputization in the recitation of the Qur'an. It has been authentically established,

without disagreement, that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to send the Companions to recite the Qur'an to the people. And in the ḥadīth: *"The recitation of the imām is a recitation for them."*

Deputization has also been validated in the rites of ḥajj that are not pillars, in cases of excuses. This is because the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) granted concessions to those with excuses to omit them altogether. Therefore, all the more so, deputization is valid, since it is better than omission altogether. *And Allah knows best.*

[A Sermon on Purity]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

O servants of Allah, fear Allah *the Exalted* and obey Him in what He has commanded you, and refrain from what He has forbidden you. And know that Allah loves those who repent and loves those who purify themselves.

Purify yourselves, O servants of Allah, from impurities and filth, and know that most of the punishment of the grave is due to urine and tale-bearing. So be cautious, O servants of Allah, lest urine touch your bodies or your clothes. Allah *the Exalted* says: *"And they ask you about menstruation. Say: It is harm, so keep away from women during menstruation and do not approach them until they become pure. Then when they have purified themselves, go to them from where Allah has commanded you. Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and loves those who purify themselves."* [Al-Baqarah] It is not permissible for a Muslim to approach his wife sexually while she is menstruating. However, it is permissible for him to lie with her and eat with her. When she becomes pure from her menstruation and performs the ritual bath, intimacy with her becomes lawful for him.

It is not permissible for a menstruating woman to pray, nor to fast, nor to recite the Qur'an, nor to enter the mosque.

It is not permissible for a husband to divorce his wife while she is menstruating, for Allah *the Exalted* has emphatically forbidden that for all believers.

It is an absolute obligation upon the Muslim, if he intends to divorce his wife, to wait until she becomes pure from her menstruation and performs the ritual bath. Then, if she has become pure and performed the ritual bath, he may divorce her if he so wishes.

It is not permissible for the husband to divorce her during a period of purity in which he has had intercourse with her. For the divorce that Allah *the Exalted* has permitted is that he divorces her during a period of

purity in which he has not had intercourse with her. If she is in such a state, he divorces her with one divorce only, no more.

Thus has Allah *the Exalted* set the limits for the believers regarding divorce, and He has forbidden them from transgressing His limits. So whoever divorces his wife while she is menstruating has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and has transgressed the limits of Allah. And whoever divorces his wife during a period of purity in which he has had intercourse with her has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and has transgressed the limits of Allah *the Exalted*. And whoever issues three divorces at once has disobeyed Allah and transgressed His limits.

[Ablution from the Perspective of Reflexology]

From the journal *Scientific Miracles*, issue ten, Jumādā al-Ākhirah, year 1422 AH, under the title: *Ablution from the Perspective of Reflexology*,

by Dr. Mājidah ‘Āmir, Ain Shams University, Cairo.

We shall take the intended meaning in summary in order to clarify it for the reader:

There exist on the surface of the body numerous points connected to the internal organs of the body. Most of these points are concentrated in the extremities, the face, the hands, the ears, and the feet.

Massaging these points restores balance and activity to the internal systems of the body. It is beneficial in treating many chronic diseases, such as back pain, neck pain, spinal pain, high blood pressure, chronic constipation, insomnia, epilepsy, tension, and other conditions.

It also alleviates the intensity of tension arising from the pressures of daily life, which cause many illnesses. It restores to the person a sense of comfort and relaxation, activates blood circulation, helps eliminate toxic and harmful substances from the body, and renews vitality and energy.

[The Wisdom Behind Not Detailing the Rulings of Prayer in the Qur’an]

Question: If it is said: Allah *the Exalted* has detailed the rulings and limits of fasting, and He has detailed the rulings and limits of pilgrimage in the Noble Qur’an, then what is the wisdom behind not detailing the rulings and limits of prayer, and not detailing the rulings and limits of zakāh in the Qur’an?

It is said in reply: Perhaps the secret and wisdom behind not detailing the rulings and limits of prayer and zakāh in the Noble Qur’an is sufficing with what Allah *the Exalted* knew — that the rulings and details of these two obligations would become widely known among the Muslims and spread among them in such a manner that no obscurity

would attach to them until the end of legal responsibility.

If it is said: Many disagreements have occurred within the Ummah regarding the details of the rulings of these two obligations. Had their rulings and details been mentioned in the Qur'an, such disagreement would not have occurred, just as much disagreement did not occur regarding the obligations of fasting and Hajj.

It is said in reply: The occurrence of disagreements in some details of the rulings of these two obligations does not harm the essence of the obligation nor the duty to perform it.

Consensus and agreement have occurred regarding their essential details that are indispensable. As for what disagreement has occurred in these two obligations, it is not from their pillars nor from their fundamental components. Thus, disagreement in such matters is disagreement outside the essence of the obligation; it does not harm it, nor does ignorance of it cause harm.

[The Wisdom in Making Slaughter and Sacrifice among the Acts of Worship and Rites of Ḥajj]

Question: What is the secret behind Allah *the Exalted* making slaughter and sacrifice among the acts of worship and rites of ḥajj?

Answer — and Allah knows best: The secret in that lies in the benefits that result from it, among which, as it appears to me, are the following:

1. Manifesting the glorification of Allah *the Exalted* through slaughter for Him. This is indicated by His saying: *"Neither their flesh nor their blood reaches Allah, but what reaches Him is piety from you..."* [Al-Ḥajj:37]
2. Manifesting the oneness of Allah *the Exalted*, mentioning His Name, and proclaiming His greatness at the time of slaughter.
3. Feeding the poor and the needy, and all the pilgrims, with meat; for they are the guests of the Most Merciful, and guests have a right to hospitality. This is indicated by what has been narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he forbade fasting during the Days of Tashrīq and said: *"Indeed, they are days of eating, drinking, and marital relations."*

[Some of the Benefits of Prayer]

- Prayer, with all that it contains from its beginning to its end, revives faith in Allah in the soul of the one who prays, and brings to life in his heart the greatness and majesty of Allah, and His worthiness of gratitude, and the awareness that He is the Sovereign, the Judge on the Day of Recompense, and that He alone is deserving of worship and reliance. And

within it is humble supplication, seeking guidance, and within it is disavowal of those upon whom Allah's wrath has fallen, and of those who have gone astray from guidance.

And within it is a practical embodiment of the utmost humility and submission to Allah through bowing and prostration, and within it is the manifestation of obedience to Allah and compliance with His command.

And within it is praise of Allah *the Exalted*, gratitude to Him, and testimony to His Oneness and Lordship, and within it is disavowal of every object of worship besides Allah, and within it is acknowledgment of the prophethood of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and bearing witness to it.

And within it is sending prayers upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and his family, in which there is acknowledgment of the greatness of the blessing through him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and through his family.

And within it is highlighting Ibrahim and his family, and the greatness of their virtue, and the greatness of Allah's blessing upon them, and within it is clarification of the virtue of the family of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the greatness of their right, and that it is obligatory that their virtue remain alive in the soul of every Muslim.

[The Cupper and the One Cupped Have Broken the Fast]

Hadith: "*Both the one who performs cupping and the one upon whom it is performed have broken the fast.*"

The meaning — *and Allah knows best* — is that it has been narrated that the cupper and the one cupped were backbiting, so the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said this hadith regarding them, and he did not say it because of cupping itself, but rather because of their backbiting.

The intent of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is that their backbiting invalidated the reward of their fasting, and nothing remained for them of their fast except fatigue, yet it is not obligatory upon them to make up the fast, due to the consensus — as appears — that sinful fasting persons are not required to make up the fast.

[The Best Deeds in the Month of Ramadan]

Question A question was directed to me from a man who possesses social standing among people, and who has influence and impact, regarding the best deeds that draw one closer to Allah *the Exalted* in the month of Ramadan.

This question came at a time when the situation in Sa'dah was tense,

and an explosion of the situation was expected at any moment.

So the answer — and from Allah comes success — was:

That the best deeds for the questioner are calming the situation and reconciling between people, because the best deeds after the obligatory acts differ from one person to another, and from one time to another. So when the questioner was a person of standing, influence, and impact among people, and the situation was tense, the guidance was directed toward reconciliation among people and calming the situation as being the best deeds of goodness in this noble month.

- And had the questioner been among the people of wealth and affluence, and not among the people of standing and influence, the legal opinion would have been directed toward him that the best deeds of goodness in this noble month are consoling the poor, the needy, and those in need with whatever amount of wealth is made easy.

- And had the questioner been among the poor, the legal opinion would have been directed toward him that the best acts of righteousness after the obligatory duties in this noble month are recitation of the Qur'an, remembrance of Allah the Exalted, and supererogatory prayers. If the questioner does not recite the Qur'an, we would say to him: supererogatory prayers, and remembrance of Allah *the Exalted* through glorification, praise, declaring His oneness, magnification, and so on.

- And if the questioner has parents who are incapacitated and in need, we would say to him: your care for your parents and fulfilling what they require is the best of deeds after the obligatory acts.

- And had the questioner wives and young children in need of financial support, we would say to him: your striving for your family, providing their needs, what satisfies their hunger, and what covers their nakedness, is the best of deeds in your case. And thus should the questioner be given a legal opinion in this matter.

If it is said: What then is the best of good deeds in the month of Ramadan absolutely, meaning without consideration of the questioner?

It is said — and Allah knows best — that recitation of the Qur'an in the month of Ramadan may be in the foremost rank of virtue after the obligatory acts. And evidence for that is:

1. That Allah *the Exalted* revealed the Qur'an in the month of Ramadan: *"The month of Ramadan in which the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind and clear proofs of guidance and the Criterion; so whoever among you witnesses the month, let him fast it"* [Al-Baqarah:185].
2. That Jibril (*peace be upon him*) used to review the Qur'an with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

during the month of Ramadan.

3. That recitation of the Qur'an includes remembrance of Allah *the Exalted* in its various forms, and within it is seeking knowledge, and knowing many rulings, and within it are admonitions, lessons, and so on.

[Some of the Benefits of Hajj]

Hajj is a manifestation of Islam, and one of its great, visible rites upon the earth, in the sight and hearing of people. Within it is the manifestation of worship of Allah and obedience to Him, and the manifestation of humility, submission, and servitude in a manner that is seen and heard on a grand scale.

Within the act of Hajj there is a trial from Allah and a test for the Muslims, by which the truthful in faith is distinguished from others, because Hajj is a strenuous act of worship. For within it are great expenditures, and exposure to the dangers of travel, its hardships, and its fears, which none can endure except one whose faith is sincere.

And within it is the greatest gathering of Muslims, such that no gathering comparable to it occurs at all. Through it, Muslims can consult one another, exchange advice, and acquaintance occurs among Muslims, and they gain awareness of one another's conditions, news, experiences, and problems, and through it they can cooperate in solving problems, and so on.

And within it is strengthening of bonds and reinforcing them with the Prophets and Messengers, especially Ibrahim and Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and upon their families be Allah's prayers, peace, mercy, and blessings.

Mecca

Allah *the Exalted* swore by Mecca in His saying: "*I swear by this city*" [Al-Balad:1], and He swore by it in His saying: "*And by this secure city*" [At-Tin:3]. In this there is an alert and an indication to its immense virtue and honor with Allah *the Exalted*. What is meant by "*the secure city*" is Mecca and what surrounds it of the Sacred Precinct, as proven by His saying, *the Exalted*: "*Have they not seen that We have made a secure sanctuary, while people are snatched away from all around them?*" [Al-'Ankabut:67]. And He, *Glorified be He*, said: "*And the Sacred Mosque which We have made for mankind — equal are the resident therein and the visitor; and whoever intends therein deviation by wrongdoing — We shall make him taste of a painful punishment*" [Al-Hajj:25]. Allah *the Exalted* named the Sacred Precinct, in this verse, a mosque.

And He, *Glorified be He*, said: "*I have only been commanded to worship the Lord of this city, who has made it sacred...*" [An-Naml:29]. And He, *Glorified and Exalted*, said: "*Indeed Allah has fulfilled His Messenger's*

vision in truth: you will surely enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allah wills, in safety, with your heads shaved or hair shortened, not fearing" [Al-Fath:27]. The Ka'bah was not entered except by the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and one man during the 'Umrah of compensation; this indicates that what is meant is entering Mecca.

And He, *Glorified be He*, said: "*Glory be to Him who took His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose surroundings We have blessed*" [Al-Isra':1]. And it is mentioned in the biographical reports that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was taken on the Night Journey from the house of Umm Hani bint Abi Talib.

It is known that there was no building around the Ka'bah designated for prayer; rather, it was built alone in the valley, people circumambulated it and prayed near it.

It has been narrated that a single good deed in the Sacred Precinct is equal to one hundred thousand good deeds.

Based on what we have mentioned, the statement is directed that prayer in the Sacred Precinct is equal to one hundred thousand prayers, because Allah the Exalted named the entire Sacred Precinct a mosque.

And that the entire Sacred Precinct is a mosque is indicated by the fact that the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt and most of the scholars of the Ummah said: it is neither permissible nor valid to sell the land of Mecca nor to lease it, and that its inhabitants and non-inhabitants are equal therein. They used as evidence His saying, *the Exalted*: "*Equal are the resident therein and the visitor.*"

There is no doubt that Allah *the Exalted* has magnified it and honored it, and commanded that it be magnified and honored, and has strictly forbidden transgressing the limits of Allah therein, and has threatened for that with a painful punishment. Rather, He, *the Exalted*, has forbidden within it many things which He has permitted elsewhere.

The summary of the matter is that Allah *the Exalted* has made the Sacred Precinct one of His rites, by which He commands people to worship Him through venerating it.

And among what confirms what we have mentioned — that the entire Sacred Precinct is a mosque — is His saying, *the Exalted*: "*For you therein are benefits until a specified term; then their place of sacrifice is at the Ancient House*" [Al-Hajj]. The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the Muslims slaughtered, during the Farewell Pilgrimage, what they had with them in Mina.

They have said: when sacrificial animals reach the Sacred Precinct, they have reached their place. However, they said: the sacrificial animals

of 'Umrah are slaughtered in Mecca and its mountain passes, and the sacrificial animals of Hajj are slaughtered in Mina. And if they are slaughtered in any place within the Sacred Precinct, there is no harm; this further confirms what we have mentioned.

Accordingly, the Sacred Precinct is established to have what is established for a mosque in terms of rulings. An exception to this is the entry of a menstruating woman and a person in a state of major ritual impurity due to necessity, and likewise relieving oneself therein due to necessity as well.

Except that the Sacred Precinct exceeds mosques in honor, and its sanctity exceeds their sanctity, due to the majesty, exaltedness, and loftiness of the One who made it so.

[Some of the Benefits of Fasting]

Fasting is a great act of worship and one of the rites of Islam. Allah tests the Muslims through it, by which the obedient is distinguished from the disobedient, and the sincere from others. Through it, the soul is refined and purified, so the soul turns toward Allah, desires piety, and distances itself from sins. Along with that, fasting brings about bodily health and well-being, and through it health, vitality, activity, and strength are renewed.

It is a hidden act of worship between the servant and his Lord, which none perceives except Allah *the Exalted*; for this reason there has come concerning it, in a sacred hadith: *"Except fasting, for it is for Me, and I reward for it."*

And within it is that it is an annual act of worship, meaning that its obligation recurs upon the Muslims with the recurrence of circumstances, so it is obligatory once every year — that is, one month.

Allah *the Exalted* is free of need of the fasting of His servants; rather, He obligated it upon them for the interests and benefits contained therein for them, both religious and worldly.

As for the worldly benefits, among them is what we have mentioned previously of the renewal of health, well-being, vitality, and strength, and that it is a means among the means of health and wellness, and among them... and among them... and so on.

As for the religious benefits, they include what it brings about of turning toward constant adherence to piety, illumination of the heart, purification of the soul, and Allah's forgiveness, mercy, and pardon.

[Some of the Benefits of Zakat]

Zakat is a financial act of worship by which true faith is distinguished from falsehood, through it the poor and needy among the Muslims become self-sufficient, through it their state is established and their

authority is strengthened, through it the lands of the Muslims are protected, through it the enemy is repelled and the disbelievers are fought, through it the laws and rulings are established, through it the roads become secure, and through it the public interests of the Muslims come to life, such as schools, clinics, roads, water sources, and so on, and through it ..., and through it ..., and so on.

And within it is the removal of enmity between the poor and the rich, and the attainment of affection and mercy between them, and within it ..., and within it ..., and so on.

[When Is Sending Blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) Obligatory]

A question concerning sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): Is it obligatory whenever he is mentioned (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)?

The answer — and Allah is the Granter of success and assistance — is that sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is obligatory, as indicated by the verse of Al-Ahzab, and there is no disagreement regarding the obligation of sending blessings upon him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in general. The Sunnah has been transmitted regarding the obligation of sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) during the prayer, and it is also obligatory in the Friday sermon; and this is an explanation of what came in the verse of Al-Ahzab.

As for the hadith: “*Whoever I am mentioned in his presence and he does not send blessings upon you ...*” and so on, no one — as far as it appears — has acted upon its apparent meaning; thus its meaning is referred back to the obligation of sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) during the prayer. Accordingly, the one who performs the five daily prayers has indeed sent blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) whenever he is mentioned (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). And Allah knows best. And all praise is for Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless Muhammad and his pure family.

As for outside the prayers and outside the Friday sermon, sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and his family is recommended in all cases, whether he is mentioned (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) or not, due to what has come in the Sunnah encouraging and urging it.

[From the Hadith: “Recite Surah Ya-Sin over Your Dead”]

It has come in the hadith: “*Recite Ya-Sin over your dead.*” It seems that

what is meant is reciting it over those who are approaching death, namely, those in the throes of death upon the bed of dying. And it seems that the reason for that — *and Allah knows best* — is what Surah Ya-Sin contains of the following:

1. Alerting the dying person to faith in the Wise Qur'an, and to the prophethood of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and to the greatness of what Allah has prepared of honor after death for His righteous servants: *"He said: O would that my people knew of how my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honored."* [Ya-Sin].
2. Alerting the dying person to the evidences of Allah's power and greatness.
3. Alerting the dying person to the evidences of Allah's power to resurrect for reckoning: *"And a sign for them is the dead earth: We give it life" [Ya-Sin:33], "He says: Who will give life to bones while they are decayed? Say: He will give them life who produced them the first time, and He is, of all creation, Knowing. He who made for you from the green tree fire, and then from it you ignite. Is not He who created the heavens..."* — to the end of the surah — *"Who has raised us from our resting place? This is what the Most Merciful promised, and the Messengers spoke the truth. It was but one blast, and behold, they are all brought before Us."*
4. Alerting the dying person to what Allah *the Exalted* has prepared of honor for His righteous servants: *"Indeed, the companions of Paradise today are in joyful occupation"* — the verses.
5. And alerting him to what Allah has prepared of disgrace and punishment for the criminals: *"But stand apart today, O you criminals"* — the verses.
6. And alerting him to the detestability of those who turn away from Allah, His signs, and His messengers — *may Allah's blessings be upon them* — and disavowal of them: *"And when it is said to them: Fear what is before you and what is behind you, that you may receive mercy. And no sign comes to them from the signs of their Lord except that they turn away from it, and when it is said to them ..."* the verses.
7. And within it is alerting him to the clarification of the end of the believers and the end of the deniers.
8. And within it is alerting him to the remembrance of Allah's favor upon him, in that He guided him to faith, did not place a covering over his sight, and did not block the path between him and faith.

And within it are many matters which the dying person should be alerted to, and with which he meets Allah *the Exalted* from what we have mentioned and what we have not mentioned.

[The Permissibility of Honoring the Deceased in His Grave]

There is no objection to honoring the deceased who is buried in his grave. The Salafi trend has gone to excess in judging the honoring of the graves of the prophets and the righteous, and has exaggerated in that, to the extent that it judged the one who does so as committing shirk.

Thus we say — and from Allah is success: Indeed, the believer has a sanctity during his lifetime which must be observed and honored, and there is no disagreement regarding the sanctity of the believer and the obligation of honoring him among Muslims, whether Salafi or otherwise.

The disagreement is only concerning honoring after death. We say: the sanctity of the believer and the obligation of honoring him remain after his death, and the evidence for that consists of several matters:

1. The foundational principle is the continuation of the obligation of sanctity and the continuation of the obligation of honoring. This is what is termed the proof of presumption of continuity (istishab). This obligation does not fall away nor cease except by a transferring proof, and there is no proof for those who negate that.
2. Among what indicates the continuation of the sanctity of the deceased and the obligation of honoring him after death is what Allah *the Exalted* has legislated of honoring the deceased through washing him, shrouding him in a good shroud, perfuming him, then the gathering of the Muslims to pray over him and supplicate for him, then escorting his funeral by the Muslims walking behind it, then standing at his grave until he is buried. Had the sanctity of the deceased and his honoring died with his death, Allah *the Exalted* would not have legislated all of that.
3. The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) departed from Madinah to Uhud and performed a funeral prayer for the martyrs of Uhud eight years after the day they were killed. This has been narrated in the authentic collections of the scholars of hadith. In this there is evidence for what we have stated regarding the continued sanctity of the martyrs and the obligation of honoring them — or at the very least, the recommendation or permissibility of doing so.
4. The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to go out at night until he reached the cemetery of Al-Baqi', where he would stand, greet its inhabitants, and supplicate for them. This was narrated by the scholars of the authentic collections from 'A'ishah.
5. It is universally agreed upon among Muslims that it is impermissible to demean the graves of Muslims by stepping on

them, sitting on them, relieving oneself on them, placing filth upon them, and the like.

I have seen cemeteries in Salafi lands surrounded by fences, and this is nothing other than to protect them from desecration, trampling, and the like.

Backbiting (Ghibah)

Backbiting is among the sins that people take lightly, and it has become widespread and prevalent in gatherings of men and gatherings of women. In reality, it is a sin that Allah and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) detest. Allah the Exalted revealed a Qur'anic warning against backbiting, recited until the Day of Resurrection, as an admonition to believing men and women.

Backbiting is among the most vile and repugnant of sins. Allah *the Exalted* depicted it in a manner that exposes its filth and ugliness, saying: *"And do not backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would detest it."* [Al-Ḥujurāt:12] Thus, the believing man and woman must distance themselves from backbiting and recoil from it just as they would recoil from eating the flesh of a dead believer.

The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) also portrayed it, meaning that eating the flesh of a dead, bloated, and rotten donkey is lighter than backbiting a Muslim. Allah *the Exalted* has made the honor of the believing man and woman sacred.

[Regarding Narrations about Satan and His Attachment to the Son of Adam]

Question: What is the meaning of the narrations stating that Satan settles beneath long fingernails, that he spends the night on the nostrils of the sleeper, and that he flows through the son of Adam like blood?

Answer — and Allah is the Grantor of success and aid: What appears to me — *and Allah knows best* — is that filth and impurities, when they adhere to the human body, disturb one's thoughts and unsettle inner tranquility. At that point, laziness and lethargy take hold of the body, and activity diminishes. Then Satan finds the path open to the human heart.

This is the opposite of cleanliness and purity, for they bring about energy, clarity of thought, sharpness of insight, and soundness of intellect. They eliminate lethargy and laziness and block the avenues through which Satan enters.

For this reason, Allah the Exalted referred to major ritual impurity as *"the filth of Satan"* in His saying: *"And to remove from you the filth of Satan, and to strengthen your hearts and make firm thereby your feet."* [Al-Anfāl]

[The Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) Mosque and the Times of Prayer]

In *Wafā' al-Wafā'* by Al-Samḥūdī, Ibn Zubālah and Yaḥyā narrated from Ja'far that the wall of the Prophet's Mosque (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) — before it was roofed — was the height of a man. When the shadow reached one cubit (two feet), the noon prayer was performed; and when it doubled, the afternoon prayer was performed.

I say: the Imami Shi'ah have narrated from Ja'far (*peace be upon him*) that the time of 'Aṣr is at four feet, and likewise the Zaydiyyah narrated this from Ja'far ibn Muḥammad. This is evidence for the soundness of the narration from Imam Ja'far ibn Muḥammad (*peace be upon him*).

Accordingly, this evidence is added to the proofs for combining the two prayers.

Determining the Months

According to the madhhab: If the months become obscured for the fasting person, and no predominant assumption arises that they are deficient, then he builds upon completeness and counts from the nearest month whose beginning was known. (*End from Marginal notes*).

Indicators for Knowing the Beginning and End of the Month

1. If the crescent rises before dawn, it belongs to the twenty-seventh.
2. If after dawn, it belongs to the twenty-eighth.
3. If it is not seen, then it is the twenty-ninth.
4. The crescent sets on the thirteenth before dawn.
5. It sets on the fourteenth before sunrise.
6. And on the fifteenth after sunrise.

[The Virtue of the Month of Ramadan]

1. The virtue of the month of Ramadan, the virtue of reciting the Qur'an in it, and the virtue of Laylat al-Qadr: good deeds are multiplied in it, and Allah grants in it what He does not grant in other months.
2. The manner of Qur'anic recitation: collective recitation.
3. Fasting is not merely abstaining from food and drink; rather, one must guard the tongue from backbiting, disparaging people, insulting them, belittling them, harming neighbors and relatives, and must avoid the acts that nullify rewards.

[Regarding Laylat al-Qadr]

The night of the twenty-first of Ramadan / 1434 AH.

It is the first of the virtuous nights of Laylat al-Qadr, whose merit is established by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and whose increased virtue is

agreed upon by the Muslims.

It is one night among the last ten nights of Ramadan, and reports have come meaning: *"Seek it in the odd nights after the twentieth."*

Furthermore, they have said that the wisdom behind concealing Laylat al-Qadr within the last ten nights of Ramadan is to encourage those seeking it to enliven all ten nights, so that they attain the reward of reviving the ten nights and the reward of reviving Laylat al Qadr. For whoever revives the last ten nights of Ramadan has indeed revived Laylat al-Qadr. Thus, there came in a report — meaning, not wording: *"Whoever fasts the days of Ramadan, stands in prayer during its nights, performs his prayers, attends the Friday prayers, and restrains his tongue — he has fasted the month, attained Laylat al-Qadr, and won the prize of the Lord."* This is the meaning, not literal quoting

I write these lines while filled with regret over my negligence in what ought to be done in the nights of Ramadan of worship, abundant bowing and prostration, remembrance, and supplication to Allah.

However, the report has been authenticated that: *"Whoever is pleased with the deeds of a people shares in their deeds."* Therefore, I supplicate to Allah and hope from Him to include me in the righteous supplications of His righteous servants, and in their righteous deeds in this noble month and in all months. For I love the righteous and love their righteous deeds — prayer, fasting, night vigil, supplication, humble entreaty, devotion, remembrance, and other acts. I approve of all of that, thank Allah for it, supplicate for them for acceptance, success, and assistance, and include them in my supplication. I ask Allah to grant them freedom from the Fire. Thus, my sorrow is eased and my grief lightened by what I hope from Allah the Most High, the Most Great, Possessor of immense favor: that He will include me in the deeds and worship of His righteous servants. His grace, *exalted is He*, is immense — He does not disappoint the hope of one who hopes in Him, nor cut off the aspiration of one who calls upon Him.

And Imam Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (*peace be upon him*) used to supplicate to Allah *the Exalted* to grant him the same reward as one who fasted Ramadan and stood in prayer during it.

[Clarification of Some Matters That Existed in the Time of the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace)]

Issues:

There are several matters that we find reported from the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), yet they no longer have a visible practice. What is the reason for that? Examples include:

1. When a serious matter arose, he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) would call out: “*As-ṣalātu jāmi‘ah*” “Prayer is to be gathered”.
2. When there was rain, the caller would announce: “*Pray in your dwellings.*”
3. Performing voluntary prayers while riding an animal: does this indicate leniency in voluntary prayers and that they are not invalidated by turning one’s face and the like? Or is this specific to prayer on a mount? What is the distinction? Especially since it is narrated in the *Musnad* of Imam Zayd (*peace be upon him*) that if a person’s ablution is invalidated during prayer, he leaves, performs ablution without speaking, and then resumes from where he left off.
4. Do the sacred months still retain their ruling?

Answer:

1. “*As-ṣalātu jāmi‘ah*”: This phrase was used to summon Muslims to attend the mosque for consultation over an important matter or to inform them of something significant. Its meaning is: “Come, O Muslims, to the mosque, for the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the leader, or the caliph wishes to address you regarding an important matter.”

This meaning can be fulfilled by other expressions that convey a call to gather at the mosque where the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), caliph, or leader is present. The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used the mosque as a place to meet with the Muslims, and the caliphs after him did likewise.

We are not ritually bound to these exact words, nor were they legislated by the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) as an act of worship in themselves; rather, what is intended is the meaning we have mentioned.

2. And “*Pray in your dwellings*”: The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) instructed the caller to announce to the Muslims, “*Pray in your dwellings,*” when the call to prayer was made on a rainy day. He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) told the caller to say this so that the Muslims would understand that they were not obliged to attend congregational prayer with him due to the excuse of rain.

This was an explanation from him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) of a concession (*rukḥṣah*), and the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

was commanded by Allah Almighty to clarify for the Muslims both the strict rulings and their concessions. Once the laws became established and the rulings well known, there was no longer a need for such an announcement.

3. Voluntary prayers performed on a mount: This indicates leniency in voluntary prayers, and it can be used as evidence that what is permissible in voluntary prayers is not necessarily permissible in obligatory prayers.
 - As for the narrated report (the combined narration), it may be said that it occurred before speech was prohibited during prayer, and the same applies to the hadith of *Dhū al-Yadayn*.
4. The ruling of the sacred months remains in effect and has not, in all likelihood, been abrogated.

[The Secret Behind the Abundance of Differences in Frequently Repeated Acts of Worship]

Question: What is the reason that the more an act of worship is repeated and practiced, the greater the disagreement concerning it becomes, whereas acts of worship that occur infrequently have less disagreement? For example: prayer is the most frequent and has the most disagreement; fasting occurs less frequently and has less disagreement; then pilgrimage; then almsgiving; then inheritance laws, transactions, and so on. Why is this so?

Answer: The reason behind the abundance of disagreement in frequently repeated acts of worship—such as prayer—and the lesser disagreement in those that are less frequent is that repetition itself leads to increased disagreement, proportionate to how often the act is performed. This is because frequent repetition encourages the narration of details, the transmission of descriptions, and the reporting of what people heard from the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and what they observed. Undoubtedly, the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) frequent performance of prayer among the Companions led to a large number of transmitters describing the manner of his prayer (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

Furthermore, the frequent performance of prayer by worshippers after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—together with the need for everyone to know how to perform it—resulted in abundant narrations describing the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). This stems from the well-known immense importance of prayer among Muslims: it is the greatest of their deeds after faith and the most virtuous of them, and its obligation is general and restrictive, allowing no concession for

anyone—neither traveler, nor sick person, nor one who is busy, not even in the midst of battle.

For all these reasons, there was strong motivation to transmit its details and to carefully narrate everything related to it, whether small or large. Each Companion narrated what he saw and heard, especially since they had ample opportunity to narrate due to their long companionship with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and their frequent observation of his prayer.

Moreover, people of deviant inclinations found room for their falsehoods within this vast body of transmissions and numerous narrations, and they mixed their fabrications into this current, causing them to spread among the ignorant of the Muslims.

From what we have mentioned regarding the abundance of disagreement about prayer, you can understand the reason for its prevalence therein and its relative scarcity in other matters.

[Mixing of Men and Women During the Pilgrimage]

Question: Regarding the mixing of women with men during pilgrimage—especially during circumambulation (ṭawāf), where a woman may be pressed closely against a man, whether with desire or without—does this occur merely out of necessity?

Is it permissible for the Imam (leader) of the Muslims, if he oversees the pilgrimage, to separate the area of circumambulation for women from that of men, and likewise the area of walking between Ṣafā and Marwah, as is done for people with disabilities (those using wheelchairs)? Or is this mixing something legislated and established since the time of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), when they performed ṭawāf closely together?

Or were they few in number then, and the situation today is due to the large crowds?

Do Muslims have the right to demand separation, or is that not legislated?

Answer:

- Mixing that occurs unintentionally and without deliberate intent—such as crowding at the Kaʿbah—does not incur sin upon the legally responsible person, because it happens without intent, choice, or deliberate action.
- It is obligatory upon the guardian of Muslim affairs, if he is able to resolve the problem of mixing at the Kaʿbah and the crowding of men and women, to do so. The same applies to the area of walking between Ṣafā and Marwah and elsewhere, because he is responsible for safeguarding the public interests of the Muslims.

- Men and women used to circumambulate together, but the crowding was not like that of today. Women would seek appropriate opportunities; it is narrated that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) instructed Umm Salamah to circumambulate the House at the time of the dawn prayer, when people were occupied with prayer.

With the smaller numbers at that time, it was possible for women to avoid crowding.

Even today, women can avoid crowding by choosing appropriate times, by standing among their male relatives, or by a group of women gathering together while their male relatives encircle them during ṭawāf, as is often observed.

Crowding itself is not legislated in Islamic law; rather, it is prohibited.

- If it is possible to separate the areas of circumambulation for men and women, then separation is obligatory, and Muslims have the right to present this matter to those in authority, due to the public interest involved.

[Benefits Concerning Transactions]

[Building in the Courtyards of Houses]

It is permissible to build in the courtyards of houses so long as no harm is caused to a neighbor or to passersby. This has been the established practice of the Muslims, as stated in *Fath al-Bārī*.

I add: an exception is made if the land was purchased or came into a person's possession through division, in which case the buyer or the one receiving the share may not introduce any new construction except within what specifically came to him by purchase or division.

Accordingly, it becomes clear that what is meant in *Fath al-Bārī* refers to buildings erected on open, unclaimed land—land that belongs to no one and is not a private right. Whoever builds houses upon such land thereby acquires the right of sanctuary (ḥaram), the right to the surrounding courtyard, and the right of access. The extent of the sanctuary and the courtyard is determined by custom, as is the access road to the house, and no one has the right to introduce any construction that infringes upon these rights.

[The Prohibition of Exposing Oneself to Humiliation]

It is not permissible for a Muslim to expose himself to humiliation, unless doing so is a means of averting a harm greater than the humiliation he would endure. In such a case, there is no blame in accepting humiliation.

Here there is a principle: it is permissible to repel a greater harm by means of a lesser harm. The proof of this is rational, and it has been said that some evils are lesser than others. Hence, people do not disagree about removing cancer from the body through cutting or amputation, nor about undertaking surgical operations throughout the body in order to cure disease.

If a legally responsible person believes that, should he travel for pilgrimage, he would be exposed during his journey to humiliation such as beating, insult, or imprisonment, then pilgrimage is not obligatory upon him. The scholars of the school have stated that security of the route is a condition for the obligation of Hajj.

The evidence for this condition in Allah is what Allah Almighty has mentioned regarding the suspension of certain pillars of prayer in the presence of fear of the enemy; the suspension of standing, bowing, and prostration for a sick person who would be harmed by them; the suspension of ablution with water and ritual bathing from major impurity or menstruation when there is fear of harm from using water.

And the suspension of the obligation of fasting for one who fears harm; the suspension of many obligations from those with valid excuses,

such as staying overnight in Minā, the Farewell Circumambulation, spending most of the night in Muzdalifah; the suspension of Friday prayer for the sick and for the slave.

And the suspension of jihad for the sick and the lame; the suspension of pilgrimage for one who does not possess a mount; and many similar examples in the legal rulings.

Self-Praise

It is valid for a person to praise himself in certain circumstances:

1. When the motive for praise is the attainment of a public or private benefit, or the prevention of harm. This is permissible, and its proof is what Allah *Almighty* relates about His Prophet Joseph (*peace be upon him*), when he said to the king of Egypt: *"Appoint me over the storehouses of the land; indeed, I am trustworthy and knowledgeable."* [Yusuf:55] Accordingly, it is appropriate for a scholar to praise himself for knowledge, justice, and piety in order that people may turn to him for legal opinions, acquire knowledge from him, be guided by his conduct, and follow his example.

It is also appropriate for a person to praise himself for honesty, justice, and scrupulousness so that a merchant may trust him in financial dealings, or so that he may be employed in a shop, taken as a partner in an investment, allowed to reside in a community and live among its people, or for similar public or private interests.

2. When praise is for the purpose of having one's testimony or narration accepted, or to establish suitability for leading prayer, or for being hired to perform pilgrimage on behalf of another, and the like. There is no blame upon the believer in this, whether he introduces himself or asks another to do so on his behalf.
3. When praise is motivated by arrogance and self-conceit, this is not permissible, due to the saying of Allah *Almighty*: *"So do not ascribe purity to yourselves; He knows best who is truly Allah-fearing."* [An-Najm:32] This refers to a person believing that, by virtue of his deeds and piety, he is among the righteous servants of Allah who have no fear and shall not grieve, and then mentioning this about himself and praising himself for it. This is impermissible and entails great danger.
4. When praise is for the sake of boasting, this is not appropriate and is not permissible, except when it occurs between those who uphold the truth and those who uphold falsehood. In such a case it is permissible, as it strengthens the side of truth and weakens the side of falsehood.

5. When praise is for the purpose of repelling an accusation that has been attached to a person, it is permissible to repel it by mentioning noble virtues.

A Believer's Mention of His Righteous Deeds

It is not appropriate for a believer to mention his righteous deeds or speak of them before people without a purpose such as those previously mentioned, or something similar.

Human nature and instinct continually urge a person to speak of his righteous deeds, but the believer must not comply with this instinct nor respond to it, because of the danger it poses to the loss of the reward for those deeds.

If it is said: If a believer performed righteous deeds with sincere intention, and then after some time spoke of them, how could their reward be lost when they were done sincerely?

The answer is: Allah, *Exalted is he*, records the reward of a righteous deed that a person performs secretly between himself and his Lord as the reward of secrecy. If the person then discloses it, Allah records for him the reward of publicity. Between the reward of secrecy and the reward of publicity there is a great difference: the reward of secrecy exceeds the reward of publicity by seventyfold, as has been reported in the narrations.

The established practice of the righteous servants of Allah—among the Imams and others—was to conceal acts of worship and to exercise extreme caution in revealing them. It is narrated from al-Hādī (*peace be upon him*) that one of his companions once became aware of some of his acts of worship. When al-Hādī (*peace be upon him*) learned that the man had witnessed his worship, his intimate supplication to his Lord, and his weeping throughout the night, he was distressed, and he bound the man firmly to secrecy until death, making him swear to it. The man did not speak of what he had seen of al-Hādī's (*peace be upon him*) worship until after his death (*peace be upon him*).

What we have mentioned—that by disclosing and displaying a righteous deed its reward is reduced from that of secrecy to that of publicity—is the least of the dangerous possibilities. Otherwise, it is possible that the deed may be rendered entirely void by speaking of it.

Accordingly, the prudent course is to conceal one's deeds and to be cautious about revealing or displaying them, except for a sound purpose of the kind mentioned earlier.

If it is said: when a person is praised for something that is not actually in him, and a measure of joy enters his heart in accordance with normal human nature—while he neither seeks to be praised for what he

does not possess nor desires it—does he incur blame for that joy? And does he fall under those whom Allah described in His saying: *“They love to be praised for what they did not do, so do not think that they are safe from punishment”* [Āl ‘Imrān:188]?

The answer is: there is no blame upon him in that, nor does any censure or reproach attach to him. This is because he played no role in bringing it about, nor did any cause originate from him. The praise issued from another without his instruction, request, or causation, and the joy that arose within him stems from human nature. He has no power to rid himself entirely of that natural disposition, and *“Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity”* [al-Baqarah:286].

As for those in whose condemnation the verse was revealed, they—*Allah knows best*—desired to be praised for what they had not done, strove to obtain such praise, and sought it deliberately. When it was achieved, they rejoiced in it, and when it was not, they were distressed. In most narrations, they were the Jews.

If it is said: is the one who is praised for what is not in him obliged to clarify to the listeners that such praise is contrary to reality, or is he not obliged to do so?

The reply is: the praised person is not obligated to expose the falsity of the praise, for several reasons:

1. There is no certainty that the one offering praise intended to lie; perhaps he imagined it, supposed it, or was informed of it by someone else.
2. No harm or corruption results from leaving it unclarified.
3. Clarifying the falsity of the praise would entail injuring the one who offered it. The apparent state of the praiser is that he intends nothing but good by his praise, and it is not permissible to respond to his kindness with harm. His error in praise does not remove him from being a benefactor. Allah *Almighty* says: *“Is the reward for goodness anything but goodness?”* [al-Raḥmān:60], and He also says: *“And when you are greeted with a greeting, respond with one better than it, or return it”* [al-Nisā’: 86].

As for what is reported from the Commander of the Faithful (*peace be upon him*), when he said to one who exaggerated in praising him, *“I am less than what you say, and greater than what is in your heart,”* this was because he (*peace be upon him*) knew that his praiser was a hypocrite of vile character. Therefore, he did not refrain from exposing his falsehood and hypocrisy. His response (*peace be upon him*) combined both matters:

1. Exposing his lie: *“I am less than what you say.”*
2. Exposing his hypocrisy: *“and greater than what is in your heart,”*

because he (*peace be upon him*) knew the praiser's corrupt belief regarding his person (*peace be upon him*).

If praise reaches the level of blameworthy exaggeration, then it must be repudiated. An example of this is what is reported that the poet of Imām al-Ḥasan ibn Zayd (*peace be upon him*) praised him on the day of a festival, saying:

"Allah is One, and Ibn Zayd is One."

The Imām (*peace be upon him*) rebuked and reprimanded him, then prostrated to Allah in humility and submission, and said to his poet: say instead, "Allah is One, and Ibn Zayd is a servant."

What appears—*Allah knows best*—is that a morally responsible person is not free from impulses toward showing off (*riyā'*), nor is he able to rid himself of them entirely. Rather, he is obligated to resist them and struggle against them. Were it not for these natural impulses, a person would not deserve reward for sincerity, nor would moral responsibility be valid. Reward is deserved for preferring obedience to Allah over the inclinations of the self, and this entails considerable hardship for the soul. Preferring obedience to Allah over the desires of the self is called moral obligation because of the difficulty and burden it imposes on the soul. If the believing person's soul were entirely devoid of impulses toward showing off and love of it, to the extent that none remained, then sincerity in worship would be an easy psychological disposition requiring no hardship or effort.

For this reason, we say that the believing, morally responsible person is never entirely free from impulses toward showing off. Consequently, he must constantly strive against them and resist them. It is not permissible for him to neglect them or neglect striving against them, for if he does so, his soul will gradually incline toward showing off without his awareness. Thus, the responsible person must remain vigilant at all times.

Let the responsible person know that even if he guards himself against showing off, persists in resisting and striving against it, and is diligent in that, he will not be safe from the slips and lapses of his soul. Therefore, he should end his day in repentance and begin his morning in repentance, increase in seeking forgiveness, and ask Allah for assistance, success, right guidance, and sincerity.

A person may think himself sincere, while in reality something of showing off has crept into his heart without his awareness.

Conversely, a person may persist in accusing himself of showing off, continually reproaching and detesting his soul, and seeking forgiveness from Allah—such a person is among the sincere in the sight of Allah. This is because even if something of showing off has in fact entered his heart,

his self-accusation, self-reproach, and seeking forgiveness render him among the sincere before Allah.

It has been reported from the Commander of the Faithful (*peace be upon him*) in this regard that he said: *“The believer does not enter evening or morning except that his soul is under suspicion.”*

That is, the believer continually accuses himself of shortcoming, heedlessness, and negligence in obedience to Allah, including sincerity.

Question: is it considered showing off for a person to conceal from others his own lapses, heedlessness, and shortcomings, and the like—without doing anything that would suggest their absence—when all that he has done is merely concealment?

The answer: is that concealing one’s own faults is not showing off; rather, it is a recommended practice, even if it leads people to believe that the person is righteous. Much encouragement for concealment has come in the Qur’ān and the Sunnah. If one who conceals himself becomes aware that people think well of him, let him thank Allah *Almighty* and praise Him for having concealed him, and let him desist from his shortcomings and negligence. For if he persists without thanking and praising Allah, and does not desist from his negligence and shortcomings, Allah *Almighty* will remove His covering from him and reveal to people the reality of his state. Allah *Almighty* says: *“If you are grateful, I will surely increase you; but if you are ungrateful, indeed My punishment is severe”* [Ibrāhīm:7]. The impulses toward showing off and the inclination toward it weaken through continual striving against them and persistent resistance, and they grow stronger through neglect of that struggle. Thus, these impulses are weakest in the prophets and messengers—*may Allah’s blessings be upon them*—and in the righteous friends of Allah, due to the strength of their striving against the desires of their souls.

Question: What is the correct view regarding what is reported of some Sufis in their struggle against the self and in subduing its desires—namely, that one of them deliberately exposes himself to suspicion, such as sitting in a wine-seller’s shop, or snatching goods from the market and fleeing before people so that they chase him, beat him, and recover what he took—doing all this in order to sever his soul’s attachment to people’s praise and to cut off his craving for their admiration?

The answer: This is neither appropriate nor permissible, for several reasons:

1. Allah *Almighty* has declared the honor, property, and blood of the Muslim inviolable; therefore, it is not permissible for a Muslim to violate the sanctity of his own honor, nor that of others.
2. In the well-known hadith, there is an instruction to avoid the

causes of cursing when relieving oneself; accordingly, a Muslim must avoid the causes that prompt people to insult or curse him.

3. What some Sufis have introduced in this regard is an innovation (bid'ah) that conflicts with what Islamic law has established concerning the preservation of the believer's dignity, honor, elevated rank, and noble standing.
4. It also conflicts with what Allah *Almighty* intends of ease in His religion and leniency in His law: "*Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship*" [al-Baqarah:185], and "*He has placed no hardship upon you in religion*" [al-Ḥajj:78].
5. Allah *Almighty* has made the Qur'an a healing for the maladies of hearts and a mercy for the believers.

A Note on Shaving the Beard

It has been said that shaving the beard is prohibited, based on his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) statement: "*Trim the moustaches and let the beards grow,*" and other reports.

I say: I have seen, in some of the books of al-Hādī within *al-Majmū'ah al-Fākhirah*, words attributed to him (*peace be upon him*) in which he mentions and explains the commands of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Among them, he stated that some commands are not intended to legislate binding rulings or impose obligations; rather, they are intended for discipline and refinement, and he mentioned matters similar to what we are discussing here.

I later reflected upon al-Hādī's (*peace be upon him*) classification of the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) commands in this manner and found it sound, and I saw that he was granted success in reaching the correct view. This is because matters such as letting the beard grow, trimming the moustache, wearing white garments, honoring the hair by washing it, trimming the nails, plucking the armpit hair, shaving the pubic hair, cleaning the courtyards of houses, and the like—all of these were regarded as commendable among the people of the pre-Islamic period, with only a few exceptions. When Allah sent the Prophet Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he taught them the laws and obligations of Islam and instructed them in these matters and others. Thus, whatever of these pertains to refined customs and manners is not intended as obligatory and binding, whereas what pertains to the worship of Allah is binding and obligatory unless there is an indication to the contrary.

Among the proofs cited by those who claim the prohibition of shaving the beard is his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) statement: "*The family of Kisrā shave their beards and let their moustaches grow, whereas the family of Muḥammad trim their*

moustaches and let their beards grow.” There is no proof in this for what they claim, for it adds nothing beyond merely reporting what the hadith itself conveys.

The family of Muḥammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), with “the family” here being a figurative reference to the Muslims—used to let their beards grow before Islam and after it. Thus, the Prophet’s (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) statement in this hadith that they let their beards grow is simply an informative statement about their customary practice.

Yes, there is a distinction between this and other legal commands. The Lawgiver’s commands and prohibitions are founded upon consideration of benefits and harms, whereas commands of etiquette are founded upon their intrinsic proprieties and improprieties, abstracted from considerations of benefit and harm—such as shaving or letting the beard grow, shaving the head or leaving it, trimming the forelock, and the like—unless there are contextual indicators that point to obligation or prohibition, such as the cursing of the woman who attaches hair extensions, the one who seeks them, the tattooer and the one who is tattooed, the one who plucks eyebrows, and those who file their teeth.

Among such indicators is what may be general, such as the Prophet’s (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: “*Whoever imitates a people is one of them.*” From this, a prohibition of shaving the beard may be inferred—not because shaving itself is unlawful, but because it entails imitation of the wicked and the like.

Indeed, what supports what we have mentioned is that some scholars of legal theory have stated that among the indicators showing that a command is not intended as obligatory is prior knowledge of the permissibility of the commanded act. They cited this in relation to Allah’s saying: “*And when you are released, then hunt*” [al-Mā’idah:2], interpreting the command here as one of permissibility, with the indicator being the prior knowledge that hunting is permitted.

Moreover, in *al-Baḥr*, it is stated: “Issue: it is recommended to let the beard grow,” and then it says at the end of the issue: “And it is prohibited to shave the beard because it is an innovation.” End quote.

He did not base the prohibition of shaving on the hadiths commanding the letting of the beard grow—perhaps because of what we previously stated, namely that commands of this type are not intended as obligatory.

As for his statement in *al-Baḥr* that shaving it is prohibited because it is an innovation, this is questionable, for abandoning a recommended act is not described as an innovation; otherwise, abandoning the regular supererogatory prayers and the like would also be unlawful.

Yes, in some countries shaving the beard is considered among refined customs, and this is predominant in many lands of the Islamic world. In our lands, however, the opposite is the case: shaving the beard is considered a bad custom, indicating laxity and a deficiency in manliness, and it may conflict with uprightness; thus, testimony from such a person may not be accepted. The scholars mentioned a similar ruling regarding one from the scholars who wears the attire of soldiers, or one from the general populace who wears the attire of scholars, stating that this compromises uprightness—not because of the clothing itself, but because of what it signifies in terms of diminished decorum.

[The Text of al-Hādī's Words, *Peace be upon Him*, in the Book *Ma'ānī al-Sunnah*]

... As for all that we have mentioned of what is lawful and unlawful, the ordinances of religion, and the legal rulings, these are truly from Allah—truly and indeed—and their state is not like the state of other matters that the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) established from himself and by his own choice, matters for which neither Allah nor His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) imposed punishment upon one who leaves them, such as what he instituted of the witr prayer, trimming the nails, shaving the hair, using the tooth-stick (*siwāk*), letting the beard grow, and trimming the moustache, and other things that he instituted, did, and chose for himself as additional acts of worship.

And likewise what he used to pray, adhere to, and urge of rak'ahs that he would pray during times of calamity ... etc., as found on pages 207–208 of *al-Majmū'ah al-Fākhirah*, the manuscript.

[On Insulting and Cursing]

A question concerning insult and cursing was asked, and the questioner cited the narrated hadith: "*The believer is not one who insults, nor one who curses, nor one who is obscene, nor one who is indecent.*"

The answer: The insulting and cursing that are impermissible are those directed at the innocent, the righteous, and the believers, as well as that which is falsehood, slander, and fabrication.

As for distinguishing the one who is right from the one who is false, the truthful from the liar, and the disobedient from the obedient, and naming each according to what he deserves and judging him according to what Allah, *Blessed and Exalted*, has judged in the Qur'an—this is something required by the innate nature of reason and necessitated by the reality of faith.

For a reason Allah distinguished the human being with intellect and favored him over all other animals. And Allah *the Exalted* said to His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "**And**

do not obey every worthless habitual swearer, a slanderer, going about with malicious gossip, a preventer of good, a transgressor, a sinner, harsh and after that ignoble" [Al-Qalam:10–13]. Thus Allah *the Exalted* censured al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīrah al-Makhzūmī with the utmost censure—if it be correct to call that insult and abuse—for it is the utmost that can be inflicted and the furthest that can be said.

And He said, *the Exalted*: *"Those who disbelieved from the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed..."* [Al-Mā'idah:78] to the end of the verses. And He said: *"Indeed, the curse of Allah is upon the wrongdoers"* [Hūd:18].

And He said: *"Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Book—those are cursed by Allah, and cursed by those who curse"* [Al-Baqarah:159].

And He said, while mentioning a people who opposed His command and disobeyed Him: *"Those—upon them is the curse of Allah and the angels and the people, all together"* [Al-Baqarah:161].

And how many instances there are in the Qur'an of cursing those who disobeyed the Lord of the worlds and opposed His command.

[Finding a Believer Burdensome, Feeling Distressed by Him, Envy, and the Like]

Question: Does a person incur sin by finding some believers burdensome, or by feeling distressed at sitting with him or the like? And does a person incur sin for what he finds in his heart of envy toward his brother, or for what he finds of love for this world?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success: A person does not incur sin for what is mentioned in the two questions, because it is not within his power to rid himself of such things. Rather, he incurs sin for what issues from him of statements or actions that harm another or cause him distress.

As for love of this world, it is an innate disposition upon which Allah created people, and it is not possible for the legally responsible person to rid himself of it by any stratagem. Hence Allah *the Exalted* said: *"And indeed, he is intense in love of wealth"* [Al-ʿĀdiyāt:8], and: *"And you love wealth with immense love"* [Al-Fajr:20].

Based on this, what is blameworthy and to which prohibition is directed is consuming what Allah has forbidden or withholding what Allah has obligated upon the legally responsible person of financial rights. Hence Allah *the Exalted* said: *"O you who believe, eat of the good things which We have provided for you"* [Al-Baqarah:172], and: *"Say, who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good things of provision? Say: they are for those who*

believe during the life of this world, exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection” [Al-A‘rāf:32].

[Does One Report an Abusive Neighbor to the Authorities?]

Question: If a man has, for example, a neighbor who harms him, may he raise his case to the governor of his district, knowing that the district governor is neither just nor trustworthy?

The answer: What appears to me—and *Allah knows best*—is that it is permissible to raise the matter to the ruler in what is mentioned in the question, in order to rid him of the oppression of his neighbor. Thus said the people of the school, except that they made an exception, saying: unless he knows that the ruler will do to him more than he deserves, in which case it is not permissible.

And what may indicate what they said is the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: “*And cooperate in righteousness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression*” [Al-Mā‘idah:2].

I say: This is if he has intention and purpose to wrong his neighbor. But if he has no intention or purpose except to rid himself of his neighbor’s harm, then it is permissible to raise the matter, even if it is the habit of that ruler to exceed the bounds of propriety.

The evidence for that is what has been narrated about Zayd ibn ‘Alī and ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan, *peace be upon them*, that they brought their dispute before the governors of Banū Umayyah, despite their knowledge that the governors of Banū Umayyah exceeded the limits in their judgments.

[The Counsel of the Commander of the Faithful, *Peace be upon Him*, Regarding Fighting the Khārijites]

Question: What is meant by the saying of the Commander of the Faithful Imām ‘Alī to his son al-Ḥasan, *peace be upon Them*: “Do not fight the Khārijites after me, for the one who sought the truth and missed it is not like the one who sought falsehood and attained it”?

The answer: By this counsel, the Commander of the Faithful, *peace be upon Him*, intended to forbid his son al-Ḥasan, *peace be upon Him*, from fighting the Khārijites under the banner of Mu‘āwiyah and under his command. For Mu‘āwiyah and his companions—even though they fought the dogs of the people of the Fire—were more misguided and more unjust than the Khārijites. That is because the Khārijites did not enter into misguidance deliberately; rather, they entered it through error in judgment, so their intent was the truth but they missed it. As for Mu‘āwiyah and his companions, they entered into misguidance deliberately and out of love for misguidance.

And it is not the intent of the Commander of the Faithful Imām ‘Alī

(*Peace be Upon Him*) that fighting the Khārijites is absolutely impermissible. Rather, his intent is what we have mentioned, namely supporting Mu‘āwiyah against the Khārijites.

And the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) clarified the reason for his forbidding his son al-Ḥasan (*Peace be Upon Him*) when he said: “*For the one who sought the truth...*” etc. The meaning of that is: because Mu‘āwiyah was more misguided than the Khārijites and more deeply immersed in falsehood than they were.

Then the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) clarified that Mu‘āwiyah went astray from two aspects: choosing falsehood deliberately, with intent, pursuit, and resolve—this is one aspect; and the second aspect is his attaining falsehood, entering into it, and acting upon it.

As for the Khārijites, they only went astray from one aspect, in that they had no intention of falsehood, nor pursuit, nor resolve, nor determination. Their intention was only to seek the truth, but they erred in it, and thus entered into falsehood and acted upon it; so their misguidance was only from this one aspect.

If it is said: Was it then permissible to fight Mu‘āwiyah together with the Khārijites?

We say: There are texts indicating that it is not permissible to assist the people of falsehood in their falsehood, such as the saying of Allah the Exalted: “*And cooperate in righteousness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression*” [Al-Mā'idah:2]. And the Khārijites are people of misguidance; they are the worst of creation and creatures. They pass out of the religion as an arrow passes out of the game. Therefore, assisting them is not permissible.

If it is said: If Mu‘āwiyah wronged them by aggression and transgression, and their stance was merely one of defense, then why is it not permissible to assist them in repelling injustice from them, just as it is permissible and obligatory to repel injustice from the People of the Covenant (ahl al-dhimmah)?

We say: Even though the Khārijites may be as such, assisting them is not permissible, because they have, through their misguidance, departed from the guardianship of Allah to enmity toward Him, and they have departed from the party of Allah to the party of Satan. And Allah the Exalted described the believers in Sūrat al-Tawbah as being allies of one another, and that the hypocrites are of one another.

And He, *Glorified and Exalted*, said: “*And thus We appoint some of the wrongdoers over others because of what they used to earn*” [Al-An'ām:129]. In this verse there is evidence that what befalls some wrongdoers from others is a type of immediate punishment which they deserved because

of what they used to earn. Thus, it is neither proper nor permissible for the believer to confront the wrath and punishment of Allah that descends upon the wrongdoers.

What is befitting of the believer—and more appropriate for him—is to keep away from that and to say: *“Our Lord, do not make us a trial for the wrongdoing people”* [Yūnus], and: *“And do not place us with the wrongdoing people”* [Al-Aʿrāf], and: *“So separate between us and the defiantly disobedient people”* [Al-Māʾidah].

If it is said: The people of the school have said that it is permissible to assist the lesser wrongdoer against the greater wrongdoer.

We say: They said that with conditions:

- 1- That their assistance not be in matters exclusive to the Imams.
- 2- That the wrongdoer adhere to sound judgment, meaning in accordance with the dictates of the Sharīʿah.
- 3- That assisting him not lead to strengthening his oppression.

As for the People of the Covenant, defending them is obligatory due to what the covenant of dhimmah entails: the protection of their lives, their children, their women, and their wealth—on the condition that they pay the jizyah willingly while being subdued.

As for the Khārijites and the like, by their departure from guardianship the bonds have been severed between them and others. They have no share or portion in the guardianship of the believers, nor do they possess, like the People of the Covenant, a treaty or covenant.

If it is said: If the aggressing enemy against the Khārijites is from the disbelievers, does the ruling differ?

We say: The ruling here differs from what preceded. Assisting the Khārijites and the like is permissible in repelling the aggression of the disbelievers, because the advance of the disbelievers against the Khārijites or the like is considered an advance against Islam. Hence Allah the Exalted said in what resembles this: *“And those who believed but did not emigrate—you have no guardianship over them at all until they emigrate. But if they seek your help in the matter of religion, then upon you is the help...”* [Al-Anfāl:72]. So when the disbelievers are repelled from the lands of the Muslims, the Muslims then withhold their hands from assisting the Khārijites.

If it is said: What is meant by the saying of Allah the Exalted: *“And if two groups of the believers fight, then make peace between them. But if one of them transgresses against the other, then fight the one that transgresses until it returns to the command of Allah...”* [Al-Ḥujurāt:9]?

We say: What is meant by this verse is that if two groups of Muslims, or two tribes, fight one another, then it is obligatory upon the believers

to reconcile between them. If one of them then transgresses after reconciliation against the other, it becomes obligatory to fight the transgressing party until it ceases its transgression and returns from its enmity.

As for the Khārijites and Mu‘āwiyah, they are certainly outside the command of Allah, and before Allah they are transgressing wrongdoers. Their matter is not ambiguous. What would have been obligatory upon the believers—had the means been available to them— would have been to fight both parties, not to reconcile between them. And likewise is the obligation concerning anyone who is of their description.

Yes, if a Khārijite repents, and he had killed soldiers from among the soldiers of Mu‘āwiyah or the like, then what appears is that nothing is due from him except sincere repentance.

- 1- Because the Khārijites are among the disbelievers, even though their disbelief is disbelief by interpretation. And it is known that Islam erases what came before it, and repentance from disbelief erases what preceded it.
- 2- Because the Commander of the Faithful Imām ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) did not pursue the people of Basra after the Battle of al-Jamal, and it is known that they had treacherously killed a number of his companions before the battle, and killed others during the battle. Yet the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) did not question them regarding the killers.

[Plucking Grey Hair]

Question: Is it permissible to pluck grey hair from the beard or not?

Answer: What I see is that there is no objection to plucking grey hair from the beard, due to the absence of any evidence prohibiting that—unless harm or pain results from it, in which case it is not permissible for a person to cause pain to himself or harm himself.

If it is said: It has been narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he forbade al-namṣ (plucking), and al-namṣ is plucking hair?

It is said in reply: Imām al-Manṣūr bi-Allah (*Peace be Upon Him*) said: The namṣ mentioned in the prohibition is the plucking of the hair of the pubic area.

However, plucking grey hair is not recommended, because of what it contains of admonition and reflection. For when a person looks at his appearance and sees grey hair, his hopes are shortened, and he realizes that after grey hair there is nothing but death. This then calls him to return to Allah, to repent, and to improve his deeds.

It also contains motives for dignity and gravity, for when one with

grey hair sees the grey in his face, he adopts dignity even if he was not dignified before, and he becomes shy of engaging in many permissible matters.

It also carries social esteem among people. Indeed, it has come in reports that Allah the Exalted is shy before one who possesses grey hair.

If it is said: It has been narrated in *al-Intiṣār*: “Plucking grey hair is an innovation,” and: “Grey hair is the light of Allah, so turning away from it is turning away from light.”

And in its marginal notes it is narrated from ‘Amr ibn Shu‘ayb, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “Do not pluck grey hair, for it is the light of the Muslim.” Narrated by Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, and al-Nasā’ī—along with other reports in this chapter—which indicate that plucking grey hair is prohibited.

We say: What has come in this chapter pertains to manners and etiquette, and does not indicate more than recommendation and desirability. This is clarified by the fact that the commands and prohibitions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) are divided into two categories:

- 1- A category related to refined etiquette and good manners, such as cleaning the hair of the head, combing it, oiling it, letting the beard grow, trimming the moustache, clipping the nails, plucking the armpit hair, shaving the pubic hair, and the like—matters which people used to do in the pre-Islamic period and knew before the advent of the Sharī‘ah. Thus, whatever commands and prohibitions came regarding these matters are intended for etiquette and recommendation. Included in this is plucking grey hair or dyeing it with henna or with black dye.

Something close to this was mentioned by al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) in *al-Majmū‘ah al-Fākhirah*. In this chapter, the commands and prohibitions are not intended as legislative rulings, because these were practices already established before Allah the Exalted sent Islam. People used to wear turbans, let their beards grow, and sometimes dye their grey hair—as did ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib and others. They would wash their heads, oil them, comb them, part their hair, clip their nails, and so on.

- 2- A legislative category, which is everything besides that.

[Exceptions to Backbiting]

The one who criticizes before a judge, the one who gives counsel to another, the one who sincerely advises another, the one who warns another, the one who complains about someone who wronged him by word or deed, the one who seeks a legal opinion from another, the one

who seeks help from another in removing an evil, and the one who identifies another, such as saying: “So-and-so is one-eyed, black,” and the like. End of quotation from *al-Bayān*.

[When Does Jihād Become Obligatory upon the Imams?]

Question: When does jihād become obligatory upon the Imams?

Answer: Jihād by killing and fighting becomes obligatory upon the Imams when they possess the equipment and numbers required by the circumstances—on the condition that there is an expectation of achieving a preponderant benefit.

The evidence for what we have mentioned is the saying of Allah *the Exalted*: “*Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity*” [Al-Baqarah: 286], and: “*So fear Allah as much as you are able*” [At-Taghābun:16]. If the leaders of the Muslims do not possess the equipment and numbers necessary for jihād, the obligation falls from them. Hence the saying of the Commander of the Faithful Imām ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), as mentioned in the Sermon of al-Shaqshaqiyyah: “By the One who split the grain and created the soul, had it not been for the presence of the people and the establishment of proof by the existence of supporters, I would have cast its rope upon its shoulder, and would have given its last to drink from the cup of its first ...”

As for stipulating the expectation of achieving a preponderant benefit, that is because of the known obligation upon the Imams to consider what benefits Islam and the Muslims and strengthens their position.

Thus, if the rulers have no hope of victory, nor expectation of it, but rather know or presume loss, then jihād should not be undertaken—indeed, it is not permissible—because it is not in the interest of the Muslims for their armies to perish. Allah the Exalted has said: “*And do not throw yourselves with your own hands into destruction*” [Al-Baqarah:195].

And the Commander of the Faithful Imām ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) said in al-Shaqshaqiyyah: “I looked, and behold, I had none with me except the members of my household, facing death with them ...” etc.

If it is said: Al-Ḥusayn and Zayd and others (*Peace be Upon Them*) rose for jihād without possessing the necessary equipment and numbers, and without expecting victory.

We say: As for al-Ḥusayn and Zayd (*Peace be Upon Them*), they did not rise until they believed they had acquired the necessary equipment and numbers, and they expected victory and dominance. However, what they expected did not occur, for the equipment and numbers betrayed them at the decisive moment, in the time of hardship and at the point of apparent victory. Thus, they were compelled to defend themselves out of

necessity.

The jihād of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh and al-Fakhkhī (*Peace be Upon Them*) was a defensive jihād, and likewise those similar to them who were in a state of small numbers and weakness.

[From the Words of Imām Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*)]

From a sermon of Imām Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*): “Servants of Allah, do not fight your enemy while in doubt, lest you stray from the path of Allah. Rather, insight—insight first, then fighting. For Allah rewards certainty with the best reward that He grants for truth. Indeed, whoever kills a soul while doubting its misguidance is like one who kills a soul without right.” End.

And from another sermon of his (*Peace be Upon Him*):

“We are the trustees, the elect, and the scholars. We are the treasurers of the knowledge of Allah and the heirs of the revelation of Allah, the progeny of the Messenger of Allah Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Our Shi‘a are the shepherds of the sun and the moon. By Allah, Allah does not accept repentance except from them, nor does He single out anyone besides them with mercy.”

And from words of Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) describing the Qur'an:

“And an interpretation (ta'wīl) known only to Allah, namely what will occur of that which has not yet occurred.” End.

I say: This is one of the interpretations of the ambiguous (al-mutashābih), and it is a sound interpretation. For the word *ta'wīl* is derived from *al-ma'āl* (the outcome), and the outcome pertains to the future, and the future is unseen, known only to Allah the Exalted. According to this interpretation, the pause in the verse¹ is at the Name of Majesty, and what follows begins thereafter.

And from the words of Imām Zayd ibn 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*):

Mu'āwiyah ibn Ishāq al-Anṣārī, *may Allah have mercy on him*, asked him and said: “O son of the Messenger of Allah, is there with you knowledge from the knowledge of the Messenger of Allah that people do not know?”

He replied: “Yes—abundant knowledge, inherited by the younger ones from the elders.”

He said: “I said: What is it?”

He said: “Muḥammad ibn 'Alī, our elder, used to gather to him the

1- That is His saying, the Exalted: “*And none knows its interpretation except Allah. And those firmly rooted in knowledge...*” [Aal-Imran: 7].

children of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (*Peace be Upon Them*), teaching them the Qur'an according to the recitation of 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), and he would bring forth to them his knowledge."

He said: "I said: And what is his knowledge?"

He said: "That which this Ummah needs regarding its lawful and its unlawful, the genealogies of the Arabs, and what will occur from the time of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) until the Hour is established; and that there is no prayer for one who wipes over leather socks; and that one should not lower the voice in '*Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*'; and that whoever omits raising the voice where recitation is to be audible has diminished his prayer; and that one must not eat al-jarrī¹ or al-marmāhī, nor any fish that does not have scales; and that enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong is obligatory upon one among us who has the opportunity with knowledge; and whoever claims that anyone is more entitled to this matter than us has no covenant, and we are free from him. By Allah, this is the natural disposition of Islam, and the religion of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Upon it I live, and upon it I die, and upon it are those believers who follow me. And there is no power except with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great." End.

[The Manner of Zayd ibn 'Alī's Visit (*Peace be Upon Him*) to the Grave of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)]

Then Zayd (*Peace be Upon Him*) came to the grave of the Messenger of Allah Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and prayed beside it. Then he turned away from his prayer and said: "Peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allah. Peace be upon you, O Prophet of Allah. Peace be upon you, O chosen of the prophets and noblest of the messengers. Peace be upon you, O beloved of Allah. This is my final covenant with your city, and my final covenant with your grave and your pulpit. I departed, O my father, unwilling, and I traveled through the lands as a captive. O Messenger of Allah, I ask you for intercession to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, that He support me with the certainty of faith, the might of piety, and that He seal my end with martyrdom that will join me with my noble forefathers and my pure family." End.

In this there is evidence for the permissibility of voluntary prayer at the grave of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the permissibility of complaining to him of affliction

1- Al-jarrī (Eel): is a type of fish that resembles a snake, and is called al-marmāhī in Persian.

that has befallen, then asking him to intercede with Allah for the granting of what one desires. This is *tawassul*.

[Ḥadīth: “Be Upright and Draw Near”]

Ḥadīth: “*Be upright and draw near, and know that the most beloved of deeds to Allah is that which is most consistent, even if it is little.*”

The meaning: “Be upright” — that is, avoid the two extremes of excess and negligence. “And draw near” — that is, approach deeds gradually so that you do not become weary.

I say: This is how it was explained in *al-Tāj*. “Be upright” means: let your deeds be upon correctness. “And draw near” means: do not be reckless; proceed gently. For whoever acts contrary to the Sunnah is not upon uprightness, and a little done upon the Sunnah is better than much done upon innovation.

[On undertaking action where safety is not permissible]

As for undertaking action where safety is not permissible, it is not considered valid; rather, it is not permissible for him. End quote from *al-Tāj*.

I say:

1. If the possibility of safety and the possibility of its absence are equal, then in this case, if there is an interest in undertaking the action that returns benefit to Islam and its polity, then undertaking it is permissible; otherwise, it is not.
2. If the likelihood of lack of safety outweighs the likelihood of safety, then undertaking the action is not permissible.
3. If the likelihood of safety outweighs the likelihood of harm, then undertaking the action is permissible.

All of this is based on the saying of Allah Almighty: “*And do not throw yourselves with your own hands into destruction*” [al-Baqarah:195], and on what is established in reason regarding the general obligation to preserve one’s life.

The strength of a woman is less than that of a man; she is weaker than him. Hence, Allah Almighty did not prescribe fighting for her as He prescribed it for men.

However, there is no objection in Islam to women assisting men in wars by treating the wounded and transporting them, preparing food and providing it to the fighters, as well as supplying drink, serving the combatants, and encouraging them to fight; such was their practice in the early period of Islam.

Indeed, the people of modern civilization have erred regarding women’s rights and attempted to equate her with the man, assigning her

to men's occupations, and so forth. If we reflect upon the position in which Islam has placed the woman, we realize that it has placed her in the position suited to her and compatible with her nature. Whoever attempts to place the woman in a position other than that in which Islam has placed her is in fact attempting to wrong her.

The work to which Islam has assigned her is:

1. Attending to the upbringing of children in all that upbringing entails, including education, discipline, cleanliness, and so forth.
2. Managing household affairs. The mistress of the household is the primary person responsible for preparing and arranging meals for the husband, the children, and those connected to them; for the cleanliness of the home, the kitchen, and the bathrooms; and for the cleanliness of the family's clothing and bedding.
3. Providing moral support to the man; for a righteous wife alleviates her husband's worries and hardships. As Allah *Almighty* says: "*And among His signs is that He created for you from yourselves spouses that you may find tranquility in them...*" [al-Rūm:21].

[The purity of fats, oils, and vessels of the Abode of War upon taking possession of them]

- If the Muslims take possession of the Abode of War, then whatever they find already slaughtered becomes pure and lawful. Likewise, their fats, oils, and vessels that they handle with their moisture become pure by virtue of taking possession.
- Whatever a Muslim takes from the Abode of War by way of loan or deposit, it is permissible for him to take it. End quote from *al-Tāj*.

[The Abode of War and the Abode of Disbelief]

The Abode of War is the land of disbelievers who are at war with the Muslims.

The Abode of Disbelief is the land of disbelievers who are not at war.

Migration from the Abode of War is obligatory by consensus. As for the Abode of Disbelief, the obligation of migration from it is presumptive, due to disagreement regarding the obligation of migrating from it. This was conveyed in *al-Tāj al-Madhhab*.

[The permissibility of entering the Abode of War to fulfill needs]

In *Ma'āthir al-Abrār*, quoting Imam Yaḥyā ibn al-Muḥassin, *peace be upon him*: It is permissible to enter the Abode of War to fulfill needs; our Imams have mentioned this. End quote.

I say: Evidence for this may be drawn from what is mentioned in the

books of prophetic biography, namely that some Muslims used to travel to Mecca—while it was at that time an Abode of War—for ‘umrah, for ḥajj, or for trade during the era of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

[What is obligatory upon the believer in times of tribulation]

Question: What is obligatory upon the believer in times of tribulation, given that he must pursue means of livelihood—what should he do and what should he avoid?

Answer: It has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful that he answered this question, saying: “Be during tribulation like the young camel: it has no back to be ridden, nor udders to be milked.”

The meaning is: strive with all your effort to remain distant from assisting the wrongdoers or cooperating with them, such that they derive no benefit from you whatsoever. All of this should be accompanied by outward social interaction, exactly as it is said: “Be moderate, and walk to the side.” It suffices for him to denounce evil in his heart, and it is not permissible for him to attend gatherings in which sinful acts are committed.

As for means of livelihood, they are diverse; he should pursue from among them that which is closest to safeguarding his religion.

[Ḥadīth: Whoever departs from obedience and separates from the community]

Ḥadīth: “*Whoever departs from obedience and separates from the community, then dies, dies a death of ignorance.*” Narrated by Muslim.

It may be inferred from the ḥadīth that one should not fight against whoever departs from obedience and separates from the community; rather, he should be left to his own affair.

This is supported by the fact that the Commander of the Faithful, *peace be upon him*, left the Khārijites alone and did not confront them. He did not even prevent them from their share of the public treasury. He only fought them when they shed unlawful blood, cut off roads, and brandished weapons against the Muslims.

[Ḥadīth: “A people who entrust their affairs to a woman will never prosper”]

Ḥadīth: “*A people who entrust their affairs to a woman will never prosper.*” It is understood from this ḥadīth that it is not permissible for a woman to assume any of the general public offices.

Moreover, it is rationally obligatory upon one who seeks the reform of lands and people to appoint to public offices those who are most capable in competence and strength. The woman, by her nature, is generally weaker than the man.

The evidence for this is that when a woman is exposed to a crisis, a problem, or pressure, she fails, her strength collapses, and it is lost in vain; in such a state she resorts to crying—crying being her political method and her final solution.

[On the Rights of a Muslim]

Answering a Muslim's invitation, visiting the sick, attending funerals, advising a fellow Muslim, offering sympathy to someone who sneezes, and greeting him when meeting—these are the rights of a Muslim upon another Muslim, as established in the ḥadīth from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). They are all generally recommended (mandūb).

It has been said that answering a Muslim's invitation is obligatory because it is commanded, and that whoever fails to respond is considered disobedient, as mentioned in some reports.

We say: generally, answering a Muslim's invitation is recommended, but it may become obligatory if refraining from it would cause harm, pain, or lead the inviter to perceive arrogance or pride in the one who ignores it.

Advising a Muslim may also be obligatory, as indicated in Allah's saying: *"Except those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience"* [al-'Asr].

[Ḥadīths on the Lawful, Intention, Abstaining from What Does Not Concern One, Loving for One's Brother, and Asceticism]

1. Ḥadīth: *"The lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear, and between them are doubtful matters unknown to most people. Whoever avoids doubtful matters has purified his religion and honor; whoever falls into doubtful matters falls into the unlawful—like a shepherd grazing near a protected sanctuary, almost entering it. Indeed, every king has a sanctuary; indeed, the sanctuary of Allah is His prohibited things; indeed, in the body there is a morsel which, if sound, makes the whole body sound, and if corrupt, makes the whole body corrupt—indeed, it is the heart."*
2. Ḥadīth: *"Actions are judged by intentions, and everyone will have only what they intended. Whoever's migration is for Allah and His Messenger, then his migration is for Allah and His Messenger; and whoever's migration is for a woman to marry or for worldly gain, then his migration is for what he migrated towards."*
3. Ḥadīth: *"Part of the perfection of a person's Islam is leaving what does not concern him."*
4. Ḥadīth: *"None of you is a true believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself and dislikes for him what he dislikes for*

himself.”

5. Ḥadīth: *“Renounce the world and Allah will love you; renounce what is in the hands of people and people will love you.”*

These ḥadīths guide many acts of Islam and underlie numerous rulings.

I say: they should be supplemented with the ḥadīth: *“There is no harm and no causing harm in Islam,”* as it underpins many rulings that are virtually countless.

Indeed:

- The first ḥadīth guides the Muslim on what to pursue and what to leave.
- The second guides on what earns acceptance of deeds with Allah.
- The third guides on what purifies deeds, namely leaving what does not concern the Muslim.
- The fourth guides on the rights of a Muslim over another.
- The fifth guides the path to the love of Allah and the love of people.
- The sixth guides that a Muslim should restrain his limbs from harming fellow Muslims, and that no Muslim should harm another, as this is not permissible in Islam.

[Exalting a Person for a Benefit]

Question: If there is benefit in exalting a person—such as ensuring safety for the believers, attracting them to the righteous, or similar purposes—does exalting him become permissible?

Answer: This is permissible, and indeed it is preferable not to neglect it. The Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) practiced this; it is reported that he spread a garment for a disbeliever and seated him upon it, and that al-Hādī (*Peace be Upon Him*) mentioned *Ad-da'am* during the Friday sermon.

In this regard, Allah *Almighty* says: *“So by mercy from Allah, you were lenient with them. And if you had been harsh, hardened of heart, they would have dispersed from around you; so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter...”* [Āl 'Imrān:159]. Allah commanded His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to honor those of weak faith who, out of heedlessness, commit many sins, by bringing them closer, consulting them in affairs, not holding them accountable for minor transgressions, and praying for their forgiveness.

- It is also reported that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) shrouded 'Abdullah ibn Abi in his

cloth, although Abdullah was a leading hypocrite; the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did this to reform his people and draw them toward Islam and the prophet of Islam (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- However, it is not permissible to exalt someone in a way that is impermissible—such as lying about him, or praying for mercy or forgiveness for someone who is openly sinful, disbelieving, or hypocritical.
- Permissible forms of exalting include standing when he enters a gathering, giving him space, visiting him at home, greeting him respectfully if he is elderly or learned, addressing him with his honorific (e.g., “Abu So-and-So”), accepting gifts and hospitality, or seeking his counsel.

From this, it is narrated that on the day of the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “*Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufyan is secure.*”

[Difference Between Positive Laws and Islamic Laws]

Human conditions and situations vary over time, from one state to another, reaching the level of development and civilization we see today. Similarly, their conditions vary from one land to another due to differences in climate, terrain, wealth, poverty, etc.

People who do not follow Allah’s religion continue to legislate laws, issuing new rulings in every era and land, adding and subtracting as time and place change, and often borrowing from the laws of others.

Despite their long experience, extensive experimentation, study of civil laws, and assessment of their success, failure, and effectiveness, they have not achieved what they hope for in terms of a dignified life for the general populace and elites.

Meanwhile, the laws of Islam and its legislative rulings are suitable for all human conditions, in every time and place.

[On Contraceptive Treatment]

Question: It is known that contraceptive treatments can lead to various illnesses, and we see that the enemies of Islam support family planning and its reduction, while we see that the Hadith encourage procreation and marriage. So, in this contradiction, does it imply that contraceptive use is prohibited for reasons other than harm—such as preserving a woman’s youth, or for the couple to enjoy a calm life, or having fewer children to facilitate their sustenance, or other reasons? And is the encouragement of procreation the correct approach, or limiting it?

Answer: There is no doubt nor suspicion that the Wise Legislator has encouraged marriage and desired abundant offspring.

There is no disagreement among Muslims that marriage is not obligatory solely for procreation, nor is it obligatory for a Muslim to deliberately cause offspring.

There is also no disagreement that a Muslim should not marry unless he fears falling into harm.

The encouragement of marriage and abundant progeny does not indicate the prohibition of using contraceptive treatment; rather, it indicates the priority of avoiding it, which is considered disliked (makruh).

What indicates the permissibility of using contraceptive treatment are the following:

1. The default ruling is permissibility, and the burden of proof is on those claiming prohibition.
2. It has been authentically narrated that the Companions used coitus interruptus ('azl) during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

As for slaves, there is agreement and consensus on the permissibility. Regarding free wives, the correct view is permissibility, due to the authentic narration that the Companions practiced 'azl during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). This was also the view of Imam Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), who responded to those among the Companions who said that 'azl constitutes minor infanticide, stating its meaning: "It is not considered infanticide until seven menstrual cycles have passed," and the seven menstrual cycles are mentioned in Surat Al-Mu'minun.

[On Supplications]

The Thirty Verses

The thirty verses are: Al-Fatiha, the beginning of Al-Baqarah up to: *muflihoon*, and Ayat al-Kursi up to: *khalidoon*, and in Al-A'raf: *In rabbukum Allah ...* up to near *muqsineen*, and in Subhan¹: *Say: Call upon Allah ...* to the end of the Surah, and the beginning of As-Saffat up to: *tin laazib*, and in Ar-Rahman *O assembly of jinn and mankind ...* up to: *fa la tansasiran*, and *If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain ...* to its end, and from the beginning of Al-Jinn up to *shattan*, and *Say: He is Allah, One*. Completed from the annotations of *Sharh al-Azhār*.

[On the Supplication of Zain al-Abidin]

In the supplication of Imam Zain al-Abidin (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"And make Your sustenance abundant for me as I age, and strengthen my power when I am weary ..."*

- This indicates that Allah's tradition is to expand the sustenance of His believing servant as he ages, and I have witnessed this truth in myself and others.
- That Allah provides His believing servant with strength at times of fatigue; thus, when a believer is tired in body or soul, Allah grants him psychological strength and firm determination to fulfill His pleasure and acts of worship. This is part of Allah's gracious treatment and kindness toward the believer.

As a believer ages and his body weakens, he most needs wealth and increased sustenance due to physical weakness in earning and having many dependents, and he most needs the grant of strength during times of fatigue.

Response to Supplication

Allah has promised His believing servants that He will respond to their supplication: *"Call upon Me; I will respond to you"* [Ghafir:60]. *"And when My servants ask you about Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls..."* The verse [Al-Baqarah: 186].

It is clear that Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. It is part of His wisdom and knowledge that in responding to a supplication, He considers the welfare of the one obligated (the supplicant). If Allah were to immediately grant the supplicant what he asked for, he might become conceited, believing it to be a sign of high rank with Allah, which could lead him to destruction and loss. Allah, *the Exalted*, does not misguide His faithful saints nor expose them to causes of tribulation or ruin. *"Allah*

1- This is from [Al-Isra'].

intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship" [Al-Baqarah:185].

If asked: What about the causes of tribulation and ruin that Allah allowed for the people of the Sabbath?

We say: Allah prepared these causes as a recompense for their rebellion, disobedience, and transgression, as stated in His words at the end of their story: *"Thus We tested them for their wickedness"* [Al-A'raf], and similarly: *"So let those beware who transgress against His command that a trial may strike them or a painful punishment"* [An-Nur].

Thus, it is clear that Allah does not subject His obedient, faithful servants to causes that would lead them into tribulation and error; He does so only for sinners and transgressors, as recompense for their disobedience. In this context, He said: *"Then the outcome of those who did evil was that they denied the signs of Allah and mocked them"* [Ar-Rum].

Allah, *the Exalted*, informed that the recompense and final end of the wicked is the most evil fate: denying Allah's signs and ridiculing them.

However, for the obedient believers, He said: *"Allah will firmly establish those who believe with the firm word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter"* [Ibrahim: 27].

Therefore, the response of Allah to the supplication of His faithful servant comes at the time when Allah knows that granting the request is purely beneficial for his religion and worldly life.

Sometimes it is in Allah's wisdom not to grant the request at all, neither in the present world nor in its future. In that case, Allah compensates him either in this world or the Hereafter according to His wisdom. Allah says: *"And if Allah had extended the provision for His servants, they would have transgressed on earth; but He sends it down in measured amounts as He wills; indeed, He is Acquainted with His servants, All-Seer"* [Ash-Shura]. And He says: *"Indeed, man transgresses when he sees himself self-sufficient"* [Al-'Alaq].

[How Does Allah Respond to the Polytheists?]

Question: Allah *the Exalted* mentioned that He responds to the supplication of polytheists when they are on the deck of a ship in the middle of the sea, while the sea rages around them; when they call upon Him in that situation, He answers their supplication and saves them. How does He respond to their supplication while they are polytheists?

It may be said in response: The polytheists in the middle of the sea, when the winds rage and the sea becomes turbulent, turn their hearts and supplication to Allah alone, knowing that none other than Him can save them. They forget their idols at that moment, being certain that these idols have no power to benefit or save them.

At that moment, their call to Allah comes from hearts believing in

Allah alone, certain that power and strength belong only to Him; there is no place for idols in their hearts.

Thus, Allah informs us that in such a situation, they call upon Him sincerely, abandoning polytheism temporarily. They supplicated to Allah with the supplication of the distressed, and He answered them and saved them.

Therefore, their supplication at that time was from its proper source, and the response was in its due place. They called upon Allah with the supplication of the distressed, as He said: *"Who responds to the distressed when he calls upon Him?"* [An-Naml:62].

Furthermore, the response to their supplication serves as a proof against them, a clear sign to turn them away from polytheism and return them to Allah alone, and an additional kindness to them.

It appears to me that the response to supplication can be divided into two categories:

1. **Response to the supplication of the distressed:** This is the one surrounded by causes of destruction, looking here and there in hope of salvation but finding nothing, losing hope in everything in this world and in the heavens. He turns his heart to Allah, extends his hope to Him, and calls upon Him, certain that none other than Allah can save him. Such a supplicant is answered by Allah, and it is not a condition for acceptance that he was a believer before the supplication, nor that he remains steadfast in faith and obedience after emerging from the distress.

Evidence of this is what has been mentioned regarding Allah answering the supplication of the polytheists in the raging sea. Allah addressed the polytheists in *Saurt An-Naml* through the tongue of His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"Say: All praise is due to Allah, and peace be upon His servants whom Allah has chosen; is it not that they associate others?"* [An-Naml], up to His words: *"Who responds to the distressed when he calls upon Him and removes the evil..."* [An-Naml:62].

2. **Response to the supplication of the non-distressed:** This is conditional, in addition to what was mentioned about sincerity in the supplication of the distressed, that the supplicant be obedient to Allah, consistent in piety, and repentant to Him. This is based on His words: *"I respond to the supplication of the supplicant when he calls upon Me; let them respond to Me and believe in Me, so that they may be guided"* [Al-Baqarah:186]. Allah thus made the response contingent upon obedience to His commands and refraining from what He forbids, along with maintaining faith—

making this the cause and reason for the acceptance of their supplication, which leads to their guidance and success. Allah also says: *"Indeed, Allah only accepts from the righteous"* [Al-Ma'idah].

[Supplication as an Independent Act of Worship]

Supplication is a worship beloved to Allah, *the Exalted*, as He said: *"And call upon Me; I will respond to you. Indeed, those who scorn My worship will enter Hell humiliated"* [Ghafir:60]. Allah calls it an act of worship because it manifests one's need and poverty before Allah, and shows humility in requesting from Him, the One in whose hand is all goodness, and Who is All-Powerful over everything.

It also affirms that all sources of matters are in His hand alone; He is the Guide, the Helper, the Provider, the Protector, etc.

This is the meaning of living faith in the accountable, which is the greatest remembrance that Allah mentions in His Book: *"And the remembrance of Allah is the greatest"* [Al-Ankabut:45], as said by Al-Hadi (Peace be Upon Him).

When this feeling exists in the believer and fills his soul, the tongue overflows with remembrance of Allah and supplication without burden, effort, or will.

[Humility in Supplication]

Allah, *Exalted is He*, says: *"Call upon your Lord humbly and in secret; indeed, He does not love the aggressors"* [Al-A'raf:55].

Allah has made it obligatory that supplication be:

1. With humility.
2. In secret.

Humility means showing subservience when supplicating, with the supplicant's voice and posture reflecting a state that evokes compassion and mercy.

Just as people, when asking others for help, display an appearance of weakness, need, and poverty so that others may pity them and show compassion,

Allah, *the Exalted*, desires His servants to show humility, need, and poverty in their supplication to Him. Moreover, Allah loves that this humility and supplication be secret, because private supplication is the most sincere and safest from ostentation and desire for praise. By concealing the supplication from the eyes of people, the avenues for Satan to corrupt the prayer are blocked, and the supplicant is protected from the snares of ostentation.

His words: *"Indeed, He does not love the aggressors"* mean that Allah does not love those who exceed the limits set for them in His Book and

by the tongue of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), in everything small and great. Among those limits is what is prescribed for supplication in this verse: that supplication be with humility, submission, and modesty, and that it be secret, away from the hearing and sight of people.

Aggression in supplication also includes asking for what is unlawful according to Allah, and for what Allah should not do.

It is not aggression to make frequent supplications, as some have claimed, because supplication is part of remembrance and worship. Allah said: "*O you who believe, remember Allah with much remembrance*" [Al-Ahzab]. And because the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) also frequently supplicated, and it was narrated that he did so on the day of Badr.

It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) that he made long supplications; most of the supplications in the *Sahifa al-Sajjadiyya* are narrated from the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*), as mentioned by Ibn Abi al-Hadid in *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*.

[On Raising One's Voice in Supplication]

Raising one's voice in supplication and speaking it aloud is disliked (*makrūh*), except in specific places.

In seeking rain (*istisqā'*), in the ten (days) of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, and supplication during Ḥajj, and the supplication of the wronged. Ended from the marginalia of *Sharḥ al-Azhār*.

I say: This is due to specific evidences that have been reported regarding that; otherwise, the principle is that supplication is to be secret, due to His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*Call upon your Lord in humility and privately*" [Al-A'raf:50], and: "*And remember your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear, and without loudness in words, in the mornings and in the evenings; and do not be among the heedless*" [Al-A'raf].

The evidence for raising (the voice in) supplication in Ḥajj is what has been narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and from his saying in Ḥajj: "*It is al-'ajj and al-thajj*"—or as he said; and al-'ajj is the raising of voices.

And regarding the wronged: His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*Allah does not like the public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged*" [An-Nisa':148]. Allah—*Exalted is He*—has permitted the wronged person to speak aloud with evil speech concerning his oppressor; so, all the more, Allah—*Exalted is He*—loves raising the statement and speaking it aloud in supplication against the oppressor, which there is no doubt about its goodness.

And perhaps the evidence for raising supplication **in the ten (days)** is: *"... as your remembrance of your fathers, or with [even] more remembrance"* [Al-Baqarah:200]; and the polytheists, in the days of Ḥajj, used to proclaim the boasts of their fathers and raise their voices with them among the gatherings of the pilgrims; so Allah—*Exalted is He*—commanded the believers to remember Him in Ḥajj as their remembrance of their fathers when they were polytheists, or with more remembrance.

And in seeking rain (istisqā') the narrations have been reported from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he spoke aloud with the remembrance of Allah—*Exalted is He*—and praising Him and supplication.

Yes, speaking aloud in supplication has come in other than those four aforementioned places:

- 1- In the audible prayers, and that is because al-Fātiḥah includes the remembrance of Allah—*Exalted is He*—and supplication.
- 2- In qunūt in the Fajr prayer; for it is said aloud, and it is supplication and remembrance.
- 3- In the Friday sermon; for what is legislated in it is speaking aloud with the remembrance of Allah—*Exalted is He*—and supplication.
- 4- In supplication for the one who pays zakāh; for the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to say it aloud for the one who pays the zakāh of his wealth, and among that: *"O Allah, send blessings upon the family of Abū Rāfi"*.
- 5- At the time of the outbreak of war, as narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) on the day of Badr.
- 6- Supplication for a people, or supplication against them, due to the occurrence of a cause; as narrated regarding supplication for the shavers three times, then for the shorten-ers once; and like supplication for 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) on many occasions; and as narrated regarding supplication with cursing upon Abū Sufyān, Mu'āwiyah, al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-'Āṣ, and others.

From here, it is appropriate for us to say: indeed, what is legislated in supplication is concealment and secrecy, except if need and interest call for making it apparent; so if there is no need and no interest, then it should not be made apparent, and concealing it is purer with Allah and nearer to being answered; due to what it contains of sincerity, and cutting oneself off to Allah.

And what appears from the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) speaking aloud in supplication on the day of Badr is that it was for the sake of informing that victory is not in his

hand nor in the hand of his armies, rather it is from Allah, and that in that hour he was in the greatest need of Allah and the most impoverished to Him; for this reason he raised his hands in supplication, and implored Allah until his cloak fell.

And he spoke aloud in supplication for the shavers and repeated it, and for the shorten-ers—(that was) to urge and encourage shaving.

And he spoke aloud in supplication against Abū Sufyān, Mu'āwiyah, al-Ḥakam, and the like—so that the believers would beware of them regarding their religion and their worldly life.

And he spoke aloud in supplication for a people, to draw the eyes of the Muslims to magnifying them and taking them as allies.

And he spoke aloud in supplication for the one who pays zakāh to calm his self and reassure it, along with what is in that of encouragement toward paying zakāh; and likewise the rest of the places in which speaking aloud in supplication has been reported—indeed, for speaking aloud therein there are motives which wisdom and interest called for.

And based on this, we can say: if an interest presents itself for speaking aloud in supplication, then one should speak aloud; and that is like when in speaking aloud there is an admonition, or for teaching, or the like of that.

[Exposing Oneself to the Breezes of Allah's Mercy]

Ibn 'Asākir narrated with his chain from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: "*Seek goodness throughout your lifetime, and expose yourselves to the breezes of your Lord; for Allah has breezes from His mercy by which He strikes whom He wills among His servants; and ask Him to cover your nakednesses and to secure your terrors*". Ended from Ibn Kathīr's Tafsīr of Sūrat Yūnus.

[Some Means for Attaining Religious and Worldly Needs]

Reciting the Qur'an is a means for attaining religious and worldly needs, because reciting it is worship and obedience that brings one near to Allah—*Exalted is He*; and likewise charity, prayer, maintaining ties of kinship, and ... etc.

[The Ruling on Seeking Forgiveness for the Believing Men and the Believing Women]

Question: Is seeking forgiveness for the believing men and the believing women obligatory?

Answer: Seeking forgiveness is obligatory:

1- For oneself; so the legally responsible person must seek forgiveness for himself.

2- For the parents, due to the right they have over the child: *"and say,*

'My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was small'" [Al-Isra':24].

3- Seeking forgiveness for the Muslim deceased when his funeral prayer is performed over him.

As for seeking forgiveness for others besides those we mentioned, then it is recommended and legislated, and there is no evidence for its obligation. And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And ask forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and the believing women"* [Muhammad: 19]—it is an address to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) when Allah—*Exalted is He*—commanded him to seek forgiveness; because his intercession with Allah is accepted, due to the tremendous honor and the lofty rank that he has; so the command came to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) due to this particularity, and this particularity does not exist in other than him.

And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And those who came after them say, 'Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our hearts any resentment toward those who have believed ...'"* [Al-Hashr:10]—it is a narration which Allah—*Exalted is He*—related about those people, and it does not indicate obligation. And likewise, Allah—*Exalted is He*—relating the seeking forgiveness of Ibrāhīm and Nūḥ (*peace be upon them*) there is in them nothing that indicates obligation. And likewise, Allah—*Exalted is He*—relating the seeking forgiveness of the angels for the believers—so all of that does not indicate obligation.

[A Supplication for Going Out in Obedience to Allah]

Whoever goes out in obedience to Allah and says: (O Allah, indeed I did not go out in insolence, nor in vain pride, nor in ostentation, nor for reputation; rather I went out seeking Your pleasure and avoiding Your wrath. So I ask You, by Your right over all Your creation, that You provide me with goodness more than what I hope, and that You turn away from me evil more than what I fear). Ended.

[Great Remembrances and Supplications]

(O Allah, indeed I seek refuge in You from poverty except to You, and from humiliation except to You; and I seek refuge in You from saying falsehood, or committing wickedness, or being deceived concerning You. And I seek refuge in You from the gloating of enemies, and the severity of illness, and the disappointment of hope, and the removal of blessing, and the suddenness of punishment.)

(O Allah, make well-being for me a slogan and a garment, and a shield against every affliction.)

And Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal narrated with his chain from Abū Dharr (*May*

Allah be pleased with him) who said: My beloved, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) commanded me with seven: he commanded me to love the poor and to draw near to them; and he commanded me to look at the one who is below me and not to look at the one who is above me; and he commanded me to maintain the ties of kinship even if it turns away; and he commanded me not to ask anyone for anything; and he commanded me to speak the truth even if it is bitter; and he commanded me not to fear, regarding Allah, the blame of any blamer; and he commanded me to increase in saying: «*There is no power and no might except by Allah*», for indeed they are a treasure from beneath the Throne.

And he also narrated with his chain from Shaddād ibn Aws who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: "*When people hoard gold and silver, then hoard these words: O Allah, I ask You for steadfastness in the matter, and determination upon right guidance. And I ask You for gratitude for Your blessing, and I ask You for excellence in Your worship. And I ask You for a sound heart, and I ask You for a truthful tongue. And I ask You from the good of what You know, and I seek refuge in You from the evil of what You know, and I seek Your forgiveness for what You know. Indeed You are the Knower of the unseen.*"

And he also narrated with his chain from ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar who said: The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to, when he mounted his riding animal, say “*Allāhu akbar*” three times, then say: "*Glory be to Him who has subjected this to us, and we could not have been capable of it; and indeed, to our Lord we will surely return*". Then he would say: "*O Allah, indeed I ask You in this journey of mine for righteousness and piety, and from deeds that which You are pleased with. O Allah, make the journey easy for us, and fold up for us the far distance. O Allah, You are the Companion in travel and the Successor over the family. O Allah, accompany us in our travel and succeed us among our family.*"

And when he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) returned to his family he would say: "*Returning, repenting—if Allah wills—worshipping our Lord, praising (Him).*" And thus it was narrated by Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and al-Nasā’ī. Ended from Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr.

Greeting the People of the Graves

(Peace be upon you, people of these abodes, from among the believers; and indeed, if Allah wills, we shall join you. May Allah have mercy upon those who have gone ahead of us and of you, and those who come later. We ask Allah for well-being for us and for you.)—from what the Prophet (May

Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) taught.

[A Supplication for the People of the Graves]

"May Allah make your loneliness intimate, have mercy on your estrangement, pardon your wrongdoer, and accept your good deeds".

Supplication for Insomnia

Al-Ṭabarānī narrated from Zayd ibn Thābit who said: Insomnia from the night afflicted me, so I complained of that to the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and he said: "Say: *O Allah, the stars have set, and the eyes have become still, and You are the Ever-Living, the Sustainer; O Ever-Living, O Sustainer, put my eye to sleep and make my night calm*". So I said it, and it left me. Ended from Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, Sūrat ar-Rūm.

[The Name of Allah by Which, When One Supplicates, He Responds]

Al-Nasā'ī narrated that a man said in his supplication: "O Allah, indeed I ask You by the fact that to You belongs all praise: there is no god but You, the Bestower, the Originator of the heavens and the earth; O Possessor of majesty and honor; O Ever-Living, O Sustainer; indeed I ask You." So the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to his companions: "Do you know by what he supplicated?" They said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, he has supplicated Allah by His Greatest Name—when He is supplicated by it, He responds, and when He is asked by it, He gives." Ended, abridged.

[A Benefit: The Greatest Name of Allah]

In a ḥadīth mentioned by Imām Aḥmad ibn Hāshim (*May Allah have mercy on him*) in *as-Safīnah*, from *Amālī al-Murshid bi'llāh* (*May Allah have mercy on him*): "The Greatest Name of Allah is in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And your God is One God; there is no god except Him—the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate"* [Al-Baqarah], and in the openings of Sūrat Āl 'Imrān: *"Alif-Lām-Mīm. Allah—there is no god except Him—the Ever-Living, the Sustainer"* [Aal 'Imran]"—or as he said.

I say: what is mentioned from the Most Beautiful Names of Allah in these two verses are five names, they are: Allah, ar-Raḥmān, ar-Raḥīm, al-Ḥayy, al-Qayyūm.

As for the first names—Allah, ar-Raḥmān, ar-Raḥīm—one may infer the greatness of their affair and the nobility of their rank with Allah—*Exalted is He*—by their coming at the beginning of every sūrah in the Qur'an except Sūrat Barā'ah.

And it can be inferred from what has come abundantly from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

regarding the virtue of Āyat al-Kursī, about the greatness of the matter of the last two names.

And in *Amālī* of Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsā, from ʿAlī (*Peace be Upon Him*), he said: (Bismillāh ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm is nearer to the Greatest Name of Allah than the blackness of the eye is to its whiteness.)

Yes, Allah—*Exalted is He*—said: *"And to Allah belong the Most Beautiful Names, so call upon Him by them"* [Al-Aʿraf: 180], and He said: *"Say, 'Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Merciful; whichever you call—then to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names'"* [Al-Isra': 110]. So all of the Names of Allah—*Exalted is He*—are beautiful, and He—*Exalted is He*—loves that He be supplicated by them and praised by them. And what appears to me is that the secret of the acceptance of supplication returns to the supplicant himself, not to a particularity of the names—though they have virtue with Allah and a distinction.

And in the Noble Qurʾān there is that which guides to what we said regarding that: His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Is He [not best] who responds to the distressed one when he calls upon Him"* [An-Naml:62]; and His—*Exalted is He*—saying, relating about the people of the sea when the waves surge: *"They call upon Allah, sincere to Him in religion"* [Al-ʿAnkabut:65]; and His—*Exalted is He*—saying after mentioning the supplication of the people of understanding at the end of Sūrat Āl ʿImrān: *"So their Lord responded to them..."* [Aal ʿImran:195]; and His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Call upon your Lord in humility and privately"* [Al-Aʿraf: 55]; and His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Our Lord, we have believed, so forgive us and have mercy upon us"* [Al-Muʾminun:109]; and His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And make righteous for me [my affairs] in my offspring. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed I am of the Muslims"* [Al-Ahqaf]; and the like of that in the Qurʾān is much. So from that and its like it is taken:

That Islam, and faith, and repentance, and (being compelled in need) to Allah—meaning: that the hope of the supplicant is cut off from other than Allah—and showing humility, poverty, need, and sincerity in supplication, and concealing it and keeping it secret.

It is taken from what we have put forward that these are among the (causes) of the acceptance of supplication.

Then, after bringing to mind what has been mentioned, it is appropriate that the supplicant place before his supplication an admission of sin, as in the supplication of Ādam (*peace be upon him*); or putting forward praise of Allah—*Exalted is He*—as in the supplication of Yūnus (*peace be upon him*), and as in Sūrat al-Fātiḥah, and as in the supplication of the angels: *"Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge..."* [Ghafir]; and as in the supplication of the people of understanding: *"Our Lord, You did not create this in vain; glory be to*

You, so protect us from the punishment of the Fire" [Aal 'Imran].

Or putting forward complaint, as in the supplication of Zakariyyā (*peace be upon him*); or seeking (means) by faith, as in the like of His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Our Lord, we have believed, so forgive us..." [Al-Mu'minun: 109]*; and likewise sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) as in many aḥādīth; and sealing the supplication with praise and sending blessings upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

Supplication of the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) which he supplicated for Abū Salamah:

"O Allah, forgive Abū Salamah, raise his rank among those rightly guided, replace him among his offspring among the successful, forgive us and him, O Lord of the worlds, make his grave spacious for him, and illuminate it for him". Muslim.

[The Best Supplication and the Best Remembrance After the Qur'an]

Question: What is the best supplication and the best remembrance after the Qur'an?

Answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success: What appears to me is that the best supplication is what Allah—*Exalted is He*—has mentioned in the Qur'an. And most of the supplication mentioned in the Qur'an on the tongues of the prophets and the righteous is seeking forgiveness; and in it there is much urging to seek forgiveness frequently. And after seeking forgiveness in abundance is seeking mercy; and very often, in the Qur'an, the mention of forgiveness and mercy comes together.

And in the Qur'an there is much supplication, but it is not in abundance like seeking forgiveness and mercy. Among that is seeking repentance; among it is seeking protection from the Fire and from disgrace; and seeking Paradise: *"And make me among the inheritors of the Paradise of bliss" [Ash-Shu'ara':85]*; and seeking knowledge and wisdom; and supplicating for the righteousness of offspring and spouse; and seeking death upon Islam; and supplicating to join the righteous; and seeking patience and steadfastness; and victory over the disbelieving people; and seeking safety from the trial of the wrongdoing and disbelieving people, and seeking deliverance from them; and seeking steadfastness upon guidance: *"Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate" [Aal 'Imran:8]*; *"Guide us to the straight path" [Al-Fatihah:1]*.

And in it is the mention of seeking elevation in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And make us an example for the righteous" [Al-Furqan:74]*; and in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And grant me a reputation of truth among later generations" [Ash-Shu'ara':84]*.

And in it is the mention of seeking provision, and seeking guardianship and support in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And appoint for us from Yourself a protector, and appoint for us from Yourself a helper"* [An-Nisa':75]; and: *"And appoint for me a minister from my family—Harun, my brother"* [Ta-Ha].

And in it is seeking refuge for the supplicant and his offspring from Satan, the accursed; and: *"... and from the evil of what He created ... and from the evil of the whisperer ..."*—the sūrah.

And in it is the mention of supplication against the wrongdoers, and the supplication for safety from accompanying them and from following their way: *"Not of those who have earned [Your] anger ..."* [Al-Fatihah: 7].

And in it is the mention of seeking the good of this world and the Hereafter in His saying: *"Our Lord, grant us in this world ..."* [Al-Baqarah].

And in it is the command to send prayers and peace upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*); and in it ... and in it ... etc.

As for the remembrance that Allah—*Exalted is He*—has mentioned in the Qur'an, it is glorification, praise, and magnification; and there has come the command for remembrance in absolute terms.

And the best remembrance is what Allah—*Exalted is He*—has mentioned of Himself; that is like Āyat al-Kursī, al-Fātiḥah, al-Ikhlāṣ, and the endings of Sūrat al-Ḥashr; and: *"Say, O Allah, Owner of sovereignty ..."* [Aal 'Imran:26]; and: *"And say: Praise be to Allah, who has not taken a son ..."* [Al-Isra':111]; and what He—*Exalted is He*—relayed from His prophets (*Peace be Upon Them*), like His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Our Lord, indeed You know what we conceal and what we declare ..."* [Ibrahim: 3]; and: *"There is no god except You; glory be to You; indeed, I have been among the wrongdoers"* [Al-Anbiya':87];

and the like of: *"Our Lord, You did not create this in vain; glory be to You"* [Aal 'Imran:191]; and: *"Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge"* [Ghafir: 7].

Yes, it may be that the best supplication and remembrance is what Allah—*Exalted is He*—legislated in the prayer: that is, the takbīr, and reciting al-Fātiḥah, and saying "Allah hears the one who praises Him," and praising for the one following the imam, and the glorification of bowing and prostration, and the tashahhud and sending prayers upon the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and saying "Glory be to Allah, praise be to Allah, there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest" in the last two rak'ahs.

[The Perfect Words]

Question: What is the explanation of "the words" in the transmitted

supplication: *"I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah, all of them, from the evil of what He created"*?

Answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success and assistance: The "words" here can be explained as the power of Allah—*Exalted is He*. And they came in the plural form, considering their penetration into everything, in every place and time, and in all states.

And what supports this explanation is what came in another ḥadīth from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"Place your hand on the place of pain seven times and say: I seek refuge in the might of Allah and His power from the evil of what I find"*—or as he said.

And this may be supported by His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And the best word of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel because they were patient"* [Al-A'raf:137]; for the meaning of that is: that Allah—*Exalted is He*—brought to pass for the Children of Israel and did for them, by His power, what had preceded as the promise from Allah to them of succession in the earth and the good end; so Allah—*Exalted is He*—named the doing of that a "word."

And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, 'Be,' and it is"* [Ya-Sin:82]; so Allah—*Glorified and Exalted*—is He—expressed His power and the speed of its effect by the word "Be."

And the words were described with perfection in his saying: *"the perfect"* in order to clarify the penetration of the power of Allah—*Exalted is He*—and that nothing incapacitates it, and no obstacle stands in its way.

And among that is His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And Allah eliminates falsehood and establishes truth by His words; indeed He is Knowing of what is within the breasts"* [Ash-Shura:24].

And from this figurative usage is His—*Exalted is He*—saying regarding 'Īsā: *"... the Messenger of Allah and His word which He cast to Maryam, and a spirit from Him"* [An-Nisa':171].

This—and it may be intended by "the words" the Qur'an; and it was permitted to seek refuge by it due to what it has of distinctiveness and clear connection to Allah—*Exalted is He*—so seeking refuge by it is seeking refuge in Allah; and from here it was not permitted for the menstruating woman and the one in major ritual impurity to recite it nor to touch it.

And it may be intended by "the words" knowledge; for "words" may be used and knowledge intended by them, as in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And if whatever trees upon the earth were pens, and the sea were*

ink, replenished thereafter by seven more seas, the words of Allah would not be exhausted" [Luqman:27].

And this meaning is near and suitable for the context: for indeed the knowledge of Allah—*Exalted is He*—has encompassed everything; so it is fitting that a person seek refuge from the evil of everything encompassed by the knowledge of Allah—*Exalted is He*—.

And from this figurative usage as well is His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Say, if the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if We brought the like of it as a supplement" [Al-Kahf:109].*

[The Blessed Litany (al-Ḥizb al-Mubārak)]

From *Ṭabaqāt al-Zaydiyyah*, from al-Kaynī'ī (May Allah be pleased with him): he recites *Surah Al-Fatihah* ten times, then says:

"Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest, and there is no power and no might except by Allah, the Most High, the Most Great. A bounty from Allah and a blessing; gratitude from Allah and mercy; praise be to Allah for granting success, and we seek His forgiveness for every shortcoming. Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return. Glory be to Allah, the Most High, the Most Exalted, the Bestower. Glory be to You—We have not worshipped You with the worship due to You. Glory be to You—We have not known You with the knowledge due to You. Glory be to You—We have not esteemed You with the esteem due to You. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, with no partner; to Him belongs the dominion and to Him belongs praise; He gives life and causes death, and He is Living and does not die; in His hand is all good, and He is Powerful over all things" (three times), "and to Him is the return. There is no god but Allah, the King, the True, the Manifest" (twice). "There is no god but Allah, the Most Merciful of the merciful. There is no god but Allah, the Most Generous of the generous. There is no god but Allah, the Beloved of the repentant. There is no god but Allah, the Succor of those who seek succor. There is no god but Allah, the King, the Compeller. There is no god but Allah, the One, the Subduer. There is no god but Allah, the Wise, the Forbearing, the Concealer. There is no god but Allah, the Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving. There is no god but Allah—forever—truly, truly. There is no god but Allah—in faith and in truthfulness. There is no god but Allah—in gentleness and in kindness. There is no god but Allah—in devotion and in tenderness. There is no god but Allah—before everything. There is no god but Allah—after everything. There is no god but Allah—our Lord remains and everything perishes. There is no god but Allah, worshipped in every place. There is no god but Allah, remembered by every tongue. There is no god but Allah, known by

beneficence. There is no god but Allah alone: He fulfilled His promise, aided His servant, and defeated the parties alone—and there is nothing after Him. There is no god but Allah: to Him belongs the blessing, and to Him belongs the bounty, and to Him belongs the beautiful praise. There is no god but Allah, and we worship none but Him, sincere to Him in religion, even if the disbelievers dislike it. He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden, and He is Knowing of all things. There is nothing like Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Allah is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs; and excellent is the Protector, and excellent is the Helper.”

Then he repeats “*There is no god but Allah*” one hundred times, or two hundred, or one thousand.

[Ruqyah for the Evil Eye]

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. In the name of Allah: a restrainer restrained, and a dry stone, and a blazing flame. I have repelled the eye of every one who looks, from jinn and humankind. Whatever Allah wills—there is no power and no might except by Allah. And may Allah bless Muhammad and his family. And I have erased its trace and removed it by the might of Allah and the power of Allah: “*Kāf-Hā-Yā-‘Ayn-Ṣād*”, and “*Hā-Mīm-‘Ayn-Sīn-Qāf*”, and “*Tāhā*”. “*We have not sent down the Qur’an upon you that you be distressed*”, and: “*Ya-Sin. By the wise Qur’an*”, and: “*Sad. By the Qur’an of reminder*”, and: “*Qaf. By the glorious Qur’an*”, and: “*Nun. By the pen and what they inscribe*”. “*So return [your] vision: do you see any breaks? Then return [your] vision twice; [your] vision will return to you humbled while it is fatigued*”. “*And Allah eliminates falsehood and establishes the truth by His words. Indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts*”. “*That is a lightening from your Lord and a mercy*”. “*And We send down of the Qur’an that which is healing and mercy for the believers*”. And may Allah send blessings and peace upon our master Muhammad and upon the good and pure people of his Household.

[Ruqyah for the Bewitched]

In *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, Ibn Abī Ḥātim said: Muḥammad ibn ‘Ammār ibn al-Ḥārith narrated to us; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān—meaning al-Dashtakī—narrated to us; Abū Ja’far al-Rāzī informed us, from Layth—who is Ibn Abī Sulaym—who said: It has reached me that these verses are a cure from magic, by the permission of Allah—*Exalted is He*:

They are recited over a vessel containing water, then it is poured over the head of the bewitched person: The verse from *Surah Yunus*: “*And when they threw, Moses said, ‘What you have brought is magic. Indeed, Allah will nullify it. Indeed, Allah does not amend the work of corrupters. And Allah will establish the truth by His words, even if the criminals dislike*

it'" [Yunus: 81-82].

And the other verse: *"So the truth was established, and abolished was what they were doing. And they were overcome right there and returned humiliated. And the magicians fell down in prostration. They said, 'We have believed in the Lord of the worlds—the Lord of Moses and Aaron'" [Al-A'raf: 118-122]. And His—Exalted is He—saying: "They have only contrived the plot of a magician, and the magician will not succeed wherever he may go" [Ta-Ha: 69].*

[For Safety from Drowning, Magic, Collapse, and Fire... etc.]

From what has been narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*):

For safety from drowning:

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. *"They have not estimated Allah with the estimation due to Him, while the earth entirely will be in His grasp on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him" [Az-Zumar:67]. "In the name of Allah is its course and its anchorage. Indeed, my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful" [Hud:41].*

For safety from magic:

"Say, 'Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Merciful. Whichever [name] you call—To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names.' And do not recite too loudly in your prayer or too quietly, but seek between that an intermediate way. And say, 'Praise be to Allah, who has not taken a son and has had no partner in sovereignty, and who has no protector out of weakness; and magnify Him with [great] magnification'" [Al-Isra': 110-111].

For safety from collapse:

"Indeed, Allah holds the heavens and the earth lest they cease. And if they should cease, no one could hold them after Him. Indeed, He is Forbearing and Forgiving" [Fatir:41].

For safety from collapse:

"There is no power and no might except by Allah, the Most High, the Most Great; there is no refuge and no escape from Allah except to Him".

For safety from fire:

"Indeed, my protector is Allah, who sent down the Book, and He is an ally to the righteous" [Al-A'raf:196].

"They have not revered Allah with the reverence due to Him, while the earth entirely will be in His grasp on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him" [Az-Zumar: 67].

Whoever Fears Wild Beasts, Let Him Recite:

"There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful. So if they turn away, say, 'Allah is sufficient for me; there is no god but Him. Upon Him I have relied, and He is the Lord of the Great Throne'" [At-Tawbah:128-129].

Whoever finds his riding animal difficult for him, let him recite into its right ear:

"And to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be returned" [Aal 'Imran:83].

Whoever has yellow water in his belly:

Let him write the Verse of the Throne on his belly, and let him drink it, for he will be cured by the permission of Allah—Mighty and Majestic.

Whoever fears a sorcerer or a devil:

Let him recite: *"Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He covers the night with the day, chasing it rapidly; and [He created] the sun, the moon, and the stars, subjected by His command. Unquestionably, to Him belongs the creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds" [Al-A'raf:54].*

"Indeed, your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne, arranging the matter. There is no intercessor except after His permission. That is Allah, your Lord, so worship Him; then will you not remember?" [Yunus:3].

[The Reason for Supplicating with His Saying: "Our Lord, Do Not Take Us to Account If We Forget..." — the Verse]

Question: What is the reason for supplicating with His—Exalted is He—saying: *"Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred... Our Lord, and do not lay upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us. Our Lord, and do not burden us with that which we have no ability to bear" [Al-Baqarah: 286]*, while it is known that Allah—Exalted is He—does not take to account for error and forgetfulness, and does not burden beyond capacity?

Answer: It is rationally possible to take to account for error and forgetfulness; and if it is possible, then supplication to Allah for not taking to account for it is directed.

The clarification of that: the legally responsible person can avoid falling into error and forgetfulness by avoiding the causes that lead to falling into that. For that reason Allah—Exalted is He—punished Adam for his slip, and it had occurred from him in the manner of forgetfulness, as indicated by His—Exalted is He—saying: *"And he forgot; and We found not in him determination" [Ta-Ha:115].* And Allah—Exalted is He—

reproved our Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) for his granting permission to those who stayed behind, so He—*Glorified is He*—said: "*May Allah pardon you; why did you give them permission...*" [At-Tawbah:43].

And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*And do not burden us with that which we have no ability to bear*" can be said to be a metonymy for difficult obligations; meaning: do not burden us with difficult obligations.

[The Best Deeds in the Month of Ramadan]

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate; and by Him we seek help.

Tonight is the first night of the nights of the noble month of Ramadan, from the months of the year 1434 Hijri. We ask Allah, the Generous, to grant us success in it toward what pleases Him with us, by His power and His might; indeed He is Most Kind, Most Merciful. And may Allah send blessings and peace upon our master Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and upon the purified people of his Household. **As for what follows:**

Indeed, the best deeds in the month of Ramadan are the remembrance of Allah—*Exalted is He*—comprising prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, glorification, praise, magnification, declaring Allah's oneness, and praising Allah as He deserves.

- And the greatest remembrance by which Allah makes the scale of deeds heavy is the remembrance of the heart; and the remembrance of the heart is that it be filled with faith in Allah, and affirmation of His greatness, majesty, grandeur, and the encompassing of His knowledge and power; and affirmation of His promise and His warning; and the feeling of the abundance of His blessing and the multitude of His favors which are not counted and not encompassed; and being filled with awe of Him and the greatness of His dominion; and that He is the One who bestows upon His servants the great blessings and their fine details, their manifest and their hidden, their first and their last—there is no bestower besides Him.
- So when the heart overflows with this remembrance, the tongue is driven to translate what is in the heart, and it becomes active in mentioning the greatness of Allah and His majesty, and mentioning His dominion and His grandeur, and enumerating His blessings and His beneficence, and His immense bounty and His gracious favor; and the limbs become active in glorifying their Creator through the obligated duties, and through the established and recommended voluntary acts.
- So by knowing what we have mentioned, it becomes clear that the

remembrance of Allah—*Exalted is He*—has two meanings, one of which follows from the other; for the remembrance of the tongue and the limbs follows from the remembrance of the heart and results from it.

[Validity of Performing Voluntary Acts on Behalf of the Living and the Deceased]

In *Risālat ath-Thabāt* by Imam 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥamzah (*Peace be Upon Him*): "and whatever it is possible for them and their brothers and the rest of the Muslims to do on my behalf during my life and after my death, or to bequeath it so that whoever accepts the bequest performs it: charity on my behalf, or righteousness, or killing a troublemaker or an apostate from the sects of misguidance, or kindness, or prayer, or fasting, or remembrance... etc."

I say: it is taken from that that voluntary prayer and fasting and the like are valid to be performed on behalf of the living and the deceased—meaning that their reward reaches him.

I say: and I, **Muḥammad 'Abdullāh 'Awad**, ask my sons and daughters, and the rest of my relatives and believing brothers, to be dutiful to me in my life and after my death with whatever they can: charity on my behalf, or righteousness, or kindness, or glorification, praise, remembrance, and supplication, or prayer and fasting and Ḥajj and 'Umrah, or whatever is made easy of the types of obedience.

[On the Best Supplication Being Seeking Forgiveness]

- The best supplication is seeking forgiveness, due to what follows from it of desirable outcomes and religious and worldly benefits. Allah—*Exalted is He*—said: "*So I said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers, and give you increase in wealth and children, and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers'*" [Nuh:10-12]. So look at what seeking forgiveness leads to:

- 1- Forgiveness of sin: "*Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver.*"
- 2- Abundant rain and its profusion: "*He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers.*"
- 3- Increase of wealth—gold and silver, camels, cattle, sheep, grains, and fruits: "*and give you increase in wealth.*"
- 4- Increase of male children and their righteousness: "*and give you increase in wealth and children.*"
- 5- Abundant orchards, thick with trees: "*and provide for you gardens.*"
- 6- Abundant rivers and their profusion: "*and provide for you rivers.*"

- And He—*Glorified is He*—said: "*And Allah would not punish them while you are among them, and Allah would not punish them while they*

seek forgiveness" [Al-Anfal:33]:

7- And in this verse, it follows from seeking forgiveness: safety from calamities, disasters, and catastrophes, and the tranquility of the soul, and general safety in family, wealth, and children—except what must inevitably occur from what results from the nature of worldly life which Allah has fashioned it upon.

- And Allah—*Exalted is He*—said: *"And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins—and who can forgive sins except Allah?—and they do not persist in what they have done while they know. Those—their reward is forgiveness from their Lord and gardens..."* [Aal 'Imran:135-136]:

8- Forgiveness and Paradise.

So all these tremendous desired outcomes—whose last is forgiveness and Paradise—are contingent upon seeking forgiveness. And it is the utmost of what the hopeful desire, and the furthest end of what seekers request and strive to attain. In sum, there follows from seeking forgiveness: the good of this world and its bliss, and the good of the Hereafter and its bliss.

[The Best Supplication, the Best Remembrance, and the Best Times for an Answer]

Question: What is the best supplication? What is the best remembrance? And what are the best times for the answering of supplication?

The answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success and assistance —is that the best supplication is seeking forgiveness, as evidenced by what Allah—*Blessed and Exalted*—related of the faith of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the believers at the end of Surah Al-Baqarah; so the first of their supplication after mentioning faith was their saying: *"Our forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return"* [Al-Baqarah:285]. And Allah—*Exalted is He*—related the supplication of Nūḥ (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whoever enters my house as a believer and the believing men and the believing women. And do not increase the wrongdoers except in destruction"* [Nuh:28]; and the supplication of Mūsā: *"My Lord, forgive me and my brother"* [Al-A'raf:151]. And Allah praised the people of understanding, so He—*Exalted is He*—said: *"Those who say, 'Our Lord, indeed we have believed, so forgive us our sins and protect us from the punishment of the Fire'—the patient, the truthful, the devoutly obedient, the spenders, and those who seek forgiveness in the pre-dawn hours"* [Aal 'Imran:16-17]. And He—*Exalted is He*—said: *"They used to sleep but little of the night, and in the pre-dawn hours they would seek forgiveness"* [Adh-Dhariyat:17-18].

And He commanded His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), saying: *"And ask forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and the believing women" [Muhammad:19] ... "So glorify the praise of your Lord and ask His forgiveness" [An-Nasr:3].* And He—*Exalted is He*—said: *"Indeed, there was a group of My servants who used to say, 'Our Lord, we have believed, so forgive us and have mercy upon us, and You are the best of the merciful'" [Al-Mu'minun:109].* And Allah—*Exalted is He*—mentioned the supplication of the angels, saying: *"Those who carry the Throne and those around it glorify the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed: 'Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented...'" [Ghafir:7].* And Allah—*Exalted is He*—mentioned the supplication of the believers for their brothers who preceded them: *"Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith..." [Al-Hashr:10]*—and other than that which Allah—*Exalted is He*—related in His Noble Book of supplication; for you find that most of it and the majority of it is supplication for forgiveness, which indicates its superiority over other supplications.

This is so; and what we said is supported from the standpoint of reflection: that seeking forgiveness—if it is as it should be—comprises several matters, in each of which there is magnifying Allah and venerating Him. For seeking forgiveness—true seeking forgiveness—has behind it the sense and feeling of falling short in obeying Allah, and neglect in His remembrance and gratitude, and shortcoming in mentioning His blessings, and forgetfulness of sins, and failing to establish what Allah commanded of His obligations with their due establishment because of the abundance of distracting whispers in prayer and the like. And that the blessings of Allah—*Exalted is He*—are many: how many of Allah's blessings upon him has he not mentioned and not thanked for; and how many a blessing passed over him while he was heedless. And that no matter how far he reaches in piety toward Allah, he is still falling short in the right of Allah, in need of His forgiveness and His mercy.

So bringing to mind such matters as we mentioned is a great act of worship of Allah—*Exalted is He*—and perhaps it and what resembles it is the greatest remembrance of Allah referred to in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"... and the remembrance of Allah is greater ..."* [Al-'Ankabut:45].

And what we mentioned is supported by the fact that seeking forgiveness gathers the good of this world and the Hereafter, as evidenced by His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"So I said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send the sky upon you in [continuing] showers, and give you increase in wealth and children, and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers'" [Nuh: 10—*

12], and His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Indeed, the righteous will be among gardens and springs, taking what their Lord has given them. Indeed, they were before that doers of good. They used to sleep but little of the night, and in the pre-dawn hours they would seek forgiveness"* [Adh-Dhariyat:15-18]. And in this verse is evidence that the best times for seeking forgiveness are the pre-dawn hours.

This is so; as for the best remembrance, it is as is narrated: *"Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest, and there is no power and no might except by Allah, the Most High, the Most Great,"* and: *"There is no god but Allah alone, with no partner; to Him belongs the dominion and to Him belongs praise; He gives life and causes death; in His hand is all good, and He is Powerful over all things."*

This is so; and the best remembrance may be what Allah—*Exalted is He*—legislated in the prayer, and the evidence for that is that the prayer is the best of deeds, and remembrance is a part of it; and based on this, the best remembrance is: reciting *Surah Al-Fatihah*, the takbīr, the glorification in bowing and prostration, *"Glory be to Allah, praise be to Allah, there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest,"* the two testimonies, and sending blessings upon the Prophet and his family (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

[Supplication of the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) on the day of al-Ṭā'if]

"O Allah, to You I complain of the weakness of my strength, the scarcity of my means, and my lowliness before people. O Most Merciful of the merciful, You are the Most Merciful of the merciful, and You are the Lord of the weak, and You are my Lord. To whom do You entrust me? To a distant enemy who scowls at me, or to a near friend to whom You have given authority over my affair? If there is no anger from You upon me, then I do not mind; but Your well-being is more expansive for me. I seek refuge in the light of Your face by which the darknesses are illuminated and by which the affair of this world and the Hereafter is set right, that Your anger descend upon me or Your displeasure come upon me. To You belongs the right to reproach until You are pleased, and there is no power and no might except by You".

Times of seeking forgiveness:

- 1- The pre-dawn time: *"and in the pre-dawn hours they would seek forgiveness"* [Adh-Dhariyat:18].
- 2- After the prescribed prayers.
- 3- When remembering the sin.
- 4- When feeling neglect and shortcoming.
- 5- The night of Friday, and its daytime.

- 6- Between the call to prayer and the commencement call.
- 7- When looking and reflecting upon the creation of the heavens and the earth.
- 8- And there are other times, and other causes for seeking forgiveness, such as the nights of Ramadan, and at the time of breaking the fast, and... etc.

The intended seeking forgiveness:

The intended seeking forgiveness—upon which those desirable outcomes we previously mentioned are contingent—is what combines the following qualities:

- 7- That the one seeking forgiveness has ceased from the sin, abandoning it.
- 8- That the one seeking forgiveness has a sense and feeling of the evil of what he committed of sin, and the ugliness of disobeying Allah.
- 9- That he has a sense and feeling that he is falling short in obeying Allah, neglecting it, and being remiss.
- 10- That he has a sense of the greatness of his sin and its ugliness.
- 11- If the sin is connected to people, then in addition to what preceded, it is required of him that he seek their pardon for what he brought upon them.
- 12- That he has determination and resolve to adhere to piety toward Allah—*Exalted is He*—by leaving His prohibitions and carrying out His commands.

Forms of seeking forgiveness in the Qur'an:

- 1- *"Our forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return"* [Al-Baqarah:285].
- 2- *"Pardon us, forgive us, and have mercy upon us"* [Al-Baqarah:286].
- 3- *"Our Lord, indeed we have believed, so forgive us our sins and protect us from the punishment of the Fire"* [Aal 'Imran:16].
- 4- *"Our Lord, we have believed, so forgive us and have mercy upon us, and You are the best of the merciful"* [Al-Mu'minun:109].
- 5- **"Our Lord, forgive us our sins and our excess in our affair..." ** [Aal 'Imran:147].
- 6- *"Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith"* [Al-Hashr:10].
- 7- *"Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers"* [Al-A'raf:23].
- 8- *"If our Lord does not have mercy upon us and forgive us, we will surely be among the losers"* [Al-A'raf:149].

- 9- *"Our Lord, forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds, and cause us to die with the righteous" [Aal 'Imran:193].*
- 10- *"And forgive us; indeed, You are Powerful over all things" [At-Tahrim].*
- 11- *"My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whoever enters my house as a believer, and the believing men and the believing women" [Nuh: 28].*
- 12- *"Our Lord, forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day the account is established" [Ibrahim].*
- 13- *"There is no god but You; glory be to You. Indeed, I have been among the wrongdoers" [Al-Anbiya'].*

- And among what indicates the rank of seeking forgiveness, and that it is the best supplication, is that what Allah—*Exalted is He*—related of the supplication of the prophets and messengers and His righteous servants in the Qur'an is, almost, seeking forgiveness.

[On the Obligation of Seeking Forgiveness]

Question: Is seeking forgiveness obligatory or not obligatory? And if it is obligatory, does it have a fixed limit?

Answer: In the answer there is detail:

- 3- The one who commits a major sin such as associating partners with Allah, fornication, and so on—this type must seek forgiveness and repent to Allah.
- 4- The one who is negligent in leaving obligations, and falling short in them, and wasting something of them—repentance and seeking forgiveness are obligatory upon him.
- 5- The believing person who leaves disobedience and fulfills obligations is not free of shortcoming and heedlessness; therefore seeking forgiveness is obligatory upon him.

So, the obligation of seeking forgiveness upon the first type is the most emphasized, then the second type, then the third type.

As for the time when seeking forgiveness becomes obligatory: it is when its cause occurs; and its cause is committing disobedience or leaving an obligation. So whenever something of that occurs, seeking forgiveness becomes obligatory.

As for the third type, the time when seeking forgiveness becomes obligatory upon him is the time when he senses and feels shortcoming in obeying Allah, thanking Him, and remembering Him.

And it is not hidden that it is from the nature of the believer to feel that, even if he reaches the utmost in obeying Allah, thanking Him, and remembering Him. For the believer remains accusing himself of

shortcoming in obeying Allah, thanking Him, and remembering Him. And from here the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*), said: "The believer does not reach evening nor morning except that his soul is, with him, accused"—meaning: suspected.

And further: seeking forgiveness is among the completions of faith and its consequences. Do you not see how Allah—*Exalted is He*—described the faith of the Messenger and the believers at the end of *Surah Al-Baqarah* in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers ...*" until His saying: "*And they say, 'We hear and we obey. Our forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the return'*" [Al-Baqarah:285].

And finally, we say: seeking forgiveness has no fixed limit, but it appears to me that it becomes obligatory, when one feels sin and shortcoming, as a constrained obligation.

[The Meaning of Glorification, Magnification, and Declaring Allah's Oneness]

- "*Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest*": these are four words, and for each word among them there is a meaning, which is:

"*Glory be to Allah*" indicates declaring Allah—*Exalted is He*—free from resembling created beings, and from every deficiency, and from every ugly thing, and from everything that conflicts with the greatness of Allah and His majesty.

"*Praise be to Allah*" is a phrase indicating that Allah—*Exalted is He*—is the One truly deserving of praise and gratitude, because He is the One who bestowed upon His servants blessings that are not counted.

"*There is no god but Allah*" indicates disavowal of everything that is worshipped besides Allah, and affirming divinity for Allah alone, and negating it from other than Him.

"*Allahu Akbar*" indicates affirming the attributes of perfection, greatness, and majesty for Allah—*Exalted is He*.

So these four phrases contain, in summary, what is required of faith in Allah—*Exalted is He*—.

- "*And there is no power and no might except by Allah, the Most High, the Most Great*": and this phrase is considered a completion of the meanings of the previous phrases. It indicates acknowledging disavowal of one's own power and strength, and affirming power and strength for Allah—*Exalted is He*—. And this means acknowledging servitude to Allah—*Exalted is He*—, and weakness and incapacity, and acknowledging poverty and need toward Allah.

[Wisdoms and Admonitions]

From the words of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*):

(There is no good in recitation except with contemplation, and no in worship except with reflection, and no in forbearance except with knowledge. Shall I not inform you of the scholar—the whole scholar? He is the one who does not make the disobedience of Allah appear pleasing to the servants of Allah, and does not make them feel secure from His plan, and does not cause them to despair of His mercy... etc.)

Hadith

"No person conceals an inner matter except that Allah clothes him with its cloak: if it is good, then good; and if it is evil, then evil."

[The Path to Safety from Tribulation, and What Its Causes Are]

Question: What is the path to safety from tribulation? For we see many of us repeatedly entering into tribulation, so we fear for ourselves.

Answer: The path to safety from being tempted is caution against committing the disobedience of Allah—whatever is small of it and whatever is great—and eagerness to fulfill what Allah commanded His servants. Then, humbling oneself to Allah—*Exalted is He*—by supplication for protection, success, and rightness, and maintaining constant seeking of forgiveness.

That is because tribulations are a recompense from Allah—*Exalted is He*—for the disobedient due to their disobedience, as evidenced by His—*Exalted is He*—saying regarding the people of the Sabbath: *"Thus We test them because they were defiantly disobedient"* [Al-A'raf], and His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Then the outcome of those who did evil was the worst, because they denied the signs of Allah and used to mock them"* [Ar-Rum].

Question: We saw many enter into tribulation, and we knew them with firm knowledge due to long companionship, sitting together, and fellowship in residence and travel; and we did not see from them except adherence to piety, good character, humility, modesty, benefiting brothers, general and specific mercy, good conduct with the near and the far... etc. So what is the cause, along with what we know of their good insight in religion, and the rest of what we mentioned?

Answer: The causes of tribulation away from religion are:

- 1- Disobedience to Allah—*Exalted is He*—for it is a cause of entering into tribulation. Allah—*Exalted is He*—said regarding the people of the Sabbath: *"Thus We test them because they were defiantly disobedient"* [Al-A'raf], and He—*Exalted is He*—said: *"Then the outcome of those who did evil was the worst, because*

they denied the signs of Allah and used to mock them" [Ar-Rum].

- 2- That there be in the heart pride, or zealotry, or partisanship, or arrogance whose effect did not appear on the person's conduct and dealings, and the person had not been exposed to what stirs it and brings it out from his heart; then when Allah—*Exalted is He*—tests him with what stirs that and makes it appear, he falls into tribulation—such as the tribulation of Iblis, *may Allah—Exalted is He—curse him*.

Extraordinary Gifts (Karamat)

- They are events that Allah—*Exalted is He*—brings about for His righteous allies, indicating His pleasure with them, their honored standing with Him, and that they are the people of truth.

Among that is what we find of noble fragrances upon the graves of the Imams of the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*), and this gift is clear; the visitors to their graves find it.

- And these fragrant scents are not found upon the graves of others; and in that there is an indication that they have with Allah a rank that others do not have, and that they are the people of truth.

- ***And I have heard*** from some of them that Allah—*Exalted is He*—may grant extraordinary gifts to some of the people of misguidance so that that may be a tribulation and a test.

And I say: this statement is not correct. And it is my strong assumption that what compelled him to this statement is that he found extraordinary gifts occurring for the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*), and he did not know how to explain that except by saying this statement.

And what is correct and established among the Muslims is that extraordinary gifts are only for the righteous, and it is not permissible that Allah—*Exalted is He*—cause them to occur for the people of misguidance, because they run in the course of the miracles of the prophets, and there is no difference between them and miracles except that the miracle comes after a claim to prophethood, whereas the extraordinary gift is not preceded by a claim.

And if we were to allow that Allah—*Exalted is He*—gives that to the people of misguidance, the prophet would not be known from other than him; because it would be possible that Allah—*Exalted is He*—cause the miracle to occur at the hand of the misguided, to make that a tribulation and a test—then the path to knowing the prophets and distinguishing them from others who claim prophethood would be blocked.

[Admonition from Earthquakes]

A great earthquake occurred in the country of Haiti—which is a small country from the countries of South America, known for poverty—in the

month of January 2010 CE. And rescue teams are still extracting the bodies of the dead from among the rubble. It has been announced that more than seventy thousand bodies have been buried, and it is expected—as is said in the media—that the dead will reach more than two hundred thousand; and some of them expected that the dead would be half a million.

And in this tremendous event there is a sign and a lesson for people, awakening them from their heedlessness and alerting them from their sleep; as if it says to them: pay attention—wake up. And if you are in ignorance or forgetfulness, then know that behind this tremendous event that crushed that city and destroyed it in seconds is the power of Allah, which nothing can render incapable. So, fear that something like what befell this city may befall you. And look: what were the causes that led to that catastrophe? Avoid them so that you do not fall into the like of that.

It appears to me that this great lesson will pass without any effect upon the inhabitants of the world. And thus, has been the habit of the people of disbelief in former times: they do not benefit from a lesson, nor do their hearts soften for a sign.

And before this lesson, there occurred that water overflowed over a state from among the states of the United States of America, and destroyed it, and drowned its people.

And before that, what occurred of the great earthquake in the Indian Ocean, which led to its waters surging upon its northern coasts; so several coastal cities were drowned by that, and were destroyed completely, and their people drowned. So these three incidents occurred in close periods, and the wisdom behind them is:

- 1- What is in them of lesson and reminder.
- 2- Punishment and retribution for those who rebel against Allah through disbelief, immorality, and disobedience.

Authentic Hadiths

- Abū Ṭālib narrated: "*Hasten to charity, for affliction does not descend upon it*".
- From the *Ṣaḥīfah* of 'Alī ibn Mūsā: "*The pinnacle of intellect after religion is showing affection to people, and doing acts of goodness toward every righteous person and wicked person*".
- In the *Amālī* of Abū Ṭālib: "*Looking at the Sacred House is worship, and looking into the Book of Allah is worship, and looking at the face of the scholar who seeks by his knowledge the Face of Allah—Majestic is His mention—is worship, and sitting in the mosque is devotional retreat*".
- From *Al-Majmū'*: "*The nearest of you to me tomorrow, and the most*

entitled of you to my intercession: the most truthful of you in speech, the most fulfilling of you in trust, the best of you in character, and the nearest of you to people".

- From *Al-Aḥkām*: "Guarantee for me six things and I will guarantee for you, from Allah, Paradise: fulfill when you promise; discharge when you are entrusted; be truthful when you speak; guard your private parts; lower your gazes; and maintain your ties of kinship".
- And from *Al-Aḥkām*: "Trustworthiness brings provision, and betrayal brings poverty".
- From the *Ṣaḥīfah*: "Among the treasures of righteousness are concealing one's deeds, being patient over calamities, and keeping hardships hidden".
- And from it also: "He is not from us who deceives a Muslim, or harms him, or schemes against him".
- In *Al-Majmū'*: from 'Alī (Peace be Upon Him): "Whoever glorifies Allah—Exalted is He—every day one hundred times, and praises Him one hundred times, and magnifies Him one hundred times, and declares His oneness one hundred times, and says: "There is no power and no might except by Allah, the Most High, the Most Great," one hundred times—Allah will lift from him seventy kinds of affliction, the least of them being death by killing. And He will write for him, of good deeds, the number of times he glorified Allah multiplied seventy-fold; and He will erase from him, of evil deeds, seventy-fold".

For Self-Accountability

The limbs and the outward and inward senses are immense blessings which Allah—*Exalted is He*—has bestowed upon the human being and granted to him. And every blessing among those blessings is not valued, due to its greatness, by any price. If a person were given the revenues of the whole world as a price for the removal of his intellect, he would not be pleased with that as a price for his intellect—or as a price for his sight, or as a price for his tongue, or for his hands, or his feet, and so on. So let the intelligent person pose these questions to himself, in order to calm his impulsiveness and lessen his heedlessness:

- Would you be pleased with the removal of your intellect, while you have the equivalent of the oil revenues of the Arabs?
- How many years have you been turning about within those immense blessings—namely, the blessings of the senses and the limbs?
- Who is the one who gave you those blessings?
- Who is the one who preserves the continuance of those blessings

in your body?

- And do you fear their disappearance?
- And if their remaining with you required paying a financial tax, would you pay it as you pay the water and electricity bill—or not?
- And do you know that the Giver of those blessings and the Bestower of them upon you has demanded from you, in return for each blessing among them, a due?
- If you know that He demanded that, have you delivered to Him what He demanded and thanked Him for what He bestowed—or not?
- And if you do not know that He demanded that, did you ask those who know about that?

[A Report: Whoever Makes the Hereafter His Concern]

"Whoever makes the Hereafter his concern, Allah suffices him regarding his concern from the world. And whoever rectifies his inner state, Allah rectifies his outward state. And whoever rectifies what is between him and Allah, Allah rectifies what is between him and people".

[A Report Concerning Spending]

From al-Şādiq (*Peace be Upon Him*): (Spend and be certain of replacement. And know that whoever does not spend in obedience to Allah—*Mighty and Majestic*—will be afflicted with spending in disobedience to Allah—*Mighty and Majestic*. And whoever does not walk in the need of the ally of Allah—*Mighty and Majestic*—will be afflicted with walking in the need of the enemy of Allah—*Mighty and Majestic*).

[From the Words of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*)]

From the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*): (All goodness is in three traits: looking, silence, and speech. Every look in which there is no lesson is heedlessness; every speech in which there is no remembrance is idle talk; and every silence in which there is no reflection is negligence. So glad tidings to the one whose looking is lessons, whose silence is reflection, whose speech is remembrance; who wept over his sin; and from whose evil people were safe). Ended.

It was narrated from 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*):

(There is no Qur'anic verse except that it has an outward aspect and an inward aspect, a limit and a point of ascent: the outward is recitation; the inward is understanding; the limit is its lawful and its unlawful; and the point of ascent is the heart's apprehension of what is intended by it, as understanding from Allah—*Mighty and Majestic*). Ended from the book of Ja'far al-Şādiq (*Peace be Upon Him*).

I say: the meaning is that the Qur'anic verse has four aspects:

- 3- Recitation, free of understanding the meaning and comprehending it; and it is worship by which Allah is worshipped by His servants.
- 4- Understanding the intended meaning in general; and this is an additional virtue for which the legally responsible person is rewarded.
- 5- Deriving the legal rulings; and this is not grasped except by those firmly grounded in knowledge. And this includes the two last aspects.

[Wisdoms from the Book *Al-I'tibār*]

It is related that in the Torah:

- Indeed, wealth is in contentment.
- Indeed, safety is in seclusion.
- Indeed, freedom is in rejecting desires.
- Indeed, love is in leaving greed. Ended from *Al-I'tibār*.

Pious Caution

Pious caution is of four ranks:

- 1- Avoiding what necessitates immorality through an act or a neglect, and this is the pious caution of the Muslims.
- 2- Withdrawing from every doubtful matter, and this is the pious caution of the believers.
- 3- Leaving what is not harmful out of fear of what is harmful, and this is the pious caution of the righteous.
- 4- Leaving permitted matters, and this is the pious caution of the most truthful.

Self-Accountability

- 1- Its highest (level) is that he calls himself to account regarding everything he intends to do.
- 2- Its lowest (level) is that he calls himself to account once every day.

From *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*

From the words of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "A sign of Allah's pleasure with His creation is the cheapness of their prices and the justice of their ruler; and a sign of Allah's anger with His creation is the tyranny of their ruler and the highness of their prices".

Beauty is in the tongue.

From the words of Zayn al-'Ābidīn (*Peace be Upon Him*): How many are seduced by the fine speech said about them; and how many are

deceived by the fine covering placed over them; and how many are drawn on step by step by kindness done to them.

From the Words of al-Ṣādiq

- Excessive probing is separation; criticism is enmity; little patience is disgrace; disclosing a secret is downfall; generosity is astuteness.
- When affliction is added to affliction, within the affliction there is well-being.
- No one has attained good who attained it through wrongdoing.
- The one who eats and is grateful has the like of the reward of the one who fasts, seeking reward; and the one who is healthy and grateful has the like of the reward of the afflicted one who is patient.
- Enough is the fear of Allah as knowledge, and enough is self-deception as ignorance.
- Courteous dealing with people is one third of intellect.
- Whoever Allah bestowed a blessing upon, and he recognized it in his heart, and knew that the Bestower upon him is Allah—then he has performed its gratitude, even if he did not move his tongue. And whoever knew that the One who reproaches for sins is Allah—then he has sought forgiveness, even if he did not move his tongue. And he recited: *"And whether you reveal what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allah will bring you to account for it..."* [Al-Baqarah: 284].
- Kindness is the alms of blessings; intercession is the alms of status; illnesses are the alms of bodies; and pardoning is the alms of victory. And whatever its alms has been given is secure from being taken away.

[Refreshing the Hearts]

- Hadith: *"Give the hearts rest from time to time, for when hearts become weary, they become blind"*.
- From 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"Give these hearts rest, and seek for them the subtleties of wisdom, for they become weary as bodies become weary"*.

[From the Words of the Wise]

In the book *Kashf al-Rībah fī Ahkām al-Ghībah*, it is narrated that a man followed a wise man for seven hundred farsakhs for seven words. When he came to him, he said: I have come to you for the knowledge Allah—*Exalted is He*—has given you. Inform me about the heaven and what is heavier than it; and about the earth and what is wider than it;

and about stones and what is harder than them; and about fire and what is hotter than it; and about bitter cold and what is colder than it; and about the sea and what is richer than it; and about the orphan and what is more abased than him?

So the wise man said:

Slander against the innocent is heavier than the heavens.

Truth is wider than the earths.

A content heart is richer than the sea.

Greed and envy are hotter than fire.

Needing a close person when he does not come through is colder than bitter cold.

The heart of the disbeliever is harder than stones.

The tale-bearer, when his matter becomes known, is more abased than the orphan.

And in the mentioned book: it is narrated from ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) that a man came to him, hastening against a man. So he (*Peace be Upon Him*) said: "O man, we will question about what you said. If you are truthful, we will detest you; and if you are lying, we will punish you. And if you wish that we excuse you, we will excuse you". The man said: Excuse me, O Commander of the Faithful. Ended.

[Miscellaneous Wisdoms and Benefits]

From *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*:

Plato said: The intellects of people are recorded on the tips of their pens, and manifested in the excellence of their choices.

It is said: Do not consult a teacher, nor a weaver, nor a shepherd, nor one who sits much with women.

- ‘Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*): "The opinion of the elder is better than the witnessing of the youth".
- A man and his wife disputed before al-Sha‘bī, and she was among the most beautiful of women. The husband said:

*Al-Sha‘bī was tempted when he raised his glance toward her,
She tempted him with coquettishness and with the line of her
eyebrows.*

*He said to the guard: bring her near and bring her witnesses,
So, he judged unjustly against the opponent, and he did not
judge against her.*

- Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays: If you see that evil leaves you when you leave it—then leave it.
- And others said: The knowledge of kings is lineage and reports; the

knowledge of the people of war is studying the books of battles and biographies; and the knowledge of merchants is writing and arithmetic. Ended.

I say: and the knowledge of surveying (*geometry*) and arithmetic is needed by the divider who measures lands and then divides them; and the knowledge of inheritance shares and arithmetic is needed by the divider of estates; and the knowledge of transactions is needed by the judge who resolves disputes; and the knowledge of transactions is half of the knowledge of jurisprudence; and the knowledge of jurisprudence is needed by the jurist who issues legal opinion.

A benefit: if it is said, “the scholars of the regions,” then they are: Sufyān and Ibn Abī Laylā in Kūfah; al-Shāfi‘ī and Ibn Jurayj in Makkah; Mālik and Ibn al-Mājjishūn al-Mālikī and ‘Uthmān al-Battī and Abū Suwār in Baṣrah; al-Awzā‘ī in al-Shām; and al-Layth ibn Sa‘īd in Miṣr. Completed from the marginalia.

- What is meant when this is said is in the books of jurisprudence among the Zaydiyyah.

From Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd:

- The first of knowledge is silence, the second is listening, the third is memorization, the fourth is acting, and the fifth is spreading it.
- ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ was black, one-eyed, flat-nosed, partially paralyzed, lame, then he became blind; and his mother was black and was called Barakah.
- And al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays was one-eyed and lame.
- And from it: and from the district of Ḥuḍūr is Shu‘ayb ibn Dhī Mahzam, the prophet whom his people killed, so Allah empowered against them Nebuchadnezzar and he killed them, so none of them remained. And it is said that regarding them was revealed: *"And when they sensed Our punishment, at once they fled from it"* [Al-Anbiya’] to the end of the verses. So it is said: indeed the grave of Shu‘ayb this prophet (*Peace be Upon Him*) is in a mountain in Yemen, in a district called Ḍayn. There is not in Yemen a mountain that contains salt besides it, and in it is the fruit of al-Shām, and no venomous creature passes by it. Ended.

[Transmitted Wisdoms]

Among the transmitted wisdoms: “Learn before you become leaders.” Ended. That is because when a man becomes a leader, he becomes occupied with people’s needs, looking into their affairs, setting their condition right, and solving their problems.

A wisdom: If you see a person has made a mistake, then do not teach him, for he will learn from you and become angry with you.

[From the Sayings of Imam al-Shāfi‘ī]

Imam al-Shāfi‘ī said: No fat person ever prospers—except that he be Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan.

It was said: Why? He said: Because the intelligent person is not free of one of two states: either he grieves for his Hereafter and his return, or for his world and his livelihood; and fat does not accumulate with grief. So if he is free of both meanings, he becomes in the rank of beasts, and then fat accumulates.

And he said: Any household whose women do not go out to men other than their own, and whose men do not go out to women other than their own—there will be foolishness in their children. Ended. By that he means that it is appropriate for a man to marry from women who are distant, and for women to be married to men who are distant.

And he said: The highest of people in rank is the one who does not see his own rank; and the greatest of them in virtue is the one who does not see his own virtue.

And he said: It is not from manliness that a man informs of his age; for if he is young, they belittle him, and if he is old, they deem him senile. Ended.

And he said: The pillars of manliness are four: good character, generosity, humility, and devotion. Ended.

[A Chapter of Wisdom: On the Division of Souls]

A chapter of wisdom: the souls are three:

- 1- An irascible soul, and its nature is competing with equals, overcoming peers, and outnumbering the clan.
- 2- A royal soul, and its aspiration is certainty in knowledge, grasping realities, and looking into outcomes.
- 3- A bestial soul, and its inclinations are toward comfort and immersion in desire—food, drink, and marriage.

And here are examples of these three natures:

It was said to al-Ḍirār ibn ‘Amr: What is joy? He said: Establishing the proof and refuting the doubt.

And it was said to another: What is joy? He said: Reviving the Sunnah and putting innovation to death.

And the same question was directed to al-Ḥuṣayn ibn al-Mundhir, and it was said to him: What is joy? He said: A banner unfurled, sitting on the couch, and “Peace be upon you, O commander.”

And it was said to Abū Muslim, the inviter: What is joy? He said: Riding swift, fine-going mounts, and killing tyrants.

Then the same question was directed to Imru’ al-Qays, and it was said

to him: What is joy? He said: A fair, soft woman—kindled with perfume, plump with flesh. And he was infatuated with women.

And it was said to al-A'shā of Bakr: What is joy? He said: A reddish wine of Ṣālihiyyah, mixed by a cupbearer from a morning downpour. And he was enamored of drink.

And it was said to Ṭarafah: What is joy? He said: Pleasant food, quenched drink, warm clothing, and a compliant mount.

And it was said to Yazīd ibn Mazīd: What is joy? He said: A kiss in heedlessness.

And it was said to Abū Nuwās: What is joy? He said: Sitting with youths in the houses of singing-girls, and drinking companionship with brothers.

And it was said to another: What is the sweetest life? He said: Tearing away modesty and following desire.

And it was said to a Bedouin: What is joy? He said: Wearing the worn-out in summer and the new in winter.

And it was said to another: What is bliss? He said: Hot water in winter and cold water in summer.

[The Virtue of Wisdom]

A noble hadith: *"A Muslim has not given his Muslim brother a gift better than a word of wisdom he hears, then keeps it within himself, then teaches it to him. Allah increases him by it in guidance, or turns him back by it from ruin. And indeed it equals the saving of a life; and whoever saves it, it is as though he saved all people altogether."* Ended.

[Admonition and Lesson]

It is narrated from 'Imād al-Iṣfahānī: No person writes a book in his day except that he says on the next day: If only other than this were better; and if such-and-such were added it would be more commendable; and if this were brought forward it would be preferable; and if this were left it would be more beautiful. And this is among the greatest lessons, and it is evidence of the dominance of imperfection over the whole of humankind.

I say: the matter is as he said. And I have found the confirmation of that within myself, and no one knows the reality of that matter except the one who occupies himself with the craft of writing and composition.

[Mentioning Some Blessings and Their Importance]

From al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Them*): Praise be to Allah who guided us to Islam. Praise be to Allah who bestowed upon us Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). And praise be to Allah who made us from the best nation brought forth for people.

Then we say: "*Glory be to Him who has subjected this to us, and we could not have been capable of it; and indeed, to our Lord we will surely return*" [Az-Zukhruf]. Ended—from the marginal note of *Al-Maṣābīḥ* in tafsīr.

I say: in that there is an alerting to the greatness of these three blessings, which are:

- 4- The blessing of guidance to Islam.
- 5- The immense mercy of Allah upon us in that He sent to us our Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).
- 6- The immense blessing of Allah upon us in that He made us from the nation of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—the best nation brought forth for people.

And in that there is an alerting that these three blessings are among the first of blessings, and the most entitled to be mentioned and thanked for, because they are the foundation of the blessings of this world and the Hereafter. Upon them is built the honor of this world and the Hereafter, and the happiness of this world and the Hereafter. And praise be to Allah who guided us to this; and we would not have been guided had Allah not guided us. And may Allah send blessings and peace upon Muhammad and his purified family.

[Discussion of Hadiths from Sunni Books]

[Discussion with the People of Other Schools]

- Whoever follows a school should be debated with kindness and gentleness, and by presenting arguments and proofs; and he should not be answered by attacking him, harsh speech, or obscene words, for that will not turn him away from his view, nor distance him from error, nor bring him near to guidance. Nothing brings him near to guidance except gentleness, good conduct, and arguments and proofs.
- In summary, this chapter falls under commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong; therefore it is obligatory to observe its levels. And from Allah is success.

On Qunūt

In al-Bukhārī: a man asked Anas about qunūt—after bowing or when finishing the recitation? He said: “No; rather, when finishing the recitation.”

And in it also, from Anas: “The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) performed qunūt for a month after bowing, supplicating against tribes among the Arabs.”

And in it, from ‘Āṣim al-Aḥwal, he said: I asked Anas ibn Mālik about qunūt in the prayer. He said: Yes. So I said: Was it before bowing or after it? He said: Before it. I said: So-and-so informed me from you that you said: after it. He said: He lied. The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) only performed qunūt after bowing for a month—because he had sent people called “the Reciters,” and they were seventy men, to some of the polytheists, and there was between them and the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) a covenant before them... the hadith.

I say: in this there is an indication of what the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) settled upon: that qunūt is before bowing.

[Expiating Sins by Acts of Obedience]

In a hadith narrated by Aḥmad and others: “*Every deed is an expiation except fasting; fasting is for Me, and I will reward for it*”.

And the wording of al-Bukhārī: “*For every deed there is an expiation; and fasting is for Me, and I will reward for it*”.

I say: the meaning of the first is that all deeds of obedience are expiations for sins.

And the meaning of al-Bukhārī’s narration is that for every deed among sins there is an expiation from acts of obedience.

And furthermore: the meaning of both hadiths is sound. The first is

supported by His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds"* [Hud:114]. And it has come in narration that prayer to prayer, Friday to Friday, Ramadan to Ramadan, and Ḥajj expiate sins; and it has come regarding other matters as well. And repentance is an act that expiates major sins and minor sins.

[Children Are Not Punished for the Sins of Their Fathers]

In the Ṣaḥīḥ, from Abū Hurayrah, he said: The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: *"Every newborn is born upon the natural disposition; then his parents make him a Jew, or make him a Christian, or make him a Magian... the hadith"*.

And in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from 'Iyād ibn Ḥammād, from the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he said: *"Allah—Exalted is He—says: 'Indeed, I created My servants upright, then the devils came to them and turned them away from their religion, and made forbidden for them what I had made lawful for them, and commanded them to associate with Me that for which I sent down no authority.'" Ended from the tafsīr of Ibn Kathīr.*

The first hadith indicates the opposite of what the People of Sunnah and the Community claim, for they claimed that no newborn is born except that Allah has already written guidance or misguidance upon him, and decreed it, made it binding, and determined it—as has come in the two Ṣaḥīḥs: *"Then Allah sends an angel, and he is commanded with four words: he writes his provision, his lifespan, his deeds, and whether he is wretched or happy"*.

The second hadith likewise: the hadith explicitly states that Allah—*Exalted is He*—created His servants upright, and that the devils are the cause of their misguidance.

Many hadiths have been narrated concerning the children of the polytheists, which Ibn Kathīr mentioned in the tafsīr. Some of them state: *"They are with their fathers in the Fire"*. And some of them indicate that they will be tested on the Day of Resurrection on the gathering grounds: whoever obeys enters Paradise, and whoever disobeys enters the Fire.

And Ibn Kathīr said—his wording—: *"And this statement is what Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī related from the People of Sunnah and the Community, and it is what al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī supported in the book al-I'tiqād, and likewise others among the verifying scholars and hadith masters."* Ended.

And some of the hadiths indicate that they are servants of Paradise.

I say: what is correct is that the children of the polytheists who died before being held responsible are among the people of Paradise, due to His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"And no bearer of burdens will bear the*

burden of another" [Fatir:18]—so they are not punished for the sins of their fathers—and due to his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: "Every newborn is born upon the natural disposition; then his parents make him a Jew, or make him a Christian", and due to the hadith by him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "The pen has been lifted from three...".

As for their being tested on the gathering grounds—so whoever obeys enters Paradise and whoever disobeys enters the Fire—then responsibility has been lifted there.

[Opening the Gates of Heaven in Ramadan]

In al-Bukhari: "When the month of Ramadan enters, the gates of heaven are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained".¹

I say: this hadith is well known.

And his saying: "*the gates of heaven are opened*" is a metonymy for the acceptance of acts of obedience and the answering of supplication, the increase of divine kindnesses, the multiplication of good deeds, the spreading of mercy, and so on—up to all the good that Allah—*Exalted is He*—grants His believing servants in the month of Ramadan of the good of this world and the Hereafter.

And his saying: "*the gates of Hell are closed*" is a metonymy for what occurs in Ramadan of the believers' avoiding acts of disobedience, and their keeping themselves pure from approaching vile deeds, while devoting themselves to worship and turning to remembrance; and all of that is a cause of their salvation from the Fire.

And his saying: "*and the devils are chained*" is also a metonymy. What is meant—*Allah knows best*—is that the devils are not able to tempt the believers in the month of Ramadan because of their being occupied with fasting, night prayer, and remembrance.

On Fasting the Day of Doubt

In *Fath al-Bari*: Ahmad said: "Narrated to us..." up to his saying: Ibn 'Umar, when twenty-nine days of Sha'ban had passed, would send someone to look. If he saw it, then that was it. And if he did not see the crescent—and nothing prevented its sighting of cloud or haze—he would begin the morning not fasting. But if something did prevent it, he would begin the morning fasting.

And *Fath al-Bari* stated that Ahmad has three opinions in this issue:

1- Not all the hadiths of al-Bukhari and Muslim are authentic as the People of Sunnah say, and not all of them are inauthentic; rather, among them is what is authentic and among them is what is not authentic. [From the author].

The first: that it is obligatory to fast it as being from Ramadan, on the condition that something like cloud or the like blocks the sighting, and he reasoned with what we mentioned from Ibn ‘Umar.

And *Fath al-Bari* stated—and said it is the well-known view of Ahmad—that what has become obligatory to fast is not called a “day of doubt,” and that he restricted the “day of doubt” to the case where people held back from sighting the crescent, or where the sighting was testified to by someone whose testimony the judge does not accept.

I say: we say the madhhab of the Hādawiyyah is that fasting the day of doubt is recommended, and we interpret “the day of doubt” as the thirtieth day, and we do not consider fasting it recommended except if there is a barrier to sighting such as clouds or haze or the like. As for if there is no barrier to sighting at all and the crescent is not seen, then the day is not a day of doubt; rather, it completes thirty.

And we did not say it is obligatory as Ahmad and others said, because the basic rule is that the month remains and is completed.

Yes, what we held—though we called it a “day of doubt”—is not the day about which it was narrated that whoever fasts it has disobeyed Abu al-Qasim (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

And what appears to me is that what is meant by that is fasting the thirtieth day of Sha‘ban when there was nothing that prevented sighting the crescent—this on the assumption that the hadith is authentic.

And the best way to direct that narration is: if the crescent is not seen on the night of the thirtieth after seeking it carefully, and there is no barrier preventing its sighting, then the day is, by law, the completion of the month; and then taking “precaution” by fasting it is a precaution in a place where precaution is not appropriate. And it is not far that it is a form of excessiveness in religion which the laws came to condemn.

For if the one fasting counts it as being from Ramadan and builds his count upon it, then he has acquired a sin upon a sin.

If it is said: the well-known hadith has come: “*Fast for its sighting and break the fast for its sighting; and if it is obscured from you, then count thirty*”—or as he said—so there is no basis then for fasting the day of doubt.

We say: we did not say it is obligatory to fast it as Ahmad and others said; rather we said it is recommended. So we did not contradict what this hadith indicates, because this hadith did not intend by it the obligation of counting thirty, for it has come in another wording in authentic narrations: “*If it is obscured from you, then estimate it*”, and the meaning of that is that we work by calculating the phases of the moon.

[On Fasting]

In *Fath al-Bari*: al-Awza'i said: If a boy is able to fast three consecutive days and does not become weakened during them, he is encouraged to fast.

And Ibn al-Majshun among the Malikis said: If boys are able to fast, they are obliged to it; and if they break the fast without an excuse, then upon them is making it up. Ended.

I say: Imam al-Hadi said the like of the view of al-Awza'i. So Imam al-Hadi did not uniquely hold that view. And our companions interpreted the statement of Imam al-Hadi as being by way of teaching, whose path is recommendation, not by way of obligation.

And thus should the speech of al-Awza'i and Ibn al-Majshun be interpreted: then their requiring them to fast and make it up is from the chapter of teaching, habituation, and training, not from the door of its being obligatory upon them. For it is not hidden to any scholar that the pen is lifted from the boy until he reaches puberty.

[From al-Bukhari on the Fast of 'Ashura']

In al-Bukhari regarding the fast of 'Ashura': a hadith: When the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) arrived in Madinah and found a people from among the Jews venerating 'Ashura' and fasting it, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "*We have more right to fast it*", so he ordered fasting it. Ended.

I say: it may be taken from the hadith that it is legislated to venerate the days in which a great blessing occurred—such as the day of the birth of the noble Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the day of his commissioning, and the like—because the noble Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) approved the Jews in their veneration of the day of 'Āshūrā', due to what occurred in it of Mūsā (*Peace be Upon Him*) and the Children of Israel prevailing over Pharaoh. Rather, he fasted it for that reason, and he commanded the Muslims to fast it.

Yes, some of the People of Sunnah fight such a matter and say that it is an innovation, and they are severe in condemning it.

[Attaching Fasting to Hajj in Prohibiting Intercourse with One's Wife]

In *Fath al-Bārī*: Ibn Ḥazm obliged the people of analogical reasoning to attach fasting to Hajj regarding the prohibition of intercourse and the muqadam of marriage. Ended.

I say: what he mentioned is not binding, because among the conditions of the validity of analogy is that it not clash with a text; and it is so here. For it is authentic and established from the Prophet (*May*

Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) that he used to kiss and engage in intimate contact while he was fasting.

And further: the cause that motivates the prohibition of the muqadam of marriage in Hajj is not known, and analogy is not valid except after knowing the cause.

[The Prohibition of Continuous Fasting]

In al-Bukhārī: The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) forbade continuous fasting. A man from the Muslims said: But you fast continuously, O Messenger of Allah. He said: "*And which of you is like me? Indeed, I spend the night while my Lord feeds me and gives me drink.*" Then when they refused to stop continuous fasting, he fasted continuously with them for one day, then another day, then they saw the crescent, so he said: "*Had it been delayed, I would have increased you*"—as a disciplinary measure for them when they refused to stop. Ended.

I say: it is taken from it that the Companions understood that the prohibition was not for unlawfulness, but rather for dislike; or that they understood that it came by way of compassion for them and mercy upon them.

And the Companions would often refuse to comply with what was of that kind—such as their going out on the day of Uhud outside the city, while the view of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) had been to remain within it.

And like what is narrated: that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) commanded the Companions to return from the siege of al-Ṭā'if, but they refused; so he commanded them to attack the enemy early the next day, and injuries and hardship struck them and they wished to return. So he began the morning returning with them, and that pleased them.

And Allah—*Glorified and Exalted*—guided the Companions of His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to leave such behavior in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*And know that among you is the Messenger of Allah. If he were to obey you in much of the matter, you would surely be in hardship...*", the verse [Al-Ḥujurāt:7].

Yes, their opposition to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and their revising matters with him was only in what was the domain of opinion and consultation, or mercy and compassion toward them, or the like—not in what Allah—*Exalted is He*—legislated of rulings: the lawful and the unlawful in His Book or upon the tongue of His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

Among that is their objection to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding his appointing Usāmah ibn Zayd, and before him his appointing Zayd ibn Ḥārithah.

And among that is 'Umar's objection to the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding the treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyyah, and his objection to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding his praying over 'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy, and his objection to accepting ransom from the captives of Badr.

And among that is the revising of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding fasting.

Fasting of Rajab

In *Fath al-Bārī*: al-Nasā'ī and Abū Dāwūd narrated—and Ibn Khuzaymah authenticated it—from Usāmah ibn Zayd, who said: I said: O Messenger of Allah, I have not seen you fast in any month among the months the way you fast in Sha'bān. He said: "*That is a month people are heedless of between Rajab and Ramadan, and it is a month in which deeds are raised to the Lord of the worlds; so I love that my deed be raised while I am fasting*". Ended.

I say: it is taken from that the legality of fasting in the month of Rajab and its virtue, and that the Muslims among the Companions had care for fasting and worship in the month of Rajab.

From al-Bukhārī: That the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) Ordered the Beating of One Who Drank Wine, and He Was Among Those Who Witnessed Badr

In al-Bukhārī: that the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) ordered the beating of Nu'aymān, and he was a drinker.

And in *al-Fatḥ*: that Nu'aymān was among those who witnessed Badr, and he was given to joking.

The Retreat of the Prophet in the Last Ten Nights of Ramadan

In al-Bukhārī, from 'Ā'ishah: The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to perform retreat in the last ten nights of Ramadan. So I would set up for him a small tent; he would pray the dawn prayer, then enter it. Then Ḥafṣah sought permission from 'Ā'ishah to set up a small tent, and she permitted her, so she set up a small tent. When Zaynab bint Jaḥsh saw it, she set up another tent. When the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) reached the morning and saw the tents, he said: "*What is this?*" So he was informed, and he said: "*Is it righteousness—you think they intend by*

it?!" ... the hadith.

In *Fath al-Bārī* it is stated, and in the narration of al-Awzā'ī occurred: "*Is it righteousness they intended by this?*".

And in the narration of Ibn 'Uyaynah: "*Is it righteousness—you say they intend by this?*".

And in the narration of Ibn Faḍīl: "*What carried them to this? Is it righteousness? Remove them, for I do not wish to see it.*"

I say: in that there is what indicates that the Companions—including the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—may be overcome by human nature, and it brings them out of the path of correctness, as happens to other people. So whoever takes them beyond this human nature has exaggerated and gone beyond what is correct.

Yes, our saying this is not a condemnation of the Companions, nor of the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). For Allah—*Exalted is He*—created human beings upon a nature with which a person remains in struggle and continuous striving: at times he overcomes it, and at times it overcomes him. And "*all the children of Adam are sinners, and the best of sinners are those who repent.*" And Allah—*Exalted is He*—has related regarding Ādam (*Peace be Upon Him*) and his slip. And the Companions are not another species higher than the human species, nor are they in infallibility above the prophets.

[A Woman Spending from Her Husband's House]

In al-Bukhārī there is a hadith: "*If a woman spends from the food of her house without causing corruption, then she has her reward for what she spent, and her husband for what he earned, and the treasurer has the like of that; none of them diminishes the reward of another in anything.*"

And in it also a hadith: "*If a woman spends from her husband's earnings without his command, then she has half of his reward.*"

I say: they have said in explaining that various statements, as in *Fath al-Bārī*.

And what I see in explaining that is: that the wife may give charity from her husband's wealth in what customarily is given in charity by someone like her, even if the husband did not explicitly give her permission for that—because the prevailing custom in that takes the place of permission.

Among examples that are customary in our lands: giving charity with a loaf of bread, or something of milk, or a bunch of grapes, or what equals it of fruits or the like. And it is not appropriate for her, nor is it permissible, to exceed what custom has established.

This is, in my view, the best way by which the hadith is to be

explained. And Allah knows best.

Selling Something Before Taking Possession

In *Fath al-Bari*, the following was stated:

- They agreed on prohibiting the sale of food before taking possession of it.

- And they differed regarding other than food, according to schools:

- 1- *The first*: It is not permissible to sell anything before taking possession of it, absolutely. This is the view of al-Shafi'i and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan.
- 2- *The second*: It is permissible absolutely, except for houses and land. This is the view of Abu Hanifah and Abu Yusuf.
- 3- *The third*: It is permissible absolutely, except what is measured by volume and what is weighed. This is the view of al-Awza'i, Ahmad, and Ishaq.
- 4- *The fourth*: It is permissible absolutely, except what is eaten and what is drunk. This is the view of Malik and Abu Thawr.

["Measure Your Food and You Will Be Blessed in It"]

In al-Bukhari there is a hadith: "*Measure your food and you will be blessed in it*".

I say: a meaning has appeared to me in explaining this hadith in addition to what was mentioned in *Fath al-Bari* in its explanation, namely: that Allah—*Exalted is He*—criticized those who are extravagant in spending and those who are stingy in it, and He praised those who are moderate between that, in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor stingy, but are ever, between that, moderate*" [Al-Furqan:67]. And avoiding extravagance and stinginess is not completed as it should be except by measuring: for if food is not measured, it may become too much or too little; but with measuring it neither increases nor decreases.

And what is meant by the blessing of food along with measuring is that it will be safeguarded from extravagance, which is wasting it without need—this is a tangible, known blessing.

And by complying with the teachings of Allah—*Exalted is He*—another, spiritual blessing will be obtained, like the blessing that is obtained by remembering Allah and mentioning His Name.

[Hoarding]

Hoarding: withholding food from sale, and waiting for prices to rise while one is not in need of it and people are in need of it. Ended—from *Fath al-Bari*.

Conditions in Sale

- Hadith: *"Whoever sells date palms that have been pollinated, then their fruit belongs to the seller, unless the buyer stipulates otherwise"*.
- And Jabir sold a camel to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and stipulated riding it until Madinah.
- The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) forbade a sale and a condition.
- *"The believers are bound by their conditions, except a condition that makes lawful what is unlawful, or makes unlawful what is lawful"*—or as he said.
- And there came a prohibition of two conditions within one sale.
- And in the hadith of Barirah: *"If your family wishes that I pay them your price in a single payment and set you free, I will do so"*. From it is taken the validity of a sale along with the stipulation of manumission.
- And likewise from it is taken that if a female slave or a male slave is sold and it is stipulated that the patronage-right belongs to the seller, then the sale is valid and the condition is void.
- And there came, from the hadith of Jabir: the prohibition of sales involving an unspecified exception (Thunyā sale) unless the exception is clearly specified.

[Sale of a Mudabbbar Slave]

In al-Bukhari there is a hadith: the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) sold a mudabbbar slave.

And in Muslim and others, as in *Fath al-Bari*: a man from Banu 'Udhrah emancipated a slave of his as a mudabbbar; that reached the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), so he said: *"Do you have wealth besides him?"* He said: No... and so on.

And in it: he gave it to him, then he said: *"Begin with yourself, and give charity to it"*.

And in a narration: *"If one of you is poor, let him begin with himself; then if there is surplus, then upon his dependents"*. Ended—from *Fath al-Bari*.

I say: it is taken from that that the charity of the poor needy person is rejected.

And what is meant by the poor needy person is the one who owns nothing except what he needs for himself, or what he needs for himself and his dependents.

And it may be taken from the hadith: the rejection of the charity of the one who gives in charity all of his wealth, even if it is much.

[The Dispute of al-Zubayr and an Ansari Who Witnessed Badr]

In al-Bukhari, in mentioning the story of the dispute between al-Zubayr and the Ansari: that a man from the Ansar had witnessed Badr... up to his saying: the Ansari became angry and said: "Is it because he is your cousin?" So the face of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) changed... and so on. And at the end of the hadith, al-Zubayr said: By Allah, I think this verse was revealed regarding that: *"But no, by your Lord, they will not believe until they make you judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves"* [An-Nisa':65].

I say: in this there is what indicates that hypocrisy and major acts of disobedience can issue from the people of Badr.

And in this hadith also there is what weakens the strength of the authenticity of the hadith: *"Perhaps Allah looked upon the people of Badr and said: Do whatever you wish..."*.

[Contradiction of the Hadith "Do Not Prefer Me Over Moses..." with the Qur'an]

- Hadith number 2412 in al-Bukhari: *"Do not prefer me over Moses, for the people will be struck down unconscious on the Day of Resurrection..."*—the hadith.
- 2413: and in it: *"Do not prefer between the prophets, for the people will be struck down unconscious..."*—the hadith.

I say: that contradicts His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Those messengers We favored some of them over others"* [Al-Baqarah:253]. And it would not have been appropriate to put forward such a matter and occupy oneself with it except by way of warning against it and drawing attention to it. And the hadith scholars rejected the hadith that contradicted the narration of the rest of the hadith masters; so it is more fitting and more deserving for them to reject the hadith that contradicts the narration of the Noble Qur'an.

[Hadith of the Bridge with Qur'anic Verses]

In al-Bukhari there is a hadith: *"When the believers are delivered from the Fire, they will be held at a bridge between Paradise and the Fire, and they will settle injustices that were between them in the world, until, when they are cleansed and refined, they are permitted to enter Paradise. By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, one of them will be more guided to his dwelling in Paradise than he used to be to his dwelling in the world"*. Ended.

This hadith is dubious, and it is not permissible to rely upon it, for several reasons:

The first: Allah—*Exalted is He*—censured the Jews when they said a

statement like this, and Allah—*Exalted is He*—related that to us in His Book so that we do not say the like of their statement. He—*Exalted is He*—said: *"And they say: The Fire will not touch us save for a certain number of days. Say: Have ye taken a covenant with Allah—then Allah will not break His covenant—or speak ye concerning Allah that which ye know not? Nay, but he who earneth evil and is encompassed by his sin, such are owners of the Fire. They will abide therein."* [Al-Baqarah:80-81]

The second: the Qur'an has judged that the people of the Fire will abide therein, and the people of Paradise will abide therein, and it did not mention exit from the Fire.

The third: Allah—*Exalted is He*—after mentioning the inheritances and their limits in Surat al-Nisa', which is Madinan, addressing the believers with those verses whose beginning is: *"Allah chargeth you concerning (the provision for) your children..."* until He—*Exalted is He*—said at the end of the verses: *"These are the limits (imposed by) Allah. Whoso obeyeth Allah and His Messenger, He will make him enter Gardens underneath which rivers flow, where such will dwell for ever. That will be the great success. And whoso disobeyeth Allah and His Messenger and transgresseth His limits, He will make him enter Fire, where such will dwell for ever; and his will be a shameful doom."* [An-Nisa':13-14]

The fourth: Allah—*Exalted is He*—says about the Day of Resurrection: *"On the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) nor those who believe with him..."* [At-Tahrim: 8]. And whoever Allah admits into the Fire—He has disgraced him.

The fifth: the threat of abiding forever in the Fire has come for the killer of a believer intentionally in Surat al-Nisa', and for the killer and the fornicator in Surat al-Furqan, and for the one who returns to usury in Surat al-Baqarah.

If it is said: Exit from the Fire is among the special distinctions of this community—an honor from Allah and a bounty He gave them: *"That is the bounty of Allah; He giveth it unto whom He will."* [Al-Ma'idah:54]

We say: Allah's honor and bounty upon whom He wills among His servants is not a protection that prevents punishment and an evil reckoning. Allah—*Exalted is He*—honored the Children of Israel and favored them over the worlds, and gave them what He did not give anyone among the worlds—and Allah—*Exalted is He*—has related much of that in His Noble Book—yet that did not prevent them from punishment and abiding in the Fire. Rather, the punishment of Allah—*Exalted is He*—upon the people of His honor and bounty, if they disobey Him, is greater and more severe than His punishment upon others, as indicated by what He—*Exalted is He*—mentioned in Surat al-Ma'idah

about one whom He honored and favored, in His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Then, lo! I will punish him with a punishment wherewith I have not punished any among the peoples."* [Al-Ma'idah:115] And by what came in Surat al-Ahzab about the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): that He—*Exalted is He*—will give the devout woman her reward twice, and that He—*Exalted is He*—will double the punishment twice for the disobedient woman.

And furthermore: there is no favoritism between Allah and any of His creation; His rulings regarding the early and the later are equal—arising from an all-encompassing mercy, a far-reaching wisdom, and a vast knowledge. And He—*Exalted is He*—said: *"What concern hath Allah for your punishment if ye are thankful and believe? Allah was ever Responsive, Aware."* [An-Nisa':147] So Allah—*Glorified and Exalted*—is willing good for all His servants and does not will for them evil, as indicated by His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Allah desireth for you ease; He desireth not hardship for you."* [Al-Baqarah:185]

[Hadith: "I Would Have Loved to Die While I Was Enslaved"]

In al-Bukhari there is the hadith of Abu Hurayrah: The enslaved servant has two rewards, and by the One in whose hand is my soul, were it not for jihad in the path of Allah, and Hajj, and dutifulness to my mother, I would have loved to die while I was enslaved. Ended.

I say: what appears from that is that it is from the words of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and it should not be attributed to him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). That is because in slavery and servitude there is humiliation, degradation, and being used; and the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) does not wish that nor love it—likewise the rest of the rational. And Allah—*Exalted is He*—has said: *"And the glory belongeth to Allah and to His Messenger and the believer."* [Al-Munafiqun:8] And the sound human nature inclines to honor, nobility, and dignity, and is greatly averse to humiliation, lowliness, and baseness.

Yes, it has been said that the end of the hadith is from the words of Abu Hurayrah, and it is not from the words of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). And he should not have said that, because the rational person does not wish for, nor love, the removal of the blessing he is in; and because slavery and servitude are a punishment and a recompense which Allah has ruled upon the disbelievers.

[Hadith: "Allah Created Adam in His Image"]

In *Fath al-Bari*, in explaining al-Bukhari: al-Bukhari in *al-Adab al-Mufrad* and Ahmad narrated from Abu Hurayrah as a raised report: "Do

not say: May Allah disfigure your face and the face of one whose face resembles yours; for Allah created Adam in His image".

And in Muslim: "*For Allah created Adam in His image*".

And in al-Bukhari in the chapter of seeking permission: "*Allah created Adam in His image*".

And in *Fath al-Bari* he mentioned many sources for this narration from Ibn 'Umar and Abu Hurayrah.

I say: this narration should be interpreted if possible; otherwise it must be rejected and discarded, for the following:

- 1- Because it is established by consensus that it is obligatory to negate any likeness from Allah—*Exalted is He*.
- 2- And because of His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*There is nothing like unto Him.*" [Ash-Shura:11]
- 3- And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*Is He Who createth as he who createth not?*" [An-Nahl:17]
- 4- And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*Knowest thou of any one equal to Him?*" [Maryam: 65]
- 5- And His—*Exalted is He*—saying: "*And there is none comparable unto Him.*" [Al-Ikhlās:4]

[The Story of the Prophet's (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) Wives Petitioning Him for Fairness Concerning 'Ā'ishah]

In al-Bukhari, from 'Ā'ishah: People used to choose the day of my turn for their gifts. And Umm Salamah said: My companions gathered and mentioned it to him, so he turned away from her.

Then al-Bukhari narrated the hadith in a detailed form from 'Ā'ishah. In it: that the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) sent Umm Salamah to him twice, and he did not say anything to her. Then they sent Fāṭimah, and she said: Your wives ask you for fairness regarding the daughter of Abū Bakr. So he said to her: "*Do not harm me regarding 'Ā'ishah*". Then they sent Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, and she said: Your wives ask you for fairness regarding the daughter of Abū Quḥāfah... and so on.

I say: it is far-fetched that such a matter would proceed from the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), for several reasons:

- 1- Nothing from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) occurred in what they complained about, because the gift was from the Ansar. In that case, the blame—if there is any blame—is on the Ansar. And there is no doubt that there is no blame on them for placing their gifts where they

- wished, and it is not obligatory upon them to be equal in that.
- 2- It is not possible for the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to do what was requested of him, because it is not fitting for people of honor and high rank—especially the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—to ask the Ansar to give gifts to all his wives, nor to say to someone who gives a gift to the house of ‘Ā’ishah: if you give a gift again, then give it to the house of so-and-so. For that is a request in which there is a diminution, and the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) forbade such asking; and it is not fitting to refuse a gift, because refusing it causes pain to the giver.
 - 3- It is not appropriate to attach an accusation to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) of unfairness, inclination, and leaving justice. And it is not hidden that such a thing would be known to the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*); therefore, it would not proceed from them to ask the Prophet and to press him for justice.
 - 4- His saying (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "Do not harm me regarding ‘Ā’ishah" as an answer to Fāṭimah when she asked him for fairness regarding the daughter of Abū Bakr—while he kept silent when Umm Salamah asked him for fairness, and when Zaynab also asked him— all of that confirms the accusation and attaches it to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). So his answer to Fāṭimah is the answer of one who is suspicious, and silence is likewise.
 - 5- **Yes**, perhaps the narration was only presented to show the merit of ‘Ā’ishah over the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and that he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) inclined to her with a strong inclination to the extent that he did not accept anyone’s statement regarding her; rather, that would harm him. But when they intended by the drift of this narration to prefer ‘Ā’ishah, they attached blame and deficiency to the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

[A Woman Giving to Her Husband]

In *Fath al-Bari*: ‘Abd al-Razzaq narrated from Ma‘mar from al-Zuhri, he said: I saw judges allowing the woman to retract regarding what she had given to her husband, and they did not allow the husband to retract regarding what he had given to his wife.

And in al-Bukhari, from al-Zuhri: He returns it to her if he deceived

her; but if she gave it to him of her own good will, and there is no deception in any part of his matter, then it is permissible. Allah—*Exalted is He*—said: *"But if they, of their own good pleasure, remit to you a part of it, then consume it with pleasure and ease."* [An-Nisa':4]

He said in *al-Fathḥ*: and the majority went to the view that there is no right of return from either side. Ended.

I say: the detail narrated from al-Zuhri is closer to what is correct.

[Gifts of Rulers Are Misappropriation]

It is narrated that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) took the gift of the ruler who said: "This is for you, and this was given to me as a gift," and so on. And it is narrated: *"The gifts of rulers are misappropriation"*.

From that is taken:

- 1- That it is obligatory to give in charity what one obtained through a prohibited way.
- 2- And that it is not obligatory to return it to the one who gave it; so it is not required of the wine-seller, the fornicatress, and the like, if they repent and want to rid themselves of it, to return what they took in that to the one who gave it.
- 3- That what the briber, the fornicator, and the purchaser of wine, and the like, gave has left their ownership.
- 4- That what these gave to the one who took it became property with no owner.
- 5- That it is not valid for the one who took it to own it, and it is not permissible.
- 6- That what is like that may not be accepted nor taken possession of.
- 7- And from that is taken a general rule: that it is unlawful to take compensation for doing something unlawful, or for doing something obligatory.
- 8- And it is the same whether he made the condition explicit or concealed it, since the preceding evidence did not distinguish.

[The Testimony of a Woman That She Nursed the Two Spouses]

In al-Bukhari, under the chapter "The Testimony of the Wet-Nurse," from 'Uqbah ibn al-Ḥārith, he said: I married a woman, then a woman came and said: I have nursed you both. So I went to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and he said: *"And how—when it has been said? Leave her."* Or something like it. Ended.

And in *Fath al-Bari* it is mentioned that Abu 'Ubayd narrated—through 'Umar, al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, and Ibn 'Abbas—that they refused to separate the spouses on that basis; for if the

door were opened, no woman would wish to separate two spouses except that she would do so. And they interpreted his statement in the hadith: "Leave her," and "he forbade him from her," as being for guidance and recommending avoidance.

And the majority held that the testimony of the wet-nurse alone is not sufficient for that, because it is testimony regarding her own act. Ended—briefly.

I say: what appears to me is the following detailed ruling:

- If the husband comes to think it likely that the one claiming she nursed them is truthful, separation becomes binding upon him; and this likelihood occurs through supporting indications and signs.
- And if he comes to think it likely that she is lying, separation does not become binding, nor is it recommended; and this also occurs through indications.

And if the two possibilities are equal, separation is recommended but not binding; it is only recommended because it involves precaution.

We only said this because probability is acted upon in probabilistic matters. So when indications conflict for a jurist and some outweigh others in his view, it becomes binding upon him to adopt what outweighs in his judgment. And likewise with a single indication: if its truth outweighs for him due to supporting signs, it becomes binding upon him to adopt it; and if its falsehood outweighs for him due to supporting signs, it becomes binding upon him to leave it. And if the two matters are equal for him: then if precaution lies in leaving it, leaving it is recommended; and if precaution lies in doing it, doing it is recommended.

This detailed approach is what reason dictates. In that case, the one addressed by this duty is the husband, and his obligation is in what is between him and his Lord, the One who knows what is within the breasts.

As for the manner of judicial ruling: it is not permissible to judge separation, because a ruling is not based on that unless the husband acknowledges the nursing, or an upright legal proof is established that it occurred.

If it is said: How was it permissible for you to oppose the hadith, when it is an authentic hadith narrated by al-Hadi (*Peace be Upon Him*) and others?

We say: the hadith is authentic, but we considered it necessary to carry its command as guidance and recommendation rather than obligation, because it is established and verified—beyond any doubt—

that claims are not accepted except with proofs and evidences: *"Say: 'Produce your proof, if you should be truthful.'" [An-Naml:64]* And in the Sunnah: *"Upon the claimant is the evidence, and upon the denier is the oath"*.

Along with that, what is more fitting for the believer is precaution for his religion—and precaution is what is indicated by the hadith. And like this hadith is: *"Leave what makes you doubt for what does not make you doubt"*, and *"Believers stop short at doubtful matters"*.

On Reconciliation

Reconciliation has categories: reconciliation of a Muslim with a disbeliever; reconciliation between spouses; reconciliation between a rebellious faction and the just faction; reconciliation between those who have become mutually estranged; reconciliation in wounds, such as pardoning in exchange for wealth; and reconciliation to cut off dispute when competition occurs over properties or shared rights such as streets. And this last is what the jurists speak about.

[Hadith: *"Whoever Introduces into Our Affair What Is Not from It, It Is Rejected"*]

In al-Bukhari and others there is the hadith: *"Whoever introduces into this affair of ours what is not from it, it is rejected"*.

And it is narrated: *"Whoever does an action that is not upon our affair, it is rejected"*. And it is a well-known hadith among the hadith scholars.

And our Imams (*Peace be Upon Them*) narrated the hadith: *"No statement except with action; and no statement and no action except with intention; and no statement, no action, and no intention except by conforming to the Sunnah"*.

So his statement: *"and no statement, no action, and no intention except by conforming to the Sunnah"* has the same meaning as the hadith of al-Bukhari.

They said: this hadith is counted among the foundations of Islam and a principle among its principles.

And they said: this hadith is suitable to be called half of the evidences of the Sacred Law.

[From the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah]

In al-Bukhari and others, in the writing of the treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah: then he said to 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"Erase: 'Messenger of Allah'"*. 'Ali said: No, by Allah, I will never erase you. So, the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) erased it with his own hand... and so on.

I say: it is taken from this that the wording of a command may come

on the tongue of the Lawgiver for something other than obligation, as in this famous hadith. In that is a rebuttal of the Zahiriyyah and those who followed their path, for they carry the command forms that come on the tongue of the Lawgiver as obligatoriness absolutely, and they do not pay attention to the contextual indications that divert it away from obligation.

If they say: the form that appears in this hadith is for obligation, and there is no evidence in it for what you mentioned,

We say: no one from the community ever claimed that ‘Ali (Peace be Upon Him) disobeyed the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in this situation—despite the intense eagerness to mention his alleged faults. And if that had been disobedience, they would have made it widely known, and filled the world’s ears with it.

[‘Ā’ishah’s Denial of a Bequest from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)]

In al-Bukhari: it was mentioned in the presence of ‘Ā’ishah that ‘Ali had been a legatee, so she said: When did he make a bequest to him? And I had been supporting him [the Prophet] against my chest—or she said: in my lap—then he called for a basin, and he leaned over in my lap, and I did not realize that he had died; so when did he make a bequest to him?

I say: this narration from ‘Ā’ishah is rejected for several reasons:

- 1- Custom—especially regarding the great men—is that their male relatives attend their death, tend to them in illness, and deal with them at the time of dying, and women are not allowed that, because of what they are naturally disposed to of tenderness of heart, weakness, and frailty.
- 2- ‘Ā’ishah used to oppose ‘Ali, so her statement about him is not accepted.
- 3- The Hadith of the Two Weighty Things has been transmitted widely and become well-known. In it, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) gave a bequest concerning the Book of Allah and his progeny—his Household—and urged holding fast to both. And the Hadith of the Two Weighty Things is authentic by the consensus of the hadith scholars among the Sunnis and the Shi’ah. We do not claim from the bequest more than what the Hadith of the Two Weighty Things contains; and ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib is the head of the progeny and the master of the Household.

However, the People of Sunnah and the Community, when they denied a bequest to ‘Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), did not deny it except in conformity with the reality that the caliphs imposed in the Umayyad and

'Abbasid states—and those before them. So they became partisan to that imposed reality, and did not look to anything else, nor rely upon anything other than it; and upon that the doctrine of the People of Sunnah and the Community was built.

And the evidence for what we mentioned is several matters:

- 1- In the principles of their hadith method, they declare upright those who were hostile to the Household and used to hate them and curse 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), and they impugn the Shi'ah of the Household and those who love them, and attribute to them various accusations. Ibn Hajar mentioned the meaning of that in the introduction to *Fāth al-Bari*, the commentary on al-Bukhari.
- 2- They do not pay attention to authentic texts that contradict their traditional doctrine inherited from the Umayyads. One example of that is the hadith: "*No one loves you except a believer, and no one hates you except a hypocrite*". They narrated this hadith and authenticated it, and it is in Muslim; yet they opposed that text, so they declared the lover of 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) to be sinful, and they elevated his hater.
- 3- They judged all the Companions as just, believing, trustworthy, and so on—yet the texts that they authenticated, and that al-Bukhari and Muslim and the rest of the hadith scholars narrated, refute them and respond to them, but they did not give them consideration. Among that is: "*Then I will say: My Companions, my Companions! and it will be said: You do not know what they introduced after you; they turned back upon their heels backward*"—or as he said.

[Hadith: "O Banu 'Abd Manaf, I Cannot Avert from You Anything from Allah"]

In al-Bukhari there is a hadith: "*...O Banu 'Abd Manaf, I cannot avail you against Allah in anything. O 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, I cannot avail you against Allah in anything. And O Safiyyah, the paternal aunt of the Messenger of Allah, I cannot avail you against Allah in anything. And O Fatimah bint Muhammad, ask me whatever you wish of my wealth; I cannot avail you against Allah in anything*". Ended.

I say: it is taken from this hadith that companionship or kinship does not prevent Allah's punishment and chastisement. So, the one who commits a major sin is judged to deserve a painful punishment if he does not repent. And this does not mean that we negate the merit of companionship and kinship. Rather, companionship and kinship are two tremendous virtues, but they do not prevent Allah's punishment.

In that case, their merit is manifested in:

- 1- Honor and high rank in this world.

- 2- Honor and high rank in the Hereafter.
- 3- Multiplication of reward, as indicated by His—*Exalted is He*—saying: *"Not equal among you are those who spent before the Conquest and fought. Those are greater in degree than those who spent afterward and fought. Yet to each Allah has promised the best."* [Al-Hadid:10] And His—*Exalted is He*—saying about the wives of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), who combined companionship and kinship—meaning kinship by marriage: *"We shall give her her reward twice."* [Al-Ahzab:31] And: *"And the foremost, the foremost—those are the ones brought near."* [Al-Waqi'ah:10-11]

[The Imam Trades Among His Subjects]

In *al-majmou* and the *Amali* of Ahmad ibn 'Isa there is a hadith: *"Indeed I have cursed the imam who trades among his subjects..."* and so on.

I say: in al-Bukhari there is the hadith: *"O Allah, I disavow to You what Khalid has done..."*.

["Let Those of Understanding and Wisdom Stand Closest to Me"]

In Sunan al-Tirmidhi, the hadith of Ibn Mas'ud from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"Let those of understanding and wisdom stand closest to me, then those next to them, then those next to them. Do not differ lest your hearts differ. And beware the commotions of the markets"*.

And in it, from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), that he liked the Muhajirun and the Ansar to be nearest to him so that they would preserve from him. Ended.

["When My Community Does Fifteen Traits..."]

In al-Tirmidhi there is a hadith: *"When my community does fifteen traits, affliction will descend upon it"*. It was said: What are they, O Messenger of Allah?

He said: *"When booty becomes something circulated among a few; when the trust becomes a means of gain; when alms becomes a burden; when a man obeys his wife and is undutiful to his mother; when he is kind to his friend and harsh to his father; when voices are raised in mosques; when the leader of a people is the vilest of them; when a man is honored out of fear of his harm; when wines are drunk; when silk is worn; when singing-girls and musical instruments are adopted; and when the last of this community curses its first—then let them await, at that, a red wind, or an earth-swallowing, or a transformation"*. Ended.

I say: all of that has occurred, except for the last of this community cursing its first, for it has not appeared in a general way. And the raising

of voices in mosques is by the use of the loudspeaker.

[A Statement by al-Nasa'i Criticizing the "Virtues" of Mu'awiyah]

In the biography of al-Nasa'i written at the beginning of his Sunan, its wording is: Imam al-Nasa'i went out in the year 302 AH to Damascus, and the partisans of Mu'awiyah from the people of al-Sham asked him to prefer Mu'awiyah over 'Ali (*May Allah honor his face*). He said: Is Mu'awiyah not satisfied with being equal for equal, such that he must be preferred over 'Ali?!

They also asked him about what he narrates of "virtues" for Mu'awiyah. He said: I do not know for him any virtue except: "*May Allah not fill his belly*"! So the people of al-Sham continued striking him on his testicles with their feet until they dragged him out of the mosque. Then he was carried to al-Ramlah, and he died there. Ended.

I say: what dominates the hadith imams is an extreme partisanship toward Mu'awiyah and exaggeration in his merit and in preferring him; and it appears from the words of al-Nasa'i regarding Mu'awiyah that he did not agree with them about Mu'awiyah.

[The Army That Invades the Ka'bah]

In al-Bukhari: "*An army will invade the Ka'bah, and they will be swallowed up by the earth*".

And in it: "*It is as though I see him—black, with splayed legs—dismantling it stone by stone*".

And in it: "*The Ka'bah will be ruined by the one with thin shins from Abyssinia*". Ended.

I say: it seems to me that the second and third narrations are not authentic from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), for the following reasons:

- 1- Because Allah, *Exalted is He*, protected the Ka'bah from the People of the Elephant when they intended to demolish it, and He seized them with the seizure of the Mighty, the All-Powerful, making them like eaten straw. Thus, in the narrations mentioned there is something of contradiction with the Qur'an.
- 2- He, *Exalted is He*, said: "*And whoever intends therein deviation by wrongdoing, We will make him taste of a painful punishment.*" [Al-Hajj: 25]

As for the first hadith, there is no far-fetchedness in its being authentic.

[Hadith: Whoever Seizes a Span]

In Muslim there is the hadith: "*Whoever seizes a span of land wrongfully, Allah will encircle him with it on the Day of Resurrection from seven earths*". And in a narration: "*He will be encircled with it in seven*

earths on the Day of Resurrection".

I say: it is as though the meaning—*Allah knows best*—is like the meaning in His, *Exalted is He*, saying: "*And every human being—We have fastened his bird (deed) to his neck...*" [Al-Isra':13] Meaning: the evil deed that the accountable person commits adheres to its doer, clings to him, does not separate from him, and becomes on him like a collar around the neck.

So, whoever usurps a span of land, the crime of that usurpation clings to him, becomes binding upon him, and is upon him like a collar around the neck—never separating from him, neither in this world nor on the Day of Reckoning—until he meets the recompense of that in Hell.

If it is said: what is the meaning of "from seven earths," or "*in seven earths*"?

I say: the meaning—*Allah knows best*—is that the one who usurps a span of land has usurped what lies beneath that span from the depths of the earth, which are—so it is said—seven earths, one above another. So he is a usurper of all of that, and therefore the recompense of usurping the span reaches him from every earth, which are seven.

[Discussing al-Bukhari's Hadith on Satan Touching the Newborn]

In al-Bukhari, the hadith of Abu Hurayrah: "No newborn is born except that Satan touches him at the moment he is born, so he cries out from Satan's touch—except Mary and her son..." and so on.

I say: Satan is empowered to tempt the children of Adam, to turn them away from the religion, and to cast them into sins and crimes. Children are not among those addressed by temptation, and he has no authority to inflict pain upon the young or the old by striking, stabbing, and the like.

Further, there is no special distinction for Mary and her son (*Peace be Upon Them*) above other righteous people. And Allah, *Exalted is He*, said regarding John son of Zachariah (*Peace be Upon Them*): "*And peace be upon him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he is raised alive.*" [Maryam: 15] For the verse indicates that John (*Peace be Upon Him*) is encompassed by peace and safety on the day of his birth, and that entails that he is protected from Satan, the accursed.

Further, Satan's "touch" of the newborn at the time of birth has no effect upon misguidance; otherwise all the children of Adam would be misguided—prophets and others.

[Discussing the Hadith: "If This One Is Delayed, He Will Not Reach Old Age Until the Hour Is Established"]

In Muslim, from Anas, he said: A boy passed by belonging to al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, and he was one of my peers. The Prophet (*May*

Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) said: "If this one is delayed, he will not reach old age until the Hour is established". Muslim narrated it through multiple chains from Anas.

I say: the hadith should not be considered authentic, even if Muslim narrated it in his Sahih, for the following reasons:

- 1- One should not rigidly cling to imitating the hadith masters in declaring reports authentic or weak.
- 2- Those hadith masters are not fit to be followed blindly in everything they said, because their error is clear in much of what they authenticated.
- 3- From here the extremism of the People of Sunnah and the Community becomes evident in their saying about the two Sahihs: that they are the most authentic book after the Book of Allah, *Exalted is He*. It appears that their statement arises either from foolish partisanship or from great ignorance.
- 4- From here the corruption of the propaganda and promotion regarding the hadith masters becomes evident—namely, that they reached the ultimate limit in verification, precision, investigation, scrutiny, and study in the sciences of hadith, its types, its ranks, and so on. Rather, their work—if they understood—would be counted as a beginning that needs continuation, follow-up, development, refinement, and improvement, and repeated examination after examination, until views reach the final limit and ultimate goal which no view can surpass.

However, the scholars of the People of Sunnah and the Community and their hadith men froze upon imitating a group from the third century and stopped where they stopped them. And instead of continuing research and examination, they placed barriers that prevent continued examination and block the path to it, such as:

- 1- No criticism is accepted against any of the narrators of the two Sahihs, because whoever is among the narrators of the two Sahihs has "crossed the bridge" and left the sphere and field of criticism.
- 2- The two Sahihs are the most authentic book after the Book of Allah.
- 3- No one who came after the era of the hadith masters has the right to judge contrary to what they judged regarding hadith, and whoever came after them must adhere to what they judged—thus they closed the door in the faces of those who look and research.

[Discussing Hadiths in Muslim]

In Muslim there is a chapter about the dwelling in Madinah and its

expansion before the Hour. Under that he mentioned the hadith: "*Dwellings will reach Ihab—or: Yihab*¹". It was said to Suhayl: how far is that from the city? He said: such-and-such miles. Ended.

I say: at this time—in the year 1428 AH—dwellings have expanded greatly until they have gone far beyond Dhu al-Hulayfah, and what lies between the mountains has filled up, and it has gone far beyond that.

In Muslim: from Ibn 'Abbas that Mu'awiyah said to him: Have you known that I clipped some hair from the head of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) at al-Marwah with a broad arrowhead? So I said to him: I do not know this except as an argument against you. Ended.

I say: the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did not clip his hair at al-Marwah, because he was performing qiran during the Farewell Pilgrimage. Rather, he shaved his head after he stoned the largest pillar and slaughtered his sacrifice.

If it is said: perhaps that was in one of his three 'umrahs that he performed?

We say: as for one of them, it was the one joined with his Hajj (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). The second: the polytheists prevented him from reaching the House, so he ended the state and shaved his head at al-Hudaybiyah; then after it came the 'Umrah of Fulfillment, and Mu'awiyah at that time was a polytheist. The third was the 'Umrah of al-Ji'irranah, and it was upon his return from the expedition of al-Ta'if after the conquest of Makkah; and Mu'awiyah at that time was among those whose hearts the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) sought to reconcile with one hundred camels because of the weakness of his Islam. So he was not a person of trust such that he would stand with a broad arrowhead at the jugular veins of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Therefore we say: the statement of Mu'awiyah is not correct and is not acceptable.

Concerning the Khawarij

In the hadith that came regarding the Khawarij in Muslim, from 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*): "Were it not that you would become self-conceited, I would inform you of what Allah promised those who kill them, upon the tongue of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)".

And in another narration in Muslim, from 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*): "If the army that strikes them knew what has been decreed for them upon

1- It is a place near al-Madinah al-Munawwarah.

the tongue of their Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), they would not slacken from deeds". Ended.

I say: it may be taken from this hadith that fighting the innovators who rebel from obedience is better than fighting the disbelievers, and that is supported by several matters:

- 1- The Companions in the time of Abu Bakr unanimously agreed upon fighting those who withheld the alms, while they were Muslims who gave the call to prayer and prayed. Nothing issued from them that would necessitate their apostasy except their withholding of alms, and that does not take them out of Islam. Yet the Companions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) fought them and left fighting the polytheists.
- 2- Those who rebel from obedience are of greater danger and their corruption is greater. Allah, *Exalted is He*, said regarding those who were like that among the hypocrites: *"They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allah fight them—how are they turned away!"* [Al-Munafiqun:4]
- 3- Fighting the polytheists and disbelievers is not properly completed except after internal reform and extinguishing the corruption that has penetrated within the community of Muslims.
- 4- Jihad was made obligatory by Allah, *Exalted is He*, to give might to the religion and to raise the word of Allah. Therefore it is obligatory to strive against whoever attempts aggression against the might of Islam, or attempts to stand in the way of raising the word of Allah—whether the aggressor is from within the ranks or from outside them. And it is required of the community of Muslims to give precedence to the most important, then the next most important. There is no doubt that the nearby enemy, close in abode, is more dangerous than the distant enemy.

[Solomon son of David (*Peace be Upon Him*) Going Around to His Wives]

In Muslim, in a hadith from him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he said: *"Solomon son of David, the Prophet of Allah, said: I will go around tonight to seventy women; all of them will give birth to a boy who will fight in the path of Allah. So his companion—or the angel—said to him: Say: if Allah wills. But he did not say it, and he forgot. So he went around to them, and none of them gave birth except one woman, who gave birth to half a human being..."* and so on.

And in another narration also in Muslim: *"I will go around tonight to ninety women..."* and so on.

I say: I have doubt concerning the authenticity of this narration, for

several reasons:

- 1- The nature of a human being—even if he reaches the utmost limit of human strength—is not capable of intercourse with ninety women or seventy women in a single night.
- 2- It is far-fetched that a prophet from among the prophets of Allah—who are the people of knowledge of Allah and of His ways—would swear that ninety women or seventy women would become pregnant in one night, and that each one of them would bring forth a boy who would strive in the path of Allah.
- 3- It is unlikely that a prophet from among the prophets of Allah would be reminded of Allah's will and then not pay attention to that, nor remember it, but rather turn away and forget. Rather, it is unlikely that he would swear about an unknown future matter, of those things that Allah, Exalted is He, has kept to Himself in knowledge, and he does not know what Allah will decree in it.
- 4- In the hadith there is attribution of immense ignorance to a prophet from among the prophets of Allah. How could that issue from a great prophet? Did Solomon not know that his own self and the strength of his body are in Allah's hand, and that Allah is able to take his life, or to strip him of his strength before he reaches what he swore to do? Did Solomon not know Allah's way with the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve? Did he not know that when a man has intercourse with a woman, she may become pregnant and she may not become pregnant? Did he not know that if she conceives, she may give birth to a male, and she may give birth to a female? And that her pregnancy may miscarry before completion?
Did he not know that a child may be righteous and strive, and may be corrupt and not strive?
And that a child may live, and death may seize him before he reaches maturity? And that he may be sound, and he may be disabled and thus not strive? And so on.

[The Loss of Everything After the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), Even the Prayer]

In al-Tirmidhi—and he said: it is a fair hadith—on the authority of Abu 'Imran al-Jawni, from Anas ibn Malik, who said: "I do not recognize anything of what we used to be upon in the time of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)."

So I said: "What about the prayer?" He said: "Have you not done in your prayer what you already know?" Ended.

I say: in that there is an indication that the prayer in the time of the Companions changed from what it had been in the time of the Prophet

(*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

And the narration has been authentically reported from ‘Imran ibn al-Husayn and Abu Hurayrah that they prayed behind ‘Ali in al-Kufah, and one of them said: “This reminded me of the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).”

And what they did—so it appears to me, *and Allah knows best*—were matters such as:

- 1- Leaving the basmalah in al-Fatihah, and in the surah after it, and leaving the transition takbir.
- 2- Leaving the call to prayer with “Hayya ‘ala khayr al-‘amal,” and the third call to prayer on Friday.
- 3- Making the iqamah single.
- 4- Placing one hand over the other upon the chest during standing.
- 5- Saying “Amin” behind the imam, and raising the hands at every lowering and rising.
- 6- Completing the prayer at Mina in the time of ‘Uthman.
- 7- Leaving the qunut in the Fajr prayer.
- 8- The tarawih prayer in the nights of Ramadan.
- 9- Adding the tathwib in the Fajr call to prayer.
- 10- Calling the Fajr prayer before the true dawn rises.
- 11- Cursing ‘Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) in the Friday sermon.
- 12- And it has been narrated that there was a call to prayer for the ‘Eid prayer, and that the sermon was before the prayer.

Evidence for What We Mentioned

- 1- Al-Nasa’i narrated in his Sunan from Nu‘aym al-Mujmir, who said: “I prayed behind Abu Hurayrah. He recited: ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,’ and every time he prostrated he would say: ‘Allah is the Greatest.’ And when he rose from sitting after two units he said: ‘Allah is the Greatest.’ And when he gave salams he said: ‘By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I am the one of you whose prayer most resembles the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).” Ended.
- 2- And in al-Nasa’i also, from ‘Alqamah ibn ‘Abd Allah, that he said: “Shall I not pray for you the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)?” So he prayed, and he did not raise his hands except one single time. Ended.

[It Is Not Permissible to Attribute Bada’ to Allah]

In Anwar al-Tamam: al-Bukhari, Abu Dawud, and al-Tirmidhi narrated from Abu Hurayrah, who said: The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) sent us out and said: “If you

find so-and-so and so-and-so, then burn them with fire." When we intended to depart, he said: "I had commanded you to burn so-and-so and so-and-so, but none punishes with fire except Allah. So if you find them, then kill them." Ended.

I say: the command to burn could be understood as having issued from the Prophet's ijtiḥad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and Allah, *Exalted is He*, made clear to him that this was not appropriate, so he retracted for Allah's sake from that. It is not valid nor permissible that he said it by command of his Lord, because Allah, *Exalted is He*, does not command a thing and then retract from it—since that would entail deficiency, which is not permissible to attribute to Allah. What is like that is called *bada'*.

Bada' is that a command, for example, is retracted from what was commanded because it becomes apparent that the interest lies in something else, as in this hadith; and such a thing is not permissible to attribute to Allah, *Exalted is He*, because nothing is hidden from Allah and ignorance is not permissible to attribute to Him.

Yes: if the hadith is authentic, then it is evidence that the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to exercise ijtiḥad in matters of war.

Regarding the People of Yemen

Ahmad and al-Tirmidhi narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "*May Allah have mercy on Himyar: their mouths are peace, their hands are food, and they are the people of security and faith*".

The exegetes narrated in explaining His, *Exalted is He*, saying: "*Then Allah will bring a people...*" [Al-Ma'idah:54] that the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) pointed to Abu Musa and said: "*The people of this one*."

And the exegetes mentioned in the explanation of Surah al-Nasr: when this surah was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "*Allah is the Greatest. The help of Allah and the opening have come, and the people of Yemen have come—people whose hearts are tender. Faith is Yemeni, jurisprudence is Yemeni, and wisdom is Yemeni*." And he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "*I sense the breath of your Lord coming from the direction of Yemen*".

And Ibn Hajar mentioned in *Fath al-Bari*, from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "*The people of Yemen will come upon you like clouds; they are the best people of the earth*".

And in Sahih Muslim: "*Indeed I will be at the basin, driving people away*

for the people of Yemen; I will strike with my staff until they are poured in upon it".

And a group of hadith scholars narrated it, among them Ahmad and al-Hakim—and he said: its chain is authentic: *"The best of men are the men of Yemen; faith is Yemeni, and I am Yemeni"*.

When Hamdan accepted Islam at the hand of 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), 'Ali wrote that to the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), so he fell down in prostration and said: *"Peace be upon Hamdan, peace be upon Hamdan"*—two or three times.

And he said, as in al-Jami' al-Kabir: *"How excellent is the clan Hamdan—how swift they are to support, and how patient they are upon hardship."*

[A Benefit from al-Bukhari Indicating That Washing Is Something Other Than Mere Contact of Water With the Skin]

In al-Bukhari: *"...then he took a handful of water and sprinkled it over his right leg until he washed it."*

It is taken from the hadith that washing is something other than merely making the water touch the skin.

[A Discussion of al-Bukhari's Hadith Regarding the Age of Abu Bakr]

In al-Bukhari: *"The Prophet of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) came toward Madinah, with Abu Bakr riding behind him. Abu Bakr was an elderly man who was recognized, while the Prophet of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) was a young man who was not recognized..."* and so on.

We say: it has been agreed—almost unanimously—that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) died at the age of sixty-three years, and that Abu Bakr also died at the age of sixty-three years. Accordingly, the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was older than Abu Bakr by more than two years; therefore, it is not correct that Abu Bakr on the day of the Hijrah was "an elderly man" while the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was "a young man," due to Abu Bakr's age at that time being less than the age of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

As for Abu Bakr being recognized while the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was not recognized—this is, by customary standards, unlikely. For the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was the focus of attention, and people would point him out even before prophethood; then his standing increased and his renown rose after prophethood. Eyes were directed

toward knowing him, and the motives to see him were abundant. Add to that fame that he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to present himself to the Arab tribes during the seasons of Hajj and others, year after year, which increased recognition of his person. This is in addition to the awe, majesty, and beauty with which Allah clothed him, to the extent that his describer said: "I have not seen anyone like him before him nor after him," (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

And there is nothing among the causes of renown for Abu Bakr: he was not among the elders of Quraysh, nor among their nobles, nor among those of power among them; he had no standing among them and no mention.

If it is said: Abu Bakr was a man of great trade, which gave him fame and recognition among the Arab tribes.

We say: Abu Bakr was not like that—evidenced by what al-Bukhari narrated: that Abu Bakr hired or purchased two riding mounts for the Hijrah, one mount for the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and one mount for Abu Bakr; then the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) took one of them from Abu Bakr for its price, and Abu Bakr took the other. If Abu Bakr had been a merchant, he would have needed several mounts to transport his goods, and he would not have needed to purchase or hire only two mounts. He would also have had several horses—or at least one horse—because people of means did not refrain from owning them. And he would also have had a herd of camels, because camels were the most beloved wealth to the people of those times, and they did not give up possessing them due to the benefits and prestige in them; rather, they were among their greatest sources of nourishment, and most of their food was milk. So when none of that was present, we know that Abu Bakr was neither wealthy nor a merchant.

Moreover, Allah described the Emigrants as poor in verses of the Qur'an, and that indicates the generality of their poverty, such as His saying: "*For the poor Emigrants...*" [Al-Hashr:8].

And Allah praised the Ansar for preferring the Emigrants, and it became well-known that the Ansar gave the Emigrants their date-palms: the Emigrants would work to maintain them, and they would receive half.

And it also became well-known that Abu Bakr, when he assumed the caliphate, had an allowance assigned for him from the public treasury.

Regarding the Companions

In al-Bukhari: it reached 'Umar that so-and-so sold wine, so he said: "May Allah fight so-and-so! Did he not know that the Messenger of Allah

(*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: ‘*May Allah fight the Jews: fats were forbidden for them, so they melted them and sold them?*’” Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Bukhari said: “May Allah fight them” means: “May He curse them.”

And in Muslim and Ibn Majah: that Samurah sold wine, so he said: “May Allah fight Samurah...” and so on—quoted from Fath al-Bari.

I say: it is taken from that that the Companions are like others: if one of them does what necessitates cursing, then he is cursed.

And Samurah ibn Jundub was among the Companions, and he was governor over al-Basrah for Ziyad ibn Abih, then for ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad.

And it has been narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to Samurah, and to Abu Hurayrah, and to a third man: “*The last of you to die will be in the Fire.*”

[The Hadith of Abu Hurayrah and the Jinni Who Stole the Zakat]

In al-Bukhari is the hadith of Abu Hurayrah: “The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) assigned me to guard the zakat of Ramadan. Then someone came to me and began scooping up some of the food. I seized him and said: ‘By Allah, I will take you to the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).’ He said: ‘I am needy, I have dependents, and I am in severe need.’ So I let him go. In the morning, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: ‘What did your captive do last night?’ I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, he complained of severe need and dependents, so I had mercy on him and let him go.’ He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: ‘Indeed, he has lied to you, and he will return...’” and so on.

And in it: that he returned a second time, and Abu Hurayrah let him go; then he returned a third time, and Abu Hurayrah let him go; and at its end: the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “*Indeed, he has told you the truth, though he is a liar. Do you know whom you have been speaking with for three nights, O Abu Hurayrah?*” He said: “No.” He said: “*That was a devil.*” Ended.

I say: it appears to me that this story is fabricated, for several reasons:

- 1- A rational person, even if deceived once, is not deceived a second and third time—especially after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) warned him.
- 2- The jinn and devils do not eat the food of human beings, nor do they need to steal and plunder it. That is because they do not have earthly bodies like human beings and other animals; rather, they

are spirits and their bodies are subtle and not seen—evidenced by His saying, *Exalted is He: “Indeed, he sees you—he and his tribe—from where you do not see them.”* [Al-A’raf:27].

- 3- If they were in need of the known foods and fruits, they could have eaten from the tops of trees and from the wilderness and open lands, and they would not have needed to burden themselves by entering Abu Hurayrah’s storehouse, and then apologizing to him, and claiming need, and so on.
- 4- It is known that the appearance of a devil or jinni to a human being, and conversing with them, and disputing with them, and addressing them, is from mythical stories, or from the stories of those afflicted with obsessive whisperings.
- 5- It is from the nature of the jinn, upon which Allah created them, that they are not seen by eyesight.

[Refuting the Authenticity of What Is Narrated About Mu’awiyah’s Virtues]

Some Sunni hadith scholars narrate a report about the merit of Mu’awiyah: “O Allah, make him a guide who is rightly guided.” This narration is not sound, because Mu’awiyah was not a guide who was rightly guided—evidenced by the following:

1. Mu’awiyah fought the rightly guided caliph ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. Sunnis and Shi’a alike agree that in that fighting Mu’awiyah was not “a guide who is rightly guided,” but rather an aggressor and a rebellious transgressor.
2. Al-Bukhari, in the chapter on the “virtue of Mu’awiyah,” recorded only an attribution from Ibn ‘Abbas: “He is a jurist,” meaning Mu’awiyah. He did not know what else to write besides that. If there had been an authentic hadith narrated in praise of Mu’awiyah, al-Bukhari would have included it in his Sahih because of his eagerness to mention Mu’awiyah’s merit.

[On Condemning the Leadership of a Miser, and the Reason for the Revelation of “These Two Adversaries...”]

Ibn Kathir said—while interpreting Surat al-Tawbah—that in the authentic tradition the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to them—meaning Banu Salimah: “Who is your leader, O Banu Salimah?” They said: “Al-Jadd ibn Qays, though we consider him miserly.” The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “And what disease is more ruinous than miserliness? Rather, your leader is the curly-haired, fair-skinned youth: Bishr ibn al-Bara’ ibn Ma’rur.” End.

And in it also: then al-Bukhari said: “Hajjaj ibn al-Minhal narrated to us...” and so on, from ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, who said: “I am the first who will

kneel before the Most Merciful for litigation on the Day of Resurrection.” Qays—who is the narrator from ‘Ali in this hadith—said: “Concerning them was revealed: *‘These are two adversaries who disputed concerning their Lord’* [Al-Hajj:19].” He said: they are those who came forth for single combat on the Day of Badr: ‘Ali, Hamzah, and ‘Ubaydah; and Shaybah, ‘Utbah, and al-Walid.

[Al-Bukhari’s Narration of Moses Debating Adam]

Al-Bukhari narrated, with his chain, from Abu Hurayrah, from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): “Moses debated Adam and said to him: ‘You are the one who brought people out of Paradise by your sin and made them miserable.’ Adam said: ‘O Moses, you are the one whom Allah chose with His message and His speech—do you blame me for a matter Allah wrote upon me before He created me, or decreed upon me before He created me?’ The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: ‘So Adam overcame Moses in argument.’” Ibn Kathir said in his tafsir: this hadith has routes in the two Sahihs and other Musnads.

Its soundness should be examined even if it is in the two Sahihs. For Allah, *Exalted is He*, reproached Adam in the Qur’an for his disobedience and expelled him from Paradise because of it. When Allah reproached Adam and blamed him for the sin and for obeying Satan, Adam did not excuse himself by predestination; rather he said: *“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers.”* [Al-A’raf].

And it is well known among Muslim scholars that whoever is blamed for committing sins and then argues by predestination and excuses himself with it—his argument is invalid and his excuse is rejected, and it does not remove any blame from him.

[Which Deed Is Most Beloved to Allah]

In Ibn Kathir’s tafsir, from Ibn Mas‘ud (*May Allah be pleased with him*): I asked the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and said: “O Messenger of Allah, which deed is most beloved to Allah?” He said: “*Prayer at its proper time.*” I said: “Then which?” He said: “*Kindness to parents.*” I said: “Then which?” He said: “*Jihad in the path of Allah.*” Both of them (al-Bukhari and Muslim) transmitted it. End—taken from Ibn Kathir’s tafsir of Surat al-Mu’minun.

[Islam, Faith, Godfearingness, and Charity]

Ahmad narrated with his chain from Anas, who said: the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to say: “*Islam is outward, and faith is in the heart.*” Then he would point with his hand to his chest three times, and then say: “*Godfearingness is here, godfearingness is here.*” End—quoted from Ibn Kathir’s tafsir.

Ahmad narrated with his chain from al-Mundhir ibn Jarir, from his father, who said: We were with the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) at the beginning of the day. Then a group came to him barefoot and unclothed, wearing striped cloaks or rough garments, with swords hanging from their shoulders—most of them from Mudar, rather all of them from Mudar. The face of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) changed when he saw their extreme need. He went inside, then came out and ordered Bilal to call the prayer and establish it; he prayed, then delivered a sermon and recited: *“O people, fear your Lord who created you from a single soul and created from it its mate and spread from them many men and women; and fear Allah by whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever watchful over you.”* [Al-Nisa’]. And he recited the verse in Surat al-Hashr: *“Let a soul look to what it has sent ahead for tomorrow.”* [Al-Hashr:19]. Then he said: *“Let a man give charity from his dinar, from his dirham, from his clothing, from a measure of his wheat, from a measure of his dates,” until he said: “even if it is half a date.”* He said: then a man from the Ansar came with a bundle that his hand could barely carry—rather it had become too heavy for him. Then people followed one after another until I saw two heaps: one of food and one of clothes—until I saw the face of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brighten as though it were gilded. Then the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: *“Whoever establishes in Islam a good practice will have its reward and the reward of those who act upon it after him, without that diminishing their rewards in the least. And whoever establishes in Islam an evil practice will bear its burden and the burden of those who act upon it after him, without that diminishing their burdens in the least.”* Muslim alone narrated it.

End—quoted from Ibn Kathir’s tafsir when explaining His saying in Surat al-Hashr: *“Let a soul look to what it has sent ahead for tomorrow.”* [Al-Hashr:18].

[A Note About Senna(Al-Sanaa)¹]

In al-Tirmidhi there is a hadith: *“If anything contained a cure for death, it would be in senna.”*

[Hadith Scholars’ Endorsement of Those Who Hated the Prophet’s Household]

From *Tahdhib al-Ttahdhib*:

- Lamazah ibn Ziyad al-Azdi: they praised him and declared him

1- Al-Sanaa is a plant from the legume family. It has good benefits, and it is used in medications.

reliable, while he used to insult 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. End.

- Muhammad ibn Ziyad al-Alhani: trustworthy and dependable; he became known for *nasb* [hostility toward the Prophet's Household], like Hariz ibn 'Uthman.
- Maymun ibn Mihran al-Jazari, the jurist: they praised him greatly and deemed him reliable, while he used to speak against 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. End.
- Nu'aym ibn Abi Hind al-Ashja'i: they declared him reliable, while he used to attack 'Ali (*may Allah be pleased with him*). End.
- Al-Haytham ibn al-Aswad al-Nakha'i: they declared him reliable; he was "Uthmani," biased against 'Ali, and he was among those who testified against Hujr ibn 'Adi.
- 'Umar ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas: people narrated from him; a trustworthy Successor; and he is the one who killed al-Husayn. End.
- Zuhayr ibn Mu'awiyah ibn Khudayj: they lauded him, praised him, and declared him reliable; some criticized him for having been among the guards at the crucifixion platform of Zayd ibn 'Ali.
- 'Anbasah ibn Sa'id ibn al-'As: Ibn Ma'in, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, and others declared him reliable. Al-Daraqutni said: he was a companion of al-Hajjaj; and al-Zubayr said: his attachment was to al-Hajjaj.
- Qabisah ibn Dhu'ayb al-Khuza'i: he was in charge of the seal of 'Abd al-Malik; he was the most favored of people to him; he was his courier; and he was trustworthy, dependable, and prolific in narration. End.
- Kathir ibn al-Salt ibn Ma'd Yakrib al-Kindi: he was a scribe for 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan in official correspondence; they declared him reliable and praised him. End.
- Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub al-Jawzajani al-Dimashqi: he was harsh toward 'Ali ibn Abi Talib; he was of the Haruri persuasion; "firm in the Sunnah"; and on the way of Hariz. They praised him in Tahdhib al-Tahdhib; Ibn Hibban listed him among the trustworthy. End.

The phrase "firm in the Sunnah" here means: he used to curse 'Ali (*peace be upon him*).

- Ishaq ibn Suwayd ibn Hubayrah al-'Adawi: trustworthy, but he showed severe bias against 'Ali and said: "I do not love 'Ali." End.
- Khalid ibn Salamah ibn al-'As ibn Hisham al-Makhzumi: trustworthy; he was a leading figure among the Murji'ah; he hated

‘Ali; and he used to recite to the Marwanids poems in which the Chosen Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was satirized. End.

- Khalid ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Qasri, Al-Amer Al-Dimashqi: trustworthy; he used to speak against ‘Ali; and Ibn Jarir mentioned that he used to curse ‘Ali. End.
- Dawud ibn al-Husayn al-Madani, the Umayyad client: they declared him reliable; he held the view of the Kharijites. End.
- Ziyad ibn Jubayr al-Thaqafi: they declared him reliable and praised him; he used to attack al-Hasan and al-Husayn. End.
- Ziyad ibn ‘Allafah al-Tha‘labi: they praised him and declared him reliable; he held a bad doctrinal stance and was biased against the Prophet’s Household.
- Al-Sa‘ib ibn Faruj al-Makki: al-Bukhari, Muslim, and others narrated from him; he was a vile satirist and an enemy of the Prophet’s family (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). End.
- ‘Abd Allah ibn Shafiq al-‘Aqili: among the trustworthy, but he was “Uthmani,” hating ‘Ali, and he used to speak against ‘Ali. End.
- ‘Imran ibn Hittan, the Kharijite: they declared him reliable and narrated from him. End.
- Qays ibn Abi Hatim al-Bajali: the major compilers used him as proof and exaggerated his status, saying: “more reliable than al-Zuhri,” while he used to speak against ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. End.

[The View of Theologians Toward the Hadith Folk]

The theologians call the hadith folk “the Hashwiyyah,” and describe them as the most ignorant of people regarding what they carry, and the least fortunate regarding what they seek. Concerning this, their poet says:

*“Pack-animals for journeys—no knowledge do they have of its excellence,
except like the knowledge of camels.*

*By your life: a camel does not know, when it sets out, with its loads—or
when it returns—what lies within the bags.”*

They were content with the mere outlines of knowledge, and were satisfied that it be said: “So-and-so is familiar with the chains and the narration of hadith,” and they renounced having it said: “So-and-so is knowledgeable of what is written,” or “a doer of what he knows.”

There is much more said by some of them about others; for that, see volume two of *Jami‘ Bayan al-‘Ilm wa Fadlih* by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr.

[On Mentioning the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the Prophets (*May Allah's Blessings be upon them*), and Matters Related to Them]

Hadith: “Whoever visits my grave, my intercession becomes due for him”

Hadith: “Whoever visits my grave, my intercession becomes due for him.” This is a well-known hadith. However, deserving intercession requires that the visitor be committed to piety, based on the Qur’anic statement: “*Allah only accepts from the righteous.*” [Al-Ma’idah:27]

[The Night Journey and Ascension]

Question: Did the Night Journey of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to the heaven actually occur?

Answer (and Allah is the Granter of success): Yes, it is established. Allah mentioned in Surat al-Najm what indicates that it occurred, in the beginning of the surah from His saying: “*By the star when it descends...*” up to His saying: “*He certainly saw of the greatest signs of his Lord.*” [Al-Najm].

This is also indicated by what Imam Zayd ibn ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) narrated in *al-Majmu’*, and what Muhammad ibn Sulayman al-Kufi narrated in *al-Manaqib*, through their chains from ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*), who said: the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said:

“My Lord said to me on the night I was taken on the Night Journey: ‘Whom did you leave in charge of your community?’ I said: ‘You know best, my Lord.’ He said: ‘O Muhammad, I have chosen you for My message and selected you for Myself. You are My Prophet and My chosen one among My creation. Then [comes] the greatest truthful one, the pure and purified, whom I created from your clay; I made him your minister and the father of your two grandsons, the two masters, the two martyrs, the pure and purified, the leaders of the youth of Paradise. And I married him to the best of the women of the worlds. You are a tree, and ‘Ali is its branches; Fatimah is its leaves; and al-Hasan and al-Husayn are its fruits. I created you from the clay of the highest rank, and I created your followers from you. If swords struck their necks, it would only increase them in love for you.’ I said: ‘My Lord, who is the greatest truthful one?’ He said: ‘Your brother, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib.’”

He [Ali] said: “The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) gave me this glad tidings, and my two sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn also received it—three years before the

migration.”

And in the *Sahifah* of ‘Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (*peace be upon him*) there is another hadith indicating the occurrence of the Night Journey. Among Sunni sources there is also a lengthy hadith that includes the story of the Night Journey.

The Prophet’s Vision in Dreams (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)

Question: How do you interpret the Prophet’s vision in a dream and the hadith narrated about it?

Answer: It has been narrated that whoever sees the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in a dream has truly seen him. The meaning is that seeing him in a dream is a true vision. It does not mean that what is seen in the dream is the Prophet’s physical person and exact self, because the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is seen in dreams in various forms that symbolize meanings.

So, if the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is seen in a state of joy and happiness, the interpretation is that his religion is in elevation, increase, victory, and honor. If he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is seen in a state of distress or the like, the interpretation would be the opposite of what was mentioned.

Furthermore, one should not act upon what the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) commands in a dream unless it agrees with recognized proofs. If it contradicts them, it is not acted upon, because commands in dreams may have interpretations other than their apparent meaning.

[The “Words” Abraham Fulfilled]

Question: What are the “words” with which Allah tested Abraham, and he fulfilled them, in His saying: *“And when Abraham was tested by his Lord with words, and he completed them, He said: ‘Indeed I will make you an imam for the people.’”* [Al-Baqarah:124]

Answer (and Allah is the Granter of success): The “words” Abraham fulfilled were severe obligations and great trials—such as being tested with the command to sacrifice his son Ishmael, being tested with his people throwing him into the fire, being tested with debating and arguing with his people, and other tremendous and difficult responsibilities. Abraham (*peace be upon him*) fulfilled these, doing what Allah wanted and was pleased with.

It has also been said that they are five matters of the head and five of the rest of the body: trimming the moustache, letting the beard grow,

rinsing the mouth, sniffing water into the nose, cutting the nails, shaving the pubic hair, plucking the armpit hair, and so on.

But I believe that this is not correct, because what they mentioned is not severe, nor does it constitute a great trial. It is far-fetched that such things would be the reason for selecting him for leadership, and the like.

The Prophet of Allah Joseph (*peace be upon him*)

Allah taught him the knowledge of interpreting dreams, the knowledge of religious laws and rulings, and the knowledge of economic management.

Question: In what way was the story of Joseph the best of stories: *“We relate to you the best of stories”* [Yusuf: 3]?

Answer (and from Allah is success): This can be known if you recognize several matters, as it appears to me:

1. The story of Joseph that Allah related in the Qur’an is undoubtedly a true and truthful story in all its details, because Allah Himself narrated it.
2. It contains admonitions and lessons for believers, doers of good, and all righteous servants of Allah.
3. It contains a sign indicating the truthfulness of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

From the Book “Stories of the Prophets” on Mentioning Hud (*peace be upon him*)

In the book *Stories of the Prophets* by ‘Abd al-Wahhab al-Najjar:

The people of Hadramawt say that Hud (*peace and blessing be upon him*) lived in Hadramawt after the destruction of ‘Ad, until he died, and that he was buried in the eastern part of their land about two travel-stages from the city of Tarim, near the valley of Barhut. It has been reported from ‘Ali (*may Allah honor his face*) that he is buried in a place called “Kuthb Ahmar,” and that near his head is a hill they named in Hadramawt. End.

From the mentioned book:

Scholars state that the “incubation” of knowledge is fifteen years—so if a nation begins learning, it reaps the fruit of knowledge after fifteen years. As for the “incubation” of morals, its term is forty years—so if a nation begins holding firmly to morals, it does not reap the fruit until after forty years. End.

The Nine Signs of the Prophet of Allah Moses (*peace be upon him*)

Question: The Qur’an states that Allah sent Moses with nine signs to Pharaoh and his people. What are these signs?

Answer (and Allah is the Granter of success):

The signs are: the staff, the hand, the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, the blood, the years (of drought), and the decrease in fruits/crops.

As for the other signs that occurred at the hand of Moses, they were signs specific to the Children of Israel—such as the splitting of the sea, shading them with clouds, sending down manna and quails, and the rock from which water gushed when Moses struck it with his staff, and so on.

Ruling on Sending Blessings and Peace upon Others besides the Prophets

There is no prohibition in sending blessings (ṣalāh) upon someone other than the prophets and messengers (*may Allah's blessings be upon them*). The same applies to giving peace; it is permissible to say: "So-and-so, peace be upon him," or "So-and-so, may Allah bless him."

Evidence for "blessings" is Allah's statement: "*He is the One who sends blessings upon you, and His angels [do so], to bring you out from darkness into light.*" [Al-Ahzab:43] And the reported supplication: "O Allah, send blessings upon the family of Abu Awfa."

Evidence for "peace" is what Allah and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) legislated as the greeting among Muslims: "Peace be upon you," and "And upon you be peace," and what was legislated for greeting the dead, such as: "Peace be upon you, abode of a people..." and so forth. Greeting both the living and the dead is a form of supplication.

So this indicates the permissibility of making this supplication for believers—reflect upon that.

It may be said: sending blessings or peace upon people other than prophets—though permitted by evidence—should not be done because it diminishes the rank of the prophets and messengers (*May Allah's Blessing be upon them*). If we say, "So-and-so, may Allah bless him," or "peace be upon him," then the Prophet would have no distinguishing mark over other believers; so from this angle, it should not be done, so that blessings and peace remain a distinction by which the Prophet is distinguished from others.

We reply: there is no evidence requiring restricting it to prophets alone or making it a unique marker for them. How could it be so, when Allah did not restrict it nor reserve it exclusively—rather, He sent blessings upon the believers in the Qur'an.

They also say: scholars of the early and later generations do not use blessings and peace except for prophets and messengers (*peace be upon them*), and they reserve it for them.

We reply: that is merely a convention adopted by Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah; and a convention is not evidence, as is obvious.

The Excellence of the Prophets (*peace be upon them*) and the Excellence of ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*)

Question: Some people consider ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) superior to many prophets such as Moses and Jesus (*May Allah’s Blessing be upon them*). What is correct regarding his rank?

Answer (and Allah is the Granter of success): Allah’s messengers—such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (*may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon them, and upon our Prophet and his family*)—are the best of humankind absolutely, due to how Allah described and praised them in His Book, such as His saying: *“Those who convey the messages of Allah and fear Him, and fear none but Allah.”* [Al-Ahzab:39] And His saying after mentioning a number of prophets: *“And each We preferred over the worlds.”* [Al-An‘am] *“And We chose them and guided them to a straight path.”* [Al-An‘am] *“Those are the ones to whom We gave the Book, judgment, and prophethood...”* [Al-An‘am:89] *“Allah knows best where to place His messages...”* [Al-An‘am: 124] *“Those messengers—We preferred some of them over others...”* [Al-Baqarah:253] and other praises and commendations in the Qur’an. The summary of this is:

1. Conveying Allah’s messages, warning, and giving glad tidings.
2. Compassion and mercy for people in general, as indicated by: *“Perhaps you would kill yourself in grief over them if they do not believe in this message.”* [Al-Kahf] and *“So how could you grieve over a disbelieving people?”* [Al-A‘raf] and what, *Exalted is He*, Allah mentioned in the story of Noah.
3. The utmost level of patience: *“So be patient as those of firm resolve among the messengers were patient.”* [Al-Ahqaf:35]
4. *“They fear Him and fear none but Allah.”* [Al-Ahzab:39]
5. Allah gave them the Book and wisdom.
6. Allah selected them, chose them, and preferred them over the worlds—along with other traits and beautiful praise in the Magnificent Qur’an.
7. Allah mentioned them by name in His Noble Book as an honor and glorification.

As for the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (*peace be upon him*): even if he does not fall short of such qualities, Allah’s messengers and prophets were distinguished by the special virtue of prophethood and messengership.

This is with respect to outward rank. But if what is meant by “more excellent” is “greater in reward,” then there is no way to determine it, because the records of deeds are with Allah-Exalted is He.

[On Mentioning Ahl al-Bayt and the Companions and Matters Related to Them]

[On Mentioning ‘Abd al-Muttalib]

In *al-Maṣābīḥ* by Abu al-‘Abbās, with its chain back to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), it is narrated: “‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection as a nation by himself.” It also states that he did not seek divination by arrows, did not worship idols, and used to say: “I am upon the religion of Abraham (*peace be upon him*).”

He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) also says: “‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib established five practices which Allah, Mighty and Majestic, then enacted within Islam:

1. He prohibited the wives of fathers from being married by their sons.
2. He set the blood-money for killing at one hundred camels.
3. He used to circumambulate the House seven circuits, then stand at the door of the Ka’bah praising Allah and extolling Him—whereas Quraysh would circumambulate as they wished, whether few or many.
4. He found a treasure, took out one-fifth from it, and gave it in charity.
5. He named Zamzam “the watering of the pilgrims.”

(End, summarized, from *al-Maṣābīḥ*.)

[From *Tārīkh al-Ya’qūbī* on ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib’s Monotheism]

In *Tārīkh al-Ya’qūbī*: ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib rejected the worship of idols and affirmed the oneness of Allah, Mighty and Majestic.

Explanation of the Hadith: “*This religion will be carried by the upright of every generation...*”

In the authentic hadith narrated by al-Hādī (*peace be upon him*): “*This religion will be carried, in every succeeding generation, by its upright ones: they will remove from it the distortions of the extremists, the fabrications of the falsifiers, and the misinterpretations of the ignorant.*”

Corruption in religion and alteration of its rulings comes from three directions, as the hadith indicates:

1. **The distortion of extremists:** extremists are those who are overly rigid; their rigidity pushes them to go beyond the truth into falsehood, and then they adopt that as religion.
2. **The appropriation of falsifiers:** people of falsehood invent rulings from themselves, promote them through propaganda,

compel their followers to practice them, and replace with them the rulings that do not suit their politics.

3. **The interpretation of the ignorant:** ignorant people err in explaining and interpreting the legal texts, and their error and ignorance lead them to practice what Allah did not permit.

- This prophetic report also indicates that Allah appoints in every era and generation those who proclaim the truth and clarify it, and who expose and refute what has entered Islam of distortion, fabrication, and corrupt interpretation.

- It also indicates that the truly-guided, upright scholars within the nation of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) do not cease over time.

- This hadith is close in meaning to the hadith: “A group from my community will remain manifest upon the truth...”

If it is asked: How do we recognize the truly-guided, upright scholars so that we can refer to them and take their views, given the many scholars in the nation of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the many schools, sects, and groups?

We answer: The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) pointed them out and identified them in the well-known, mass-transmitted hadith of al-Thaqalayn—agreed upon as authentic among all groups—and they are the Household of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- The upright ones’ negation of falsehood is by showing its falsity through proof and evidence and clarifying that to the community. It does not mean erasing it entirely so that no one in the community remains who acts upon it—because the task of those who convey from Allah is to convey the truth and invalidate falsehood by proof. That is all that is required of them in this domain. Allah says: “*Upon you is only the conveying.*” [Ash-Shūrā:48] And: “*So remind; you are only a reminder. You are not a controller over them.*” [Al-Ghāshiyah]

[Mention of the Martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him)]

In the name of Allah and by Allah: this is the twenty-eighth night of the nights of Ramadan, 1434 AH.

In Ramadan of the year 40 AH, the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Talīb (*peace be upon him*), was martyred, and the story of his martyrdom is well known.

It is fitting here to clarify his standing in Islam. His standing (*peace be upon him*) becomes clear through two paths:

The First Path: His deeds in Islam, namely:

1. ***His precedence in Islam:*** he was the first male to accept Islam and respond to the call of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). None preceded him in Islam except the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) himself and Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, the wife of the Prophet of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Allah says: “*The foremost are the foremost—those are the ones brought near.*” [Al-Wāqī‘ah] The community agreed that the one who precedes to Islam is superior to the one who comes later; therefore, those who preferred Abu Bakr over him resorted to the claim that Abu Bakr was the first to accept Islam—a false claim, for it is established that he only accepted Islam after six or seven had preceded him.
2. ***His striving (jihad) in Islam:*** the biographies unanimously indicate that no Muslim—neither among the emigrants nor the helpers—had in jihad with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) what ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) had. His sword had a profound effect on the polytheists on the day of Badr; whoever reads the sīrah finds that nearly half of the polytheists killed at Badr were struck down by ‘Ali’s sword. On the day of Uhud he killed the standard-bearers (*Aṣḥāb al-Rāyā*). On the day of the Trench he killed ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd Wudd al-‘Āmirī, who was considered equal to a thousand. On the day of Khaybar he killed Marhab and opened the fortress. At Hunayn, the Muslims fled, but he remained with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), fought before him, and dealt the polytheists severe blows, and so on. Thus he had great weight in Islam: the polytheists feared him, were terrified of his sword and its force, magnified his might, and dreaded his position.

So Allah humiliated shirk and the polytheists and the disbelievers by his sword, defeated them by his might, and strengthened Islam, the Messenger of Islam (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and the polity of Islam through his awe, his great presence, and the loftiness of his rank and standing.

He (*peace be upon him*) would not part from the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) except at special times, and he would step forward and hasten to carry out tasks out of love for Allah and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and he (*peace be upon him*) would not hold back unless the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) ordered him to remain.

3. **Along with that**, nothing ever issued from him that would blemish the purity of his striving—no flight, no defeat, no retreat, no placing the sword where it should not be, and no law-breaking to the commands and teachings of his Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). He neither added nor diminished from what he was entrusted with of actions or missions, and nothing came from him of disputation, criticism, opposition, or objection to his Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Rather, he received what came from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) with full satisfaction, energy, activity, joy, and content acceptance. He revered the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) with the utmost reverence, loved him with the strongest love, and devoted himself entirely to that. And due to his intense love for the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), it is narrated that he would not mention the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) except that his eyes would overflow with tears until he was killed (*peace be upon him*).
4. **Knowledge**: he carried the knowledge of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—Islamic laws and obligations—until the Day of Resurrection: its foundations and branches, and everything the community needs, including what the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) singled him out with regarding knowledge of future events, known as the knowledge of al-Jafr. He (*peace be upon him*) is also the one who laid the first lines for the science of theology, the principles of jurisprudence, grammar, the laws of inheritance, and so forth.
5. **Worship**: no report is known from any of the Companions like what is reported from the Commander of the Faithful (*peace be upon him*) in worship devoted to Allah, turning wholly to Him, and fearing Him—neither in the time of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) nor after his time.

Whoever wishes to learn more about the personality of the Commander of the Faithful (*peace be upon him*) should refer to *Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah* by the Mu'tazili scholar Ibn Abi al-Hadid, in the first volume of his commentary.

The Second Way: His Rank (Peace be Upon Him) as Shown Through the Prophet's (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) Words

His standing (*peace be upon him*) is also made clear through the Prophet's (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) testimony: the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) publicly highlighted, reiterated, affirmed, and emphasized the rank of 'Ali (*peace be upon him*) through well-known statements recorded in the books of the leading scholars of Islam, such as his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: "No one loves you, O 'Ali, except a believer; and no one hates you except a hypocrite." (Narrated by Muslim and others.)

His (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) statement on the day of Khaybar, when those who had been defeated returned with the banner of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "Tomorrow I will give the banner to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger, and whom Allah and His Messenger love; one who attacks repeatedly and does not flee. Allah will grant victory at his hands." He then gave it to 'Ali (*peace be upon him*), and Khaybar was opened and Marhab was killed. (Narrated by al-Bukhari and others.)

And his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) statement; "Ali is to me as Harun was to Musa, except that there is no prophet after me." (Narrated by al-Bukhari and others.)

And there is much more that cannot be listed here. Whoever wishes to examine what is authentically reported from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) about him should refer to *Lawami' al-Anwar* by our teacher, the imam, scholar, and erudite authority Majd al-Din al-Mu'ayyidi (*may Allah's mercy and blessings be upon him*).

The Twenty-Ninth Night of Ramadan, 1434 AH

The Personality of the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (*peace be upon him*)

The Commander of the Faithful (*peace be upon him*) possessed a great and powerful personality, with immense weight and far-reaching effects. His enemies found themselves unable to withstand it when he was pledged allegiance for the caliphate; the world, despite its vastness, felt constricted for them. They mobilized against him the historical enemies of Islam from Quraysh, along with remnants of the old factions and the hypocrites, and they kindled the fire of war against him in every place. He faced all of that with the strength of his character.

He defeated the first coalition—headed by Talhah, al-Zubayr, 'A'ishah, and Marwan—in Basrah, overpowered them, then pardoned them and released them without punishing them. Talhah and al-Zubayr were killed in that battle, along with many of the hardened elements of Quraysh whose entrenched hostility toward 'Ali (*peace be upon him*) was well

known.

He nearly crushed the second coalition led by Mu‘awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and ‘Amr ibn al-‘As among the people of Syria, were it not for ‘Amr ibn al-‘As’s plot and stratagem of raising copies of the scripture.

He then crushed the third coalition—the Kharijites—and killed them on the day of al-Nahrawan.

After that, he (*peace be upon him*) was hindered by the obstacle of death: he was struck by the blow of the wretched Kharijite ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam (*may Allah curse him*) on the night of the nineteenth of Ramadan in the year 40 AH. He lived only three days after the strike, then returned to his Generous Lord. May Allah’s mercy, blessings, and peace be upon him.

Among what confirms the strength of his personality is the strength of his authority during his caliphate despite the many enemies he had inside Iraq and beyond it. He maintained firm control over Iraq and beyond it into the lands of Persia; over Makkah, Madinah, Yemen, and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula; and over Egypt and what adjoins it from the lands of Sudan, and elsewhere—while Mu‘awiyah held nothing but Syria.

Had anyone else faced what he faced in his rule, that person’s authority would have collapsed and the throne of his dominion would have fallen between evening and morning.

Whoever carefully studies the history of his caliphate and the circumstances surrounding it will recognize the truth of what we have stated.

This is further supported by what happened to al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*). When he was pledged allegiance for the caliphate after his father, his authority did not stabilize, nor did governance become firmly established for him. Regions slipped from his control, his supporters dispersed, his affairs became fragmented, and Mu‘awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan nearly seized him and his companions entirely. He (*peace be upon him*) averted that by concluding a treaty of reconciliation.

This indicates the weight, strength, political acumen, great impact, and awe-inspiring stature of ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*).

We do not say this as a slight against the Master of the Youth of Paradise, the sweet basil of the Messenger of this community (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the fifth of the People of the Cloak, the son of Fatimah al-Zahra’, the descendant of the chief of the executors, and a branch from Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): Imam al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. He and his brother al-Husayn (*peace be upon them*

both) are the Masters of the Youth of Paradise, the two sweet basils of the Messenger of this community, and the lesser of the two weighty trusts—along with the many virtues spoken of by their grandfather, the Chosen One (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) clarified the distinction of their father over them, so we are not stating this from ourselves; rather, it is in the hadith: “*Al-Hasan and al-Husayn are two imams, whether they rise or sit; and their father is better than them both.*”

[On the Knowledge Unique to the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him)]

It is narrated from ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*), as found in *Nahj al-Balaghah* in meaning: “If I wished, I could inform every one of you of his beginning and his end...” and so on. He addressed the people of Kufah with this.

A discussion occurred about this with some students, and one of them seemed to find it unlikely that ‘Ali’s memory could encompass the names of the men of Kufah—along with their conditions, fluctuations, and final outcomes—man by man, especially alongside what is narrated about him (*peace be upon him*): that he had knowledge of the events and tribulations of time up to the Day of Resurrection, and alongside the vast knowledge he carried of the rulings and laws of Islam and everything transmitted from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) of knowledge.

That student then said: It is possible that the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) taught ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) foundational principles, under each of which lies a great quantity of unseen information. He cited as evidence what is narrated from ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) in meaning: “The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) taught me a thousand doors; from each door a thousand doors open.”

I replied: There is nothing far-fetched in that, given the care ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) received from Allah Most High and from His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). It is authentically reported regarding the verse “*and an attentive ear will comprehend it*” [Al-Haaqqa:12] that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “*I asked Allah to make it your ear, O ‘Ali.*”

It is also narrated that ‘Ali (*peace be upon him*) would not sleep until he learned what had been revealed that day.

It is narrated that he used to ask the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) frequently, and when he fell silent, the

Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) would begin speaking to him. It is also narrated that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) frequently held private counsel with him (*peace be upon him*).

And 'Ali (*peace be upon him*) said: "My Lord granted me a tongue that asks much, and a heart that understands..." He would also say: "Ah, ah—indeed here there is abundant knowledge, if only I found carriers for it..." He remained with the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) from the time Allah sent him until Allah took him—twenty-three years—and 'Ali (*peace be upon him*) scarcely parted from the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), neither by night nor by day, except at times of seclusion.

[Al-Bukhari's Hadith about Ali (Peace be Upon Him) that he is the first to kneel on the Day of Resurrection for dispute]

In al-Bukhari, from Ali ibn Abi Talib (*May Allah be pleased with him*): I am the first who will kneel before the Most Merciful for dispute on the Day of Resurrection. And Qays ibn 'Abbad said: Concerning them was revealed: "*These are two opponents who contend concerning their Lord...*" [Al-Hajj:19] He said: They are those who met in single combat on the Day of Badr: Hamzah, and Ali, and 'Ubaydah ibn al-Harith; and Shaybah ibn Rabi'ah, and 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, and al-Walid ibn 'Utbah.

And he also narrated the like of that from Abu Dharr through three chains.

I say: It would have been fitting for al-Bukhari to mention such reports in the chapter on the virtue of Ali, and the virtue of Hamzah, and the virtue of 'Ubaydah ibn al-Harith; because Allah, *the Exalted*, clarified in that verse what He has prepared for each of the two opponents. So He, *Glorified and Exalted*, said: "*These are two opponents who contend concerning their Lord. Then as for those who disbelieve, for them are cut out garments of fire; boiling fluid is poured down upon their heads. Whereby that which is in their bellies and their skins is melted. And for them are hooked rods of iron.*" [Al-Hajj:19-22] Then *the Exalted* informed what He has prepared for the second opponent: entering Paradise, and rivers, and pearls, and silk, and that they were guided to the goodly of speech and were guided to the path of the Praiseworthy.

These reports have thus included that those three are the first who will kneel for the reckoning on the Day of Resurrection, and that indicates an increase in their merit, and that, apart from the rest of the Companions, they are singled out with the promise of Paradise and its rivers and its silk and its pearls and ...etc., and that is evidence of their virtue and their distinction over the rest of the Companions. And Allah has promised the Companions of His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and*

his family and grant them peace) the beautiful promise, but that is in a general manner; and there is a difference between specification and generalization, and that is known.

Yes, the statement of Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*): "I am the first who will kneel for dispute before the Most Merciful on the Day of Resurrection" perhaps the reason for that is the abundance of what occurred between him and his opponents of bloodshed. Among that is: what occurred before the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) at Badr, and Uhud, and al-Khandaq, and Khaybar, and al-Ta'if, and other than that; and his killings (*Peace be Upon Him*) in those places are many, scarcely to be counted.

And among that is what occurred of those killed on the Day of al-Jamal.

And among that is what occurred of those killed at Siffin.

And among that is what occurred of those killed between him and the Khawarij.

And it may be said: The promise of Paradise has occurred for all the people of Badr, in what al-Bukhari and others narrated: "Perhaps Allah looked upon the people of Badr and said: Do whatever you wish, for Paradise has become guaranteed for you, or: I have forgiven you."

We say: In the hadith there is consideration from several angles:

- 1- That "perhaps" is for hope/expectation, and it does not give definiteness of that.
- 2- That his saying: "*Do whatever you wish*" is a command to the people of Badr to do whatever they wish of sins, and that entails their permissibility for them; because the least meaning of the wording here is permissibility, and if the discussion is with the Zahiriyah sect, then the command is for obligation, then the sins would be permissible for the people of Badr or obligatory upon them, and no Muslim says that.
- 3- That the Companions did not act upon the import of this hadith throughout their lives. So Qatadah ibn Maz'un was flogged when he drank wine, and before that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) flogged Hassan and Mistah and ...etc., and Mistah is among those who witnessed Badr as is in al-Bukhari.
- 4- In the hadith there is incitement for the people of Badr to sins, and calling them to do them, and that is inconsistent with the religion of Islam which commands them to good and forbids them from evil, and makes lawful for them the good things and forbids for them the vile things.
- 5- It has become well-known among Ahl al-Sunnah that those given

glad tidings of Paradise are ten, and they singled them out with this virtue apart from others, which indicates that there is no correctness to the generality of the glad tidings of Paradise for the people of Badr with the additional virtue—namely, delegating to them that they do whatever they wish with no reckoning upon them for that.

- 6- In al-Bukhari: And Ka'b ibn Malik said: "They mentioned Murarah ibn al-Rabi' al-'Umari and Hilal ibn Umayyah al-Waqifi, two righteous men who had witnessed Badr." And it is well-known that they stayed behind in the expedition of Tabuk, so the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) ordered that they be boycotted and shunned until the earth, despite its vastness, became tight upon them and their own souls became tight upon them, and that was for many days, then Allah accepted their repentance; so if the hadith regarding the people of Badr were sound, Allah and His Messenger would not have constrained them with that constraint, nor would He have been severe upon them in repentance.

Al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*)

Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) is a promise from Allah, a promised one, who will come at the end of time; he will fill the earth with justice as it was filled with wrongdoing and injustice. This promise has become famous and mutawatir among the scholars of the Muslims and their common people, and that he is from Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), from the progeny of Fatimah (*Peace be Upon Her*), and there is no disagreement in that among all the sects of the Shi'a and the sects of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah.

[The Authority of al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*)]

In the hadiths of al-Mahdi: "*He will fill the earth with justice as it was filled with oppression*", or as he said.

What appears to me, and I incline to it, is that the authority of Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) will reach wherever Islam has reached; and it is known that the authority of Islam in the time of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) did not go beyond the Arabian Peninsula, but after his death (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) it extended and spread east and west and north; and it is known that Islam, in its extension and spread, did not encompass the whole earth, rather it did not occupy of it except less than a fifth of its area.

And it has come in the descriptions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he fills the earth with justice, and upon this it is possible that the meaning is that the state of al-

Mahdi and his authority are justice and fairness, and he eradicates oppression and injustice in his governance and the authority of his state; then that becomes famous and spreads, and its mention spreads in the world, and people speak of it in the east of the earth and its west; and by that fame and spread among all people, unjust politics receives disgraceful criticism from its subjects, accompanied by praise and veneration for the policy of the state of al-Mahdi, and that is the share of the disbelieving state from the justice of al-Mahdi; and what we mentioned is testified to by matters:

- 1- That the messengers of Allah and His prophets—*may Allah's blessings be upon them*—none of them applied the authority of any one of them over the entire expanse of the earth; and the last of them was Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and his state and authority did not go beyond the Arabian Peninsula, and if his authority extended after his death, it is a limited extension; and Sulayman (*Peace be Upon Him*), even though he had a great authority, it did not reach the Americas, nor Australia, nor most of Europe, nor many countries of Africa and Asia; for if he had had there governance and rule and authority, something of the remnants of the Jewish religion would have remained until today, but there is no trace of it—neither strong nor weak—in the lands we mentioned.
- 2- That the intended purpose of the mission of the messengers—*may Allah's blessings be upon them*—and of establishing Allah's proofs such as the executors and the Imams, is to manifest the truth and convey it, and to establish proofs and evidences of its correctness, so that there will not be for people, against Allah, any argument; thus is the path of Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*). As for authority, governance, and political kingship, it has no value and no weight with Allah, *the Exalted*, nor with His friends; and the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), used to swear by Allah to his companions that his rule over them does not equal with him the strap of his sandal.
- 3- That Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, said: "*Thus have We appointed unto every prophet an adversary from among the guilty.*" [Al-Furqan :31] And upon this, there must be for the authority of al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) an enemy; because his call (*Peace be Upon Him*) is an extension of the call of his grandfather Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and enmity is not realized and does not appear except if there is a balance in power and authority between the two opposing sides, or at least that the enemy has of strength and power by which he can show his enmity and object on the path of his enemy, and because of it

fear of him and anxiety over the state of Islam and over its subjects and over the lands occur.

[The inevitability of the appearance of al-Mahdi among the Jews and the Christians]

In the Name of Allah, some researchers said:

And through my perusal of many studies and researches of Westerners that address the Torah and Gospel prophecies concerning the events of the end, it became clear to me that the Jews and the Christians are more believing and more certain than the generality of the Muslims in the inevitability of the appearance of al-Mahdi and his victory in all his wars, and his taking Jerusalem as the capital of his kingdom, and his expansion to vast stretches of the earth.

And because they know that the end has drawn near, and they believe that he will lead a military alliance against the West, resulting in the destruction of the entire Western civilization, they expect his appearance at any moment, and they fear that he will appear and that his power will become strong while they are heedless of their affair; therefore you find them trying to recruit the whole world against what they call Islamic terrorism, out of fear of that ominous fate that awaits them at the appearance of his matter.

[How Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) will deal with the people of the Islamic schools]

It has come in the reports the promise of the establishment of a state and authority for Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) at the end of time; so how will his dealing be with the people of the Islamic schools if he gains control over them by his power and his policy?

The answer: It is expected that his dealing with them will be like the dealing of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) with the people of religions and schools in that era.

So in the first stage of the stages of his dealing with them, he greatly intensifies his calling them to the truth and guiding them to it, and clarifying the proofs and evidences indicating the correctness of what he called to, and the corruption of what they are upon of false schools.

And in the second stage, he spreads the call of truth on the general level in the cities and the villages and the regions, and whoever objects to that, he clarifies for him the proof and evidence for the correctness of his call if he is ignorant, then he forbids him and warns him from objecting and obstructing the call, and all of that is with good speech; so if he does not leave after that the objection in the path of the call, but persists in standing against it, then he threatens and is stern with him in speech; so if that does not benefit, he is disciplined by striking and

imprisonment; so if that does not benefit, then by killing and fighting—thus he does with whoever stands against his call, and he fights whoever fights him.

[Al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) and how his matter will spread]

- In a hadith of Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) its meaning is: "*Indeed, his matter spreads in a single night*", and in that there is an indication to the different media means such as radio and television and the internet. And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless and grant peace to our master Muhammad and to his pure family.

- It cannot be, nor can it come to pass, that al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) will rise and that his state will rise, while the situation in the world and its states are as they are today, and this is with our knowledge and belief that Allah is Powerful over all things; and that is because Allah, *the Exalted*, built the affairs of the world and arranged them upon causes. Therefore, I say: In my great opinion, Allah, *the Exalted*, will pave the way for the state of al-Mahdi before its establishment, by causing the tyrants to dominate one another until their destructive weapons are destroyed, and their military and material powers weaken, and killing and annihilation is intensified among them, and their thrones collapse.

Allah, *the Exalted*, sends that down upon them as a recompense for their ingratitude for the blessings of Allah, and their rebellion against Him, and their tyranny in the earth, and the abundance of their corruption in it, and their waging war against the religion of Allah and His friends.

And I see that the beginnings of this domination have begun in Iraq, and I expect that it continues and spreads until the tyrants and the evil ones perish and their thrones collapse.

And the greatest tyrant on the face of the earth, immersed up to his ears in the war of Iraq, is America; for America entered the war several years ago and did not succeed in it, and it was not able to control the general situation there—rather, along with that, it wants to rid itself of the war but it was not able to do that; and I see that it will not be able to exit from the mire of the war of Iraq until Allah decrees a matter that is to be fulfilled.

- In a hadith narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he mentions that killing will increase at the end of time.

And in another hadith, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) says to his Companions, he mentions that the nations at the end of time will rally against you.

And indeed, the instance of that has occurred in Iraq and Afghanistan,

and the abundance of killing in Iraq began about five years ago, such that the number of the killed in this period reached more than one million killed.

- In a hadith narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: "*I was sent between two times of ignorance, the latter of them is worse than the former*", this is the wording of the hadith or its meaning; and we now live through and witness the other times of ignorance that was described in the hadith as being worse than the first times of ignorance.

And indeed it is worse than it; for it is a broad, wide, far-reaching times of ignorance, composed of many states, controlled by one organization, which is America, and these times of ignorance is distinguished by organization and planning and politics, and developed destructive weapons, and nuclear weapons, and (gas) weapons, and (germ) weapons, and other types of destructive weapons.

- And in a hadith narrated from the Prophet of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said regarding the description of the end of time: "*Indeed, the one who holds fast therein to his religion is like one holding onto burning embers*", this is the meaning of the hadith.

And indeed, that has occurred in many lands of the Islamic world and others.

[On which madhhab will al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) be]

Question: Will Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) be upon one of the madhhabs of the Shi'a, or upon the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah?

The answer: Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) is from Ahl al-Bayt, from the progeny of al-Hasan or al-Husayn (*Peace be Upon Them*), and there is no disagreement about this.

- And the people of every madhhab expect that he will be from the people of their madhhab; so Ahl al-Sunnah expect that he will be from them, and the Ja'fariyyah likewise, and the Isma'iliyyah likewise, and the Zaydiyyah likewise, and ...etc.

- And naming him "al-Mahdi" is a naming that came from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), so that indicates that Allah, *the Exalted*, guided him to the truth regarding that wherein the people of the Islamic madhhabs differed.

- And what came in the hadith, that he fills the earth with justice, indicates that the false madhhabs will be defeated and will end, and justice and truth will take their place.

- And upon what has preceded, al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) will

revive the true religion which the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was upon, and he will cause the false madhhab to die; and there is no disagreement among the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that there will remain a group from the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) upon the truth; and upon that, al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) will be upon the madhhab of that rightful group, not others.

[Mention of the Renewers]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and may Allah bless and grant peace to our master Muhammad and to his pure family.

In the hadith: "*Indeed Allah will send, in every hundred years for my Ummah, one who renews for it its religion*"—this is the meaning of the hadith, and it is a hadith agreed upon as authentic between the Zaydiyyah and Ahl al-Sunnah:

- So the Zaydiyyah count the renewers one by one in every hundred years, and Ahl al-Sunnah likewise.
- And in any case, the madhhab of the Zaydiyyah has remained until today new, in its form in the era of Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*), and the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah has remained new, as it was in its form in the era of Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan.
- Falsehood renews itself, and it does not need one to be sent to renew it; and that is due to the inclination of souls toward it and their desire for it—this is the nature of falsehood.
- And truth, unlike falsehood, needs one to renew it and revive it, otherwise it goes and fades away; and that is due to souls, by their nature, recoiling from it, and their dislike of it—this is the nature of truth.
- The madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah, from its first day, was granted the support of the kings of Banu Umayyah, then the support of the kings of Banu al-'Abbas, then the support of successive states throughout history until today; and it is the official madhhab of the sultans of the Islamic lands in all historical eras.
- As for the madhhab of Ahl al-Bayt (the Zaydiyyah), then since the killing of Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*), it weakened until there remained for it almost no presence on the scene, and the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah prevailed over the entire scene; and years passed upon that, and the Islamic lands did not

know except the madhhab of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah which Mu'awiyah most strongly tended and supported, and he paved the way for it in the lands with what he was able of killing and oppression and slaughtering; then after him Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah supported it, then Marwan ibn al-Hakam, then 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, then al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik, then Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-Malik, then Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Malik.

And in the era of this Hisham, Zayd ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*) was sent forth to renew the madhhab of Ali and the madhhab of Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), so he called the people to revive the truth which the tyrants of Banu Umayyah had caused to die, and to cause to die the falsehood which they had revived, and to establish the truth and the Qur'an; so Zayd awakened the people by this call of his, and turned their sights to the truth which they had left, and he strove with his sword in the path of this call until he was killed as a martyr—*may Allah have mercy on him*; and his son Yahya continued the course upon that path which his father had taken until he was killed as a martyr—*may Allah have mercy on him*.

- And the kings of Banu Umayyah and their followers from Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah used to think that they had finished off the madhhab of Ali ibn Abi Talib and Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*), so Zayd and his son (*Peace be Upon Them*) revived the true madhhab which the rightly-guided caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*) was upon.
- And after their killing—*may Allah be pleased with them both*—Umayyah and its supporters from Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah rolled up their sleeves to eradicate that madhhab until their caliphate ended in the era of the last of their kings, Marwan ibn Muhammad ibn Marwan ibn al-Hakam.
- Then came the caliphate of Banu al-'Abbas, and they were more unjust than Banu Umayyah and more tyrannical, and their first caliph was named al-Saffah due to the abundance of blood he spilled; and in the days of their second caliph, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah (*Peace be Upon Him*) was sent forth to renew the madhhab until he was killed as a martyr in battle, and his brother Ibrahim (*Peace be Upon Him*) continued the call until he was killed in its path as a martyr; and thus were the callers of Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*) in every period, and they remained like that until a near period.

[On mention of the renewers in our era]

In the hadith, its meaning is: "*Indeed Allah, the Exalted, sends, at the head of every hundred years in this Ummah, one who renews for it its*

religion...." and it is a hadith received with acceptance among the Zaydiyyah and Ahl al-Sunnah.¹

- And what I have witnessed and lived through is that Allah, *the Exalted*, at the head of this century—and it is the fifteenth Hijri century—revived the madhhab of the Zaydiyyah, which is the madhhab of Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*); for since the beginning of this century until today, the madhhab has continued to spread, its knowledges have expanded, and the bearers of knowledge of it from men and women have multiplied, and all of that is by the efforts of the scholar of the Zaydiyyah and its shaykh and the bearer of its sciences, Majd al-Din al-Mu'ayyidi—*may Allah have mercy on him*—then by the efforts of his followers and his friends, and at their head the ascetic, patient, striving scholar, al-Husayn ibn Yahya al-Huthi—*may Allah preserve him*—who has continued until today to spread guides and teachers in the regions of the Zaydi lands; and knowledge and scholars had nearly become extinct from all the Zaydi lands, and there remained there no mention nor trace of Zaydi knowledge.

[Yes, the earth is never without one who stands for Allah with a proof...]

"Indeed, the earth is never without one who stands for Allah with a proof—either manifest and well-known, or fearful and obscure".

Thus said the Commander of the Faithful and the master of the executors, and the successor of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). And the meaning is: that the wisdom of Allah decreed that He does not take people to account for a sin they committed, nor punish them for it, until He clarifies to them what they must avoid of disobedience to Him, and that He will punish for it, and will make those who persist upon it abide eternally in the Fire of Hell, and will reward the people of Godfearingness in the Gardens of bliss, and ...etc.

And the clarification of Allah, *the Exalted*, is either by sending the messengers and revealing the books, or the clarification is upon the tongues of the godly scholars who judge by the truth, and thereby they

1- Imam al-Hujjah Majd al-Din al-Mu'ayyidi (*Peace be Upon Him*) said in *al-Tuhaf Sharh al-Zulaf*: The Sharia holder (*Peace be Upon Him, and upon his family, and peace*) said: "*Allah sends for this Ummah, upon every hundred years, one who renews for it its religion*", with this wording it was narrated by al-Amir al-Husayn (*peace be upon him*) and others. And in some narrations: "*Indeed Allah bestows favor upon the people of His religion at the head of every hundred years with a man from my Ahl al-Bayt who clarifies for them the matter of their religion*", and this hadith is from that which the Ummah transmitted and used as proof; and Abu Dawud brought it out with its meaning, and al-Tabarani with an authentic chain, and al-Hakim in *al-Mustadrak*.

act justly.

And indeed, the tangible reality throughout Islamic history, from its first days until today, is that in no era of its eras did the caller to Allah from the Household of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) disappear. So in every period of history until today there is an Imam who proclaims his call, and openly declares it, and fights for it; and if there is not an Imam like that, then there succeeds him from the people of knowledge one who clarifies the truth and proclaims it, and argues for it and makes it clear and spreads it in a peaceful manner, and Allah prepares for him followers who support him upon that, and who carry knowledge from him.

And this type may be one person, and it may be a group who cooperate upon manifesting the truth and spreading it, and calling to it, and clarifying its proof.

And if the earth were to be empty of the callers to the truth and the guides of creation, and they were absent from it, the matter would be decided; because the proof of Allah, *the Exalted*, would then not be established over the morally responsible, and Allah, *the Exalted*, will not hold accountable on the Day of Resurrection any one of the morally responsible except one to whom, in the world, the proof of Allah and His clear evidences reached—due to His saying, *the Exalted*: "*And We never punish until We have sent a messenger.*" [Al-Isra:15]

- And Allah, *the Exalted*, informed that people on the Day of Resurrection are two groups: wretched and happy. So He, *Glorified*, said: "*That is a Day for which the people will be gathered, and that is a Day witnessed. And We defer it only to an appointed term. On the Day it comes, no soul will speak except by His permission. So among them is wretched and happy. As for those who were wretched, then in the Fire, for them therein is a sighing and a wailing.*" [Hud:103-106]
- And it is known that Allah, *the Exalted*, does not punish anyone except after giving excuse and warning in the world; so if giving excuse and warning does not occur in the world, then on the Day of Resurrection there will not occur recompense and punishment for the disbelievers and the defiantly disobedient.
- And by the absence of the callers to Allah from the face of the earth, the wisdom for which Allah made the worldly life disappears; and the wisdom is what Allah, *the Exalted*, informed us of in His saying, *the Exalted*: "*And I created the jinn and mankind only that they may worship Me.*" [Adh-Dhariyat:56] And in His saying, *the Exalted*: "*He Who created death and life, that He may try you, which of you is best in conduct.*" [Al-Mulk:2]

And what Allah, *the Exalted*, related of the wisdom in creating His morally responsible creatures in this worldly life by His saying—*Majestic is His Majesty: "That He may requite those who do evil with what they have done, and requite those who do good with the best reward."* [An-Najm:31]

So if the proofs of Allah and His clear evidences disappear, and the wisdom from the creation of the earth and those upon it disappears—then life on the earth will end and the Resurrection will be established; because life on the earth would then be empty of wisdom, and it is known that Allah, *the Exalted*, is Wise and does not do that in which there is no wisdom.

[How the proof of Allah is completed over His servants by the fearful obscure one]

Question: Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) said: Allah, *the Exalted*, must have a proof—either manifest and well-known, or fearful and obscure—this is the meaning of his saying; so how is the proof of Allah, *the Exalted*, completed over His servants by the fearful obscure one?

The answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success: Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, has clarified in His Book and upon the tongue of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) the place of His proof and its location with a clear clarification in which there is no ambiguity; and that place and location is his Household (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

And if the proof of Allah is fearful and obscure, unknown to the morally responsible, then they will find what they seek with the scholars of the Household of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), for the proof of Allah does not go beyond them.

[The appearance of the religion of truth to the morally responsible]

Praise be to Allah alone, and may Allah bless and grant peace upon the one after whom there is no prophet, and upon his pure family; and after:

Indeed the religion of truth, and its bearers, and its people who call to it and point to it, is clear and manifest from the first day; except that whims, and inclination to the world, created madhhabs, and legislated for the people other paths than the path of guidance, and promoted them to the people, and what helped the success of that was the intervention of political authorities with their great weight, where they carried the masses to take up the newly-invented madhhabs, and that caused the people of truth and its callers to become weak.

[From the hadith: "This knowledge will be carried by the just of every generation..."]

"This knowledge is carried from every generation by its just ones: they negate from it the distortion of the extremists, and the false ascription of the false ones, and the interpretation of the ignorant", in this hadith:

- 1- That the religion of truth does not cease until the Day of Resurrection.
- 2- That there remains a group from the people of truth in every time until the Day of Resurrection.
- 3- And that knowledge and scholars do not cease until the lifting of moral responsibility.
- 4- And that the scholars of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), if they agree in any era, then their consensus is truth that must be followed.
- 5- And that misguidance comes from three paths, which are:
 - 1- The distortion of the extremists.
 - 2- The false ascription of the false ones.
 - 3- The interpretation of the ignorant.
 - And the distortion of the extremists is such as that the text is moved from its intended meaning to another meaning that Allah does not intend, and that occurs either by a change in the text, or by an addition, or by a subtraction.
 - And the false ascription of the false ones is that the false one, of his own accord, fabricates a text and falsely attributes it to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).
 - The interpretation of the ignorant is that the ignorant interpret the texts of the Lawgiver with other than their interpretation which the Wise Lawgiver intends.
 - And in the hadith:
 - That in every generation of the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) until the Day of Resurrection there will occur callers of (trial/temptation) in the religion, who misguide the people by their trials away from the true religion.
 - And that those trials are hidden; none perceives them except the scholars whom Allah, *the Exalted*, has testified to as being just.
 - And that it is obligatory upon us—we, the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)—to recognize the just scholars from the Ummah of Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), so that we may recognize from them the true religion

that is sound from the distortion of the extremists, and the false ascription of the false ones, and the interpretation of the ignorant.

- **Yes**, there has come in an authentic hadith from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) the designation of the just ones whom he left unspecified in this hadith, and it is his saying (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "Indeed, with every innovation by which Islam is harmed, there is a (ally/guardian) from my Household... the hadith". Rather, the clarification has come in countless authentic hadiths, even if there were nothing but the Hadith of al-Thaqalayn which Muslim narrated in his Sahih.

Yes, no group other than the Household can prove that they are the just ones intended in the hadith.

- ***Signs by which the just bearers of knowledge intended in the hadith are recognized:***

- 1- 1 - Among their signs is their keeping away from princes and sultans; they do not go to them, and they hardly know them.
- 2- They do not participate with the ruling authority in any governorship or work, nor do they attend its conferences, nor ...etc.
- 3- Asceticism regarding the world, and turning toward the works of the Hereafter.
- 4- They do not take any wages, salaries, or rewards for calling to Allah, guiding, and teaching people goodness—neither from their ruler, nor from internal or external entities.

- And know that collaboration has become abundant among men of religion with weak souls, for many of them enter into secret positions with the enemies of the religion, and his task in this position is the demolition of the true religion and the division between the people of truth, and the seduction of followers and partisans, and the stirring of enmities, and repelling people from the scholars of truth, and fabricating faults and defects for the callers to truth. All of that is done by hidden ways and crafty means that only a few of the devout notice, and the enemies of Islam have succeeded in this field with great success.

[The consensus of the Progeny regarding the ruling on Fadak and the ruling of those who opposed them]

Question: It is known that the consensus of the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) is a decisive proof; so did the consensus of the early Progeny occur regarding the ruling of Abu Bakr on Fadak, that it is a ruling contrary to what Allah, *Glorified*, sent down upon His Messenger (*May*

Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace)?

And if consensus did occur on that, then would Imam Yahya ibn Hamzah and Imam al-Mahdi Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Murtada (*Peace be Upon Them*) be opposing the consensus of the Progeny (*Peace be Upon Them*), because they considered Abu Bakr correct in his ruling and said that he ruled by his independent reasoning?

The answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success—is that the evidences have indicated that the ruling of Abu Bakr on Fadak is false, even if there were nothing except the complaint of Fatimah (*Peace be Upon Her*) and her anger against the two Shaykhs; and it appears that the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) are unanimous upon its falsity.

And what is closer to right guidance is that we say: the two of them erred, and error is pardoned even if it opposes the decisive evidence, and that is like marrying a woman while she is in her waiting period, in error and ignorance.

And this error is not like the error of one who says: Allah, *the Exalted*, is seen, or that He commits an evil act; because this is ignorance of Allah, *the Exalted*, and ignorance of Allah is disbelief, and attributing evil to Him, *the Exalted*, is also ignorance of Him, along with what that contains of lowering Him from the attribute of holiness, wisdom, justice, and mercy.

[The ruling regarding the people of different schools in the state of truth]

Question: If a state is established for the truth, and in the lands there are Salafis, Ash'aris, Imamiyyah, and Mu'tazilah, then what will be the stance toward them?

The answer: If all submit to obedience outwardly, then it is upon the authority of truth to clarify the truth and its proofs, and to intensify that and repeat it among those groups, and it is not fitting for him to inflict upon any of those groups any harm as long as they are in obedience; and thus did the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) deal with the Kharijites.

[Something of that upon which the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) agreed]

In Lawami' al-Anwar, as a transmission from Imam al-Mansur Billah (*Peace be Upon Him*): in mentioning something of that upon which the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) agreed of subsidiary rulings, its wording is: Among that which pertains to subsidiary rulings: their consensus on negating the Friday prayer behind the leaders of injustice, and on the forbiddance of affiliating with them, and on leaving wiping over leather socks, and on reciting "*In the Name of Allah, the Most*

Merciful, the Most Compassionate" aloud, and on the supplication in prayer with the Qur'an, and on saying five takbirs over funerals, and on striving against the innovators, and on the forbiddance of intoxicants and the types of amusements.

[The invalidity of what was narrated from Ali (Peace be Upon Him) regarding his explanation of the removal of resentment]

It was narrated from Ali (Peace be Upon Him) that he said: "Indeed I hope that I and Uthman and Talhah and al-Zubayr are among those about whom Allah, *the Exalted*, said: *"And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment."* [Al-A'raf:143]" End quote, from the book *Tanbih al-Ghafilin* and its marginal notes.

I say: This narration should not be authentic from the Commander of the Faithful (Peace be Upon Him), and I see that it is from the fabrication of those who say: it is forbidden to mention the Companions except with good; for if the Commander of the Faithful (Peace be Upon Him) had considered Talhah and al-Zubayr to be among the people of that verse, he would not have fought them and made their blood lawful; because the blood of believers is forbidden in Islam.

From the words of the Commander of the Faithful (Peace be Upon Him) concerning Uthman

"Indeed, every grant that Uthman granted, and every wealth he gave from the wealth of Allah—it is returned to the public treasury; for the truth is ancient and nothing nullifies it. By Allah, if he had married women with it, and owned bondwomen with it, I would have returned it; for in justice there is spaciousness, and whoever the truth constricts, injustice constricts him more".

[The basis of hoping for Allah's pardon regarding the Companions who persist upon major sins]

Question: What is the basis in what is narrated from many of the Companions, of hoping for Allah's pardon and desiring His forgiveness while they persisted upon sins—such as one who used to show enmity to Ali (Peace be Upon Him) and rebel against obeying him?

The answer—and with Allah is success—is that there is no basis for their desiring forgiveness and their hoping for pardon while they persist upon sin and rebel against repentance and returning to Allah, and their desire is nothing but wishful thinking and delusion.

This is if they were desiring and hoping within themselves and truly believing that; and it may be that what appeared of their desire and hope was an attempt to make people think that they were upon the truth, otherwise they do not, in reality and truth, desire it, due to their knowledge of what they are upon of opposing the truth.

[Sins in the era of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*)]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and may Allah bless and grant peace upon Muhammad and his family: Blessed is our Lord, the Most Merciful, Who poured goodness upon His servants, and bestowed upon them blessings, and encompassed them with His gentleness by His mercy; so to Him belongs abundant praise, morning and evening. And may Allah bless and grant peace upon the servant of Allah and His Messenger, Muhammad, and upon his pure family. To proceed: these are assorted benefits:

- In the era of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the sins of the Muslims were divided into two categories:
 - 1- Apostasy to polytheism and disbelief.
 - 2- Disobedience to Allah and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and it was called hypocrisy.

Then later usage occurred of restricting the name hypocrisy to one who conceals disbelief and shows Islam, and the name open sinfulness to one who commits a major sin other than disbelief.

Lying is of types:

- 1- Lying about Allah, or about His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and that is a major sin—rather, among the greatest sins.
- 2- Lying that is harmful to the believers, and that is a major sin.
- 3- Lying that is not harmful, and it is a tolerable sin.
- 4- A circumstance may arise in which truthfulness is not permissible, such as that an oppressor asks you about a believer while he intends to kill him; then it is not permissible for you to inform him of his location, and it becomes obligatory upon you, if you are able, to divert him from him by indirect wording; and if indirect wording is not available to you, then divert him by lying. In this case the lying is good, but its goodness is not for itself; rather, for the benefit that arose with it, since in it was the saving of a believer. Likewise, where in lying there is the safeguarding of your wealth or yourself, or the wealth of your believing brother, or the safeguarding of his honor.

- And it may be among that that if one of your parents asks you about a matter, and if you answer him with the truth he would feel pain and be affected within himself and become agitated, and it is expected that that agitation would affect his health—and the like of that occurs with heart patients, and it may occur with patients of diabetes and blood

pressure—then it is not fitting, and it is not permissible, for the child to answer one of his parents with the truth because of what it contains of causing harm to his parent; and it is obligatory upon him to use indirect wording in the answer if he is able; otherwise, that would be a concession for him in lying.

And the proof of what we mentioned is rational, for reason judges the goodness of the lying in which there is the safety of a believer from killing and the like, and judges the ugliness of truthfulness if it causes the killing of a believer or the like.

[On mentioning the Battle of Uhud from the books of the Sunni community]

In *Fath al-Bari*, in mentioning the Battle of Uhud, and it occurred in al-Tabari through the route of al-Suddi: And some of those who fled to the mountain said: If only we had a messenger to Abdullah ibn Ubayy, to seek security for us from Abu Sufyan. End quote.

I say: Concealing the doer of that indicates that the speaker is among those who should be concealed among the Sunni community, and that he is among the notable Companions.

And it is taken from that: a refutation of the Sunni community in their exaggeration regarding the Companions and their severity in declaring them free of fault and sanctifying them. And there appeared from the story of Uhud several matters, all of them refuting the Sunni community in their doctrine regarding the Companions, among them:

That among the Companions were hypocrites; that appeared when Abdullah ibn Ubayy returned with a third of those who went out to Uhud.

And from His saying, *the Exalted*: "*A faction of you He covered with drowsiness, while another faction worried about themselves, thinking of Allah other than the truth—the thought of ignorance...*" [Aal 'Imran:154]

And His saying, *the Exalted*: "*Among you are those who desire the world, and among you are those who desire the Hereafter.*" [Aal 'Imran:152]

Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Mu'awiyah

The Sunni community magnified the greatness of these figures, and promoted them with broad promotion, and clothed them with the most precious and highest robes of merit, and built for them a great wall of merit and virtues, and guarded it with strict guarding: so no one speaks about any of those figures with a word except that they cut out his tongue; and no one stretches his hand to that wall except that they cut it off; and he does not walk with a foot except that they sever it; and no one looks at it with a sharp look except that they pluck out his eye.

And no bad opinion appears from anyone regarding those figures except that they take his life; and whoever preferred others over those

figures in virtue, they declared him a disbeliever and ruled him a heretic, and made his blood lawful, and expelled him from the wide circle of Islam.

And the Sunni community intended by this practice to invalidate the virtues of Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*) and the Household, which the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought and filled the ears with, and by which the horizons became constricted.

- And by the power of the state of Banu Umayyah and the greatness of its authority, the Muslims were compelled to adopt as religion that promoted merit, and it was inserted into the core of the creed of Islam among the Sunni community.

A virtue for Abdullah ibn Rawahah

It was narrated that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said, when Abdullah ibn Rawahah (*May Allah be pleased with him*) was killed: "*He was the first of us to set out, and the last of us to return, and he used to pray the prayer at its time*". End quote, from al-Siyar al-Kabir by al-Shaybani.

The meaning of the hadith: that Abdullah ibn Rawahah was the first to step out from the ranks to fight, he was the last to return from the battlefield, and despite that he used to observe the prayer times;, so he would pray the prayer in its time, and fighting did not prevent him from that.

From al-'Iqd al-Farid: [Concerning Uthman]

- Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, concerning Uthman: He was killed by a sword sheathed by 'Ā'ishah, and Talhah sharpened, and Ali poisoned.

The questioner said: Then what was the state of al-Zubayr?

He said: He gestured with his hand, and remained silent with his tongue. End.

I say: Rather, he was killed by the evil of his conduct, when he entrusted the affair of the caliphate to his relatives, and they were not approved; so they consumed the wealth of Allah and wronged the servants of Allah.

- Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz said: If every nation brought its hypocrites, and we brought al-Hajjaj, we would surpass them.

From al-'Iqd al-Farid: [On mentioning Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*)]

Ibn Al-Hmzah ibn Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr disparaged Ali; so his father said to him: O my son, by Allah, the world did not build anything except that religion demolished it, and religion did not build anything except that the world demolished it. Do you not see Ali, and what some people

display of hating him and cursing him upon the pulpits? It is as though, by Allah, they take him by his forelock, lifting him up to the sky. And do you not see Banu Marwan, and what they lament for their dead of praise among people? It is as though they are uncovering carrion. End.

[The definition of a Companion according to al-Bukhari and Ibn al-Madini]

The definition of a Companion, as al-Bukhari said in his book: Whoever accompanied the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) or saw him among the Muslims, then he is a Companion.

And Ali ibn al-Madini said: Whoever accompanied the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) or saw him for an hour of a day, then he is among the Companions of the Prophet.

[Declaring trustworthy the companion of al-Hajjaj]

‘Anbasah ibn Sa‘id ibn al-‘As ibn Umayyah—an associate of al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf—Yahya ibn Ma‘in said about him: Trustworthy. And al-Nasa‘i and Abu Dawud and al-Daraqutni said likewise; and al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated from him. End quote from *al-‘Ilm al-Shamikh*.

Islamic Figures

Politics, from the death of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and thereafter, played a role in distorting the true image of the historical men of Islam: it raised men, and lowered men, and magnified men, and diminished men.

And because of politics, men became famous, and because of it others became obscure; rather, politics can make a man firmly grounded in knowledge, faith, and piety into a heretic whose blood and honor are deemed lawful, whose testimony and narration are not accepted. Then the writer, author, historian, and others come and record in his book about the figure what appeared and became famous in the public arena of his greatness or his baseness or ...etc., without any consideration from him, nor attention to what politics has done. Then a researcher comes after him and takes what he finds in that book and relies upon it in evaluating Islamic figures.

Yes, the one who relies in that upon what was written in this field without considering what we mentioned is one of two:

- 1- Either a ignorant man whose ignorance led him to imitation of those before him, and to trusting what they wrote.
- 2- Or a man of desire and inclinations toward what politics produced, while he knows the realities of the situation.

[The Nature of Historical Books]

Most of the books of history, biographies, and evaluation of figures—if we do not say all of them—were written, when first written, in the era of compilation, by pens fashioned by Banu Umayyah. And the era of compilation was in the early Abbasid era, and the scholars of that era were products of Banu Umayyah.

And the proof of what we mentioned and explained is that we cast a glance at the most trusted books and works that were written and authored in the late stages of those periods, and that is the book *Sahih al-Bukhari*; for in it is confirmation of what we mentioned, namely: that al-Bukhari, when he mentioned Ziyad ibn Abihi—whom Mu'awiyah claimed as a son—named him: Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan.

[Discussion Concerning the Figure of Abdullah ibn Saba']

Many of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah attribute what occurred of tribulations, killing, fighting, and enmities among the Companions to Abdullah ibn Saba'. They said that by his cunning and deception he is the one who planned the killing of Umar, and incited the people of the regions to kill Uthman, and that he is the one who ignited, by his tribulation, the Battle of the Camel, and the battles of Siffin, and the killing of Ali ibn Abi Talib, and the killing of Ammar ibn Yasir, and the killing of many of the early Companions from the people of Badr and others, and from the rest of the Companions; and that he is the one who founded the Shi'a doctrine, and stirred up attacking Uthman, and Mu'awiyah, and Marwan, and al-Walid ibn 'Uqbah, and others, and ...etc.

And they said: Abdullah ibn Saba' is from Yemen, and that his origin is Jewish; he entered Islam to plot against its people and turn them away from their religion, and that he used to move between the regions in order to incite their people to tribulation, and that he became Muslim in the time of Umar ibn al-Khattab.

- There is no doubt that what they mentioned about Abdullah ibn Saba' raises several questions and inquiries against the narrators of that, namely:

- Is it possible, in the ordinary course, that Abdullah ibn Saba' did what he did during most of the era of Umar, then in the era of Uthman, then in the era of Ali ibn Abi Talib, without those caliphs noticing him, or their governors and commanders noticing him, and without the earlier and later Companions noticing him, and the Followers not noticing him?
- Until when did the Muslims discover the figure of Ibn Saba'? And when did they discover that he is the one who caused and is responsible for those tribulations?
- Did they discover that in the era of the Companions?

- If the discovery of that was in the era of Uthman, then why did the Battle of the Camel occur, which took away the remainder of the people of Badr, and thousands of others among the Companions and Followers?
- And if his discovery was in the era of Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), then why did the battles of Siffin occur? And who is responsible for them?
- And is it possible that the most important and the lesser Companions, and the Followers who followed them with excellence, know the policy of the Jewish Abdullah ibn Saba' and his tribulation, then enter into it with full seriousness?
- And if they entered into it after knowing it, then did they do well or did they do wrong?
- If all the Companions did not know the policy of Ibn Saba', and did not become aware at all of his plots, deception, and tribulation until they all died, then who is it that narrated to us the details of the tribulation of Ibn Saba' and the details of his tricks and deception in the regions, among the Companions, the caliphs, and others?
- Is it Abdullah ibn Saba' who recounted that and conveyed to us his story?
- And if he is the one who informed of that, then does he want, by his report, to warn the Muslims from his tribulation and bring them out of it?
- And if the Companions knew the deeds of Abdullah ibn Saba' and his plots against Islam, then why did they not strive to kill him and get rid of him?
- And why did the Companions not warn Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, when he used to attack Uthman and his governors, and warn him about Ibn Saba' and about yielding to his plots?
- And if Abdullah ibn Saba' is the one who founded the Shi'a doctrine, then why did the authors of the authentic collections narrate from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) many hadiths in the virtue of Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*) specifically, and in the virtue of the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) generally, such as the Hadith of the Rank, and the Hadith, "I will surely give the banner," and the Hadith of the Two Weighty Things, and others whose mention would become long?
- Is Ibn Saba' the one who fabricated those hadiths and promoted them until the Muslims accepted them and the imams of hadith

declared them authentic?

- And why did the authors of the authentic collections not notice the plots of Ibn Saba' until they narrated and declared authentic hadiths regarding the virtue of Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) and the Household (Peace be Upon Them)?
- And if Abdullah ibn Saba' used to speak to people with the hadiths of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) related to the virtue of Ali, and Fatimah, and al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and the Household, which the authors of the authentic collections narrated, then what is there to denounce in that?
- And who is the criminal? The one who speaks of the virtue of Ali and the Household with authentic hadiths? Or the one who curses Ali and the Household, and makes them ugly to people, and turns people away from them?
- And did all the Companions forget the hadiths of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) which he said regarding his Household, until Abdullah ibn Saba' came and revived them?
- And is reviving them after their being forgotten a condemnable crime?
- And how did Abdullah ibn Saba' know that reviving the forgotten prophetic hadiths would be a path to demolishing Islam?
- Is not the opposite the correct?
- If the opponent insists that the Shi'a doctrine is a doctrine attributed to Ibn Saba', and that it is a doctrine rejected absolutely, and that it is false, then what do we do with the authentic hadiths narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in the authentic collections and in others?
- Do we reject them even if they are authentic?
- And is rejecting them faith?
- And who is the one who deserves to be called "Rafidi": the one who rejects them, and rejects acting upon them, and making religion upon what they entail? Or the one who acts upon them and makes religion upon them?
- And if the hadiths of Shi'ism regarding Ali and the Household are established from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), then what is the role of Abdullah ibn Saba'?

- And is it possible that Abdullah ibn Saba' embellished to the Companions until he induced them to fabricate hadiths regarding the virtue of Ali and the Household, then embellished for them accepting those hadiths and believing them?
- And is it possible that that plot would pass upon the Muslims century after century until the authors of the authentic collections narrate it?
- And are the authors of the authentic collections and the imams of hadith considered "Saba'iyyah" for their narrating the virtue of Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) and the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*)?
- And if the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said those hadiths, then would he, by saying them, be "Saba'i"?
- Or is "Saba'iyyah" not applied except to the one who acts upon those hadiths and believes them, excluding the one who spoke them?

[Mention of Imam Zayd in the books of the Imamiyyah]

In *'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida* by al-Saduq, and in his book *al-Athar* among the Imamiyyah, there is: the saying of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to al-Husayn the grandson: "*From your loins a man will come forth called Zayd; he and his companions will step over the necks of people; they will enter Paradise without reckoning*".

And in *'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida* as well, his saying (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) concerning him: "*Indeed he will rise and be killed in al-Kufah, and be crucified at al-Kunasah; he will be brought out from his grave by exhumation, and the gates of heaven will be opened for his soul, and the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth will rejoice in him*".

And in the book *al-Malahim* by Ibn Tawus from the Imamiyyah: the saying of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*), when he stood at the place of his crucifixion in al-Kufah; so he wept and his companions wept. They said to him: What made you weep? He said: "*Indeed a man from my descendants will be crucified in this place; whoever is pleased to look at his nakedness, Allah will cast him down on his face into the Fire*". End quote from *al-Ghadir*, volume 3, page 69.

[From the words of Imam Ibrahim ibn Abdullah ibn al-Hasan]

From the words of Imam Ibrahim ibn Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Them*), while he was upon the pulpit delivering a sermon: "O people, I found all that servants seek of great goodness with Allah in three: speech, reflection, and silence. Every

speech in which there is no remembrance is idle talk; every silence in which there is no thought is heedlessness; and every looking in which there is no taking lesson is obliviousness. So blessed is the one whose speech is remembrance, whose looking is taking lesson, and whose silence is contemplation; whose house suffices him; who weeps over his sin; and from whom the Muslims are safe...". So the people marveled at his words.

[The endurance of the house of al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim throughout time]

In *Matla' al-Budur*, volume 4, page 131: It became well-known from al-Nasir that he used to say: Two great houses are inhabited: my house and the house of al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim; as for my house, it will be ruined soon, and as for the house of al-Qasim, it will remain for all time—or as he said. End quote.

I say: The report has confirmed the report. The house of al-Nasir (*Peace be Upon Him*) was ruined by his death, so there occurred for almost none of his descendants any mention in what relates to reviving religion and knowledge and commanding the right and forbidding the wrong—except rarely, such as Abu al-Fadl al-Nasir, and he is from the children of al-Nasir. As for the house of al-Qasim, they have remained until today stars of guidance and callers to the religion of Allah, commanding the right and forbidding the wrong, and they have continued in reviving religion and knowledge, and so on.

From the words of Imam al-Hadi ila al-Haqq, Yahya ibn al-Husayn ibn al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim (*Peace be Upon Him*)

- 1- The root of fearing Allah is knowledge; the branch of fearing Allah is scrupulousness; the branch of scrupulousness is religion; and the order of religion is taking oneself to account.
- 2- The affliction of scrupulousness is a man permitting himself the small matter of his deed.
- 3- The root of good management is discernment, and the root of discernment is reflection; whoever does not find his reflection does not find his discernment, and whoever does not find his discernment, his management is not made firm.
- 4- The intellect is the perfection of the human being.
- 5- Experience is the insemination of the intellect.
- 6- Whoever does not benefit from his experience does not benefit from what was installed in him of intellect.
- 7- Thanking a favor is an increase in the blessing.
- 8- The blessing is not completed for the one provided it except by thanking the One who bestowed it.
- 9- Whoever neglects thanking for beneficence has invited

- deprivation for himself.
- 10- Whoever wants that Allah's blessings not depart from him, let him not depart from thanking Allah.
 - 11- The fortress of sound opinion is deliberation, and its affliction is haste—except when an opportunity is being made clear.
 - 12- Whoever knows what Allah is to him is not likely to perish.
 - 13- Whoever wants to see what he has with Allah, let him look at what Allah has with him, then let him know that he has with Allah the like of what Allah has with him.
 - 14- Excellence of the tongue is the adornment of the human being.
 - 15- The life of the heart is the root of expression.
 - 16- Whoever reflects on the consequences of his deed is saved from the destructive results of his action.
 - 17- The person of religion is feared; the person of generosity is loved; the person of knowledge is sought; and the person of fairness is praised.
 - 18- Whoever spares people the burden of his own needs, Allah spares him the burden of others.
 - 19- Whoever humbles himself and submits to Allah has put on the garment of faith; and whoever puts on the garment of faith has been crowned with the crown of honor from the Most Merciful.
 - 20- Whoever Allah provides with purity of soul has been given a substitute for worship.
 - 21- Whoever is granted success to be patient at affliction, the great trial is lightened for him.
 - 22- Whoever wants from Allah success and right-guidance, let him act with sincerity and verification.
 - 23- Knowledge and wisdom do not grow alongside disobedience.
 - 24- Ignorance and perplexity do not remain alongside obedience.
 - 25- Whoever is granted success is safe from stumbling; and whoever is forsaken, his work is not completed for him, and he does not reach any goal of hope.
 - 26- Whoever strengthens the sight of his heart, the weakness of his eyesight does not harm him.
 - 27- Whoever looks at himself as other than what he is has enabled people to attack him.
 - 28- The remedy for incapacity is little speech; the remedy for ignorance is learning; and the remedy for fear of Allah's punishment is acting with obedience to Allah and leaving disobedience to Him, and making a good return to Him.
 - 29- Whoever desires Allah becomes connected to Him and, in reality, is cut off to Him.
 - 30- Whoever is not guided to the best of worship and its most

elevated, let him aim to oppose the self in its desires.

- 31- Knowledge is a lamp in the breasts of scholars; its oil is scrupulousness, and its wick is renunciation of the world.
- 32- Scrupulousness and fierce striving after the world never gather, just as fire and water do not gather in one vessel.
- 33- Whoever's desire for the world becomes intense seeks interpretive justifications for himself, and without doubt plunges into destructive things, and is with Allah among the people of sins.
- 34- The person of the world who desires it is like the envious: his heart never finds rest from grief. And his thought is never empty of worry at all, even if he were given from it every giving.
- 35- Forbearance is with patience, and there is no forbearance for one who has no patience.
- 36- The roots of wisdom that strike into breasts are obedience to Allah; wisdom is not established except with obedience, and whoever lacks wisdom lacks blessing.
- 37- Wisdom is like a tree: its roots are obedience and its fruit is eloquence.
- 38- The root of righteousness is gentleness, and its branches are fairness.
- 39- The root of undutifulness is lack of fairness, and its branch is harshness.
- 40- The root of foolishness is lack of intellect, and its branch is self-admiration.

End quote from *al-Hada'iq al-Wardiyyah*.

[Ali ibn al-'Abbas]

Ali ibn al-'Abbas: he was among the jurists of al-Hadi (*Peace be Upon Him*), and it was said: he was from the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*), and it was said: he had attained the knowledge of twelve Imams, and he was held up as an example in asceticism and scrupulousness, and his grave in Huth is well-known and visited. End quote from the marginal note of *Sharh al-Azhar*.

[From the margin of the book "Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq"]

In the margin of the book (*Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq*): In the year 412 AH, a decree was issued in Baghdad in which the Caliph al-Qadir Billah declared the Mu'tazilah disbelievers and ordered that they be asked to repent.

[From the words of Imam al-Qasim al-'Ayyani on interpretation and other matters]

From the words of Imam al-Qasim ibn 'Ali al-'Ayyani (*Peace be Upon Him*): "The root of interpretive twisting is the beginning of corruption, and disagreement in the Imams is the beginning of misguidance, and

relying on other than the progeny is the beginning of ruin".

"The one who inclines toward our enemy is like the one who renounces us; the one who does good to our enemy is like the one who does evil to us; the one who thanks our enemy is like the one who condemns us". End quote from *al-Hada'iq al-Wardiyyah*.

"The root of knowledge is with asking, and the root of ignorance is disputation; the scholar outside our knowledge is like the ignorant regarding our right".

"The one who fails us is like the one who aids against us; the one who lags behind our caller is like the one who answers our enemy".

"The one who opposes us in judgment is like the one who rules against us with other than the truth; the one who divides between the guiding Imams is like the one who divides between the prophets; here is the root of tribulation, O group of the Shi'ah". End quote from *al-Hada'iq*.

[The period between the two sons of al-Hadi (*Peace be Upon Them*) and Imam Ahmad ibn Sulayman]

The eighth night of the nights of the month of Ramadan, 1434 AH.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and by Him we seek help in the affairs of the world and the religion.

It appears that the period that occurred between the two sons of al-Hadi, Muhammad and Ahmad, and between Imam Ahmad ibn Sulayman (*Peace be Upon Them*), was a period of stagnation in which we did not see for inkstands and pens any trace, and the reason for that did not become clear—this is with respect to the Zaydiyyah of Yemen.

The death of Imam al-Nasir ibn al-Hadi was in the year 322 AH, and the appearance of the call of Imam Ahmad ibn Sulayman was in the year 532 AH.

And nothing appeared in that period except Imam al-Qasim al-'Ayyani; the people of Yemen brought him from the lands of Khath'am. However, his days were short, along with what he met of disagreement and conflict from some of his supporters; and after his death, his son Imam al-Husayn ibn al-Qasim succeeded him, yet his authority did not have stability, so his days were days of war in which nothing was heard except the neighing of horses, the clashing of swords, and armies of death; and finally he was killed as a martyr at the gates of Raydah.

And because of that long intellectual stagnation among the followers of the Zaydi school, which slept for more than two hundred years, the Mutarrifiyyah was born and its school grew and spread, and the Husayniyyah faction was born and its school spread, and the Isma'ili school flourished and its followers increased, and it came to have a state and power— all of that because of the stagnation that occurred for the

Zaydi school for roughly two hundred years, as in that period the imam-scholars, authors, students of knowledge, and their schools disappeared from the scene in the Zaydi lands.

And thought did not stand upright again except in the era of Imam Ahmad ibn Sulayman (*Peace be Upon Him*) and after him; for the Zaydi school revived, and its foundation was established by the knowledge of Imam Ahmad ibn Sulayman (*Peace be Upon Him*) and by his sword. By his knowledge he clarified the impurities that had entered the school, and he drew his sword against the enemies of the school; and the judge Ja'far ibn Ahmad came, revived the school, proclaimed it, called to it, and fought with his pen the intruders in the school.

And great scholars graduated under him—Allah revived the religion through them, brought to life what had died, and recovered through them what had been lost. Among their notable figures were Shams al-Din and Badr al-Din Ahmad ibn Yahya, and Muhammad ibn Yahya, and Hamzah ibn Sulayman (the father of Imam 'Abd Allah ibn Hamzah), and Shaykh al-Hasan al-Rassas, and from the family of Abu al-Najm, and al-Qurashi, and many others whose names do not come to my mind. They covered the Zaydi lands with their knowledge and revived them by their seriousness and striving, and they stood in the face of the Mutarrifiyyah, and in the faces of the Isma'iliyyah, and the Husayniyyah, and the anthropomorphists and the determinists. They had a clear effect, Allah granted success to their efforts, and He blessed their endeavors.

And following them came Imam 'Abd Allah ibn Hamzah (*Peace be Upon Him*), and by his knowledge and sword he swept away what remained of their influence and uprooted what remained of their roots, so no trace remained for them in the Zaydi lands. Scholars increased and their intellectual output increased, and the arenas in the Zaydi lands filled with them, and there remained for the people of those false schools no presence at all on the scene; and whoever among them remained upon Mutarrifiyyah or Isma'iliyyah or ..., then his religion was imprisoned within his chest and he did not dare to show it.

And from that time until the establishment of the September Revolution, the school remained alive in the Zaydi lands, prevailing over all its arenas.

And when the revolution arose in 1962 CE / 1382 AH, the school and its bearers were afflicted with a harsh war in which many bearers of knowledge were killed, the schools of knowledge were demolished, those remaining of the scholars were removed and besieged, and pressures were directed at them preventing them from spreading knowledge and teaching it.

And moral wars were directed at the school. Among them: opening

the field for the opposing school and encouraging people to enter it; opening schools for them; printing their books and spreading them; preventing the printing of Zaydi books and preventing their spread; enticing the followers of the Zaydiyyah and the sons of scholars to enter schools and universities and to continue higher studies abroad; marginalizing whoever carries Zaydi knowledge and removing him; depriving him of any job or work that brings him provision; obstructing him in any work he turns to; and perhaps his goods were stolen if he had trade, or his shop was blown up with an explosive charge at night— all of that because of his holding fast to his religion and his adherence to his school. And perhaps they fabricated accusations against him and manufactured causes for condemning him.

Imam al-Husayn ibn al-Qasim al-'Ayyani (*Peace be Upon Him*):

A great Imam, vast in knowledge. He has a book of Qur'an commentary that indicates the breadth of his knowledge of the language of the Arabs, for he often cites, as evidence in his commentary, lines from Arab poetry; and it appears from his commentary that he has a firmly established footing in knowledge of the sciences of al-Hadi and his children (*Peace be Upon Them*), and it appears that he is strongly adhering to their schools and their statements, and his commentary is enjoyable.

[From the words of Abu Hashim al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah]

From the words of Imam Abu Hashim al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah, al-Hasan ibn 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Yahya ibn 'Abd Allah ibn al-Husayn (*Peace be Upon Him*), in which he praises Hamdan: "And this clan from Hamdan— people of glory, might, rescue, and steadfastness, the nobles of people— whose obedience and loyal friendship Allah, *the Exalted*, and His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) are pleased with; and their companionship, sincerity, defense, and protective support for us, the Household; and their repelling of harm; and their standing firm within our Shi'ah; and their backing and assisting of the one who rises from among us; and their companionship and shoulder-to-shoulder support for our truth; and their supporting and consoling of our poor; and their harshness toward our hater; and their protection of us.

So their virtues encompassed, and their extra merits were widespread. They are our inner circle and our special ones, and the allies of our call, and the supports of our state, and the protectors of our sanctuary, and the refuge of our view and our counsel. So may Allah reward their living ones on our behalf with goodness and righteousness, and praise and favor and gratitude; and may He give their dead ones abundant recompense and reward, pardon and forgiveness. How many a

great calamity, on our behalf, they took upon themselves; how many a hateful hardship they removed; how many a martyr beneath the banner of truth, dust-covered; and a slain one before his Imam, struck down; and a fallen one in the heart of his battle line, wrapped ... and so on".

Imam Ali ibn al-Mu'ayyad ibn Jibril (*Peace be Upon Him*)

Imam Ali ibn al-Mu'ayyad (*Peace be Upon Him*) has no authored works like other Imams such as Imam Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Murtada, Imam Yahya ibn Hamzah, Imam 'Izz al-Din ibn al-Hasan... and so on. However, I read for him two small treatises that revealed to me the breadth of the knowledge of Imam Ali ibn al-Mu'ayyad (*Peace be Upon Him*) in every field, and the perfection of his knowledge in every discipline.

The first thing a reader of his treatises sees is the effects of his mastery in the sciences of the Arabic language: grammar, morphology, semantics, rhetoric, eloquence, stylistic ornamentation, the vocabulary of the language, and the ability to craft eloquent speech and adorn it with the various kinds of rhetorical embellishment. So peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon him.

And among the signs of Allah's honoring of Imam Ali ibn al-Mu'ayyad (*Peace be Upon Him*) and his lofty rank with Him is what Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, placed of blessing in his descendants until today: knowledge and scholars have continued in his descendants; rather, the greatest scholars of the Zaydiyyah in every era are from his descendants.

And just as the two treatises revealed the breadth of his knowledge and his perfection in every discipline, they also revealed his humility, asceticism, sincerity, counsel, good conduct and governance, and the strength of his personality.

[The mujtahid scholars of the Household in this era]

Question: Who are the mujtahid scholars of the Household in this era, the year 1430 AH?

The answer: In the recent time there were two of the scholars of the Household: the great scholar Ali ibn Muhammad al-'Ajri, and the great scholar Majd al-Din ibn Muhammad ibn Mansur al-Mu'ayyidi—*may Allah have mercy on them both*. They were among the Imams of knowledge and independent legal reasoning. And I do not know in our time anyone who equals them or even comes close to them. However, there remains a remainder of the scholars of the Household and the scholars of the Shi'a whom I see as being between the two degrees of independent legal reasoning and following; through them the proof of Allah is completed over the servants.

[The best of the Arabs is Quraysh, and the best of the non-Arabs is Persia]

"Allah has two choices from the people: His choice from the Arabs is Quraysh, and His choice from the non-Arabs is Persia".

"By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if the religion were attached to the Pleiades, men from Persia would attain it, and Persia would be the happiest by it".

- The application of the first hadith in Quraysh is evident, for Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), then his Household after him until this day, raised the banner of truth, proclaimed the religion of Allah, established the proof of Allah over His creation, were patient and persevered, and in that the blame of any blamer did not take hold of them, nor did they fear the tyranny of an arrogant oppressor; so they spread the religion of Allah as it truly is and established the proof of Allah over His creation, in defiance of the oppressors and the falsifiers.
- And the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said in the two hadiths what he said about Persia before the people of Persia entered Islam.

And the truthfulness of the prophetic report, upon its speaker and his family be the best of blessings and peace, appeared after the second Hijri century, for several centuries in which the banner of the true religion was raised, the proof of Allah became manifest, knowledge spread, and so on; then the truth weakened there and went away completely, and upon its ruins the Ja'fari Imami school arose, and it has remained standing until today.

- And perhaps the Persians will have another return to support the religion in what is to come of time, due to what was narrated from Imam Yahya ibn Abdullah (*Peace be Upon Him*) as a report: that the people of those lands have two uprisings with the Household of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).
- One uprising has already passed, and it is what we mentioned, and one uprising remains that has not come yet; and it must occur, *Allah willing*, due to the report of Imam Yahya ibn Abdullah (*Peace be Upon Him*), and it is supported by the two reports that we mentioned first.
- And in my strong opinion, their final uprising with the Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) will be with Imam al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*). And it was narrated from the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) that he said, in meaning: "They are the Persians—they will fight you for the religion at the end of time just as you fought them for it at its beginning". And in the books of apocalyptic battles (*Al-Malahem*) there is what testifies to what

we said.

- His saying: "*and Persia will be the happiest by it*" means—*Allah knows best*—that the people of Persia will be the Ummah most sincere in counsel to al-Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*), most supportive of him, and most following of his guidance, unlike other nations, peoples, and tribes.

In the first piece of news:

- That there will still be people among the Quraysh who will raise the banner of truth until the Day of Judgment, and that a nation from Persia will continue to support the truth until the Day of Judgment.

[Al-Qadi Ja'far ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Salam]

Question: Did al-Qadi Ja'far ibn Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-Salam hold the view that the Imam after the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is Ali ibn Abi Talib without any interval, and did he rule that those who preceded him were in error, or not?

Answer and Allah is the Grantor of success: What is well-known and apparent among the scholars of the Zaydiyyah is that al-Qadi Ja'far is among the prominent scholars of the Zaydiyyah, one of its eminent figures and senior shaykhs.

It is well known that whoever does not say that the Imam after the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is Ali ibn Abi Talib is not Zaydi. Likewise, it is well known that whoever does not judge the predecessors over him to be in error is not Zaydi.

It would have been more appropriate to mention the motive behind this question so that the discussion could be directed accordingly. As for what appears in *al-Khulāṣah* regarding expressions of approval, perhaps it is from the copyist or the printer, or perhaps it is... or perhaps... and perhaps he—meaning the Qadi—held the view that the error of the shaykhs did not reach the level that would prohibit supplicating for them.

Ibn Muftah

Ibn Muftah is the author of *Sharh al-Azhar*, and *Sharh al-Azhar* is the foundational reference of Zaydi jurisprudence in Yemen. Upon it rests the reliance of the Zaydiyyah, and it is the principal source of their jurisprudence. This author attained great renown, and his work gained widespread acceptance among all the Zaydiyyah, to the extent that nearly all other Zaydi jurisprudential books—despite their abundance and breadth—were forgotten.

Ibn Muftah was buried in a large cemetery south of Bab al-Yaman in Sana'a, and his grave is well-known, famous, and visited.

The graves surrounding it were leveled in that cemetery to construct and asphalt Ta'izz Street. However, Allah's care prevented the removal of Ibn Muftah's grave; modern excavation machinery was unable to uproot it or demolish it. People were astonished at this, and the workers of the company—who were foreigners—were amazed by that grave and said: "There are monks here!!" This noble incident became widely known in Sana'a and remains famous there to this day. I personally asked a shop owner on Ta'izz Street—one of the people from the Shafi'i regions—and he informed me of this story. What I find remarkable in his account is that he does not know Ibn Muftah nor anything about his condition; rather, he refers to him as "the owner of the white grave."

The grave still exists today on Ta'izz Street, with a fence and a gate on the western side of the street, and commercial shops nearby.

In this extraordinary miracle is a clear sign that the Zaydi school is the school of truth. So may Allah's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon the occupant of that white grave.

May Allah increase the noble author of *Sharh al-Azhar* in renown and acceptance, spread benefit through him among the Muslims, and all praise is due to Allah who has increased us in certainty and insight in the truth. And may Allah bless and grant peace to Muhammad and his pure family.

The scholars and Imams of the Zaydiyyah possess many miracles that recur in every age; rather, many of their sincere believers also possess miracles. Thus does Allah support the people of His true religion, grant them victory over others, and make manifest His favor and pleasure with the religion they uphold.

This is a distinguishing characteristic by which the people of this school are set apart—a divine honor Allah has bestowed upon them exclusively. As for others among the followers of different schools, they have no share or portion of this.

Another distinguishing feature of the Zaydiyyah is their distance from rulers, from holding office under them, and from associating or mingling with them. Despite this, they live in severe poverty, yet they endure poverty and regard it as superior to closeness to rulers and mixing with them. One of their scholars may die without having seen the authorities, nor having been seen by them. Indeed, one of them may refrain scrupulously from eating the food of an official connected to princes.

[Regarding al-Razi and His Deviation from the Truth]

In the Name of Allah, and by Allah, and all praise is due to Allah. And may Allah bless and grant peace to Muhammad and his pure family.

I am truly astonished at al-Razi, the author of the great exegesis

Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb, given the vastness of his knowledge, the sharpness of his intellect, and the strength of his understanding—yet his inclination toward the doctrine of compulsion (jabr), his defense of it, and his exaggeration in strengthening its arguments. This is despite the doctrine of compulsion being a doctrine whose flaws are exposed and whose defects are manifest—one that sound intellects instinctively reject, and that justice and wisdom refuse.

I do not think that anything led him to this except partisanship and desire. We ask Allah for protection and safety: *“Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from Yourself; indeed, You are the Bestower”* [Āl ‘Imrān:8].

The evidence that this stems from partisanship and desire is that al-Razi championed the doctrine of Abu al-Hasan al-Ash‘ari, followed his path, and adopted his school—despite al-Razi’s vast knowledge, intelligence, and keen insight. Indeed, al-Razi may have been more knowledgeable, more intelligent, and more perceptive than Abu al-Hasan himself.

It would have been expected that he would develop independent perspectives, opinions, and schools arising from his knowledge, learning, and intellectual power—parallel to those of Abu al-Hasan. Yet he had nothing of that sort. Rather, all his scholarly and intellectual capacities were directed solely toward defending the Ash‘ari doctrine. This indicates the intensity of his partisanship toward the Ash‘ari school and the strength of his personal inclination toward it.

Thus have been—and remain—the investigators and thinkers of the Ash‘aris: they direct their intellectual capacities solely toward defending al-Ash‘ari, and partisanship and desire do not allow them to deviate from him by even a hair’s breadth.

[A Historical Benefit Regarding the Biases of Historians]

Among those who assumed authority in Yemen and whose affairs became firmly established was a man named Ali ibn Mahdi, of Himyarite origin, from a village called al-‘Anbarah west of Zabid. He was ascetic, devout, and performed the pilgrimage every year. He followed the Hanafi school, and he added to his theological creed the doctrine of declaring sinners unbelievers and killing them on that basis. He killed those among the People of the Qiblah who opposed his creed, enslaved their women and took them by ownership, enslaved their offspring, and declared their lands lands of war, ruling over them as one rules over the people of a land of war.

Among his practices were killing those who fled in battle without granting them any chance of survival; killing the one who drank intoxicants; killing for singing; killing the adulterer; killing one who was

late for congregational prayer; killing one who was late for his sermon session; and killing one who delayed visiting his father's grave on Thursdays and Mondays—along with many other matters enumerated by the author of *Bahjat al-Zaman fi Tarikh al-Yaman*. End of the cited history. And all praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless and grant peace to Muhammad and his pure family.

This ruler lived in the era of Imam 'Abdullah ibn Hamzah (Peace be Upon Him), and his dominion was brought to an end by Tughtekin al-Ayyubi, the brother of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. During this era, Imam 'Abdullah ibn Hamzah (*Peace be Upon Him*) called to leadership, and he had battles and epic encounters with Tughtekin.

Furthermore, the purpose of mentioning this account is that many contemporary writers exert themselves in fabricating faults against Imam al-Mansur bi-Allah (*Peace be Upon Him*) by mentioning aspects of his conduct with the Mutarrifiyyah and expressing sympathy for them—solely because he judged them according to the judgment of Allah, without exceeding it. This is while they do not address the conduct of Ali ibn Mahdi al-Himyari, nor that of his successor Tughtekin al-Turkomani, despite all of them belonging to the same era, and despite the reprehensible conduct of the latter two and their distance from the norms of Islam.

And how excellent is the saying of the poet:

"The inclinations of souls are secrets unknown—

How many a learned theologian has been bewildered by them."

Planet Earth Today

Planet Earth today has flourished greatly, and human offspring have multiplied upon it, crowding its cities and villages to an extent that alarmed the politicians of the great powers. This led them to adopt political decisions to limit population growth, and indeed they implemented those decisions, which remain in effect to this day.

- This great flourishing that our earthly planet has assumed is purely material prosperity.
- And if the prosperity of this planet has reached its utmost limit in every material respect, then faith in Allah and in His religion has completely vanished from the face of the globe, leaving absolutely no presence except in narrow corners of the earth that are given no consideration.
- There is a religious presence across areas in Islamic countries and others, but it is an insignificant presence, due either to its subservience to American intelligence agencies and their agents, or to its deviation from the straight path.

- There is also the absence of noble morals, the absence of justice, and the prevalence of oppression and tyranny over peoples.
- Likewise, the widespread prevalence of prostitution, sexual perversion, intoxicants, all types of drugs and alcohol, the general practice of usury, fraud, and deception. In summary, all forms of immorality are openly manifest. In addition to this, America and its allies among Western countries, along with their agents from Arab and Islamic countries and others, have declared war against Islam and Muslims wherever they may be—military, intellectual, economic, and political war, and so on.

Division and Misguidance in This Ummah

The division and misguidance of this Muhammadan Ummah differ from the division and misguidance of previous nations. The hallmark of the misguidance of previous nations was polytheism with Allah the Exalted. As for the misguidance of this Muhammadan Ummah, it has not reached the level of polytheism, but rather falls short of it. For all Muslims believe that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) is the Messenger of Allah, that the prayers are five, that fasting the month of Ramadan is obligatory, that pilgrimage to the House is obligatory, that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah the Exalted and His revelation, that what it contains is truth which must be followed, and that obedience and compliance are due to what the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought from Allah the Exalted.

Commentary on a Statement by Hasan Farhan al-Maliki

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and may Allah bless and grant peace to Muhammad and his pure family:

A commentary on a topic written by Mr. Hasan ibn Farhan al-Maliki under the title: "*A Reading on Sunni Transformations among the Shi'a.*"

I say first: The topic is extremely fair, and I see behind it a heart free of whims and partisanship. Upon reading it, I recalled the saying of Allah the Exalted: "*O you who believe, be steadfast maintainers of justice, witnesses for Allah, even if against yourselves or parents and relatives*" [An-Nisa':135]. Indeed, behind it is a sincere, compassionate heart, worn down by grief.

At this point, the saying of Allah the Exalted to His Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) came to my mind: "*So perhaps you would destroy yourself in grief over their footsteps if they do not believe in this message*" [Al-Kahf:6].

Furthermore, I have observations and an opinion regarding your call to rally around general principles. This is a good matter. However, there

are details and particulars that cannot be overlooked, nor does striving to suppress them yield benefit—such as the issue of human actions, for example. There are also inherited whims, partisanships, and historical grudges that do not disappear even if mountains were to vanish. Those afflicted with these diseases only grow more obstinate when treated gently with guidance, advice, and clarification of truth and reality. This is not due to ignorance of the truth; rather, their ailment is what we mentioned: *“In their hearts is a disease, so Allah increased them in disease”* [Al-Baqarah:10]. Such people are legally termed “hypocrites,” and they have no share or portion in the name of Islam. They are exactly as Allah the Exalted described them: *“And among the people are those who say, ‘We believe in Allah and the Last Day,’ but they are not believers”* [Al-Baqarah:8].

This category—or these categories—will never be pleased with you, nor can you reconcile with them unless you follow them in their doctrines and religion.

Thus, your call benefits only seekers of truth who are genuinely occupied with seeking and researching it, or those whose hearts are free from spiritual ailments.

Yes, if the rational thinkers of both sides were to gather as you desire—and they are few—then the inevitable outcome would be condemnation, insults, excommunication, and accusations of corruption from the overwhelming majority and public opinion of both sides.

Thus, people will be nothing other than what Allah the Exalted has said: *“And most of mankind, even if you strive, are not believers”* [Yusuf]. And the Messenger (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) spoke the truth when he said: *“People are like a hundred camels; you hardly find among them a riding camel.”* *“So do not let your soul waste away in regret over them”* [Fatir:8], and *“Your duty is only to convey”* [Ash-Shura:48]. Thus, the responsibility of reformers is to convey and clarify the truth; whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve.

Yes, there is a solution to which I wish to draw your attention—the legal solution. Allah the Exalted said: *“If you differ in anything, then refer it to Allah and the Messenger...”* [An-Nisa’:59]. Referring to Allah means referring to His Book, and referring to the Messenger means referring to his Sunnah whose authenticity is agreed upon by those who differ. Whatever meets this criterion is the reference that must be returned to.

It is well known that each of the well-known sects has hadith collections which they narrate from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace), refer to, and rely upon.

Thus, whatever hadith from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his

family and grant them peace) appears in the books of the differing sects is the proof to which one must return when disagreement occurs.

This is the interpretation by which this verse should be understood. Accordingly, what the Imams of Ahl al-Sunnah possess of hadith is not binding proof upon the Zaydiyyah or the Imamiyyah, and likewise the opposite. Each sect is not convinced by what the other possesses, nor does it see itself bound by it—whether authentic or not. Allah the Exalted does not command His servants to arbitrate except by what is authentic to all.

Furthermore, referring and arbitrating by other than what we have mentioned of the Sunnah does not resolve disagreement, as stated, but rather inevitably multiplies it. For the dispute will shift from the issue itself to the narrator of the report, and so on.

Yes, this verse indicates that whatever has not been disputed among Muslims is truth, and that referral to the Book and Sunnah is required only in cases of disagreement and dispute.

Yes, one who has adopted the Shi'a position of preferring and prioritizing Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) may say that the reason is other than what you mentioned, namely:

1. It has been established that Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) was the very first of the men to believe, without exception. Allah the Exalted said: *"And the foremost, the foremost—those are the ones brought near"* [Al-Waqi'ah].
2. No Companion matched him in jihad and severity against the polytheists. Allah the Exalted said: *"And Allah has preferred the mujahidin over those who sit back with a great reward"* [An-Nisa'].
3. In addition to his close kinship to the Prophet Muhammad (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) and his firm grounding in knowledge.
4. And that no Companion received praise comparable to what Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) received.

These virtues are not shared by any of the Companions in general or in detail.

If the caliphate is deserved by virtue—as is the view upon which the opinion of the majority of the Companions and those who came after them settled—then there is no need thereafter to interpret the report: *"He is your guardian after me,"* nor the report of Ghadir and the like, which the Shi'a use as supporting evidence, since what we have mentioned of Ali's virtue is manifest virtue itself.

What I see is that what is obligatory is to act upon the apparent meaning of the text, unless a rational necessity opposes it or it

contradicts definitive proof.

[Proper Guidance Regarding Some Names of Islamic Sects]

Al-Rāfiḍī:

He is the one who rejects the Sunnah of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and his law, or any part of it, little or much, whether he is from the Shi'a or from Ahl al-Sunnah.

Al-Sunnī:

The one who follows the laws of Islam and the Sunnah of the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), whether he is from Ahl al-Sunnah or from the Shi'a.

Al-Shī'ī:

He is the one who loves the Messenger and the beloved ones of the Messenger, follows their path, and is keen to trace their footsteps while adhering to the Book and the Sunnah.

Your statement: How can we disregard all this precedence of Islam, spending, migration, jihad, and so on? And among the forerunners is Abū 'Ubaydah... etc.

We say in commentary on that:

The verse may be restricted by the verse of al-Fath, which is His saying: *"Indeed, those who pledge allegiance to you are actually pledging allegiance to Allah; the Hand of Allah is over their hands. So whoever breaks [his pledge] only breaks it against himself, and whoever fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah."* [Al-Fath:10]

And by what is known: that the pleasure of Allah, *the Exalted*, and His forgiveness are contingent upon a good ending and uprightness. How many are the beautiful promises in the Qur'an and the glad tidings of Paradise for the believers in general—yet all of that is conditioned upon uprightness and adherence to piety.

Thus, the preparation of gardens is only for the one who remains upright upon piety, faith, and righteous deeds, as evidenced by His saying: *"Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak loudly to him as you do to one another, lest your deeds become worthless while you do not perceive."* [Al-Hujurat] And this verse was revealed concerning some of those whom you mentioned, as stated in the Tafsir of Ibn Kathir.

And by His saying, *the Exalted*: *"So remain upright as you have been commanded, and those who have repented with you, and do not transgress. Indeed, He is Seeing of what you do. And do not incline toward those who do wrong, lest the Fire touch you."* [Hud]

Thus, uprightness, adherence to piety, and righteous deeds restrict His promise, *the Exalted*, to the foremost forerunners among the

Emigrants and the Helpers and those who followed them—even if that restriction is not explicitly mentioned in the verse. Restriction by separate evidence and specification by it is like restriction and specification by connected evidence.

If it is said: The virtues of the early Companions—precedence and so on—are great virtues by which what occurred from them is excused.

We say: Rather, the matter is exactly the opposite. For the one upon whom the favor of Allah is great, if disobedience issues from him—even if relatively small—it becomes great in proportion to the greatness of Allah's favors upon him. For this reason He said, *the Exalted*, regarding the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"O wives of the Prophet, whoever among you commits a clear immorality—the punishment for her will be doubled twice."* [Al-Aḥzāb: 30]

The truth, then, is that the Companions and others are equal in this regard. Rather, the sins of the Companions are more entering into indecency and closer to the wrath of Allah, *the Exalted*, just as with the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

And I see that the garment of absolute immunity with which the Companions were cloaked is like the immunity granted to the men of the two Ṣaḥīḥs; all of that consists of customary terminologies agreed upon by groups of people, which received the support of the early Islamic states in those eras, until our present time—and Allah is the One whose help is sought.

What supports what we have mentioned is that when tribulation occurred among the Companions at the end of the era of 'Uthmān and after him, they did not refrain from mentioning one another with regard to bad deeds.

Among that is what occurred between 'Uthmān and Abū Dharr, and between 'Uthmān and 'Ā'ishah, and between him and Ṭalḥah, and between him and 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) in exchanges of words, and so on until the end of what occurred during the long tribulation. Rather, what occurred among them was even greater than that: the severing of heads and the spilling of blood. And the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said in the well-known ḥadīth: *"It is not lawful to shed the blood of a Muslim except in one of three cases..."* the ḥadīth.

As for excusing this by error or by interpretation, that is unconvincing. For error usually occurs, then is remedied, then after that comes apology and disavowal.

It is far-fetched—indeed, customarily impossible—that error should

occur in a grave matter such as the caliphate of prophethood or the like, and that the error should continue for a year, two years, or many long years, without the masses and the people of consultation and opinion becoming aware of that error.

We say this without declaring those early forerunners disbelievers or expelling them from Islam. They have a respected sanctity established for them by virtue of their precedence. Yet we stand toward them with a position of reproach and censure, while exercising restraint and observing the original sanctity. The judgment belongs to Allah, and the appointment is the Day of Resurrection.

All that we have mentioned here we see ourselves obligated to judge by, as a ruling based on what is indicated by His saying, *the Exalted*: *"It will have [the consequence of] what it has earned, and it will bear [the consequence of] what it has earned."* [Al-Baqarah:286] And: *"Whoever does righteousness—it is for himself; and whoever does evil—it is against it."* [Fuṣṣilat:46] And: *"So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it."* [Al-Zalzalah] And many other verses in the Qur'an. Those addressed by these verses and the like are the Companions from the Emigrants and the Helpers in particular and first, then all people in general and second.

And He, *the Exalted*, said regarding the people of Uḥud among the Companions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): *"Among you are those who desire the world, and among you are those who desire the Hereafter."* [Āl 'Imrān: 152]

And He, *the Exalted*, also said regarding the people of Uḥud, reproaching them for their lack of patience and steadfastness with their Prophet and their lack of fidelity to their covenant—among them being the forerunners and the people of Badr: *"And how many a prophet fought with him many devoted worshippers; they did not weaken for what befell them in the way of Allah, nor did they falter, nor did they submit. And Allah loves the steadfast."* [Āl 'Imrān:146]

And He, *the Exalted*, said, denouncing their action, submission, weakness of intention, and lack of steadfastness: *"And Muhammad is not but a Messenger; Messengers have passed on before him. So if he were to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels? And whoever turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; and Allah will reward the grateful."* [Āl 'Imrān]

What we have mentioned here indicates what we stated previously: that Allah's promise of gardens to the foremost forerunners among the Emigrants and the Helpers and those who followed them with excellence is contingent upon uprightness, and so on.

All of this must be judged by and believed in, and it is not permissible

to overlook it under the pretext of uniting ranks and general unity. For the Qur'an was revealed in order that judgment be made by what is in it and belief be held in it, in general and in detail. It is not permissible to remain silent about such matters when there is need, due to what Allah, *the Exalted*, has taken upon the scholars of clarification.

Yes, it may be permissible to overlook such matters at times for a temporary interest. But to overlook them absolutely and to forget them entirely—that is not permissible, as we mentioned previously.

Moreover, the need to know the history of the Companions for scholars and students of knowledge is a confirmed need, for they are the transmitters of Islam and the laws of the religion, and they are the exemplars for those after them. Thus, the situation necessitated investigation into their lives and tracing what occurred in their history, and so on.

And I see that in this subject you have breached traditional barriers and brought out one, two... and ten. This is much for someone like you, given what you endure of sectarian harassment.

Yes, I see that we do not differ with you. What I attach to your discussion here is not observations—though it appears in the form of observation and discussion—but rather a reaction of psychological feeling.

[Who Are Gog and Magog?]

Question: Who are Gog and Magog whose mention has come in the Noble Qur'an? And where is the barrier that Dhū al-Qarnayn built located?

Answer: Gog and Magog are two nations from among the nations of the earth, from the children of Adam. Their nature is evil and corruption, as mentioned in the Qur'an.

They live, as the Qur'an indicates, in the north of the earth, and the barrier is also in the north.

It is possible that the barrier has collapsed and been leveled, and that Gog and Magog have emerged and caused corruption. Perhaps they are the Tatars whose calamity encompassed nearly all the Muslims. And perhaps they are the Franks whose calamity also encompassed nearly all the lands of the Muslims.

If you say: He, *the Exalted*, said: *"Until when Gog and Magog are opened and they surge from every elevation, and the true promise draws near..."* [Al-Anbiyā']—which indicates that their emergence is among the signs of the Hour.

We say: Their emergence is among the signs of the Hour, and the time of the signs of the Hour extends from the sending of the Prophet (*May*

Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) until its establishment, as evidenced by his saying: “*I and the Hour have been sent like these two.*”

[The Barrier of Gog and Magog]

Question: It is mentioned in reports and historical accounts that the barrier of Gog and Magog exists on earth, and that they are confined behind it and will not be released except near the establishment of the Hour. With the development of transportation and the advancement of modern science in this era, we have not heard any report from any country that it exists within its territory.

Does this indicate that it does not exist and that it has already ended? Or has Allah concealed its matter from the children of Adam?

Answer — and Allah is the Grantor of success: It is likely that the promise of the destruction of the barrier has already passed. The evidence for this is the absence of anything preventing communication between the inhabitants of the earth. We have heard the latest news of people surging over one another, and the prevalence of fighting and tribulations across the northern half of the earth, where Dhū al-Qarnayn marched with his armies. The latest we heard was the First and Second World Wars, in which the number of those killed from the Russians alone in the Second World War reached twenty million, according to what was mentioned by Russian radio, and the total casualties of the Second World War reached fifty million, as stated by al-Sayyid Sābiq al-Hindī, the Muslim scholar.

The verse does not specify that its destruction is at the establishment of the Hour or upon its occurrence; rather, it mentioned the promise in absolute terms, without specification. And His saying, *the Exalted*: “*And the Trumpet will be blown*” [Al-Kahf:99] after mentioning the barrier is not a restriction of the destruction of the barrier; rather, it is information from Allah, *the Exalted*, about the destinies of creation and the true appointed time that awaits them.

What is narrated in ḥadīths from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding Gog and Magog are solitary reports, and such reports should not be relied upon.

And His saying, *the Exalted*: “*Until when Gog and Magog are opened and they surge from every elevation, and the true promise draws near; then behold, the eyes of those who disbelieved will stare...*” [Al-Anbiyā] does not contradict what we have stated, since the nearness of the Hour begins from the time of the mission of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

This being so, after the First World War, the inhabitants of the north took control over most of the lands of the Muslims, subjugated their

people, killed them, and humiliated them.

[From the Words of 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*) Regarding an Evil Pilgrimage]

It is narrated from 'Alī (*Peace be Upon Him*): "The worst pilgrimage that the former and the latter will perform is one in which the possessions of people are plundered, except that relief will come at its necks as it advances, and at its heels as it departs." End quote.

Al-Ḥils: A covering placed on the back of a camel beneath the saddle; it is also spread in houses beneath thick garments. End quote from the dictionary.

I say: It is possible that what is meant is that the plunder will encompass all the belongings of the pilgrims, even reaching what is beneath their clothes. This report is from the unseen matters of the future. We do not know whether that has occurred or not. However, it comes to my mind that the Kharijite Ṭālib al-Ḥaqq attacked the pilgrims, committed grave acts, and took the Black Stone. I do not know whether he plundered¹ the pilgrims' belongings or not.

Nevertheless, it appears to me that what the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) foretold has not yet occurred, because he informed that relief would follow the plundering, whereas the plundering of the Kharijite was not followed by relief.

Predictions of What Will Come in the Future

This occurs through analogy, whereby the outcomes of future matters are measured against the outcomes of past matters. The way of Allah with later generations is like His way with the earlier ones, and *"you will never find any change in the way of Allah"* [Al-Fath]. And He, *the Exalted*, said: *"And these days We alternate among the people"* [Āl 'Imrān:140]. Allah, *the Exalted*, commanded reflection upon the outcomes of the deniers so that the observer does not fall into the same evil end that befell them.

[The Lineage of Qaḥṭān]

The lineage of all the tribes of Yemen goes back to Qaḥṭān.

There is disagreement regarding the lineage of Qaḥṭān. It is said that he is 'Ābir ibn Shāliḥ ibn Arfakhshadh ibn Sām ibn Nūḥ (*Peace be Upon Him*). It is also said that he is from the descendants of Hūd (*Peace be Upon Him*) directly. And it is said that he is from the descendants of the son of Hūd's brother (*Peace be Upon Him*).

It is said that Qaḥṭān was the first to speak Arabic, and that he is the

1- In *Tārīkh al-Ya'qūbī*, it is mentioned that the pilgrim was not plundered. The author.

father of the Arabized Arabs. Ismāʿīl (*Peace be Upon Him*) is the father of the Arabized Arabs, whereas the original Arabs existed before that, such as ʿĀd, Thamūd, Ṭasm, Jadīs, ʿAmālīq, and others.

Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār held the view that Qaḥṭān is from the progeny of Ismāʿīl. This is supported by al-Bukhārī's chapter heading indicating the attribution of Yemen to Ismāʿīl, and he included therein the ḥadīth in which the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) addressed Banū Aslam, saying that they are from the children of Ismāʿīl.

It is also supported by the apparent meaning of the statement of Abū in the two Ṣaḥīḥs in the story of Hājar: "*That is your mother, O sons of the water of the sky,*" addressing the Anṣār.

Ibn Hibbān said in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*: Everyone who is from the descendants of Ismāʿīl is called "son of the water of the sky," because Ismāʿīl was born of Hājar and was raised on the water of Zamzam, which is from the water of the sky.

This is further supported by the statement of al-Mundhir ibn ʿAmr, the grandfather of Ḥassān ibn Thābit al-Anṣārī:

*We inherited from al-Bahlūl ʿAmr ibn ʿĀmir,
And Ḥārithah al-Ghaṭrīf an established glory.
Noble legacies from the family of Ibn Nabt ibn Mālik,
And Nabt ibn Ismāʿīl—neither of them ever changed.*

Al-Samhūdī said, after citing the above in his book *Wafāʾ al-Wafāʾ*: Rather, what I incline toward is that all the Arabs are from the descendants of Ismāʿīl (*Peace be Upon Him*). End quote.

[Miscellaneous Benefits]

Benefit: [On Naming a Person According to His Age]

A man after thirty is called *kahl*, and after forty he is called *shaykh*. It is also said the opposite. End quote from *al-Bayān*.

[For Some of the Men of Letters]

*A boy of ten years is a lad, Pens fall silent before his equal.
At twenty he is for youth and youthful play, No blame turns him back from
that.*

*Thirty is strength and youth, Passion, longing, and love.
When ten more years are added, His maturity is perfected and complete.
At fifty his youth has passed him by, And he sees it as though it were a
dream.*

*At sixty, the nights make him a target For death, whose arrows strike.
At seventy he has lived enough, Obsessions and illness befall him.
When ten more years are added after that, He reaches an unattainable
peak.*

*At ninety—do not ask me about him, For ninety admits no words.
When ten more years are added after that, He is living like the dead—
peace.*

By Another Poet

*So say to eyes afflicted with soreness before the sun:
Seek eyes other than yours that see it at setting and rising.
And pardon souls that have been content with husks,
For they have no aspiration for the core.*

Ibn al-Munajjim on Dyeing Grey Hair

*People did not dye whiteness because of its ugliness,
For uglier than it is when its roots appear.
Rather, youth has died, so its dwellings turned black,
Out of grief for it, upon their outlines.*

Benefits Drawn from the Hadiths of the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace)

It is reported from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace): “Whoever seeks to make people hear of his deeds, Allah will expose him before those who hear and will abase and belittle him.” Narrated by Ahmad. Mentioned by Ibn Kathir in his *Tafsir* of Surah al-Ma‘un.

Al-Nasa’i narrated from ‘Abdullah ibn Buraydah, from his father, that

he entered the mosque with the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and found a man praying and supplicating, saying: "O Allah, I ask You by my testimony that there is no deity but You, the One, the Self-Sufficient, who neither begets nor is begotten, and none is comparable to Him." The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "*By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, he has asked Allah by His Greatest Name; when He is asked by it, He gives, and when He is supplicated by it, He answers.*" Ibn Kathir mentioned this in his *Tafsir* and said it was also narrated by the other authors of the Sunan through various chains. Al-Tirmidhi said: "Hasan Gharib."

[On Wisdom]

Al-'Abbas ibn al-Ahnaf said:

*Bear the burden of a grave sin from the one you love,
And even if you are wronged, say: I am the wrongdoer.*

For if you do not forgive the sin in love,

The one you love will depart from you, and you will be humbled.

Another poet said:

*The abodes are empty, yet corruption prevails without leadership,
And hardship lies in my solitude with false supremacy.*

End of quotation from *Wafayat al-A'yan*.

Yahya ibn Khalid al-Barmaki said: "The bad manners of a man's servants indicate his forbearance." (*Wafayat al-A'yan*)

Ibn al-Tathriyya said:

*May my soul and family be a ransom for one who,
when harmed, Knows not how to reply,
Nor offers the excuse of the innocent,
And continues trembling until he is suspected.*

[From the Sayings of al-Shafi'i]

Among the supplications of al-Shafi'i: "O Allah, O Most Subtle, I ask You for gentleness in what the decrees have brought about." It is narrated from al-Shafi'i that he said: "I have never seen a corpulent intelligent man except Muhammad ibn al-Hasan." End of quotation from *Wafayat al-A'yan*.

In al-Maghazi by al-Waqidi, regarding the Battle of Hunayn: When the people withdrew and only one hundred steadfast companions remained, the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) supplicated: "*O Allah, to You belongs all praise, to You is the complaint directed, and You are the One whose help is sought.*" Gabriel said

to him: *"You have been taught the very words that Allah taught Moses on the day the sea was split before him while Pharaoh was behind him."*

[Is One Obligated to Assist a Traveler Whose Car Has Broken Down?]

Question: If, during my travels, I pass by a man whose car has broken down, am I obliged to repair it if I am knowledgeable, or if I have fuel, tools, or other means to fix it?

Answer: You are not obligated to do so as a binding duty. Rather, it falls under recommended benevolence in general, which Islam has strongly encouraged, and it carries great reward and immense recompense. It has been authentically reported that fulfilling a believer's need is equivalent to fasting for a month and performing i'tikaf therein. There are many reports to this effect, and the Qur'an abounds with exhortations to kindness, righteousness, and good deeds.

However, assisting the stranded person and repairing the breakdown may become obligatory in certain situations—such as when the person, his vehicle, his cargo, or his passengers are in danger. In such cases, it is not permissible to take payment or charge for the fuel used to remove the person and his car from harm. As for anything beyond that, there is no harm in charging for it.

Precaution (al-Ihtiyat)

- Acting upon precaution is not obligatory, since the established principle is freedom from liability. However, when two indicators conflict regarding a ruling, the evidence that leads to precaution is considered a valid basis for preference.
- The proof for this is what is narrated in the well-known hadith: *"The lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear, and between them are doubtful matters unknown to many people."* And in it: *"Whoever avoids them has safeguarded his religion,"* and: *"Whoever grazes near the sanctuary is likely to fall into it,"* or as he said.

[Preferring Some Matters over Others]

- The latter part of the night is better than its beginning, and the beginning of the day is better than its end; sleeping at the beginning of the night is better than sleeping at its end.
- The latter part of Ramadan is better than its beginning.
- The beginning of Dhul-Hijjah is better than its end.
- The beginning of Friday is better than its end.
- The beginning of every day is better than its end.
- The beginning of life is better than its end.
- The beginning of the Qur'an is better than its end; its beginning is

al-Fatiha and its end is al-Nas.

- The beginning of al-Fatiha is better than its conclusion, because it contains remembrance of Allah and praise of Him, whereas its end is supplication.
- The last of the revealed heavenly books is better than the first of them.
- The last of the nations is better than the first of them.
- The last of the prophets is better than the first of them.
- The last of the trustees is better than the first of them.
- The Hereafter is better for the believer than this world.
- The beginning of a meal is better than its end.
- The first people to embrace Islam are better than the later ones.
- The beginning of any speech is more deserving of virtue than its end.
- The beginning of the prescribed prayer time is better than its end.
- The last month of the year is better than the first, as it is the time of Hajj and among the sacred months.
- Voluntary prayers at night are better than voluntary prayers during the day.
- Obligatory prayers during the day are better than obligatory prayers at night, because the obligatory daytime prayers are three, whereas the obligatory nighttime prayers are two.
- The sign of the day is better than the sign of the night.
- Sleeping at night is better than sleeping during the day, and charity given at night is better than charity given during the day.
- Seeking livelihood during the day is better than seeking it at night.
- Remembrance of Allah within prayer is better than remembrance outside it, and the obligatory act is better than the voluntary one.

[A Benefit from the Words of the Commander of the Faithful]

Among the sayings of the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*): "Nothing from your wealth has been lost if it has admonished you."

I say: An example of this is when you entrust someone with a sum of money due to your trust in him and your good opinion of him, then later you ask him to return the deposit and he denies it and disavows you. Likewise, when you lend money to a man based on your favorable impression of his apparent dignity, and when you demand repayment he denies you and rejects your claim. Through the loss of your wealth, you gain the lesson of how to safeguard your property and learn that one

should not rely on outward appearances or eloquent speech in matters of transactions and debts, nor in entrusting secrets, seeking counsel, assigning important tasks, or similar matters. External appearances are not proof of a man's true integrity.

- True prudence lies in exercising caution and avoiding entering into transactions, loans, or responsibilities with a man whose outward appearance suggests righteousness, without prolonged testing and careful inquiry into his history of dealings, and so forth.

- Moreover, the loss of one's wealth may serve as a religious admonition, such as when wealth is drowned, stolen, lost, or the like. A wise person—if he has been negligent in paying zakat—will awaken and say: "The reason my wealth was lost is my negligence regarding what Allah has obligated upon me of zakat." Thus, the loss of his wealth becomes a cause for his repentance, his abandonment of negligence, and a motive for diligence in fulfilling it.

[The Speech of the Beasts at the End of Time]

In al-Tirmidhi there is a hadith: *"By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the Hour will not be established until the beasts speak to humans, and until a man's whip-lash and the strap of his sandal speak to him, and his thigh informs him of what his family has done after him"*. And he said: Good and sound. End quote.

I said: In this hadith there are some of the signs of the Hour, and they are:

- 1- The speaking of the beasts; and what is meant—*Allah knows best*—is not verbal speech composed of alphabetic letters. Rather, what is meant is that they indicate, by some movements and actions, meanings, and that becomes from them like verbal reporting in its conveying of meanings. In this time we hear about police dogs that uncover the criminal, and we have seen at some border crossings of countries that they use dogs for inspection.
- 2- The speaking of the whip-lash and the strap of the sandal; and today speaking has been found by means of telephones like that.
- 3- "And his thigh informs him of what his family has done after him," and today there have been found detection devices that transmit the image exactly as it is to the man.

[The Four Natures]

They are: water, earth, air, and fire.

- Allah created the human being from water and earth.
- And Allah created trees and fruits from water and earth also.

- And He created the jinn from fire, from its red flame: *"And He created the jinn from a smokeless flame of fire."* [Ar-Rahman:15]
- And He, *the Exalted*, created the angels from the light that is given by a flame like the flame of fire, and the candle, and the sun.
- As for air (space), it is included in the creation of every kind among the kinds mentioned.

[In Dreams]

People differ in the abundance of dreams and their scarcity; rather, some of them hardly perceives a dream. Perhaps the reason for that—*Allah knows best*—goes back to differences among people.

[Interpretation of Dreams]

Knowledge of the interpretation of dreams is a knowledge that depends on intelligence and acumen, and they have said: the true vision is from Allah, and the dream is from Satan.

The true vision is the righteous vision that the righteous man sees, or that is seen for him, and the report from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding that has been authenticated.

[Types of Dreams]

Dreams are types. Among them is that whose interpretation does not differ from the apparent meaning of the dream—such as that he sees in sleep that he shakes hands with his brother, then in wakefulness he saw his brother and shook hands with him.

Among them is that whose interpretation is near to its apparent meaning—such as that he sees in sleep that he visits Zayd the scholar and shakes hands with him, then it happened in wakefulness that he visited ‘Amr the scholar and shook hands with him; or similarly, such as that he sees that so-and-so died, then his brother dies.

Among them is that whose interpretation is far from its apparent meaning; and this type differs in farness and nearness according to the difference of the related indications in that.

[The Good Vision from the Righteous Man]

Question: What is the meaning of the hadith that he narrated in Al-Ahkam and it is his statement: Yahya ibn Al-Hussain (*May Allah's Blessings be Upon Him*) : It has reached us from the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: "*The good vision from the righteous man is one part of forty-six parts of prophethood*". And he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to say: "*Nothing remains after me except the glad tidings*". They said: And what are the glad tidings? He said: "*The righteous vision*

that the servant sees, or that is seen for him, is one part of forty-six parts of prophethood". Benefit us—may Allah benefit us—with your knowledge and your preservation.

The answer: Praise be to Allah alone, and may Allah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet and upon his pure family. Thereafter: The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), at the beginning of Allah's favor upon him with prophethood, would not see a vision except that its interpretation was realized. So he remained a period of time upon this state of vision, estimated as one part of forty-six parts of the period of his prophethood. As for the remainder of the period of his prophethood, it was by revelation; that is, the news of the heaven used to come to him by two ways:

- 1 - By way of vision, but it is a short period estimated as one part of forty-six parts.
- 2 - By way of revelation.

After the death of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), the news of the heaven was cut off, and nothing remained of it except what was by way of the righteous vision that the righteous man sees, or that is seen for him.

[From the Benefits of the Righteous Vision]

The righteous vision from the righteous man—he sees it or it is seen for him—will be:

1. Either to make him firm upon what he is upon of the path and the school of doctrine.
2. Or to warn him from slips and destructions that he does not feel.
3. Or to warn him from entering into a matter he is being called to, which they have made good for him and adorned for him to enter into it.
4. Or to warn him from a man or men who adorn for him leaving what he is upon to what they are upon.
5. Or that the vision is about the occurrence of a future matter; so one should prepare for its occurrence by supplication and seeking success from Allah.
6. The vision is not a means for establishing legal rulings; rather, it may be supportive of what the believer is upon of the path and the school of doctrine, as has preceded.
7. The vision is not a means for judging a person with corruption or righteousness; rather, it may be an aspect for giving preference to one of two persons who are ambiguous to the one who saw the vision.

From the mercy of Allah, *the Exalted*, to His servant who is incapable of looking into the evidences, is that He makes him firm when a trial is

presented to him, by a vision that alerts him to what is correct and warns him from falling into misguidance.

Many things of this type have informed me similarly; but if the servant is from the people who look into evidences, and has the ability to research and to distinguish, then he has sufficiency in that and does not need support by a vision.

One of the worshippers—deficient in his thinking regarding looking into evidences, research, and distinguishing—informed me of a number of visions, all of them warning him and alerting him from entering into a trial. He used to come to me to consult me, so I would indicate to him what is correct; but he did not benefit from the visions, and he did not become guided to the correct opinion, and he did not benefit from the clarification. So he entered into the trial and did not come out of it; rather, his soul was taken in it.

So, praise be to Allah who guided us to the face of the truth, and uncovered for us pure justice and truthfulness, and made faith beloved to us and adorned it in our hearts, and made disbelief, wickedness, and disobedience hateful to us, and made us among the rightly guided. And may Allah send blessings and peace upon Muhammad and his pure family.

Sense of Taste and Smell

Allah, *the Exalted*, by His mercy and wisdom, made filth and vile things possess foul odors from which the natural disposition recoils, and He, *the Exalted*, made for the human being a sense of smell by which he perceives foul odors and pleasant odors.

And He, *the Exalted*, made wholesome things possess pleasant odors toward which the natural disposition inclines and is drawn; and by that, the human being is, by his nature, driven toward what contains benefit for his body and health, and kept away from what contains harm to his health and the well-being of his body.

[The Shortness of the Human Lifespan and His Heedlessness Within It]

The human being cuts through the years of his life while he hardly feels, and his days are folded while he is heedless; and when the human being looks at what has passed of his days and of the years of his life, he does not see it except like one day, with events following one another. Therefore, the human being's lifespan is short, even if it reaches of years what it reaches. So it is fitting for the human being to be keen, in the days of his life, upon mindfulness of Allah, *the Exalted*, and to seek out, from deeds in his worldly life, what contains the pleasure of Allah, *the Exalted*, so that by that he may attain the everlasting life that does not cease and does not end, in the Gardens of bliss, with the prophets, the truthful, the

martyrs, and the righteous—how excellent those are as companions. *"Say, 'The enjoyment of this world is little.'"* [An-Nisa:77], and: *"But you prefer the worldly life, while the Hereafter is better and more enduring."* [Al-A'la:16–17].

The human being loves the world and living in it with intense love, and clings to it greatly, like the attachment of a child to his mother, while the human being lives, in his worldly life, a distressing life. The various kinds of trials and afflictions, and troubles and constriction and worry and grief and sorrow keep coming to him from in front of him and from behind him, and from his right and from his left. The world has not been purely pleasant for anyone. And the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) said regarding this meaning: "The world has not become sweet from one side except that it has become bitter from another side," and he said: "No person attains in it a pleasure except by the parting of another." And he has, regarding this meaning, much speech in Nahj al-Balagha.

[The Variation of Deeds According to Time and Place]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah send blessings and peace upon our master Muhammad and upon his pure family. Thereafter: the single deed may be, in one time, better than it is in another time; likewise, its doing in one place may be better than it is in another place. Rather, the righteous deed may be, in one time, obligatory, and in another time, forbidden.

- Fighting in the way of Allah becomes forbidden when the people of truth are few in number and equipment, and their enemy is in great multitude such that it predominates in the estimation of the people of truth that their entering into fighting their enemy will be a cause for their extermination, or the loss of their right, or their weakening, without any mentionable harm occurring in their fighting to their enemy.
- And thus did the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in the beginning of Islam, and the Quran was revealed commanding the Muslims to withhold their hands from the polytheists.
- And thus did Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) after the death of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*); he did not stir a thing for about twenty-six years.

[If the Brave and the Coward Both Stand Firm, Which of Them Is Better?]

Question: If the brave man and the coward stand firm in the face of the enemy, and their action is equal, then which of them is better?

The answer: the brave man and the coward in such a state are equal in merit outwardly, and each of them is distinguished by a virtue. The coward is distinguished by the virtue of extra patience in steadfastness, and reward is according to hardship. The brave man is distinguished by the virtue of courage, and it is a natural virtue that Allah bestows upon whom He wills of His servants.

If it is said: the virtue of courage is not counted; rather, what is counted is its effect.

We say: the matter is so; reward is only for deeds. However, among the effects of courage are intimidating the enemy and casting fear and awe into hearts, and this is a tremendous effect by which the brave man is distinguished. Along with this, the brave man has shared with the coward the virtue of patience in steadfastness in the face of the enemy; so, based on what we mentioned, the brave man is better, because of what we mentioned of the brave man being distinguished by the attainment of great effects that strengthen the hearts of his companions and increase their steadfastness by his presence among them, among other things that we mentioned previously.

[Among the Virtues of the Arabs]

Among the virtues of the Arabs—regarding *al-hūr al-ʿīn*—according to Nashwan: Exposition (al-Bayan), whose exposition has no equal: they have the vast language; they have the knowledge of tracking traces along with the knowledge of discerning people, so they know that this is the son of this, and this is the son of this one's brother, and this is the uncle of this. They have the truthfulness of sense, the correctness of intuition, the excellence of assumption, and the soundness of opinion. They have determination that no determination resembles, and patience that no patience resembles, and generosity and honor-pride and protective zeal in which no one comes near them. They have the preservation of lineages, the virtues of forefathers, and the faults of peers. They have immediacy in opinion and especially in speech. End quote, with adaptation.

[Preferring Some Lands Over Others]

Question: Allah, *the Exalted*, has favored some lands over others; so is the merit in them the multiplying of reward for righteous deeds in them?

Or does it return to the availability of provisions and conveniences in them, and the availability of security and stability?

Or is it a natural merit returning to the land itself and its soil?

Or does it return to the goodness of its climate and its safety from epidemics?

Or does it return to its not being exposed to earthquakes and floods

and natural disasters?

Or is its merit by consideration of the merit of its inhabitants and the lack of their merit?

Or is it for other than that?

The answer: the merit of some lands over others returns to some of what was mentioned in the question, and some of it to other than that.

Allah favored agricultural land over land that is not suitable for agriculture in His statement: *"And the good land—its vegetation emerges by permission of its Lord; but that which is bad—nothing emerges except sparsely, with difficulty."* [Al-A'raf:58]. Fertile land through which permanent rivers run is better than land in which there are no rivers, and everything mentioned in the question from aspects and considerations is an aspect for preference.

So the land of Mecca and the sacred inviolable sanctuary—Allah, *the Exalted*, favored it by what He placed in it of:

1. The Ancient House.
2. The Station of Abraham.
3. Settling Ishmael in it.
4. Its being the place of the mission of the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad.
5. What is in it of the blessing of the supplication of Abraham—*may Allah's blessings be upon him*.
6. What Allah, *the Exalted*, placed in it of multiplying reward for deeds.
7. Its being a place of return for people; they make pilgrimage to it, and a security for them—within it the fearful is safe, and the birds and the wild animals.
8. Its being a direction for the prayer—which is the greatest of acts of worship—so they venerate it by turning toward it in their prayer, and then in their supplication.

- Fertile land is better than saline-barren land, and elevated land is better than low land: *"And We sheltered them on a high ground having levelness and flowing water."* [Al-Mu'minun:50]. The plain is better than the mountain, and what is moderate in climate is better than other than it. A land inhabited by the righteous is better than one inhabited by other than the righteous, and the Abode of Islam is better than the Abode of disbelief.

In sum: the preference of lands, some over others, has aspects and considerations from what was mentioned in the question, or for other aspects besides it. And every aspect of preference returns either to a worldly interest, or to a religious interest, or to both. And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah send blessings and peace upon

our master Muhammad and upon his pure family.

[Allah's Favoring Some People Over Others]

Allah, *the Exalted*, has favored some people over others in provisions—so the provision of this one is more expansive than that one's—and in lifespans—so the lifespan of some is long and the lifespan of some is short—and in many things such as health and well-being, soundness of the senses and limbs, strength of hearing and sight, bodily strength, beauty of face and form, completeness of physique and strength of endurance, strength of patience, a pleasant voice, balance of temperaments, courage, and generosity... and so on. *"That is the bounty of Allah; He gives it to whom He wills, and Allah is the Possessor of great bounty."* [Al-Hadid:21]

[The Best Months, Days, Nights, and Hours]

The best of months is the month of Ramadan, the best of days is Friday, the best of nights is the Night of Decree, and the best hours of the night are the pre-dawn hours.

[The Best Deeds in the Month of Ramadan]

Question: Which is better in Ramadan, or in other than it: recitation of the Quran, or glorification and remembrance? Or supplication and seeking forgiveness? Or supererogatory prayers? Or reading in the books of knowledge?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that the supererogatory prayer gathers recitation of the Quran, remembrance, glorification, and praising, along with humbling oneself before Allah and submissiveness; therefore, the supererogatory prayers are better than remembrance, glorification, praising, supplication, and seeking forgiveness.

And the comparison remains between supererogatory prayers and reading the books of knowledge. What is known, in general, is that seeking knowledge—by reading the books of knowledge, or by studying it, or by teaching it—is better than any type among the types of worship.

Proofs have come regarding that from the Book and the Sunnah; among that is His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge by degrees."* [Al-Mujadila:11]; and: *"Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?'"* [Az-Zumar:9]. And the hadiths regarding this are many. However, there is a point that must be paid attention to: the purpose of knowledge is action, so the supererogatory acts should not be neglected—of prayer, remembrance, glorification, recitation of the Quran, and other than that.

And perhaps the superiority of knowledge over the rest of the supererogatory acts is not realized except along with regularly

maintaining the supererogatory acts of prayer, recitation of the Quran, glorification, remembrance, and other than that—because that illuminates the heart, purifies it, directs it to Allah, binds it to Him, and strengthens the connection with Allah. Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: *"Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts find rest."* [Ar-Ra'd:28]; and He, *the Glorified*, has said: *"So remember Me; I will remember you."* [Al-Baqarah:152].

It can be said: merit differs according to the differing states of the human being. The human being may, in some states, be energetic for seeking knowledge and have mental readiness for acquiring knowledge—so seeking knowledge in such a state is better. And the human being may be in a state of tightness of chest, closed understanding, and anxiety, feeling the need for Allah—so supplication and turning to Allah is better, because in such a state the human being finds himself looking toward Allah and turning to Him for the relief of his distress.

And the human being may feel the abundance of sins, the abundance of heedlessness, and the abundance of neglect—so seeking forgiveness in such a state is better, because seeking forgiveness with this feeling and this awareness has value with Allah. In every case, worship becomes superior due to the occurrence of its cause.

[The Excellence of the Types of Intellect Over the Types of Righteousness]

In Tafsir Ahl al-Bayt (*Peace be Upon Them*): from Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), he said: The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to me: *"When people draw near to their Creator with the various kinds of righteousness, then draw near to Him with the various kinds of intellect; you will surpass them in degrees and closeness, with people in the world, and with Allah in the Hereafter"*.

Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) explained the meaning of this by what Asim ibn Damrah also narrated from him. He said: Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*) said: "By Allah, some people have preceded to the Gardens of Eden. They were not the people with the most prayer, nor fasting, nor pilgrimage, nor lesser pilgrimage; but they understood Allah's admonitions, so hearts trembled from them, limbs became humble from them, and souls became tranquil from them. Thus, they surpassed creation with lofty degrees and a tremendous rank with Allah in the Hereafter." End quote, from Tafsir Ahl al-Bayt by al-Sharafi.

I say: What is meant—as it appears to me, *and Allah knows best*—is knowledge of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Intellect was mentioned only because it is the instrument through which knowledge is

attained. By intellect, the intelligent person distinguishes—after reflection—between truth and falsehood, the good and the ugly, the wholesome and the vile, the straight and the crooked, and by it he differentiates between the prophet and the false claimant to prophethood, and between reality and fable. By the intelligent person's reflection and thinking in the Book of Allah—if he is among the people of reflection—his soul becomes filled with awe of Allah, his heart becomes filled with a sense of Allah's greatness, majesty, vast knowledge, and power, and he feels within himself the tremendous favor of Allah, His beneficence, and the vastness of His mercy... and so on.

Through reflection, the one who reflects gathers—by his intellect—between excellent knowledge of his Lord and his religion, and excellent deeds.

[What Is Meant by What Has Come Regarding the Blame of the World]

Question: We have heard much regarding blaming the world and the command to avoid it. Is what is meant by that that the legally responsible person should avoid wealth and choose poverty? What, precisely, is blamed in it? Then what, precisely, is that for which the legally responsible person is not blamed?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that much blame of the world has come in the Noble Book, and in the Sunnah of the noble Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and in the words of the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*), and in the words of the Imams and others. What is meant by that is blaming being deceived by it, not blaming the world and its enjoyments. There is no blame upon the Muslim if his hands are filled with worldly wealth, but his heart should not be filled by it.

Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: *"Say, 'Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants and the good things of provision?' Say, 'They are for those who believe during the worldly life, exclusively on the Day of Resurrection.'"* [Al-A'raf:32]. And He, *the Exalted*, has said: *"O messengers, eat from the good things and do righteous deeds."* [Al-Mu'minun:51]. And He said: *"O you who have believed, eat from the good things We have provided you and be grateful to Allah, if it is Him that you worship."* [Al-Baqarah:172]. And He said: *"He is the One who created for you all that is on the earth."* [Al-Baqarah:29]. And Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: *"Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden usury."* [Al-Baqarah:275]. And He said: *"There is no blame upon you for seeking bounty from your Lord."* [Al-Baqarah:198]—and other verses besides these in this meaning.

From here we say: what is meant by blaming the world is not that the

Muslim should avoid wealth and choose poverty. What is blamed from the world, precisely, is that the Muslim becomes occupied with the world away from what Allah has made obligatory upon him. Allah, *the Exalted*, says: *"O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children distract you from the remembrance of Allah."* [Al-Munafiqun:9]. And Allah, *the Exalted*, says: *"And when they see commerce or amusement, they rush to it and leave you standing."* [Al-Jumu'ah:11]—and other than that.

Or that the legally responsible person seeks the world and its enjoyments from other than the way Allah has permitted: either through usury, or fraud, or betrayal, or through wicked oaths, or through usurpation and plunder and highway robbery, or what resembles that among what Allah has forbidden His servants to enter into.

And among that is that the owner of wealth withholds the obligatory rights upon him, such as obligatory almsgiving and the one-fifth religious due, and what is attached to that of the rights of relatives, guests, neighbors, and the like.

And among that is that he spends wealth in other than its proper place—such as that he gives obligatory almsgiving to one who is not entitled to it, or he spends for showing-off and seeking reputation, or he aids the wrongdoers with it, or he offers it as a bribe to rulers so that he may consume people's wealth unlawfully, or he uses it to wrong people and to behave arrogantly toward them—and what resembles that among forbidden dispositions.

As for other than what we mentioned, there is no problem in it and no blame upon its possessor. It is not upon the Muslim to refrain from enjoying what is lawful: he eats what he wills from the varieties of wholesome things, drinks what he wills, wears what he wants, rides, resides, and marries, and there is no sin upon him in that and no punishment attaches to him. But it is obligatory upon the Muslim to thank Allah, *the Exalted*, for what He has bestowed upon him of blessings, to fulfill the required rights, and to beware of being deceived by wealth—for the human being, by his nature, as Allah described him in His saying: *"Indeed, man transgresses, because he sees himself as self-sufficient."* [Al-'Alaq:6-7]

[Scattered Papers That Contain the Quran or the Remembrance of Allah]

Question: What is required of a Muslim regarding what he sees of many accumulated, scattered papers in the streets, in rubbish dumps, and in homes, which contain the Quran, or the remembrance of Allah, or His names, and so on?

And is it permissible to make a magazine that contains the remembrance of Allah into a tablecloth for food?

And is it permissible to place a book above the Quran codex?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that children who play with notebooks that contain the remembrance of Allah and the Quran are not legally responsible, and that adults who throw those papers and booklets into rubbish dumps and the like throw them without paying attention to what is in them.

Accordingly, what is required is to alert people to what is obligatory of reverence for the remembrance of Allah: so the teacher alerts to that in his school, the head of a household in his household, the caretaker of a mosque in his mosque, and so on. This is among mutual exhortation to the truth.

Some scholars of the school have mentioned that it is permissible to burn papers that contain the remembrance of Allah, to protect them from being trodden upon and exposed to humiliation.

As for the answer to the second question: what is obligatory is to revere the name of Allah, *the Exalted*, and to revere His remembrance. If placing food on the magazine and using it as a tablecloth is contempt and belittlement of the remembrance of Allah, then it is not permissible; but if placing it upon it is for seeking blessing through the remembrance of Allah, then there is no harm in that. However, it is not permissible that the magazine be thrown into the rubbish dump after the food, for that contradicts veneration and reverence; rather, it should be burned or placed in an honored place.

As for the answer to the third question: there is no harm in placing books, some over others, including the Quran codex. What is forbidden is to treat the Book of Allah with contempt—by speech or by action. There is no contempt in what the questioner mentioned if it is without intending contempt.

Yes: the answer to these three questions is built upon what usually occurs without intention and without aiming at contempt for the remembrance of Allah. As for when it is with the intention of that, then all of it is prohibited.

[The Abundance of Allah's Signs for the Children of Israel]

Question: Is it possible to explain some of the wisdom in the abundance of Allah's signs and clear proofs for the Children of Israel in the time of Moses (*May Allah's Blessings be Upon Him*)?

The answer—and by Allah is success—is that the wisdom can appear by presenting a small introduction, which is:

Allah, *the Exalted*, by His knowledge and wisdom, chose the Children of Israel and selected them knowingly over the worlds. If they were His chosen elite among the worlds and the object of His selection—despite

what they had of a nature of rebellion against Allah and against His prophets, and Allah, *the Exalted*, has related much of that in the Quran—then those besides them of humankind in that era would, without doubt, be worse than them, lower and more debased in rank, more deeply entrenched in rebellion, more intense in disbelief, and farther from Allah, from His religion, and from the call of His prophets; because Allah chooses none but the best, and selects none but the elite.

When you know this introduction that depicts the general condition of humankind in that era, and what they were upon of rebellion, depravity, and disbelief, then the elite of Allah among them and His best among them—the Children of Israel—were in need of what would straighten their crookedness, purify their harsh morals, and restrain their rebellion and obstinacy, until they reached the rank that qualifies them to be Allah's proof and witnesses over the people.

So, the wisdom of the All-Knowing, the All-Wise required that He manifest for them the signs and follow up the clear proofs, to qualify them—as we mentioned—to carry Allah's proofs and His clear evidences, and to be witnesses over the people.

[From a Man's Nobility Is the Bad Manners of His Servants]

- "From a man's nobility is the bad manners of his servants."
- It was narrated from Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) that he called one of his servants and the servant did not answer him. He found him at the door and said: "What is with you that you did not answer me?" The servant said: "I felt safe from your punishment." This is the meaning of the narration. The Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) approved the servant's answer and set him free.

[Kindness to Animals]

In *Matla' al-budūr*, narrated from Imam al-Mahdi for Lidin Allah, al-Husayn ibn al-Qasim (*Peace be Upon Him*): It has reached us from Imam Zayd ibn Ali (*May Allah's blessings be Upon Him*) that he used to be noble by honoring dogs and other animals and beasts of burden.

I say: kindness to dogs and other animals falls under the general command of kindness that Allah commanded in His Book, such as His, *the Exalted*, saying: **"And do good; indeed Allah loves the doers of good."** [Al-Baqarah:195]. And there has come in the hadith what calls to honoring dogs and being kind to them, and likewise regarding kindness to every living being.

[Benefits of the Pen]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate
Praise be to Allah who taught us reading and writing, and made for us

in both of them much good—by them we guide and we are guided. And may Allah send blessings upon His Messenger and His Prophet Muhammad and upon his pure family. **Thereafter:**

These are benefits that the pen writes with its saliva and inscribes in its book, while it speaks with the tongue of its state: The blessing through me upon humankind has become immense, and the favor through me has become widespread upon the people of knowledge and transmitted reports, and upon the people of the desert and the people of towns. Yet my blessing is forgotten, and the mention of my benefits and my advantages is denied—neither in the gatherings of the people of knowledge and remembrance, nor in the gatherings of the people of idle talk and ignorance.

Allah has highlighted the greatness of my blessing in the first chapter revealed of the Quran: *"Read in the name of your Lord who created—created man from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous—who taught by the pen—taught man what he did not know."* [Al-'Alaq:1-5]. And due to the greatness of the favor through me, Allah swore by the pen and by what it writes; He, *the Exalted*, said: *"Nun. By the pen and what they inscribe."* [Al-Qalam:1]. The transmitters of reports have narrated—though it is disputed—a hadith that says: *"The first thing Allah created was the pen..."* Through me, religious laws and rulings were preserved; through me, the Quran and the hadith of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) were preserved, and the reports of Al-Wasi [*Ali bin Abi Talib*], and his sermons, knowledge, and wisdom. Through me, the prophetic biography was preserved, and the biographies of the Companions, and the history of the earlier and the later. Through me, the language of the Arabs was preserved—its poetry, its stories, its reports, its history, its religions, and its lineages—and so on.

Through me, the sciences of Islam were preserved, and the sciences of the earlier and the later. Through me, governorships and emirates are concluded, armies are mobilized, and so on. If you were to continue counting my favors, your tongue would become tired, and weariness and exhaustion would overtake you before reaching their end—and how could you do that? So glory be to the One who placed for humankind blessings that cannot be counted, and placed for them in my saliva and my tongue favors that cannot be fully encompassed.

Here I am calling and proclaiming to people that they should be grateful for this blessing with which Allah has bestowed favor upon them. How true is Allah when He says: *"And if you were to count the blessings of Allah, you could not enumerate them."* [Ibrahim:34]. Allah, *the Magnificent*, has spoken the truth—and He is the most truthful of

speakers—in everything He has said and says: *"And who is more truthful than Allah in statement?"* [An-Nisa:87]. O Allah, to You belongs all praise, with all Your praises, for all Your blessings, including the blessing of the pen. And may Allah send blessings and peace upon Muhammad and his pure family.

[A Physician's Knowledge of the Fetus's Sex Does Not Contradict the Verse: "*Indeed, with Allah Is Knowledge of the Hour...*"]

Question: It is known that Allah, *the Exalted*, is unique in the knowledge contained in this verse: *"Indeed, with Allah is knowledge of the Hour, and He sends down the rain, and He knows what is in the wombs."* [Luqman:34]. The evidence for that is this verse. Yet in modern medicine the physician knows the sex of the fetus—male or female—so what is the way out?

The answer: Modern medicine has reached knowing whether the fetus is male or female, and that is when its formation has taken place in its mother's womb and its organs have been completed; they do not know its sex before it is formed.

As for the Creator, the All-Knowing, He knows the type of what is in the womb the moment the drop settles in the womb: He knows whether it is male or female, and He knows the details of its creation and its characteristics, and so on.

Human knowledge of what is in the wombs only occurs when the fetus's creation becomes complete, whereas Allah, *the Exalted*, knows that in the earliest stages of the fetus's creation, when it was a drop, then a clinging clot, then so on. By what we have mentioned, the problem is resolved, and praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

[Using Poetry as One of the Means of Teaching]

The means of teaching are numerous, and among its old and modern means are poetic odes. It has come in a narration: *"Indeed, some poetry is wisdom, and indeed, some eloquence is magic."* And it is among the greatest means and the most beneficial.

This beneficial means is used in some Yemeni cities and regions to highlight the merit of Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*), and the merit of the Prophet's Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) in general, to spread their virtues, to root them firmly in people's hearts, and to plant love of them within those hearts. In it there is general benefit for the young and the old, and for men and women, especially in this time in which recording devices have become available.

In it also is that those who cannot benefit—because of their distance from gatherings of knowledge, or their turning away from them, or their being common folk, or their being occupied with the affairs of their

worldly life—can still benefit. Whoever is like that gains benefit from the poetry that he hears in evening gatherings, gatherings of occasions, gatherings of qat, and other gatherings.

I have seen in Sana'a and its surroundings—such as Bani Hashish—and in the lands of Hajjah—such as al-Ahnom—that the recitation of poetry in qat gatherings is like something necessary.

[Seek Help in Fulfilling Your Needs Through Secrecy]

In the transmitted report: *“Seek help in fulfilling your needs through secrecy.”*

This indicates that among the causes of the success of aims and the fulfillment of needs is keeping the request for the need secret.

The reason for that is that showing the request and striving to obtain it draws people's eyes to it, and for many of them desire for it may arise just as it arose for the one seeking it. Then he strives to obtain it and attempts to acquire it ahead of the first seeker, and so he wins it instead of him; or at the very least he obstructs the first seeker and, by his obstruction, blocks him from it out of desire for it. A need may also be obstructed out of envy, and in secrecy there is safety from all of that.

The Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to conceal the destination toward which he was heading in his military expeditions.

The Sciences of Islam

Interpretation of the Quran by types of interpretation—each type of them is considered a distinct science on its own:

Sciences related to the Quran: such as the reasons for revelation, the science of proper recitation rules, what relates to the number of its verses and its chapters and its arrangement, what was revealed in Mecca and what was revealed in Medina, and what it contains of sciences. Some scholars have counted the sciences of the Quran as one hundred sciences, such as al-Suyuti, and the science of the seven and the ten canonical readings and their transmitters.

The science of hadith, and the sciences related to it—and they are many.

The sciences of biographies and histories, among them: the science of identifying the Companions and their histories.

The science of the fundamentals of religion.

The science of the fundamentals of jurisprudence.

The science of jurisprudence.

The sciences of the Arabic language: grammar, morphology, semantics, eloquence, stylistics, the science of vocabulary, the science of

prosody and rhymes.

And the science of logic: a borrowed science.

[Truth]

Truth throughout history has been wronged and oppressed, and falsehood throughout history has been the one elevated in the earth and controlling it.

Likewise justice: it has remained wronged and oppressed throughout history, while oppression is the one controlling the earth and ruling it.

Allah's messengers and prophets have continued coming one after another to the people of falsehood and oppression, warning them, giving them admonition, and establishing proof throughout the history of humankind—until Allah, *the Exalted*, sealed His messages with Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*). Allah, *the Exalted*, has made His noble Book, which Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) came with, a lasting proof until the Day of Resurrection.

People's turning away from the truth is not because it is hidden or unclear, but because they dislike it and recoil from it: *"And most of them are averse to the truth."* [Al-Mu'minun:70]

[The Trial of the People of Truth]

The people of truth, throughout the history of Islam, have been in severe pressures and fear up to our day. What we, the community of the Zaydis, are in today of pressures is a natural pattern. Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: *"And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy from among the criminals; and sufficient is your Lord as a guide and a helper."* [Al-Furqan:31]. And He, *the Glorified*, has said: *"And We have made some of you a trial for others—will you be patient?"* [Al-Furqan:20]

- The people of truth are usually, throughout history, a people of fewness, abasement, and poverty. The secret of that and the wisdom—as it appears to me—is that none endures that except the sincere. For if the people of truth were in safety, honor, wealth, and luxury, then the sincere and the insincere would enter into the truth, and the insincere would display sincerity out of desire for what is there. At that point, the sincere would not be distinguished from others.

[The Nature of Truth]

In the transmitted report: *"Paradise is surrounded by hardships, and the Fire is surrounded by desires."* Thus the soul, by its nature, dislikes the truth and recoils from it, because of what is in it of hardship and burden, and the soul, by its nature, inclines toward the side of cravings.

Allah, *the Exalted*, tested those who are legally responsible by having them worship Him through doing what their souls dislike, and by leaving

what their souls desire. So the obedient servant of Allah is the one who gives precedence to obedience to Allah over the inclination of his own soul, and the disobedient is the opposite of that.

[The Cause That Drives People to Hostility Toward the People of Truth]

Question: What is the cause that drives people to hostility toward the people of truth and to striving to bring upon them the most severe hardships?

The answer—and by Allah is success—is that truth and falsehood are two mutually exclusive qualities that cannot come together in one thing: when truth exists in a thing, falsehood departs; and when falsehood occurs, truth is removed. The people of truth and the people of falsehood are mutually repelled, following from the mutual repulsion of truth and falsehood. The people of truth dislike the people of falsehood, and the people of falsehood dislike the people of truth. The motive, then, is dislike: it is what drives the people of falsehood to hostilely oppose the people of truth and to bring upon them the most severe hardships. For this reason Allah, *the Exalted*, said: *"And the Jews will never be pleased with you, nor the Christians, until you follow their religion."* [Al-Baqarah:120]

[The Many Muslims Today and the Little of Their Adherence to Religion]

The lands of Islam and the Muslims today are vast, occupying a wide area on the surface of the globe—in the continent of Asia, Africa, and Europe. No non-Islamic country is devoid of the presence of a large Muslim community—for example China, in which there are more than one hundred million Muslims, and likewise America and Britain and Germany... and so on.

Yet adherence to the laws of Islam and acting by them today is weak, not as it ought to be.

[The Salvation of the Believers from the Punishment That Falls Upon Nations]

When Allah punishes a nation with a punishment in the world, He saves the believers from that punishment. Allah, *the Exalted*, said after mentioning the punishment that He sent down upon 'Ad and Thamud: *"And We saved those who believed and were mindful of Allah."* [Fussilat:18]

And He, *the Exalted*, said regarding the punishment of the people of the Sabbath: *"And We saved those who forbade evil, and We seized those who wronged with a wretched punishment because they used to defiantly disobey."* [Al-A'raf:165]

The salvation of the believers is conditioned upon their carrying out

commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong according to their ability. If they do not carry out their duty in this matter while they are able, then there is no salvation for them.

Justice

- Its meaning is clear to the generality of people: it is taking the middle path between the two sides of excess and neglect.
- Allah, *the Exalted*, is Just, and it is an attribute of action.
- Allah, *the Exalted*, has commanded His servants to justice: *"Indeed, Allah commands justice and excellence..."* [An-Nahl:90]
- Justice, truth, and equity are words close in meaning: *"So judge between the people in truth."* [Sad:26]; *"And when you judge between people, judge with justice."* [An-Nisa:58]; *"Say, 'My Lord has commanded equity.'" [Al-A'raf:29]; "Indeed, Allah commands justice."* [An-Nahl:90]; *"So judge between them with equity."* [Al-Ma'idah:42]

[The Cause That Prevents Justice from Being Realized for the Common People]

The justice of governors, rulers, and kings is a matter that the generality of people desire, look toward, and wish for, yet it has not occurred, and its occurrence is considered unlikely. The reason for that is that the notables of people, their most validated people, and their elders do not want justice at all, and they fight it with the fiercest fighting, because it makes them equal with the common people—and they do not accept that. Therefore, authority and rule is not established except for the one among governors and kings who descends to their wishes, because the generality of people are usually followers of the notables, elders, and leading figures. If they support the governor, he prevails; and if they do not support him, he falls—rather, they are the ones who bring him down and remove him.

It has become well known that Abu Sufyan ibn Harb—who was the elder of Quraysh—when allegiance was pledged to Abu Bakr for the caliphate, became angry and said: "By Allah, I will fill it against Abu Fasil with horses and men," and he disdained that a man of small standing from Taym should take charge of the caliphate. So the Companions feared civil strife and the collapse of the caliphate, and Umar advised Abu Bakr to give him a share in the caliphate. So Abu Bakr assigned the governorship of Syria and its armies to Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan, and Yazid's term did not last long. When Yazid died, he appointed in his place his brother Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, and he assigned Abu Sufyan a governorship in Medina. Abu Bakr also appointed men from the notables and chiefs of Quraysh as well, such as 'Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl, Khalid ibn al-Walid, and 'Amr ibn al-'As. Thus the caliphate became stable, conditions

calmed, and people inclined to it with goodwill and sincere counsel, because their chiefs inclined to it and gave it sincere counsel. Were it not for that, it would not have been set right, nor would it have become stable.

When Ali ibn Abi Talib assumed the caliphate and the Muslims pledged allegiance to him, his advisers proposed that he appoint the chiefs of the people—such as Mu‘awiyah—until authority became firmly established for him, and then he would remove them. But he did not accept, and he said—meaning: I do not deem it lawful to appoint an oppressor, nor to keep him in an office of mine for even the blink of an eye.

And when he distributed the stipends in the first days of his rule, the chiefs of Quraysh disdained it when he did not give them preference over others, such as Talhah and al-Zubayr. So, the caliphate did not become established for him, nor did it become stable: one group broke their pledge against him, another acted unjustly, and others went out from obedience. And Allah is the One whose help is sought against what they describe.

The Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) knew the remedy for the disease of the caliphate, yet he (*Peace be Upon Him*) wanted to establish justice and renew the first order whose garment had worn out and was close to being forgotten—or had already been forgotten. He (*Peace be Upon Him*) had been bound by a covenant from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) in which he was commanded to fight al-nākithīn (the oath-breakers), al-qāsiṭīn (the unjust aggressors), and al-māriqīn (the renegades). So he (*Peace be Upon Him*) did not deem it lawful to set right the matter of the caliphate through disobedience to Allah and injustice of the Muslims.

So his concern became establishing justice, renewing the religion, and raising the banner of truth in every small matter and great matter. In his caliphate he preferred pleasing Allah, *the Exalted*, over pleasing people, and he did not care what he would encounter in his caliphate in the path of pleasing Allah, *the Exalted*. So the world rose against him and did not settle, and the earth shook beneath his feet; yet he went on upon his path and did not care.

Because he gave precedence to justice and to pleasing Allah, *the Exalted*, Quraysh unsheathed their swords against his caliphate. The people of Basra followed them in that, and they were a great multitude—estimated at half of the Muslims in Iraq. Then the Arabs of Syria, all of them without exception, turned against him under the leadership of Mu‘awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, along with those who joined them from the Arabs of Mudar. Then his companions—the people of Kufa—became

divided against him, and the renegade secessionists came out against him with their swords. Throughout the period of his caliphate, he (*Peace be Upon Him*) continued fighting, and he (*Peace be Upon Him*) did not sheath his sword from the first day of his caliphate until he (*Peace be Upon Him*) was killed as a martyr in the prayer niche of his prayer—*may Allah's blessings, peace, mercy, and blessings be upon him*.

When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz assumed the matter of the caliphate, he adopted ascetic devotion and wanted to repair what the Umayyad caliphs before him had corrupted. So he began returning the injustices of the Umayyads. Among the first things he returned was the property of Fatimah—*may Allah be pleased with her—and may Allah bless her father Muhammad and grant him peace*—property that Abu Bakr and 'Umar had taken from her. He continued returning injustices and establishing justice, but the Umayyads did not leave him to proceed with what he intended; they gave him poison to drink, so he died poisoned. The duration of his caliphate was approximately two years.

Thus has been and thus is the general authority: the people of truth, its lovers, and those devoted to it are few, and most often they are among the poor and oppressed; while the people of falsehood, its followers, and its supporters are the overwhelming majority, and very often they are among the people of luxury and ease. Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: "*And most of them are averse to the truth.*" [Al-Mu'minun:70] Therefore, the truth and justice that the oppressed desire, wish for, and seek is considered unlikely to occur and to be realized in lived reality.

The Prophet's Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) tried, throughout the history of Islam, to establish truth and justice and to realize that upon the earth. Many of them were killed before reaching what they wanted, and some of them reached the goal—but only over a small area within the vast lands of Islam. Yet even when they reached the goal, their authority did not become stable; rather, they remained in continuous conflict—killing, fighting, invasions, and raids—coming at them from in front of them, from their right, and from their left, until they were killed in the path of what they sought; and in the end, enemies overcame their lands.

Such has been the history of truth from its first day until today, and it is expected that its history in the future will be like its history in the past. However, the promise has already preceded from the Most Truthful of those who promise: a state for truth and justice at the end of time, led by the Mahdi, Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah (*Peace be Upon Him*). Through his state Allah will revive the religion of Islam, the laws and rulings will be established within it, Allah, *the Exalted*, will make the realities of truth and justice prevail by it, and through his state He will cause falsehood to

die, erase misguided schools, and expose the plots and delusions that entered into the beliefs of the Muslims. Yet the time of this Islamic state is not known.

What has come from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) regarding specifying the time is specifying it as “the end of time,” and the end of time is a long span. So it applies to the period from the mission of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) until today that it is “the end of time,” due to his (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) saying: “*I and the Hour have been sent like these two,*” and he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) gestured with his index finger and middle finger; and due to Allah’s saying: “*The Hour has drawn near, and the moon has split.*” [Al-Qamar:1]

There is no disagreement between the Sunnis and the Shi’a regarding the soundness of the promise of the Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*), and that he is from the Prophet’s Household from the descendants of Fatimah (*Peace be Upon Her*), and that his name is Muhammad. Rather, there is no disagreement regarding the mass-transmitted nature of that among all of them.

Some may ask: How will the stance of the followers of the schools be toward the call of the Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*), while everyone believes in and affirms his rise and looks forward to his state?

It is said in answer to this question: every group among the Islamic schools today believes that the Mahdi will be from the people of its own school. So, the Sunnis see that the Mahdi will be from the Sunnis, and likewise the rest of the Islamic schools—because the people of every school believe they are the people of truth traveling upon the straight path.

It is expected that if the Mahdi (*Peace be Upon Him*) calls to something other than what the followers of the schools are upon, they will not accept his call, nor affirm it. Rather, they will stand against it, disavow it, and fight it. The situation regarding the call of the Mahdi will be like the situation that the call of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) faced: the Jews and Christians used to affirm and be certain about the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) before his mission; then when he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was sent, they disavowed his call, denied him, and rejected that he was the promised prophet. I do not expect that the situation at the end of time will differ from what the situation was at the beginning of time.

It is expected that the call at the end of time will meet hardships and difficulties more severe than what the call met in the first time. It has

been narrated from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he said: *"I was sent between two ages of ignorance; the latter of them is worse than the former."* This is the meaning of the hadith, or its wording.

Affection and Trust

Obtaining people's affection for a person and their trust in him are two aims that a person wishes to attain and strives to acquire. He is distressed if something of that is missed or diminished. He may envy those who have attained that, harbor resentment toward them, oppose them, and seek harms for them—all of that because they succeeded in gaining others' affection and trust, while that was missed for him.

Furthermore, Allah, *the Exalted*, has guided His servants to the path that leads to attaining that wished-for aim and that noble objective. He, *the Exalted*, said: *"Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds—the Most Merciful will appoint for them affection."* [Maryam:96] And He, *the Exalted*, said: *"And indeed, it is a reminder for you and for your people, and you are going to be questioned."* [Az-Zukhruf:44]—meaning: an honor for you and for your people.

Therefore, the path is in faith and righteous deeds.

[Humility]

It appears to me that humility is the companion of faith in merit. Humility and faith are the best of deeds without exception. This is indicated by matters:

- 1- Allah, *the Glorified and Exalted*, said at the end of the second chapter: *"The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and so have the believers. All of them have believed in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers, saying: 'We make no distinction between any of His messengers.' And they say: 'We hear and we obey.'"* [Al-Baqarah:285]. So, He, *the Glorified*, joined hearing and obedience with faith. Hearing and obedience are two effects from the effects of humility and two evidences among its evidences, for hearing and obedience do not issue except from the humble.
- 2- Allah, *the Glorified and Exalted*, when He mentioned in Saurt Al-Furqaan the qualities of the servants of the Most Merciful—who are truly the servants of the Most Merciful—He began those qualities with the quality of humility, mentioning it before mentioning the other qualities. He, *the Exalted*, said: *"And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth gently, and when the ignorant address them, they say: 'Peace.'"* [Al-Furqan:63]
- 3- Humility, even though its concept is not the concept of faith, is an

essential part among the essential constituents of faith—or at the very least among the essential concomitants of faith. True faith does not occur, and is not found in reality, except when humility exists within it. As for the arrogant, his arrogant soul does not permit him servitude, humility before Allah, and hearing and obedience to Him, *the Exalted*.

What is meant by humility is: that the legally responsible person is humble first to his Lord, *the Exalted*; and that he acknowledges what belongs to Him, *the Exalted*, of greatness, majesty, knowledge, power, and perfection, and what He, *the Exalted*, deserves of gratitude for His blessings that He has poured upon him and upon all creation. He recognizes the measure of himself and his weakness, his need, and his poverty to Allah—and so on. And that he accepts the truth and does not raise himself above the truth.

[Also, Regarding Humility]

Humility is a tremendous character trait that Allah loves and that people love. Humility brings about desirable results for the humble person, which are:

- 1- Honor among people, and respect and esteem. They have said: "*Humility is among the traps of honor.*"
- 2- The humble person attains people's love for him, and it is not hidden what follows from love of people's words and actions.
- 3- People listen to his speech, and they give him precedence with obedience over others besides him. If the humble person is among the people of knowledge, people respond to his call and take him as a model, guided by his guidance.

Showing Off

It is that you do an act of obedience or leave an act of disobedience while taking into consideration someone other than Allah, *the Exalted*.

If the motive for doing the act of obedience is a worldly matter such that, were it not for this worldly motive, he would not do it, then it is the highest level of showing off.

If the motive is reward and a worldly purpose, then that is from showing off, and it is below the first.

If the motive for the Muslim in doing obedience is obedience to Allah, *the Exalted*, and reward, then afterward there comes upon him the desire that people should see it and praise him for that deed, then it is required of him to resist this passing impulse and not respond to it.

If he responds to it and resolves in his heart that people should see it so that he may obtain praise and good mention, then his deed is nullified and corrupted, because deeds are judged by their endings.

If there occurs only a love of praise without resolve and without intention to show people, then there is no blame upon him because the soul is naturally fashioned upon loving praise, and it is not within his capacity to rid himself of natural disposition.

If people come to know of his deed without any effort from him, and they praise him, and he is pleased by that and rejoices, then his joy and delight do not harm him. However, what is required of him is to beware in the future of seeking by his deed such praise.

It is not showing off that a Muslim performs obedience seeking what is with Allah, *the Exalted*, and so that others may follow his example.

[Disputation for the Sake of Vanity]

Its reality is that you attack the speech of another to display a flaw within it, for no purpose other than to demean the one who said it and to show your superiority over him.

As for quarrelling: it is obstinate contention in speech to obtain thereby money or other than it, and it is sometimes initiated and sometimes a response; whereas vain disputation is only a response.

Prohibition of vain disputation has come in a hadith narrated from the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "*Do not dispute with your brother, do not joke with him, and do not promise him a promise and then break it*"—and: "*The most hated of men to Allah is the most quarrelsome adversary*"—and: "*Leave vain disputation for the little of its good; leave vain disputation, for the believer does not engage in vain disputation...*".

As for the scholarly debate of the people of knowledge for benefit, it is not included in the prohibition.

His statement in the hadith: "*and do not promise him a promise and then break it*"—its meaning is: do not promise him while you are inwardly intending to go against it. As for if you promise him while resolved to fulfill it, then a barrier occurs preventing that, then it does not enter under the prohibition.

[Fear and Cowardice]

Fear and cowardice are a human instinct, and the wisdom that follows from that is, as it appears to me:

- 1- Because of that nature, self-preservation and the preservation of limbs from destructions, harms, pains, and the like are achieved. If this instinct did not exist, self-preservation and the preservation of its limbs would not be achieved, and the human kind would be lost and would become extinct.
- 2- Upon that instinct and its existence in the human being there follow religious interests and legal duties, trial and testing, ranks

and reward, honor and nobility—and so on.

Likewise the rest of human natural traits such as stinginess, jealousy, arrogance, and the like: for upon every trait there follow tremendous interests for the human being. Stinginess prevents and restrains the human being from wasting wealth, and by the loss of wealth the human being is lost and perishes. By jealousy, preservation of the human being is obtained, and by arrogance the human being preserves his honor and dignity. Islam came with regulating these human traits and clarifying what is lawful and what is forbidden.

[Sadness — Fear — Tightness — Sorrow and Regret — Anguish — Remorse]

Sadness is what is regarding something that has already passed.

Fear is what is regarding something future.

Tightness is what is regarding something occurring in the present.

Sorrow and regret are what are regarding the loss of what is beloved.

Anguish is what is regarding the loss of something because of negligence.

Remorse occurs regarding doing what should not be done, or leaving what should be done.

Forgetting

Forgetting is either from Allah or from Satan:

- 1- The forgetting that is from Satan is forgetting what contains good and benefit for the one who forgets or for others—such as forgetting an obligatory prayer or a supererogatory prayer, or forgetting to fulfill a believer's need. Examples of that are many.
- 2- The forgetting that is from Allah, *the Exalted*, is forgetting an action or a statement that would contain immediate or delayed harm for the one who forgets or for others.

Forgetting is from the nature of the human being and the origin of his creation, and he cannot rid himself of it. Its occurrence is without choice from its possessor; therefore Allah, *the Exalted*, lifted blame from the one who forgets.

[Types of Lying]

Question: A Muslim may be compelled to lie to his parents, or to his wife, or to his companions, or... so what is the ruling regarding the one who lies in embarrassment or necessity?

The answer: Lying, in general, is ugly in reason and in law, and much has come regarding that from the Book and the Sunnah, and likewise from Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*), and from other Imams and scholars. There is no disagreement among the scholars of the community regarding its

ugliness. However, lying is divided into:

1. Lying about Allah, *the Exalted*, or about His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*); and doing that deliberately is disbelief: "*And who is more unjust than one who invents a lie about Allah?*" [As-Saff:7]
2. Lying that contains harm to a Muslim; this type of lying is blatant disobedience, due to His, *the Exalted*, saying: "*And those who harm believing men and believing women without what they have earned have borne a slander and a clear sin.*" [Al-Ahzab:58]. The divisions of this type are many, among them: false testimony, slandering chaste women, injuring a believer with what is not in him, and so on.
3. Lying in which there is nothing of what preceded: it is not lying about Allah, *the Exalted*, nor about His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), nor about the Imams, and there is no harm in it to a Muslim—neither to honor nor to wealth nor to anything else—and necessity does not call to it.
4. Lying by which the legally responsible person repels from himself or his wealth, or repels from a Muslim or from a Muslim's wealth.

The first two types are forbidden decisively. The doer of the first is an unbeliever, and the doer of the second is an openly sinful offender.

The third type is forbidden, but one does not judge its doer as an openly sinful offender.

The fourth type is forbidden, but it is permitted as a concession to the extent by which the legally responsible person repels from himself, or his wealth, or his brother, or his brother's wealth, and the like.

[In Evasive Speech There Is an Alternative to Lying]

In the hadith: "*Indeed, in evasive speech there is an alternative to lying.*"

And in a wording: "*Indeed, in evasive speech there is an alternative for the Muslim man from lying.*"

And in a wording: "*Indeed, in evasive speech there is what keeps the intelligent man chaste from lying.*"

And in a wording: "*Indeed, in evasive speech there is what protects the intelligent man from lying.*"

A group of hadith scholars narrated it, as in *Al-Risāla Al-Hādiya* (the margin of The Guiding Treatise) by Imam al-Mansur bi-Allah, ‘Abd Allah ibn Hamzah (*Peace be Upon Him*).

Imam al-Mansur bi-Allah (*Peace be Upon Him*) gave several examples, among them:

- "*By Allah, I did not see so-and-so,*" meaning: I did not strike his

lung.

- “By Allah, I did not speak to him,” meaning: I did not wound him.
- “By Allah, I did not see Ali,” meaning: the horse.
- “By Allah, I did not see Ja’far,” meaning: the river.

He (*Peace be Upon Him*) also mentioned, in this chapter, a narration from Ja’far ibn Muhammad (*Peace be Upon Him*): that a man sought him in his home, and he disliked meeting him. So he said to his maidservant: Go down and stand facing the door, then draw a circular line, then place your finger inside it, then say: “My master is not here.” End quote.

[Partisanship and Fanatical Partisanship]

Partisanship and fanatical partisanship are two kinds: true and false.

- 1- *As for the true*: that a person is partisan for the truth—such as being partisan for the true religion, and for the true school, and for the people of truth; and such as being partisan in supporting the weak, and supporting the oppressed; and being partisan in protecting the neighbor; and being partisan for noble character traits—and so on.
- 2- *As for the false*: that a person is partisan for false religion and a false school, and partisan in supporting the oppressor, the aggressor, and the tyrant, and partisan for the one upon falsehood, and partisan in hostility to the truth and the people of truth.

As for partisanship in other than that, there is no blame upon its possessor if there is no harm to others in it. This is like one who is partisan for his opinion, such as saying: the climate of Sana’a is better than the climate of Sa’dah, and the water of such-and-such a well is better than the water of such-and-such a well, and that man is more knowledgeable than others, and so-and-so is more generous than so-and-so, and this craft is better than that craft, and this is more beautiful than that... and so on. This and what resembles it is not from the blameworthy fanatical partisanship, and no liability and no sin attaches to the one who does that.

But if harm or injury occurs from that, then it becomes forbidden because of the occurrence of injury, not because of partisanship—such as that the partisanship becomes attached to saying that this man is better and more noble than that other man, and that this tribe is more noble and better than that tribe. If that results in harm to the other man and the other tribe, then it is not permissible to display such partisanship.

Regarding Reliance Upon Allah

It is not permissible for a Muslim to expose himself to causes of destruction and to their likely places, relying upon trust in Allah, or

relying upon the belief that nothing will befall him except what Allah has written for him and decreed upon him. This is what the Islamic law requires, and what the evidences of the Quran and the Sunnah indicate. Among that:

- 1- His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"And do not throw yourselves with your own hands into destruction."* [Al-Baqarah:195]
- 2- *"And let them take their precautions and their weapons... Those who disbelieve wish that you would neglect your weapons and your baggage so they could come down upon you in one single attack."* [An-Nisa:102]. Likewise the rest of the account of the Prayer of Fear indicates what we mentioned.
- 3- Allah, *the Exalted*, commanded taking provisions for the journey of pilgrimage; He said: *"And take provisions, but indeed the best provision is mindfulness of Allah."* [Al-Baqarah:197]
- 4- The Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) left Mecca in concealment, hid in the Cave of Thawr for three days, and took in his migration to Medina a route other than the known route, fearing that the people of Mecca would catch him.

Regarding Singing

What appears to me is that some scholars among the generality were lenient regarding singing, and regarding drinking the fermented beverage made from a mixture, because of what they saw of people's intense attachment to that—successor after predecessor, from the shepherds and from the subjects—especially in Iraq, which used to be considered the capital of Islam and the abode of scholars. That drove them to contrive suspicions and excuses and concessions.

[Regarding Soothsaying]

Question: A man has a prayer-bead strand, and he claims that he knows unseen matters about a person's conditions by looking into those beads; among what he said of that is his claim of seventy acts of fornication against a man. So what is the ruling on this man? Does the one accused of fornication have the right to take retribution from him, and how would that be?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that the owner of the prayer beads who... and so on—is an openly sinful person, a liar, and a slanderer.

As for his being openly sinful, a liar, and a slanderer, that is due to Allah's saying: *"And those who accuse chaste women and then do not bring four witnesses—flog them eighty lashes and do not accept from them testimony ever after; and those are the openly sinful—except those who repent..."* [An-Nur:4]. And in the other verse: *"Then those, with Allah, are*

the liars." [An-Nur:13]

What also indicates that he is a lying slanderer is what he claims of knowledge of the unseen; and there is no doubt among Muslims that whoever claims it is a lying slanderer.

As for the one accused of fornication: if there were a rightful judge, he would carry out upon him the legal punishment of the slanderers, as Allah, *the Exalted*, commanded in the Quran.

This being so: the accused person may rebuke the charlatan, scold him, and threaten him until he becomes silent about the accusation and restrains his tongue. Beyond that, he has nothing except patience, because the subjects have no authority in the matter of legal punishments and disciplinary measures; rather, that belongs to those in authority and the judges of the Muslims.

Superstitious Omens

If a man wanted a need, he would come to a perched bird and make it fly. If it flew to the right, he proceeded; if it flew to the left, he refrained.

[Regarding Prophetic Practice, Innovation, and the Ruling of Recitation for the Soul of the Deceased]

Question: What is Prophetic practice and what is innovation? And is it innovation that those offering condolences recite for the soul of the deceased?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success—is that Prophetic practice is that the worship of the legally responsible person is by what Allah, *the Exalted*, has permitted and legislated. Innovation is the opposite of that—exactly as He, *the Exalted*, said about a people who passed: *"They have legislated for them in the religion what Allah has not permitted."* [Ash-Shura:21]

Yes: reciting the Quran for the soul of the deceased is not an innovation. The evidence for that is that Allah, *the Glorified and Exalted*, has commanded His servants to seek means to Him through acts of obedience that bring one near to Him. He, *the Exalted*, said: *"And seek the means to Him..."* [Al-Ma'idah:35]. It is known that recitation of the Quran is among the greatest means to Allah's mercy. For this reason Allah, *the Exalted*, began with recitation of the Book before prayer and almsgiving; He, *the Exalted*, said: *"Indeed, those who recite the Book of Allah and establish prayer and spend from what We have provided them, secretly and openly, hope for a trade that will never perish."* [Fatir:29]

So, if believers gather for condolences and recite the noble Book, seeking by its recitation that Allah have mercy on their deceased, overlook his evil deeds, and gather them and him in the abode of His mercy, then there is no innovation in that, for they have not transgressed

the bounds of what Allah, *the Exalted*, has permitted and legislated. Seeking nearness to Allah, *the Exalted*, through acts of obedience is legislated; recitation of the Quran is legislated; and asking forgiveness and mercy for the believing deceased is legislated.

If it is said: recitation for the soul of the deceased at condolences did not come in the Book nor in the Sunnah; therefore it is an innovation.

We say: Allah, *the Exalted*, commanded seeking means and reciting the Quran in an absolute command that is not restricted to a time, a circumstance, or a purpose or request. That absolute wording indicates the legitimacy of seeking means by the Quran and by other acts of obedience for seeking forgiveness and mercy, or seeking healing and well-being, or seeking vengeance against an enemy, or seeking protection and safety, or other than that among religious, worldly, and otherworldly benefits.

What supports what we mentioned—that acts of obedience are means to attaining religious and worldly benefits—is His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"And whoever is mindful of Allah—He will make for him a way out, and provide for him from where he does not expect..."* * [At-Talaq:2-3]; and His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"And if they had remained steadfast upon the way, We would have given them abundant water to drink."* [Al-Jinn:16]; and His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"Worship Allah and be mindful of Him and obey me—He will forgive you of your sins and delay you until an appointed term..."* [Nuh:3-4]; and His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"So I said, 'Seek forgiveness of your Lord; indeed, He is ever Forgiving. He will send the sky upon you in continuing rain, and will increase you in wealth and children, and will make for you gardens, and will make for you rivers.'"* [Nuh:10-12]; and His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"And if the people of the towns had believed and been mindful of Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth..."* [Al-A'raf:96]; and His, *the Exalted*, saying: *"And if they had upheld the Torah and the Gospel and what was revealed to them from their Lord, they would have eaten from above them and from beneath their feet..."* [Al-Ma'idah:66]

And in the transmitted report: *"Treat your sick with charity,"* and *"Seek provision to descend by charity,"* and other than that from the Quran and the Sunnah.

This also indicates that reciting the Quran for the soul of the deceased is not an innovation: Allah, *the Glorified and Exalted*, has commanded prayer for the dead among the believers, and the funeral prayer is an intercession for the deceased with Allah, *the Glorified and Exalted*. In it there is recitation of the Opening Chapter (*Al-Faatiha*), and in it there is supplication—everything of that is for the sake of the deceased.

From here we know that reciting the Quran for the deceased and

supplicating for him with forgiveness and mercy is not an innovation, neither at condolences nor elsewhere.

Yes: it is valid and permissible that a believer recite the Quran and gift the reward of his recitation to whomever he wills among the believers. What indicates that are matters:

- 1- There is no impediment imaginable to a believer's soul being pleased to gift the reward of his recitation to whomever he wills among his believing brothers—whether living or dead—because the reward of his recitation is a right belonging to him from what he has earned. So he may dispose of it as he wills. No evidence has come—neither from the Book nor from the Sunnah—preventing that; thus there is no innovation in that. Recitation of the Quran is legislated; the reciter's asking Allah, *the Exalted*, to make the reward of his recitation a gift to the soul of so-and-so is a good request and a dutiful supplication. A believer may supplicate Allah, *the Exalted*, with whatever he wills, and Allah, *the Exalted*, has promised response—except in asking for sin or severing kinship ties, as has come in transmitted reports.
- 2- It has come in a sound transmitted report that al-Hasan and al-Husayn and Ali ibn al-Husayn used to give the charity of breaking the fast at the end of Ramadan on behalf of all of their deceased forefathers (*May Allah's blessings be upon them*), and likewise others among the great figures of the Prophet's Household (*Peace be Upon Them*).
- 3- It has come from the Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he sacrificed a ram on behalf of those in his community (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) who did not offer a sacrifice.
- 4- It is established that pilgrimage on behalf of another is valid.

If it is said: Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: "*And that there is not for man except what he strives for.*" [An-Najm:39]—which indicates that he benefits only from the reward of his own deeds, not from the reward of another's deeds.

We say: the meaning of the verse is that a person does not obtain reward by way of entitlement except what was through his own striving. So a person is not entitled except to the reward of his own striving, not the striving of another. We mentioned "entitlement" in interpreting the verse because the preposition (*al-lām*) in the verse indicates it. The verse did not negate what the legally responsible person obtains of reward by way of favor.

This is like your saying: "So-and-so has nothing with me except one hundred as the wage of his work." There is no impediment to your giving

him two hundred—one hundred in return for what he is entitled to of wage, and one hundred as a gift from you, or through your mediation.

So in your giving the hired worker two hundred there is no contradiction and no inconsistency with your statement: “So-and-so has nothing with me except one hundred as the wage of his work.”

[Who Is the Haruri?]

From Maymun ibn Mihran: The Haruri Azraqi is the one who, if you disagree with his opinion, calls you an unbeliever and deems your blood lawful.

The Qarmatians, the Batinites, the Isma'ilis

Three names for one and the same entity.

The first to stir up this doctrine was a man who came from Khuzestan and settled in the rural districts of Kufa; his name was Qarmat, and the first to publicize it was Abu Sa'id al-Jannabi around 278 AH.

He was devout and ascetic, and he informed people that he was calling to an Imam from the Prophet's Household (*Peace be Upon Them*).

They established a state in Bahrain, and its influence extended to the Hijaz and Yemen, and their doctrine spread in Greater Syria and the rural districts of Kufa. The aim of their doctrine is to suspend the religious laws, deny prophethood, resurrection, and recompense, and they distort the texts of the Book and the Sunnah.

Electricity

Electricity is the backbone of civilizational progress in all its fields without exception. Cars do not move except by electricity, and airplanes do not fly except by electricity, and factories do not operate except by electricity, and all moving machines do not move except by electricity. Communication devices, computers, media, broadcasting, recording, filming, and printing do not work except by electricity. Countless large and small things that have entered into the necessities of human life today all do not work except by electricity. Were it not for electricity, civilization and progress would have no existence on the earth.

The benefit of electricity has encompassed all humans on the face of the earth, and through it the blessing upon them has become immense and its place in their lives and livelihoods has become great, yet it is a forgotten blessing with few who give thanks for it.

The benefit of this blessing has expanded and its use has become great among the advanced industrial states and peoples in Europe, America, East Asia, and elsewhere. For more than a hundred years they have been turning about in this blessing: its goodness pours upon them and its barakah covers them from above them, from their right, from their left, and from beneath them. It carries them in the sky and makes them glide

through the atmosphere, and it plunges them into the depths of seas and oceans, and it brings them the news of the world and what is around it in the blink of an eye, and it connects you with whomever you wish to contact face-to-face on the screen wherever your companion may be, and so on.

As we mentioned, this blessing is met with ingratitude. Rather, the industrial states see that they are the ones who produced this blessing by the knowledge they possess, and that they have a favor thereby upon the necks of people. This has remained their view and their belief from their earliest electrical days until today.

After we have cast a glance at this blessing, let us cast a glance at the Noble Quran regarding the matter we mentioned. Allah, the *Mighty and Majestic*, said: *"And when your Lord proclaimed: If you are grateful, I will surely increase you; but if you are ungrateful, indeed My punishment is severe."* [Ibrahim:7] And He, the *Exalted*, said, relating the saying of Qarun, whom Allah gave of treasures such that their keys would burden a band of strong men: *"He said: I was only given it because of knowledge I have."* [Al-Qasas:78]

In the first verse, Allah, the *Exalted*, swore to His servants that if they are grateful for His blessing, He will surely increase them in blessings upon their blessings; and He swore that if they are ungrateful for His blessings and do not give thanks for them, He will punish them for their ingratitude with a severe punishment.

In the second verse, He, the *Exalted*, related Qarun's statement that he obtained treasures and immense wealth through his knowledge, intelligence, resourcefulness, and strength; so there occurred what Allah, the *Exalted*, narrated of his end in the Quran: *"So We caused the earth to swallow him and his home, and there was for him no company to help him other than Allah, nor was he of those who could defend themselves."* [Al-Qasas:81]

Allah, the *Exalted*, said regarding those who disbelieved in Him and His blessings and did not give thanks for them after He had clarified for them and reminded them: *"So when they forgot what they had been reminded of, We opened to them the gates of every thing until, when they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly, and they were in despair. So the people who wronged were cut off, and praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds."* [Al-An'am:44-45]

And He, the *Exalted*, said similarly: *"Until, when the earth has taken its adornment and is beautified, and its people suppose that they have capability over it, Our command comes to it by night or by day, and We make it as a harvest as if it had not flourished yesterday."* [Yunus:24]

If we look at the civilized world today and look at its contemporary

history, we see that Allah, *the Exalted*, has tested them with ease and hardship and showed them of His signs what contains for them a lesson and an admonition.

The millstones of the First and Second World Wars turned over their heads, and they tasted in the two wars calamities whose measure cannot be estimated. The terrifying specters of those wars have remained engraved in their souls to this day, despite more than seven decades having passed since them.

Allah showed them of the signs of His punishment and the consequences of His retribution what contains for them a lesson—indeed, what a lesson—yet they did not turn to their Lord in the slightest turning, nor did they remember Him with any remembrance, and He had no place with them.

Allah, *the Exalted*, said: "*This is the established way of Allah among those who passed on before, and you will never find in the way of Allah any change.*" [Al-Ahzab:62] And: "*And you will never find in the way of Allah any alteration.*" [Fatir:43]. Therefore, Allah's way with His servants—those of the earlier times and those of the later times—is uniform.

From here, we today see that the might of Allah, His anger, and His vengeance are on the verge of descending upon the world, especially the civilized world. If the vengeance and retribution of Allah descend upon the world—especially the civilized world—then it is a punishment of eradication like that which descended upon the people of Noah and upon 'Ad and Thamud, leaving nothing behind: "*So do you see of them any remains?*" [Al-Haqqah:8]

Allah, *the Exalted*, may take by His retribution the affluent and corrupt people and their armies—except for a few—and weaken their power. This is like what Allah, *the Exalted*, did to Quraysh: He took their chiefs, their leaders, their affluent, and the pillars of their strength on the Day of Badr. And like what He, *Majestic is His Glory*, did to the Jews in what Allah, *the Exalted*, related in *Surat al-Isrā'*: when they caused corruption the first time, then when they caused corruption the second time; and He, *the Exalted*, said after that: "*If you return, We will return.*" [Al-Isra:8] They returned to corruption in the earth, so Allah, *the Exalted*, punished them in the Second World War, yet He, *the Exalted*, did not eradicate them in all of that; rather, remnants of them remained.

And like what He, *the Exalted*, did to most of the great powers in the Second World War. Examples of that are many, among them what we witness today in Iraq and Afghanistan. At that point, what is expected to descend upon the world is one of the two matters we mentioned—matters by which Allah's way has proceeded.

I see that the time for Allah's retribution upon the world has come,

according to what we see of the availability of causes. As for specifying the time of its descent, that is unseen knowledge which Allah, *the Exalted*, has reserved to Himself: *"So He does not reveal His unseen to anyone, except to a messenger whom He has approved."* [Al-Jinn:26-27]

- How is it expected that the nature of the states of the world and their condition will be after the descent of Allah's wrath and retribution?

It is possible that a breakdown and chaos will occur in the great powers, then that will be followed in every state by small mini-states. So America, for example, will become many mini-states after having been one state. Each mini-state will be characterized by weakness, caring for nothing except preserving its own entity.

At that point the world will have rid itself of the dominance of the great powers and of their policies and pressures, and it will be freed from servitude to them.

[The Sunnah Regarding the Greeting of Peace]

In al-Tirmidhi there is a transmitted report that says: Making the greeting of peace brief is a Sunnah. Ibn al-Mubarak said: meaning that one does not prolong it by stretching it out. End, in brief.

[The Correct Path to the Righteousness of One's Offspring]

Nothing is more soothing to a person's eye, nor more cooling to his chest, than the righteousness of his offspring. They have said that a person should not wish anyone to be better than him except his child; thus you see a person keen upon this aim and this objective.

Allah, *the Exalted*, has guided His servants to the correct path that leads to this aim and this goal. He, *the Exalted*, said, relating the supplication of Abraham (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"And make righteous for me my offspring. Indeed, I have repented to You, and indeed I am of the Muslims."* [Al-Ahqaf:15] And He, *the Exalted*, said: *"Offspring, some of them from others."* [Aal 'Imran:34]

Yes: the righteousness of the wife, her chastity, and her purity are a cause for the righteousness of her children. Allah, *the Exalted*, said: *"And We made righteous for him his wife. Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds..."* [Al-Anbiya:90] Based on what we have said, the path to the righteousness of the wife and the righteousness of the offspring is the righteousness of the father—his mindfulness of Allah and his faith.

[A Person's Seeking for Honor and Dignity]

A person naturally loves honor and dignity and dislikes their opposite. Everyone strives to achieve that for himself. Some think that is in gathering wealth, so they strive earnestly to obtain it and collect it. Others imagine that it is in commanding and forbidding, so they exert themselves to reach that rank and spend everything precious and costly.

Others... and others... and so on.

Allah, *the Exalted*, has guided to the path that leads to honor, dignity, and happiness—things that those who seek them have gone astray from and have been blinded to. He, *the Glorified*, informed that dignity is in mindfulness of Allah: *"Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most mindful of Allah among you."* [Al-Hujurat:13] And that honor is in faith: *"And to Allah belongs honor, and to His Messenger, and to the believers."* [Al-Munafiqun:8]

[Elevation Is in Obedience to Allah, *the Exalted*]

Allah, *the Exalted*, said: *"And We intended to bestow favor upon those who were oppressed in the land and make them leaders and make them inheritors."* [Al-Qasas:5] And He, *the Exalted*, said: *"And We have written in the Psalms after the Reminder that the earth will be inherited by My righteous servants."* [Al-Anbiya:105]

It is taken from here, as we have previously stated, that elevation and honor are in obedience to Allah, *the Exalted*.

Allah, *the Exalted*, said regarding the Companions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) who obeyed Allah and His Messenger and adhered to mindfulness of Allah: *"Allah has promised you many spoils that you will take, so He hastened for you this and withheld the hands of people from you, and so that it may be a sign for the believers."* [Al-Fath:20]

And He, *the Exalted*, said about them: *"And He caused you to inherit their land, their homes, and their wealth, and land you had not trodden."* [Al-Ahzab:27]

And He, *the Exalted*, said: **"Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession in the land as He granted succession to those before them, and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that He will surely replace their fear, after it, with security—they worship Me and do not associate anything with Me..." ** [An-Nur:55]

[Attaining Wealth and Children, Fertility, the Soundness of Fruits, and the Abundance of Waters]

Attaining that is among the greatest demands in worldly life and among its most important. Allah, *the Exalted*, has guided to the path that leads to attaining that. He, *the Exalted*, said, relating from His prophet Noah (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"So I said: Seek forgiveness of your Lord; indeed, He is ever Forgiving. He will send the sky upon you in continuing rain, and will increase you in wealth and children, and will make for you gardens, and will make for you rivers."* [Nuh:10-12]

In this verse there is guidance of the servants to that repentance to

Allah and seeking forgiveness are the correct path to those noble aims.

Increase of Lifespans

Increase in lifespan is a greatly desired aim, just as death is greatly feared. Allah, *the Exalted*, has guided to the correct path that leads to safety from having lifespans cut short. *He, the Exalted*, said, relating from His prophet Noah (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"Worship Allah and be mindful of Him and obey me—He will forgive you of your sins and delay you until an appointed term. Indeed, the term of Allah, when it comes, is not delayed, if you only knew."* [Nuh:3–4]

Increase of Blessings

A person loves an increase of blessings and their continuance: he loves the continuance of health, well-being, and security; he loves the continuance of people's affection and trust; he loves an increase in fertility and an increase in profits and the continuance of that; and he loves... and he loves... and so on.

Allah, *the Exalted*, informed His servants of the path to that, and informed them that it lies in gratitude. He, *the Exalted*, said: *"If you are grateful, I will surely increase you; but if you are ungrateful, indeed My punishment is severe."* [Ibrahim:7]

He, *the Exalted*, likewise informed that the disappearance of blessings is caused by ingratitude for blessings, saying: *"But if you are ungrateful, indeed My punishment is severe."* [Ibrahim:7]

And He, *the Exalted*, said: *"There was for the people of Sheba, in their dwelling place, a sign: two gardens on the right and on the left. 'Eat from the provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him. A good land and a forgiving Lord.' But they turned away, so We sent upon them the flood of the dam, and We replaced their two gardens with two gardens of bitter fruit, tamarisk, and something of sparse lote trees. That is how We recompensed them for what they denied. And do We recompense except the ungrateful?"* [Saba 34:–17]

And Allah, *the Exalted*, said: *"And Allah presents an example: a town that was secure and at ease; its provision came to it abundantly from every place, but it denied the blessings of Allah. So Allah made it taste the garment of hunger and fear for what they used to do."* [An-Nahl:112]

In the Quran there is much of these two matters: gratitude for blessings and ingratitude for them.

[Calling the Water That Descends from the Sky Provision]

Allah, *the Exalted*, named the water that He sends down from the sky "provision," because the earth does not bring forth the sustenance of humans and animals except through water. There is no provision for animals and humans except from what the earth brings forth—this is for

the most part—while only rarely do humans and animals take provision from what comes out of the sea. The mainstay of provision is what the plants of the earth bring forth.

The Honor of Fathers

- The honor of fathers may be by a favor from Allah, *the Exalted*, which He grants to whomever He wills among His servants, such as prophethood, and such as the angels' prostration to Adam (*Peace be Upon Him*).
- And the honor of fathers may be acquired, such as generosity, courage, truthfulness, loyalty, humility, forbearance, calm deliberation, faith, spending in the path of Allah, companionship of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), striving in the path of Allah, martyrdom in the path of Allah, good neighborliness, supporting the weak, supporting the truth, good character, maintaining ties of kinship, and so on.

[Among the Explanations of Allah's Saying: *Our Lord, and Do Not Burden Us with What We Have No Strength to Bear*]

It was said regarding Allah's saying: "*Our Lord, and do not burden us with that which we have no ability to bear.*" [Al-Baqarah:286]: it means (Al-ghulma) overpowering sexual desire. End quote.

I say: Al-ghulma means overpowering sexual desire is intense craving for women—and Allah knows best.

It was said: the hardship of trial is having many dependents and little wealth. End quote.

The Nobility of the Believer

In al-Sahifah, from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he said: "*The likeness of the believer with Allah is like the likeness of a near angel, and indeed the believer with Allah is better than a near angel... and so on.*"

And in al-Sahifah also: "*Indeed the believer is known in the heaven just as a man is known among his family and his children, and indeed he is more noble with Allah than a near angel.*"

I say: these two reports, even if they are authentic, have been opposed by what is weightier than them. Among that:

- 1- What is well known from the doctrine of the Prophet's Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) and the Zaydi school is giving preference to the angels over the believers—rather, over the prophets and messengers.
- 2- The angels are more devoted in worship and more fearful of Allah, as Allah, *the Exalted*, described them in His Book: "*They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and they do what they*

are commanded." [At-Tahrim:6]; and: *"They exalt Him night and day and do not slacken."* [Al-Anbiya:20]—and other than that from many verses.

- 3- Allah's saying: *"The Messiah would never disdain to be a servant of Allah, nor would the angels brought near."* [An-Nisa:172]
- 4- Allah's saying in the story of Adam (Peace be Upon Him): *"Your Lord did not forbid you from this tree except that you become angels or become of the immortal."* [Al-A'raf:20]
- 5- Allah's saying, relating from Noah (Peace be Upon Him): *"And I do not say to you that I am an angel..."* [Al-An'am:50]—and other verses from which it is taken that the angels are better than the believing humans.

Yes: the two reports can be interpreted by saying: the two reports mentioned the believer's merit over the angel, and what is meant is merit from one aspect—namely that the believer struggles against his lustful nature and encounters from its burdens and its wrestling something tremendous, by which he deserves from Allah, *the Exalted*, great reward and immense recompense.

This lustful nature is not present in the nature of the angel. Accordingly, the angel has—by this aspect—nothing of such reward and recompense. Thus the believer is better, from this aspect, than the angel. This does not mean that the believer's reward is more than the angel's reward, nor that he is better than him absolutely. For the angel is better from other aspects, such as:

- 1- Their knowledge of Allah is more complete and more perfect.
- 2- They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and they do what they are commanded.
- 3- They do not grow weary; *"they exalt Him night and day and do not slacken."* [Al-Anbiya:20]
- 4- The length of their lifespans in obedience to Allah.

Yes: this issue is among theoretical issues in which disagreement is acceptable.

If it is said: it has been authentically established: *"Whoever establishes a good practice will have its reward and the reward of whoever acts upon it until the Day of Resurrection."* Based on this, the good deeds of prophets, imams, callers, and reformers may continue to increase even if their lifespans are short, until they match some angels or exceed them. And in a report from al-Majmu' there is what means: *"Indeed, the martyr is written the reward of his deeds until the Day of Resurrection."*

We say: that is not far-fetched. A group adopted a view between the two views: that the generality of angels are better than the generality of humans, and the select among humans are better than the select among

angels.

[You Are With Whom You Loved]

It was narrated that a man entered while the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was delivering a sermon, and he said: O Messenger of Allah, when will the Hour be? The people gestured to him: be silent. He said. The Prophet Muhammad (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "Woe to you—what have you prepared for it?" He said: I have not prepared anything, but I love Allah and His Messenger. So he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "You are with whom you have loved."

A benefit: [Regarding What Rulers Have If They Obey the Imams]

Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn al-Mukhtar said in his answer to al-Husayn ibn al-Qasim: The imams may mention alongside themselves those rulers who obeyed them, as al-Hadi (*Peace be Upon Him*) did: he used to mention al-Da'am ibn Ibrahim alongside himself on the pulpit, because in that there is bringing hearts together and supplicating for him to be righteous. End—taken from the marginal notes of the commentary on Sharh al-Azhar.

[A Hadith: The Hour Will Not Come Until the Land of the Arabs Returns to Meadows and Rivers]

Hadith: "*The Hour will not come until the land of the Arabs returns to meadows and rivers*". Muslim, Ahmad, and others.

It is taken from that:

1 - That the land of the Arabs—the Arabian Peninsula—was meadows and rivers, and that in the End Times it will return to what it previously was. The meaning of that is that the Arabian Peninsula passes through three stages:

The first stage: that it was meadows and rivers.

The second stage: a stage of drought, little rainfall, and the drying of valleys and springs, and so on.

The third stage: a stage of meadows and rivers.

We today live in the second stage, and we hear today that the south of the Arabian Peninsula—or all of it—is on the verge of coming under equatorial climate, and it is known that rain continues throughout the year on land that lies under equatorial climate.

[Satan's Whisperings]

Question: It was said that Satan's whisperings are not repelled from the believer by seeking refuge; so what is its benefit?

The answer—and Allah is the One who grants success and aid—is that the matter is as was said: Satan's whisperings are not repelled by

seeking refuge, as evidence for that is His, *the Exalted*, saying: "*And We did not send before you any messenger or prophet except that when he recited, Satan cast into his recitation.*" [Al-Hajj:52] If whisperings were repelled by seeking refuge, the burden of duty would be lightened upon the believers.

What appears is that the benefit of seeking refuge is the drawing of additional divine gentlenesses, by which, when they occur, the effect of whisperings upon the believer diminishes. If these gentlenesses occur for the believer when he resorts to his Lord, they stand in the face of Satan's whisperings, and the believer finds, because of them, strength to drive away Satan's whisperings and to crush them. Indeed, no effect remains for them—even if they are present and occurring—yet they are subdued and overcome by the authority of the divine gentlenesses that the servant drew in when he resorted to his Lord and sought refuge with Him from their evil.

Rights of the Muslim over his brother

From the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), that he said: "*The right of the Muslim over the Muslim is six: when you meet him, greet him with peace; when he invites you, respond to him; when he seeks your counsel, counsel him; when he sneezes and praises Allah, respond to him; when he is ill, visit him; and when he dies, follow him*". End—taken from the marginal notes on al-Azhar. He said: Muslim narrated it from the hadith of Abu Hurayrah.

[Poetic Verses]

Al-Mutanabbi:

Judgment comes before the courage of the brave

That is the first, and courage is the second rank.

When both unite within a resolute soul,

It reaches every lofty height and place.

Many a youth has pierced his peers with judgment

Before the spears of peers have even clashed.

Al-Hakam ibn Marrah (Qanbarah) al-Mazini al-Basri:

Woe to me for one who drove sleep away—so it refused,

And my heart increased upon its pains yet more pain.

As though the sun within his folds had shone in beauty,

Or the full moon rose from the buttons of his garment.

He comes toward what he loves—even if his sins are many—

And he is excused for what he has done.

In his face there is an intercessor that wipes away his offense,

From hearts; he is eminent wherever he intercedes.

Salih ibn 'Abd al-Quddus:

*Do not let the one who guards his clothes amaze you,
fearing dust, While his honor lies exposed and spent.*

*For how often the youth is poor—you see him,
With soiled clothes, yet his honor washed clean.*

*I drove from my heart the talk I sought to push away,
And her memory; and I displayed firmness.*

By al-Dahiyah al-Hilaliyyah:

*If only we—and the soul that rests upon its wishes—
Were Yemenis, when a beloved becomes Yemeni at evening.*

And she also said:

*Indeed I love moderation, then desires turn me back,
From moderation—inclinations of passion—so I incline.*

By al-Sayyid Sarim al-Din Ibn al-Wazir, regarding Imam Ahmad ibn al-Husayn al-Shahid (Peace be Upon Him), the man of Dhibayn:

*They sacrificed an ash-gray elder, by whom rainclouds are sought,
They pledged to him—so they became the greatest losers among mankind.*

Another—al-Kumayt:

*If there is no mount but spearheads,
Then for the compelled there is no judgment but to ride them.*

A wise man was asked about passionate love, and he said: Smoke that rises to a person's brain; intercourse removes it, and listening excites it. End quote. (Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn).

[For Some of Them]

*Indeed, the sky, when it clothes itself, clothes the earth
below With garments embroidered by the pouring raincloud.*

[By Wasil ibn 'Ata']

*Feign stupidity with the stupid when you meet them,
And meet them with ignorance—the deed of those of ignorance.*

*And mingle, when you meet one day a muddled man,
Who mixes in speech between truth and jest.*

*For I have seen a man suffer by his intellect,
Just as before today he used to be happy by intellect.*

[By Abu 'Ali al-Basir]

*By my father's life: no noble lineage is ascribed to exaltation
While in the world there is a generous man.
But lands, when they bristle and their growth dries up,
Graze only upon withered stubble.*

Poetry:

*Like one who chants onward, yet has no camel,
And one who grazes, yet has no herd.
And one who gives drink, while his coffee is a mirage,
And one who invites guests, yet has no food.*

Poetry—by Abu al-Tayyib:

*We asked—while we know Najd best—Is our road short, or long?
Much questioning is longing, And much refusal is pretext.*

Poetry—Muhammad ibn Hani' al-Maghribi:

*Every day I gain new experiences—
How many know a thing, while they keep asking?*

Poetry—by Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi:

*And among the miseries of this world for the free man is to see,
An enemy of his who has no need at all of his friendship.*

Among the Ailments of the Intellect and Its Dangers

1. The rational person has a clear sign and an evident proof in his own mind about which he has no doubt, yet he hears and rejects it because he allows—or supposes—that his imam whom he follows in his religion has something that refutes it and exposes its falsity.
2. The rational person does not accuse his own intellect of deficiency, and he does not see the intellect of another as more complete than his own.

[Servitude in Islam]

The enemies of Islam today denounce the Muslims for being religiously committed to enslaving a human being and owning him. I have seen some Muslims answer by saying that when Islam came, people in general were committed to enslaving other human beings and they approved of it, so Islam proceeded with them in this field.

The reason for legislating human enslavement—as I see it—and in my view that is not the true angle of its legislation in Islam—is that Allah, *the Exalted*, legislated it as an immediate recompense and punishment in this world for those who disbelieved in Allah and for the polytheists who rebelled against the oneness of Allah and His worship and against responding to His messengers. When the polytheists and the disbelievers refused the worship of Allah and obedience to Him and refused to enter

into servitude to Him out of rebellion and arrogance, Allah, *the Exalted*, willed to deal with them in this world with the like of their deed, and to make it of the same kind as their deed. So He, *the Exalted*, legislated their enslavement and ownership: whoever refused to be a servant of Allah is recompensed by being a servant to the servants of Allah.

And in the transmitted report: “*As you judge, you will be judged*,” and it is manifest justice that the recompense be of the same kind as the deed.

Allah, *the Exalted*, made enslavement and legislated it upon every unbeliever on the face of the earth—male and female, adult and child.

The propriety of enslaving the young among the children of the unbelievers is because they are like a part of their fathers and mothers, or because they are in fact a part of them. The evidence for that is what is established in the law of Islam: that if one of the two unbelieving parents accepts Islam, the child is judged by the rulings of Islam.

And because enslaving the children of the unbelievers is a humiliation for their fathers and an increase of punishment upon them.

Along with that, even though Islam legislated the enslavement of the children of the unbelievers, it guaranteed for them, within its laws, the necessary rights. Thus Islam forbade separating the child from his parents, and the brother from his brother, and so on.

It commanded the owner to show kindness to his owned person, to lighten his burdens, to feed him from what he eats, to give him drink from what he drinks, and to clothe him from what he wears, and so on.

And it called the owner to contract emancipation with him if the owned person desired such a contract and was able to fulfill it.

Among what indicates the propriety of enslaving the unbelievers, their offspring, and their women is that in it there is gentleness toward the unbelievers and a great benefit for them: namely, that if the unbeliever knows that his persistence in unbelief will lead to his women and offspring being exposed and his offspring being owned, that calls him to abandon it out of fear for his women being made lawful and his offspring being owned.

The Wisdom in the Nature of Worldly Life

Allah, *the Exalted*, has poured out His blessings upon His servants in this worldly life and given them of everything they asked. If they were to count the blessing of Allah, they could not enumerate it. So Allah's blessings upon His servants are many, abundant, mutually reinforcing, inward and outward.

Yet Allah, *the Exalted*, made within the nature of worldly life what troubles the people of the world with some troubling, and what clouds for them some of the enjoyment they are in with some clouding: the

people of the world are exposed to sicknesses and death, fear and worries, griefs and anxieties, distress and disturbances. In it there are harmful insects like mosquitoes, and poisonous creeping things, and predatory beasts, and people empowered to harm others. In it there are incidents and disasters. Indeed, there may be within the blessing itself what clouds it, such as a beautiful, chaste wife: she is not free of some trait by which the blessing is clouded.

Among the wisdom of that, as it appears to me, is that people do not become at ease with the bliss of this world. For the clouding and troubling factors of worldly bliss make worldly life hated to the people of the world, and lift their gazes to the Abode of the Hereafter, whose bliss has no clouding and no troubling. From here it was narrated from the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that he used to say at times of troubles and disturbances: “*O Allah, there is no life except the life of the Hereafter.*” So because of these troubles, the believer’s gaze is bound to the Hereafter and its bliss.

The believer does not become anxious and does not grieve over what befalls him of the clouding factors of worldly bliss, due to his knowledge of Allah’s wisdom in that. Rather, he thanks Allah, *the Exalted*, and praises Him for what He made of that, and he sees it as a blessing because in it there is a wake-up call for him from becoming at ease with worldly bliss, and a fastening of his gaze to the everlasting bliss in Paradise.

[An Admonition and a Lesson: A Volcano in Europe in the Year 1431 AH]

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. And may Allah bless our master Muhammad and his family, and grant abundant peace.

In this month of Jumada al-Ula of the year 1431 AH, a volcanic eruption occurred near the continent of Europe. From it rose thick ash that covered most of the countries of Europe, so air navigation in those countries stopped due to its density, and air navigation remained halted up to the time of writing these lines. It is possible—and *Allah knows best*—that this is one of the signs of the Hour that the reports have mentioned. There is no doubt that it is a sign from among the tremendous signs of Allah by which Allah, *the Exalted*, causes His servants to fear.

Allah’s established way has proceeded that if He sends to His disobedient servants a sign by which He reminds them and they do not remember, but rather rebel and persist upon the disobedience they are in, then He punishes them. Therefore it is expected that Allah, *the Exalted*, will send down upon the states of the West His vengeance and

punishment in the near and immediate term.

[On Mentioning Tribulations]

Al-Hafiz Nu'aym ibn Hammad narrated in the Book of Tribulations, page ...: "When the tribulation of the West occurs, tighten your sandal-straps toward Yemen, for no land other than it will protect you from it."

And in another: "When tribulations surge, then adhere to Yemen."

I say: in this there is evidence that Yemen is protected from general tribulations, such as the tribulation of the 'Ubaydis that came from the West and compelled people to follow their religion, and such as the tribulation of the Salafis that compelled people to follow their religion.

Even if tribulations attempt to enter Yemen, they quickly fade and melt away, like the tribulation of 'Ali ibn al-Fadl, and the Mutarrafiyyah, and the likes of them.

And in the Book of Tribulations, with its chain from Ka'b: "*Glad tidings, on the Day of the Great Battle, to Himyar and al-Humayra'. By Allah, Allah will surely give them the world and the Hereafter, even if people dislike it.*"

And in it, with its chain from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*): "*Qays are the horsemen of people on the Day of the great battles, and Yemen is the hope of Islam.*"

And in it, from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), he said: "*Indeed Allah, the Exalted, promised me Persia, then the Romans, then their women and their children, and their swords and spears, and their treasures; and He supported me with Himyar as helpers.*"

[Backgammon]

is a game known outside Yemen as the game of table. End—marginal notes on al-Taj.

[Tribulations]

Tribulations vary and take on different forms.

The tribulations meant here are the causes that lead the morally responsible person to leave the truth for falsehood. Thus, Satan's beautifying for the morally responsible person the doing of falsehood is a tribulation; corrupt scholars are a tribulation; tempting the morally responsible person with wealth is a tribulation; the great number of the people of falsehood and the small number of the people of truth is a tribulation; authority is a tribulation; abundant wealth is a tribulation; and its scarcity is a tribulation... and so on.

[A Sign by Which the Strong in Faith Is Known from the Weak]

There is a sign by which one knows the strong in faith from the weak in faith—one I have personally observed among many people—and it is:

that if you inform a man that a misguidance in religion has occurred among students of knowledge, for example, and that it has met with circulation and acceptance, and you explain to him the type of misguidance that the Prophet's Household (*Peace be Upon Them*) and the scholars of the Zaydi school agree is a destructive misguidance, and you make clear to him its danger in that it has occurred among our students and in our schools and has spread among them—then you will find the believer strong in faith reacting to this news and being affected by it to the utmost: he cannot sit still because of it. As for the weak in faith, no effect appears upon him from your news, and he gives it no concern, as though it does not matter to him in his religion.

The Sciences of the Arabs Before Islam

They had the science of poetry, the craft of eloquent speech and sermons, and the knowledge of the genealogies of the Arab tribes; memorizing poetry and critiquing it; knowledge of the prides of the Arab tribes, their exploits, their “days” and what occurred for them or against them; knowledge of their histories and their “days”; and knowledge of their faults. The science of soothsaying among them was little. They had knowledge of the qualities of horses and their types and everything connected to them. Likewise camels: they had in them knowledge and expertise.

They had knowledge of the stars, for they used them for guidance in their travels on land and sea, and they had knowledge of the stars of agriculture. The science of reading and writing among them was little.

The south of the Arabian Peninsula was a cradle of knowledge in extracting the minerals of gold, silver, and iron, and in mastering the craft of working those metals; and a cradle of knowledge of remarkable building engineering. The impact those remarkable engineering works remain to this day in what is left of the remnants of dams and palaces. It was also a cradle of knowledge of making garments and weaving them, and of agriculture and trade.

[Industrial Development]

The intellect is bewildered by the industrial developments that humans have reached in all fields. It would have been expected that humans would use what they have reached of creativity and invention for their benefits and their public and private interests, but the observed reality is the opposite.

Advanced weapons are used in oppression and aggression: the manufacturing states do not sell weapons except to the oppressor rather than the oppressed. Advanced media has been harnessed to promote the interests of oppressors and tyrants, to promote falsehood, to contaminate ideas and corrupt morals, and to wage war against the

truth, those upon the truth, and the oppressed. Likewise communications, transportation, and other matters.

[The Gift of Intellect and Wealth]

- Every person thinks well of his own intellect and does not suspect it of weakness or deficiency—this is the nature of human beings. So you see the weak-minded and the deficient-minded: if you test him, he believes in himself that he is more rational than others, more intelligent, more perceptive in managing affairs, and more knowledgeable of the ways of error and correctness... and so on.

- Among the natures of worldly life is that those with weak intellects among human beings are more fortunate in the world: you see them possessing broad trading, luxury, ease, power, and social standing... and so on. From here Abu al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri said:

How many a learned scholar whose doctrines exhausted him,

And how many an ignorant fool you meet, well-provisioned.

This is what left illusions bewildered,

And turned the brilliant scholar into a heretic.

But the abundance of wealth in their hands covers their faults that arise from weakness and deficiency of intellect, so people do not notice the deficiency and the flaw. And if they do notice, they believe it is the result of policy and cleverness.

- In the words of the Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*), is what means: A person's provision is measured against his intellect: whoever's intellect increases and becomes complete, his share of the enjoyments of worldly life decreases; and whoever's intellect is little and deficient, Allah, *the Exalted*, compensates him with abundant worldly enjoyments to the extent that his intellect is deficient.

- **The fool** is the one who wants to benefit himself and harms it. He believes his intellect to be complete and sees his opinions as correct, so he proceeds upon his opinion. Then problems and bad consequences occur for him, yet he does not notice; rather he persists in proceeding.

I have seen many of this type. Praise be to Allah who granted us well-being from what He afflicted many of His creation with.

[Allah's Great Blessings Upon Us in This Age]

Praise be to Allah who carried us on land and sea, and caused us, *Glorified is He*, to fly in the skies; and caused us, *Exalted is He*, to soar above the clouds on the most comfortable conveyances. We have crossed the journey of a month in an hour, without heat or cold reaching us in our travel, and without fatigue or toil.

Within industrial and civilizational progress there are matters that require reflection and that thought must pause upon:

- 1- Allah, *the Exalted*, has given the human being in this age blessings exceedingly great in magnitude, abundant in number—things that humanity in general would not have dreamed of in all the affairs of their lives. These blessings call for multiplied, continuous gratitude from human beings, because Allah's blessings upon them have multiplied and His favor has become abundant for them.
- 2- Disbelief, injustice, rebellion against Allah, and war against His religion and His allies have increased—this has increased along with the increase of blessings. In that is what warns of the occurrence of a general punishment for humankind, from which none will escape except the believers who are mindful of Allah. The punishment may be from Allah, *the Exalted*, or from humans, or: "*Or He will divide you into factions and make some of you taste the violence of others.*" [Al-An'am:65]

If it is said: Why did Allah, *the Exalted*, not mention in the Quran what the human being will reach in the End Times of civilization and industrial development, so that this would be signs for the people of this age and a proof against them that they cannot refute?

It is said in reply: there is no doubt that in what you have mentioned there are clear signs and evident proofs for the people of this age. However, there is an impediment that is more important than the benefit you mentioned: namely, that the existence of that in the Quran would cause problems and doubts for the generations that lived in past centuries before the occurrence of industrial progress, and it would become a source of criticism and denial... and so on. This is clear. And Allah is the One who grants success.

[The Great Blessings in This Age]

People in this age have come to enjoy tremendous blessings that human history has never witnessed before. Among them are the blessings of land, sea, and air transportation: a car passenger can cover a distance of one thousand miles in a single day without being harmed by heat or cold, or by anything that disturbs or hurts him; rather, he travels in comfort.

And the airplane passenger enjoys even greater comfort, and its speed is greater, so it covers a distance of one thousand miles in about an hour and a half.

Among them is the availability of landline and mobile telephones.

Among them is electricity.

Among them is the availability of production and manufacturing machines, and work tools.

Among them is the availability of goods in markets from all the countries of the world.

Among them is the availability of effective treatments everywhere, along with the availability of doctors well-established in medicine.

Among them are printing presses and printing, and the abundance of books in every field at low prices.

Among them is the availability of computers and the internet.

Among them is the availability of media devices. And among them... and among them... and so on.

Thus Allah, *the Exalted*, has bestowed upon the people of this age blessings that He did not bestow upon anyone among all peoples before them, and that calls for greater and more immense gratitude.

But the people of this age have received these tremendous blessings with ingratitude, tyranny, rebellion, and aggression. Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, has said: *"And when your Lord proclaimed: 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you; but if you are ungrateful, indeed, My punishment is severe.'"* [Ibrahim:7] So it is fitting for the people of this world that Allah's severe punishment—by which He threatened those who are ungrateful for His blessings—should befall them.

[The Reason for the Muslims' Defeat on the Day of Uhud]

Allah, *the Exalted*, allowing the polytheists on the day of Uhud to gain dominance over the Muslims when they disobeyed the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and opposed his command was only by:

1. Leaving the two sides to one another: the strong army of Quraysh and the weak army of the Muslims.
2. Allah, *the Exalted*, withdrawing His victory from the Muslims, and His help for them, and His support for them by the angels. When Allah, *the Exalted*, withdrew all of that from them—along with leaving the two sides to one another—the defeat occurred.
3. Allah, *the Exalted*, leaving the polytheists to themselves, so He did not cast terror, fear, or panic into their hearts.

If it is said: Did Allah will, decree, and approve the killing of those Muslims who were killed on the day of Uhud? Did He will their defeat and humiliation? Did Allah, *the Exalted*, will that the polytheists triumph over the Muslims?

We say: Exalted is Allah above willing any of that, or approving it, or decreeing it. What occurred is that He withdrew His victory from the Muslims, so His power, Exalted is He, did not intervene in that battle at

all; rather, He left the two sides to themselves. And the Muslims in that battle did not deserve Allah's help and assistance because of their disobedience. So this is what Allah willed, desired, and approved: withdrawing victory from the Muslims and leaving the two sides to one another.

As for what followed from that and resulted from killing, wounding, and defeat—Allah, *the Exalted*, did not will it and did not approve it.

And this "leaving" is like leaving the wrongdoer and the wronged, the killer and the killed; and like leaving the disobedient person and acts of disobedience. It is not correct and it is not permissible to say that Allah, the Exalted, by virtue of leaving them intends injustice, killing, and sins. So understand that.

[The Wisdom in the Differences Among People's Natures]

People's natures differ in intelligence, understanding, heedlessness, dullness, deliberation, haste... and so on. Because of that, differences arise in management and policy, in interpreting political events, in considering consequences, and the like.

And people differ in tallness and shortness; strength and weakness; fineness and coarseness; beauty and appearance; the features of limbs and body; hair, complexion, eyes, nose... and so on. ***The wisdom in that is:***

1. In it is an indication that it proceeds from a Creator who is Knowing and Wise, for difference indicates that there is a choosing Agent who made them different. Allah, *the Exalted*, has used this as evidence against the polytheists in more than one place, such as His saying: *"And of His signs is that He created you from dust; then suddenly you were human beings dispersing."* [Ar-Rum:20] ... up to His saying: *"And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge."* [Ar-Rum:22] And: *"And [also] in the alternation of night and day..."* [Al-Jathiyah:5] And: *"And on the earth are adjacent plots, and gardens of grapevines, and crops and date palms, growing from a single root or otherwise, watered with one water; but We make some of them exceed others in [quality of] fruit. Indeed in that are signs for a people who reason."* [Ar-Ra'd:4]
2. In it is trial and testing: thus the gratitude of the grateful one becomes manifest for what Allah has bestowed upon him of qualities of completeness; the ingratitude of the ungrateful one for Allah's blessings; the patience of the patient one over what Allah, *the Exalted*, has tested him with of deficiency; and the resentment of the resentful one over that.

3. Through difference, each person is known and distinguished from others, and in that are benefits that can hardly be encompassed. If not for difference, a husband would not recognize his wife and vice versa, nor a parent his child and vice versa, nor an enemy his enemy, nor a friend his friend, and financial dealings would not be possible... and so on.
4. Through difference, a blessing is recognized: the complete person does not feel the blessing of completeness except when he sees the deficient, and the beautiful person not except when he sees the ugly... and so on. And the poet said regarding that:
And by their opposites, things become distinguished.
5. Through it, the virtue of some people over others becomes evident, and that leads the less-virtuous to comply with the more-virtuous. Allah, *the Exalted*, has said regarding that: “[*Their prophet*] said: ‘Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature.’” [Al-Baqarah:247] And: “Men are caretakers of women by what Allah has given one over the other...” [An-Nisa:34]
6. Through difference, worldly affairs proceed as they should: the person of insight, intelligence, policy, and management is assigned to work that no one else can perform. Thus are all the works of worldly life: for every work there are men with specific qualities that suit that work.
7. Because of differences in insight, understanding, intelligence, and stupidity, people enter into deals, buying and selling, commercial contracts, commercial travel, manufacturing... and so on. From that results what Allah, *the Exalted*, wills in this worldly life: that some people provide livelihood for others, and that needs are met for those in need. If not for difference, that would not occur as it should.
8. Through difference, some people are made to serve others, and thus the world is built up.
9. Through difference, people strive in work and hasten to acquire material and spiritual perfections, because the deficient person by nature strives with seriousness and effort to catch up with the complete person. From here Allah, *the Exalted*, has said: “So for this let the competitors compete.” [Al-Mutaffifin:26] And in that are great benefits that are not hidden.

[Some Pros and Cons of the Qat Tree]

Among the benefits of the Qat tree for the chewer is that it removes from him drowsiness (yawning) and lethargy, stirs bodily energy, clears the mind, and refines the thinking. So if he reads, he reads with a clear mind and finds sweetness in the Qur’an; and if he prays, he prays with a

present mind and a humble heart—thus he prays with vitality and energy, recites the Qur'an with vitality and energy, and supplicates with vitality, energy, and drive.

And this vitality and energy do not change anything of the intellect, nor do they match or resemble what intoxicants and wine produce of "activity" and "merriment" that drive a person beyond the bounds of reason—so he behaves like madmen and does what they do, and the garment of modesty is stripped from him, so he commits reprehensible acts that sensible people would be too modest to do—whereas he does them brazenly and in abundance.

As for eating Qat, none of that exists in it at all. What exists in it is the removal of lethargy and drowsiness, the clearing of the mind, and energy within the bounds of reason.

And I am one of those accustomed to eating Qat for many years up to today. If I chew Qat, the lethargy and drowsiness that eating food brings on me depart from me, and I find in myself energy for reading, writing, studying, teaching, researching, investigating, asking and answering, discussing issues and reviewing them. And if I write, I benefit and cover a great distance, and I write well and adorn it with good phrasing—when the situation calls for polishing and embellishing. **Therefore, I say:**

- Qat is a great blessing for which we praise Allah, so it should be met with gratitude to Allah and praising Him.
- Likewise, people of physical labor in workshops, farms, building and construction, and so on: Qat helps them in their work, lightens their fatigue, and stirs their energy, so the outcomes of their work multiply.
- Likewise, everyone who is engaged in a task: it helps him accomplish his work and succeed in it with energy, without feeling boredom or fatigue. So praise be to Allah abundantly, morning and evening.
- And there are other people for whom Qat harms their minds: eating it causes in them the illness of obsessive whispering, delusion, and madness. Whoever is like that among people is not permitted to eat it, due to the harm in it. These are a very small minority, and this is among the negatives of Qat.
- And among its negatives is staying up late: the Qat chewer does not sleep until the end of the night, when the effect of Qat leaves the body. Then the chewer needs to sleep during the day to make up for what he missed of night sleep, and because of that he loses many tasks. If he goes to his work in the morning without having slept, he is exhausted from lack of sleep and not energetic, so his work does not proceed as it should. And if staying up late and

exhaustion continue for him, weakness in his mind may afflict him.

- And among its negatives are economic negatives: if the Qat user is poor, he is harmed by the “Qat budget” he needs to buy it. He may fall short in spending on his wife and children, and they are harmed because of that. Debts may pile up on him because of Qat, so worries afflict him and spoil his livelihood. Humiliation may befall him because he is unable to repay, and he is exposed to degrading talk because he did not repay his debt—so his personality becomes unsettled and his standing diminishes.
- It is not permissible for a Muslim to expose himself to such things, because Allah, *Glorified and Exalted*, wants the Muslim to live with honor and dignity: *“But honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger and to the believers.”* [Al-Munafiqun:8]
- And it is better for the poor person, if he fears that, to quit Qat and endure abstaining from it. Patience is the beneficial alternative, and its outcome is good; and with good intention, Allah, *Exalted is He*, will reward him for his patience and grant him recompense for it.

For it is the nature of the believer to be patient regarding everything that mars his religion, his dignity, his honor, and his manliness. Faith is not perfected, nor does it stand upright, except with patience. From here Allah, *Exalted is He*, has said: *“By time, indeed mankind is in loss, except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.”* [Al-'Asr:1-3]

[How to Deal With a Bad Neighbor, and With One Who Hates You]

The stratagem regarding a bad neighbor and a bad companion is to honor their children, so the evils of their fathers are kept away from you.

This is from *Al-Kashkul* by al-'Amili.

Do not pass by one who hates you; and if you do pass by him, then greet him with peace. This is also from it.

[Four Who Cannot Be Endured]

Qays ibn Zuhayr, the chief of 'Abs, said: Four cannot be endured: a slave who becomes an owner, a vile man who becomes satiated, a slave-woman who inherits, and an ugly woman who gets married.

[What the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace) Hopes for Abu Talib — From “The Book of the Intelligent”]

Al-'Abbas asked the Prophet (May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace), saying: O Messenger of Allah, what do you hope for Abu Talib?

He (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: “I hope for every good from my Lord.” This is from *The Book of the Intelligent*.

[How to Attain the Worship of Allah as It Should Be]

Worship of Allah, *Exalted is He*, does not occur as it should except by the attainment of three matters:

- 1- First: knowing the One worshipped.
- 2- Knowing what Allah has commanded His servants to worship Him with, in words, deeds, and inward states—whether by doing or by leaving.
- 3- Compliance and application of worship.

[About Books of Encouragement and Warning, With Some Examples]

A question about books of encouragement and warning: I find myself perplexed by what I see in examples such as warning of death and what comes after it, and its severity, and that even the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) emphasized upon him; and likewise statements attributed to Imam Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*); and likewise warnings about what is after death—stations of the grave, the gathering, and other matters. And in these books they do not differentiate between a believer, an open sinner, or a disbeliever—although, according to my limited knowledge, I have not seen in the Qur’an verses that mention severity, punishment, or hardship upon a believer after his death until his entry into Paradise; rather, all of them give him glad tidings and make him rejoice.

And also, it is from reason that the abode of recompense—if there must be, therein, constriction for the believer—then how can he keep away and be safe, when there is no way for him out of that by any deed, so long as even the prophets are in constriction and distress, and others? This is one aspect...

And another aspect, for example: they magnify everything, so it falls, when they magnify a matter as a facilitation for something else; for example, they say: Indeed, backbiting is worse than adultery because ... etc., and everyone knows that adultery is a tremendous obscenity; and this is an example, and there is much.

And also, magnifying some acts of worship—for example: remaining in the mosque after the dawn prayer until sunrise is like two pilgrimages and two ‘umrahs; so what is the benefit of fatigue and spending wealth and effort in voluntary Hajj and ‘Umrah, otherwise what is meant?

And of that: censuring wealth and its earning even if it is from the lawful, to the extent that if applied people would refrain from work,

while the Qur'an and the life of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the Ahl al-Bayt are full of calling to work and to build the self and the society economically, and what is in that of benefit in spreading religion and truth and good; for we see the domination of the economy now over everything, even over politics, and whoever does not possess his sustenance does not possess his decision).

And also, we see in the chapter of the believer's joy at death and his love for it for the meeting with Allah, then we find another chapter that magnifies death and makes it something harsh.

So, clarify what has occurred of the problems, and increase us in benefit and analysis, so that the inner conflicts may be removed by the balm of your overflowing knowledge; and may you remain for us and for the Muslims a good example and a light; and peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah, and His blessings.

The Answer:

- There is no objection to the intensification of death upon the believer; because of what he has in it of recompenses, and there is no contradiction between it and glad tidings, so the angels may give him glad tidings of Allah's pleasure while he is suffering the severities of the agonies of death.

- As for after death, the believer meets no severity, and no distress, and no constriction befalls him—neither in the grave nor in the resurrection and the reckoning.

- And what is mentioned in the books of warning, of mentioning the severities and terrors of death and the grave and the resurrection and the reckoning—then even if it has come in general, what is meant by it is what befalls the enemies of Allah specifically.

- And what has come of severities and terrors upon the believers and the truthful and the prophets, then it is not relied upon, and it is not accepted for its disobeying of the Qur'an, and because it has come by solitary routes, and solitary reports do not yield knowledge, and what we are in is from the matters of knowledge.

- But the scholars are lenient in transporting the narrations of encouragement and warning; because in them are kindness for the believer, and because no due is built upon them.

- And what was mentioned such as: "*Backbiting is worse than 'adultery'*"—in it there is no making light of adultery; rather, what is meant by that is that people are lenient regarding backbiting, so that statement was cast to them so that they may know that the backbiting which they are lenient in is not as they imagine; rather, it is, in obscenity

and crime with Allah, *Exalted is He*, like that crime which they know its obscenity and realize its enormity; so the example you mentioned is intended to portray the unknown by means of comparing it with the known.

- And remaining in the mosque after the dawn prayer until sunrise as one Hajj, or as two Hajj, or as two 'umrahs—this narration has been reported through the ways of our Imams and through the ways of others, and there is no problem in its meaning.

And the meaning is correct, for the hadith has been authenticated and has become well-known with all the scholars: "*Hajj is 'Arafah*". And then, the obligated person's confining himself in his place of prayer after the dawn prayer until sunrise, and occupying himself in that with the remembrance of Allah and His praise and ... etc., is equal and similar to the pilgrim's standing in 'Arafah and his remaining therein; thus the two matters are truly equal—since each of them is remaining in a specified place.

And then, what problem is there in that the reward of that remaining be like the reward of that remaining?!

And thus it came in the hadith: "*Umrah is the circumambulation of the House*". And it is known that circumambulation of the House and between al-Safa and al-Marwah does not need of time more than the measure from the rising of dawn to sunrise; so what prevents the equality of the reward of the 'umrah that we mentioned and the reward of remaining in the mosque after the dawn prayer?! And if there is no crowding, then what is between the dawn prayer and sunrise suffices for performing two 'umrahs or more.

And know that standing at 'Arafah for a minute, or two minutes, or a moment suffices in performing the obligation of standing—thus did the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) state that explicitly, and it became well-known from him (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) with widespread fame; so let it be known.

If you know that, then what has come in the hadith from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and from Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) of the equivalence between remaining in the place of prayer until sunrise and between Hajj and 'Umrah is intended by it what we mentioned and nothing else; so the student should not understand from it other than what we mentioned.

As for the reward of travel, and spending, and fatigue, and fear, and the reward of the rest of the rites of Hajj, and the reward of ihram, and talbiyah, and takbir, and ... etc.—then that is another matter that did not enter into the equivalence; and whoever understood the entering of that

has erred; because reward is according to the measure of hardship.

And it should be understood that what is meant by the equivalence with Hajj is the equivalence with the supererogatory Hajj; so remaining in the mosque until sunrise equals the supererogatory standing in 'Arafah, not the standing in the Hajj of Islam; because there is no comparison between the reward of the supererogatory and the reward of the obligatory.

- And what has come of censuring wealth and its earning, what is meant by it is unlawful wealth and unlawful earning, or what distracts from the remembrance of Allah, or calls to tyranny.

As for earning the lawful—even if it is abundant—without it distracting from the remembrance of Allah or from fulfilling the obligations of Allah, then there is no harm and no blame: *"Say, 'Who has forbidden the adornment of Allah which He has produced for His servants and the good things of provision?' Say, 'They are for those who believe during the life of this world, exclusively for them on the Day of Resurrection.'"* [Al-A'raf:32] And Allah, *Exalted is He*, mentioned in describing some of the Companions of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), in His saying, *Exalted is He*: *"...and others traveling throughout the land seeking [something] of the bounty of Allah..."*. [Al-Muzzammil:20] And Allah, *Exalted is He*, has made that traveling a cause for easing upon the Muslims from what He had obligated at the beginning of Islam of standing the whole night in prayer, or standing half of it, or a third of it, mentioned in Surat Al-Muzzammil; and read Surat Al-Muzzammil from its beginning to His saying: *"Indeed, your Lord knows that you stand [in prayer] almost..."* [Al-Muzzammil:20] ...to the end of the surah.

So then, the forbidden is that the world own you, not that you own it; and the blameworthy is its unlawful, not its lawful; and the grateful rich person who fulfills the rights of Allah, *Exalted is He*, from himself and from his wealth is better than the patient poor person.

And what has come of censuring from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and from Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) and from others, then what is meant by it is what we mentioned.

And there is no harm in general admonitions that warn of the world in general and absolutely; because people are naturally disposed to love wealth and the world and its adornment, and those admonitions lessen the amount of greed.

And the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) used to warn of the world in his admonitions, then he would say: *"Fear Allah and be moderate in seeking"*, then he (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) explained moderation in seeking, and he

(*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said: "Take what is lawful and leave what is unlawful".

And there is no objection to the believer's joy at death and his love for meeting Allah, *Exalted is He*, and there is no contradiction between it and magnifying death and what is after it; because that is directed to other than the believer.

And there is no harm in magnifying death and what is after it absolutely without specifying it to the enemies of Allah, and that is because in it are consoling for the believer—and *Allah knows best*.

[Sphericity of the Earth]

Question: Is the earth spherical or flat?

The answer: The earth is spherical, and this is the view of many of the Muslim scholars and their Imams; and the proof of its being spherical is that the regions of the earth differ, at one and the same time, from night to day, and from morning to evening; and if it were flat, the time would be uniform upon the face of the globe of the earth.

Question: Modern science has uncovered that the earth is spherical, and the sun likewise, and that the sun is thousands of kilometers distant from the earth; and Allah said in Surat Al-Kahf, relating from Dhu al-Qarnayn: "*Until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it setting in a spring of dark mud, and he found near it a people.*" [Al-Kahf:86]—with the knowledge that Dhu al-Qarnayn (*Peace be Upon Him*) did not depart from the earth. So is modern science opposed to the Qur'an? Or does the verse have an interpretation other than the apparent?

And also, modern science uncovered that the sun is shining upon the earth always, and there have been narrated hadiths from the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) that the sun, when it sets, settles at the pillars of the Throne... etc., or as he said; so are these hadiths false?

The answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success: The earth is spherical, as the scholars of astronomy have settled upon in this age; and the Imam al-Mahdi Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Murtada said that long ago in the introduction of al-Bahr, and the owner of al-Kashshaf, and al-Razi—this is what I have seen in the books of these; and perhaps others among the earlier ones say that.

And know that there is no opposition and no contradiction; for Dhu al-Qarnayn's seeing of the sun, at its setting, in a spring of dark mud is like one of us seeing it, at its setting, in the Red Sea, as it appears to the eye; so its setting in a spring of dark mud is only in consideration of what appears to the one who sees and looks, and not as a setting and disappearance from the earth entirely, decisively; and that can be known

by the telephone and the broadcasting device (radio).

As for the hadiths that were mentioned: if interpreting them is possible, then that; otherwise, they are left.

[The Ruling on Benefiting from Donkeys in Plowing the Land]

Question: Is it permissible to benefit from donkeys in plowing the land, with the knowledge that we see them becoming tired and that extreme fatigue and exhaustion appear upon them in plowing?

The answer: It is not permissible to tire donkeys and other animals and to exhaust them except with what Allah has permitted, for His servants, regarding them; and what Allah, *Exalted is He*, has permitted of tiring in donkeys is riding and carrying upon their backs. He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"And [He created] the horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and [as] adornment."* [An-Nahl:8]

So if plowing exhausts the donkeys and tires them with a hard fatigue beyond what riding and carrying tires them with—an apparent increase—then plowing upon them is not permissible.

[The Ruling on Acting upon the Doctor's Report]

What appears to me—and *Allah knows best*—is that it is permissible for the patient to act upon the doctor's report, such as that he informs him, for example, that washing the eye with water after the operation will harm him, or the like of that, even if the doctor is not Muslim, and that is:

- 1- Because of the scarcity of upright doctors—rather, their near nonexistence.
- 2- That repelling presumed harm from the self is an obligation rationally.

And this is along with presuming the truthfulness of the doctor.

[Love of a Thing Blinds and Deafens]

In the proverb: "Your love for a thing blinds and deafens," and truly, we have seen many of the sectarian-minded: if we make clear to them the arguments and the proofs during disputation, they do not raise their heads to them, and they hardly pay attention to them; and that is only because of their infatuation with their schools and their familiarity with them and their being brought up upon them; so, for that, they are attached to them with the attachment of the child to his mother; therefore, they do not pay attention to the evidences and proofs that violates their schools.

Solving Economic Crises in Islam and Exiting from Them

Solving that and exiting from it in Islam is easy, and that is by repentance to Allah, *Exalted is He*, and returning to Him and seeking His

forgiveness. He, *Glorified is He*, said: *"So I said, 'Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers and give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers.'"* [Nuh: 10-12] And He, *Glorified is He*, said: *"And if they had remained straight on the way, We would have given them abundant rain."* [Al-Jinn:16] And He, *Glorified is He*, said: *"And if only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened upon them blessings from the heaven and the earth; but they denied, so We seized them for what they were earning."* [Al-A'raf:96]

[How the Islamic Schools Arose]

Question: How did the Islamic schools (madhhabs) arise in beliefs, then in jurisprudential rulings?

The answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success:

- 1- **Beliefs:** The multiplicity of the Islamic schools in beliefs is the result of the multiplicity of whims; so because of them the doctrinal schools multiplied, and each scholars of a school began to interpret from the Qur'an what accords with his school, and to explain it according to his whim.
- 2- **Jurisprudential rulings:** And disagreement in jurisprudential rulings is the result:
 - 1- Either of the difference of the understandings of the scholars when examining the evidences and indications.
 - 2- Or of their difference in the method, such as their difference in acting upon analogy (qiyās), and upon the implied meaning (mafhum) and the like of them.

[Numbers to which Legal Rulings are Attached]

- 4- The month of Ramadan: the obligation of fasting it; and it comes as 30 days and 29 days.
- 5- The obligation of fasting two consecutive months in the expiation for murdering and the expiation for ḡihār.
- 6- The recommendation of fasting the day 13, 14, 15 of every month.
- 7- The recommendation of remembrance and fasting in the first ten (days) of Dhū al-Ḥijjah.
- 8- The obligation of breaking the fast on the Days of Tashrīq, and they are the days 10, 11, 12, 13 of Dhū al-Ḥijjah.
- 9- Feeding ten needy persons in the expiation for an oath, or fasting three days.
- 10- *"Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve months in the Register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred. That is the correct religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them."* [At-Tawbah:36]

- 11- The mutamatti' (pilgrim) who does not find the sacrificial offering—upon him is fasting three days in Hajj and seven when he returns to his household; those are ten complete.
- 12- The niṣāb of gold is twenty mithqāls, and the niṣāb of silver is two hundred dirhams, and the niṣāb of camels is five, and the niṣāb of cattle is thirty cows, and the niṣāb of sheep is forty sheep, and the niṣāb of each of grain, dates, and raisins is five awsuq; and the wasq is sixty sā'.
- 13- The least of menstruation is three days, and its most is ten, and the most of post-partum bleeding is forty days, and there is no limit for its least.
- 14- The traveler shortens in a distance of a barīd, and the barīd is four farsakhs, and the farsakh is three miles.
- 15- If the traveler resolves to stay ten days in a place, completion becomes obligatory upon him.
- 16- If the traveler is in a place and he says: today I will travel, tomorrow I will travel, and so on; then he shortens until completing the month; so when the month is completed, he completes the prayer.
- 17- The prayers are five: some are four-unit, some are three-unit, and some are two-unit; so the four-unit prayer is shortened to two in travel.
- 18- In the beginning of Islam, upon the twenty was that they stand to fight the two hundred, and the one hundred fight the one thousand; so Allah lightened that to the one hundred for the two hundred, and the one thousand for the two thousand.
- 19- Allah, *Exalted is He*, made obligatory in war-booty the khums (one-fifth).
- 20- The supererogatory prayers of the night are eight rak'ahs, and al-witr is three.
- 21- After every obligatory prayer: Subḥān Allāh 33, al-Ḥamdu lillāh 33, Allāhu Akbar 34.
- 22- Subḥān Allāh 100, al-Ḥamdu lillāh 100, Lā ilāha illā Allāh 100, Allāhu Akbar 100, Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh al-'Aliyy al-'Azīm 100.
- 23- Fasting six days of Shawwāl after Ramadan.
- 24- It is sunnah to wash each limb of wudū' three times, and the dead is washed three washings and five washings and seven washings, and he is shrouded in three garments or five or seven, and the praying people pronounce in their prayer over his funeral five takbīrs, and mourning over him is three days, and the wife of the deceased mourns four months and ten (days).
- 25- The husband possesses over his wife three divorces, and the

- waiting period ('iddah) of divorce is three quru', and three months for the one who does not menstruate—either due to young age or old age.
- 26- The unmarried adulterer is flogged 100 lashes, and upon the slave is half of it, and the slanderer is flogged 80 lashes.
 - 27- Impurity is washed three washings.
 - 28- The duration of pregnancy and suckling is 30 months, and the duration of weaning is two years.
 - 29- The fidyah of Hajj is fasting three days, or feeding six needy persons, or slaughtering a sheep.
 - 30- *"Hajj is [during] well-known months."* [Al-Baqarah:197] Shawwāl, Dhū al-Qa'dah, and ten (days) of Dhū al-Ḥijjah.
 - 31- The "known days" are the ten of Dhū al-Ḥijjah, and the "numbered days" are the Days of Tashrīq.
 - 32- The free man marries from women four; he does not exceed them.
 - 33- The least mahr is 10 dirhams, and the niṣāb of theft is ten dirhams, so the hand is not cut if he steals less than them.
 - 34- It is recommended to wash the hands three times at wudū' (the two palms).
 - 35- The apostate is asked to repent for three days; so if he repents, (then so), otherwise he is killed.
 - 36- The adhān and the iqāmah are in pairs, in pairs, except the tahlīl is once.
 - 37- The blood-money (diyah) is one hundred of camels, and of cattle two hundred, and of sheep one thousand, and of gold one thousand mithqāls, and of silver ten thousand dirhams.
 - 38- Wudū' is with a mudd, and ghusl is with a sā'; and a sā' of water is eight arṭāl, and a sā' of other than it is five arṭāl and a third of a raṭl.
 - 39- The vessel is washed from the licking of a dog seven times, and the eighth with soil.
 - 40- The boy is commanded to prayer at seven years, and is struck for it at ten, and separation between them in beds is done at nine; so when the boy reaches twelve years, rulings run upon him in what is between him and Allah; and when he reaches fifteen years, the ḥudūd and the rest of the legal rulings run upon him.

Corruption on the Earth

Corruption on the earth is represented in:

- 1- Shedding unlawful blood.
- 2- Stirring up tribulations among people, and planting enmities between them or stirring them.
- 3- Cutting off roads, and frightening (people) upon them, and plundering wealth.

- 4- Corrupting crops and fruits, and the rest of wealth.
- 5- Destroying dwellings and houses, and disturbing their owners from them.
- 6- Severing between relatives, neighbors, companions, and ... etc.
- 7- Polluting the waters of wells, rivers, and springs with what corrupts their water, or silts it up, or diverts it, or ... etc.
- 8- Siege and preventing necessary needs from the people of a town, and the like of that whose harm is widespread.

Its ruling in Islam:

Corruption on the earth is a great crime in Islam, and we cannot encompass mentioning the verses that came in censuring corruption and corrupters; and in the famous hadith: *"The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe"*, so the name of Islam is not realized except for the one who abandons corruption; and the corrupter either directly commits corruption himself, or by doing what results in corruption and causes it.

[Prophetic Benefits]

Hadith: *"If the ear of one of you rings, then let him mention me and send prayers upon me, and let him say: May Allah mentions in good the one who mentioned me with good"*. Ibn 'Adiyy.

"If the matter is entrusted to other than its experts, then await the Hour". Al-Bukhari.

"Seek needs with the self-pride, for matters run by the decrees". Ibn 'Asakir.

"Beware of that for which one must apologize". Al-Daylami.

"Fear the intuition of the believer, for he sees with the light of Allah". Al-Tirmidhi.

[Some of What the Groups of the Muslims Have Agreed Upon]

The groups of the Muslims, despite the disagreements of their schools, have agreed upon:

- That Allah, *Exalted is He*, commanded the legally responsible with what He commanded of His obedience, and He forbade them from what He forbade of disobeying Him.
- That Allah will reward the obedient for his obedience, and will recompense the wrongdoer for his wrongdoing—unless Allah wills to pardon him.
- That the doer of good deserves praise and commendation in the Book of Allah, and that the wrongdoer deserves blame in the Book of Allah; and Allah, *Exalted is He*, has struck, regarding that, parables in His Noble Book: *"like a good tree"* [Ibrahim:24]; *"like a*

bad tree" [Ibrahim:26]; and "And not equal are the blind and the seeing, nor are darknesses and the light, nor are the shade and the heat, and not equal are the living and the dead." [Fatir]; and "Then is one who is a believer like one who is defiantly disobedient? They are not equal. As for those who believed..." [As-Sajdah].

- That Allah, *Exalted is He*, loves the doers of good, and loves those who repent, and loves those who purify themselves, and loves the Godfearing; and that He does not love the wrongdoers, and does not love corruption, and does not love the disbelievers, and does not love the arrogant, and does not love every treacherous, ungrateful one.
- And that He, *Exalted is He*, intends for His servants ease, and does not intend for them hardship.

The Road of As'ad al-Kamil

I have seen the road of As'ad al-Kamil) between Zahrān and Şa'dah, and it is a road that is wide enough for a large car, paved with stones like the paving of the streets of old Sana'a; and on the two sides of the road are two built-up edges of stone at a height of approximately thirty centimeters; and what is well-known among people is that this road is from Ma'rib to Makkah; and in that is an indication of three matters:

- 1- That As'ad Tubba'—(As'ad al-Kamil) had great economic strength, and had great influence and political strength between Ma'rib and Makkah.
- 2- That there is civilizational progress, in that paving the road in that form and at that width indicates the existence of large conveyances that move upon wheels, and it is possible that those conveyances were similar to the conveyances that we see being pulled by horses in this time.

And His saying, *Exalted is He: "And We placed between them and the towns which We had blessed, towns visible, and We determined within them the journey. Travel between them by nights and days in safety. But they said, 'Our Lord, make distant between our journeys,' and they wronged themselves; so We made them [as] tales..."*, the verse. [Saba']

[The Origin of the Creation of the Animals upon the Face of the Earth]

Question: From what did Allah create the animals upon the face of the earth?

The answer: What appears is that they are created from clay; because in their creation they are like the human being, from flesh and blood and bone; then if the animal dies, it becomes dust with the passing of time; and in that is an indication that its origin is dust. And likewise, Hawwa'—

she is created from clay like Adam; and that is what is more likely in my view.

And Allah, *Exalted is He*, only did not relate to us the story of the beginning of her creation as He related the beginning of the creation of Adam, sufficing with His mentioning the story of the beginning of the creation of Adam, and what was joined to the beginning of his creation (*Peace be Upon Him*) of Allah's will to honor him, and of the temptation of Iblis, then his entering (*Peace be Upon Him*) the Garden, and the temptation of Iblis for him (*Peace be Upon Him*); and afterwards, Hawwa' is a follower to Adam, and she does not have of honor what Adam has.

[The Ruling of Inclination and Love for a Man and Aversion to Another without Any Cause]

Question: A man finds in his heart love and inclination toward a man, while he finds in his heart aversion and repulsion from another man, for no apparent reason in the two men, despite the two men being equal in the outward of faith—of maintaining the prayers and avoiding the forbidden and... etc. So what is the ruling in that?

The answer: The legally responsible is not taken to account for what has occurred of that in his heart; and what is obligatory upon the legally responsible in the like of that is that he does not show upon his tongue or his limbs any evidence of that dislike, and that he deal with the believer whom he dislikes with a good dealing, and that he does not diminish him from what is obligatory upon the Muslim for the Muslim of rights. And perhaps the reason for the occurrence of aversion from some believers returns to the very nature of the believer, for there may be in the believer a heedlessness such that he does not notice, with it, what annoys his brothers and his companions from the believers, so he proceeds in what annoys them of sayings and actions without awareness from him that that annoys them and disturbs them; and that repeats in him and does not stop, and if he is reminded he does not become mindful— and there is no doubt that the like of that repels them from him and causes their dislike of him.

- As for the alert, awake believer: then by his intelligence and alertness he avoids what repels his companions and what disturbs them, and he does not bring from sayings and actions except what is pleasant for them; so that causes the inclination of their hearts toward him and their love for him.

And the first man is named "al-thaqīl (the heavy)" in the usage of the experts of language, and the second is named "al-khafīf (the light)."

And the heavy is excused with Allah: no sin reaches him in what issues from him of bothering people and bringing constriction upon them; because he is not intending that; rather, he does not even know that he

causes harm to people and brings constriction upon them at all—even if people inform him of that, he does not believe.

- And I have read that if the heavy comes to know and realize that he is heavy upon his companion or the experts of his sitting, then he is not heavy.

[The Ruling Regarding One of a Sensitive Disposition Who Complains Much About the Actions of His Companions and Relatives]

Question: If the disposition of the legally responsible person is sensitive such that he interprets the actions of his companions and relatives, and their statements, as meaning belittlement of him and contempt for him, then he increases in complaining about them and turning away from them—will he be taken to account for that?

The answer: That disposition results from a deficiency in intellect; for the one of complete intellect—even if he hears from his companion, or his sitting-mate, or his friend, or his relative something that gives the impression of contempt for him—does not rely upon that impression, and does not pay attention to it. And if the matter is so, then what is closer is that he is not taken to account for it; because Allah, *Exalted is He*, calls people to account according to the measure of their intellects, so He does not call to account the deficient in intellect like the accounting of the complete in intellect: *"Allah does not burden a soul except with what it can bear."* [Al-Baqarah:286] and *"Indeed, Allah does not wrong [anyone by] an atom's weight."* [Al-Baqarah:40].

If it is said: If that one is deficient in intellect, then does legal responsibility fall from him?

It is said: Legal responsibility does not fall from him altogether; rather, he is legally responsible for what his intellect has encompassed and what his understanding has grasped, not for what his intellect has not reached and his understanding has not encompassed.

- And I have myself perceived, from some of the legally responsible, during discussion on issues, that their thinking did not reach them, and that their intellects were not able to comprehend them; and I saw that the capacities of their intellects were limited, and that what they have of innate disposition was not able to understand some issues—while, at the same time, their perception was complete, and their knowledges were firm regarding the oneness of Allah and good knowledge of Him, Exalted is He, and what is connected to that of the fundamentals of religion.

- And what I have perceived myself drew my attention to that legal responsibility differs according to the disagreement of intellects, as we mentioned; and praise be to Allah Who guided us to this, and we would not have been guided had Allah not guided us.

Protective Zeal and Partisanship

Allah, *Exalted is He*, has fashioned the human being, in the origin of his creation, upon protective zeal and partisanship; and partisanship and protective zeal become obligatory in a circumstance and forbidden in a circumstance: so they become obligatory for honoring the religion, aiding Islam and the Muslims, and aiding the truth and its people; and they become forbidden if they are in the interest of falsehood and its people.

[Legal Numbers]

The number "7":

Seven heavens.

Seven seas.

Circumambulation of the House is seven, and between al-Safa and al-Marwah are seven circuits.

- *"...and seven when you return."*
- *"Seven of the oft-repeated."*
- *"Seven fat cows".*
- *"...eaten by seven lean [ones]."*
- *"Seven years continuously".*
- *"Seven severe (years)".*
- *"Seven nights".*
- Stoning the pillars: each pillar with seven pebbles.
- Seven days and seven nights are the number of the days and nights of the week.
- The licking of a dog is washed seven times.
- The number of surahs that began with glorifying Allah is seven surahs.
- The number of surahs that began with "Ḥā Mīm" is seven.
- The number of the gates of Hell is seven.
- Seven will be in the shade of Allah on a day when there is no shade except His shade.

The number ten in the religion:

- Feeding ten needy persons in the expiation for an oath, or clothing them.
- Fasting ten days in place of the blood (sacrifice) of tamattu'.
- *"And We completed them with ten."*
- The last ten (nights) of Ramadan.
- The ten (days) of Dhū al-Ḥijjah.
- Fasting the tenth day of Muharram.

- The zakah of what the earth brings forth is a tenth if it is watered by rainfall.
- The hand of the thief is cut if he steals what is worth ten dirhams or more.
- The most of menstruation is ten, and the least of purity is ten.
- The badna suffices for ten mutamatti' pilgrims.
- The sciences of intellect are ten.
- The good deed is by ten of its like.
- *"By the dawn, and [by] ten nights."*
- "And bury one out of every ten skins."
- "Ten of the sunnahs of the messengers."
- *"Then bring ten surahs like it..."*
- *"So if you complete ten, then it is from you."*

The number five in the law:

- *"Five prayers Allah has prescribed in the day and the night."*
- The pillars of Islam are five.
- The niṣāb of camels is five.
- The People of the Cloak are five.

[Important Benefits for Women]

[A Woman's Responsibility in Islam]

- 1- Allah, *Exalted is He*, has assigned to the woman the responsibility of pregnancy and suckling, and the custody of her children and their upbringing, and the cleanliness of their bodies and their clothes and their sleeping-places, and preparing food for them, and what is connected to that.
- 2- Managing the affairs of her husband's house.
- 3- Preparing the private needs of her husband within the house.
- 4- Taking charge of safeguarding her husband's wealth.
- 5- And from the works of the woman that may come upon her: nursing the husband or some of her children, or nursing her mother, or nursing her father, or some of her relatives.
- 6- It may be that the woman, after carrying out those responsibilities, has some free time, so she can, in that time, study or teach—this being in a place befitting the safeguarding of the woman and her covering.

- And these works which we have mentioned are important and great works that occupy all of the woman's time; and these works that the woman does in her husband's house are not less than the importance of the works that the man undertakes. Rather, the importance of the works entrusted to the woman equals the works entrusted to the man in importance, rank, and benefit; for happy social life and bringing it to its hopes is not achieved as it ought to be except under the care of two pillars: the father and the mother; so if the care of the mother, or the care of the father, is absent, that does not occur.

Rather, the children—who are the future generation—are exposed to complex corruptions and moral maladies that produce social calamities and destructive effects.

- Allah, *Exalted is He*, created the man for a purpose, and created the female for a purpose, and made each of them upon a structure, a nature, and an innate disposition that suits the purpose for which he or she was created; so it is gross ignorance that we employ either of them in other than the functions for which he or she was created.

[The Dire Consequences That a Woman Reaps from Liberating Herself from Religion]

In truth and in reality, the woman who responds to the call of "liberating woman," and abandons her chastity and her safeguarding, and displays the hidden treasures of her beauties and the preserved ornament of her adornment as a public display—there will certainly occur, from her, sexual obscenities continuously and abundantly; and the

woman who is like that will lose her life entirely, and all her happy hopes for her near future will fail; and what is expected is:

- 1- Soon, her friends—those for whom she spread out the concealed part of her chastity, and to whom she conceded the most precious and most valuable thing she bears—will turn away from her; rather, they will spit in her face if she attempts to continue with them, out of their contempt for her and their belittlement of her: they see no worth for her, nor any value with them, nor any weight; rather, they see her as a germ from which their dispositions recoil. And she will collide with this ugly treatment; because she expects from them that they will thank her for what she expended for them of the precious and the valuable; but the matter will be reversed: they do not see that what she expended for them of her beauties and her chastity is a kindness that must be met with thanks; rather, they see her giving them all her chastity as lowness and vileness for which she does not deserve thanks—rather, she deserves contempt and humiliation. Such will be her condition with the “friends” of what is beneath her clothes.
- 2- If this “liberated” woman passes beyond the period of friendship and companions, and she wishes to marry, and to have a husband and children, and to live with them a calm, reassured life—then everyone who knows her will not be pleased with her as a partner for his life, and will not accept her as a wife: not her friends, nor others; for every man sees that she has lost suitability completely.
- 3- And her value will be below zero, and great academic qualifications cannot raise her value, nor her income-generating job, nor anything else; rather, her friends whose friendship with her has been prolonged will reject her friendship and seek for themselves new female friends—because so long as the door is open before desires, the self inclines by its nature to everything new. Then the “liberated” woman becomes socially cut off: no friends, no husband, and no children.
- 4- And in this state, she may be afflicted with AIDS resulting from the “freedom” of what is beneath her clothes.

- I heard, a period ago, from the Yemeni media outlets that they spoke about a strange social phenomenon, namely: that university students are not pleased to marry female university students, and they do not accept them as wives at all; and that they asked the students about that, so they answered that they wish to marry the girls of their villages, and that they have no desire to marry university girls. This is what Sana’a Television broadcast. And this is a clear proof that any “liberation” of the woman

causes her to lose her value entirely, and leaves for her no weight with men.

[The Superiority of the Man over the Woman]

- 1- The intellect of the man is more abundant than the intellect of the woman.
- 2- The aspiration of the man is high—by it he attains the highest ranks and reaches the greatest degrees—whereas the aspiration of the woman is, in most cases, restricted to adornment and beautifying herself.
- 3- The man has an ability for dispute and argumentation, and his patience in this chapter is long; as for the woman, she is described as inarticulate and incapable of that, and if she enters into a dispute and argumentation, her ability quickly collapses and she becomes confused in her proof.
- 4- Men are distinguished from women by courage.
- 5- And they are distinguished from women by the strength of the body and its muscles.
- 6- And by prolonged patience over hard and exhausting works.
- 7- And by patience and overlooking what they encounter of people's natures and their harm, and... etc.
- 8- The woman is much-talking, unlike the man in most cases.
- 9- The woman has no patience for keeping a secret, unlike the man.
- 10- The woman trusts a person for the smallest cause, and her trust is invalidated for the smallest cause.
- 11- And because she trusts a person for the smallest cause, it is easy to deceive her and scheme against her.
- 12- Logical, rational dialogue does not benefit with the woman and does not succeed; rather, what benefits with the woman is emotional dialogue.

[The Condition of the Woman in the Muslim Society]

Question: How was the life of the woman in the society of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) and the Companions? And did she mix with men? And what are the limits of this mixing? And why did Abu Bakr and 'Umar visit Fatimah (*Peace be Upon Her*) before her death—so is this permissible, or recommended, or specific? And is speaking, walking, and the companionship of the woman with men without a mahram within the mile permissible?

All of that is because of what I have read of the words of the wives of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) to the Muslims, and the companionship of women in journeys and in battles and giving drink to the wounded, and in the emigration where Zayd ibn

Harithah—as I suppose—emigrated with the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and likewise Umm Salamah emigrated without a mahram, and other than that of virtuous women who studied and taught knowledge, and other than that of the stories of history in which there is that the society was mixed—without display of adornment and without obscenity; so what is your view, may Allah preserve you?

The answer: The Muslim woman, after the descending of the command to her to lower the gaze, and the command to men to lower it, and His command to her to cover her adornment and her beauties, and to cover her voice—until she was forbidden from striking with her foot so that the sounds of her hidden adornment are not heard... etc.—was adhering to what Allah, *Exalted is He*, commanded her with.

And there is no objection, along with that, to her leaving her house for need, with her adhering to what she was commanded with of lowering the gaze, and covering adornment, and leaving crowding men, and leaving being at ease with men in speech, and to not be left alone with men.

And women used to attend the ‘Eid prayer with the men, but on a side of the prayer-place.

And there is no harm that the woman speak to the man regarding her need, if that is not accompanied by being at ease in speech, and softness in wording, and uncovering adornment, and (while maintaining) to not be left alone with men; and upon this the woman used to speak to the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and she used to speak to the man in the era of the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- And likewise, Fatimah (*Peace be Upon Her*) spoke to Abu Bakr and ‘Umar and upon that Abu Bakr and ‘Umar spoke to her.

- And their visit to her was for a need, and ‘Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) was with them; and their need was that they seek her satisfaction regarding them, and that she leave her and he got angry upon them; and she only went to them because of her need to speak with them, and if not for what we mentioned of the need, it would not have been allowed for Abu Bakr and ‘Umar to visit her, and it would not have been allowed for her to go to them.

- And there is no objection that the woman accompanies men within the mile, with her adherence to what Allah, *Exalted is He*, commanded her with, and with the men’s adherence to what they were commanded with in this matter; and it is not permissible for her to accompany a single man within the mile.

- And there is no harm, in necessity, that the woman travels with

trustworthy men without a mahram, but on the condition that she be safe, regarding herself, from temptation; and that is like the travel of emigration.

- And likewise, there is no harm upon the woman who is adhering to what Allah, *Exalted is He*, commanded, that she be in the rear of the army to give drink to the thirsty and to treat his wound, and the like of that.

- And likewise, there is no objection to the woman studying knowledge and teaching it, with her adherence to what she was commanded with.

[Mixing in Universities]

Question: Religions, in some countries, encounter university students and inform them that in the university they are mixed with women—so is the mixing of men with women in universities and schools unlawful, with the knowledge that there occurs between male students and female students the exchange of lustful glances, and likewise the professors; and there are also among them some who flirt, and they exchange speech between them.

And if this is unlawful, then is it valid for a religious student to continue his study, and lower his gaze, and restrain his tongue? Or is it not valid?

The answer—and Allah is the One Who grants success: It is not permissible for the believer to attend gatherings of wrongdoing, even if he is safe regarding himself from falling into wrongdoing—except that he attend those gatherings for the purpose of forbidding the wrongdoing and changing it; and if the matter is as in the question, then it is not permissible for the believer to continue the study.

[Various Gatherings]

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

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless and grant peace to our master Muhammad and his pure family. Thereafter: these are gatherings—each gathering in a chapter of knowledge:

Gathering: The Glories of the Arabs

The Arabs are those who trace their lineage to Adnan or Qahtan, and Adnan is from the descendants of Ishmael son of Abraham (*Peace be Upon them*). The historians differed regarding the lineage of Qahtan into two positions:

- *A position said:* he is from the descendants of the Prophet of Allah Hud (*Peace be Upon Him*), and the people of this position are the historians from the people of Yemen.
- *And a position said:* he is from the descendants of the Prophet of Allah Ishmael son of Abraham (*Peace be Upon Them*), and the people of this position are the historians from other than the people of Yemen.

And the sounder of the two positions, in my view, is the second position, due to His saying, *Exalted is He*, in Surat Al-Hajj—and it was revealed in Madinah: *"O you who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good—so that you may succeed. And strive for Allah with the striving due to Him. He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any hardship—the religion of your father Abraham. He named you Muslims before and in this..."*, the verse. [Al-Hajj: 77-78] Allah, *Exalted is He*, addressed by this verse the Muslims who were in Madinah, and most of them—indeed the majority of them—were from the people of Madinah, and the people of Madinah are Qahtani.

And in the hadith: that the Prophet (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) said to Banu Salamah—and they were from the people of Madinah, and they used to shoot: *"Shoot, O Banu Salamah, for your father Ishmael was an archer."* This is the meaning of the hadith, and it is in Al-Bukhari and others.

- What we have put forward is a tremendous glory; and among their glories is that Allah, *Exalted is He*, chose from them the Seal of the Prophets (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*), and that the Qur'an was revealed in their language, and that Allah chose from them the helpers of His Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- Then Allah, Blessed and *Exalted is He*, said regarding them: *"You are the best nation produced for mankind: you enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah."* [Aal 'Imran: 110] And He, *Exalted is He*,

said regarding them: *"And thus We have made you a middle nation so that you may be witnesses over the people and the Messenger may be a witness over you."* [Al-Baqarah:143] And He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"And indeed, it is a reminder for you and for your people."* [Az-Zukhruf:44]—meaning: the Qur'an is an honor for you and for your people.

And the meaning of this verse—and *Allah knows best*—is that Allah, *Exalted is He*, made the addressees of this verse better than other nations so that they may bear witness on the Day of Resurrection against the disbelievers and the rebels. So, when the disbelievers protest on the Day of Resurrection against Allah and say: How do You judge us, our Lord, with everlasting punishment when You did not send to us a messenger to warn us and caution us? Allah, *Exalted is He*, will say: I did send to you a messenger to warn you and caution you. Then they will deny that; so, the witnesses whom Allah, *Exalted is He*, mentioned in this verse will stand and testify with the truth: that Allah's Messenger came to you, so they disbelieved in him and in what he brought from Allah.

- And among their glories is that Allah, *Exalted is He*, made their lands a place for His Ancient House, which He made a direction for the people, turning to it in their worship, and making pilgrimage to it in veneration of what Allah has venerated therein; and He made what is around it a sacred sanctuary, and He placed there blessing and security that is not found in other lands. He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"Indeed, the first House established for mankind was that at Bakkah—blessed and a guidance for the worlds. In it are clear signs, the standing place of Abraham. And whoever enters it shall be safe. And to Allah, upon the people, is pilgrimage to the House—for whoever is able to find a way to it. And whoever disbelieves—then indeed Allah is free of need of the worlds."* [Aal 'Imran:96-97] And in their lands the Prophet of Islam (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) was born, and therein he was raised, and therein he was sent, and therein he died; and in their lands is the abode of his emigration, and therein is his grave (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*).

- And the party of truth that will remain manifest until the Day of Resurrection is from the Arabs; and in the Arabs are noble traits such as courage, readiness to help, loyalty, patience, generosity, chastity, modesty, and... etc.

Gathering: No One Attained a Pleasure Except by Parting from Another

This title is from the words of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Talib (*Peace be Upon Him*), in which he spoke about the nature of worldly life.

The meaning is: that Allah, *Exalted is He*, built worldly life and

imprinted it upon good and evil, joy and sorrow, happiness and grief, and to the rest of what is known of the traits of this worldly life.

And the Commander of the Faithful (*Peace be Upon Him*) also says, in this meaning: "the world did not become sweet from one side except that it became bitter from another side". And he (*Peace be Upon Him*) has many words in this meaning.

So, when the legally responsible person knows the nature of worldly life, what he meets in his life of disturbances and vexations becomes easy for him; and if he attains in it a blessing from its blessings, he does not greatly rejoice in it; and if a blessing from its blessings passes him by, he does not greatly pine over its passing—because he knows its dual nature.

And Ali (*Peace be Upon Him*) also has words about the nature of worldly life, the meaning of which is: that worldly life is imprinted upon worries, sorrows, murkiness, and constriction; so, whatever occurs in it of joy and happiness is only a breeze. This is the meaning of his words (*Peace be Upon Him*).

[Gathering: Rarely Does Something Turn Away and Then Return]

If you are in a state of advance in trade, or agriculture, or prestige, or other than that of the affairs of the world, then that advance turns its face away from you, gives you its back, and goes—do not exhaust yourself in pursuing it and chasing it; for its known habit and its familiar way is that it does not return to the one to whom it had been facing with its face. The evidences of that are many in the past and the present.

Acceptance: (Good Fortune)

Acceptance and good fortune may occur without a cause and without much seeking; rather, Allah, *Glorified and Exalted is He*, bestows upon whom He wills among His servants whatever He wills of giving and blessing—so He raises him after lowliness, and enriches him after poverty, and... etc.

And acceptance and good fortune may be due to a cause from the legally responsible person, such as his being dutiful to his parents, maintaining ties with his relatives, doing good to orphans and the needy and neighbors, and to people generally—so Allah rewards him and recompenses him for that with abundant wealth and blessing in it.

Turning Away

Likewise, turning away may be with a cause and without a cause. Among the causes of turning away is ingratitude for blessings. He, *Exalted is He*, said: "*And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed: If you are grateful, I will surely increase you; but if you are ungrateful, indeed My punishment is severe.*" [Ibrahim:7]

And turning away may be without a cause: that Allah, *Exalted is He*, tests His servants with good and evil and turns them about therein. He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"As for man, when his Lord tests him and honors him and favors him, he says, 'My Lord has honored me.' But when He tests him and restricts his provision, he says, 'My Lord has humiliated me...'"* [Al-Fajr:15-16]

- And what Allah, *Exalted is He*, wants from the legally responsible person in both states is:

- As for in the state of advance: that he receives the bestowed blessing with gratitude to Allah, and that he persists in praising Allah and thanking Him and extolling Him, and not be heedless of that, and that he sees the blessing in himself as great. And gratitude is by carrying out everything Allah, *Exalted is He*, commanded, and refraining from what He forbade.
- And as for in the state of turning away: that he be patient, and say *"To Allah we belong and to Him we return,"* and be content with Allah regarding what He has tested him with, and not greatly pine and grieve over what has turned away from him.

[Gathering: On What Has Come in the Wise Qur'an Concerning the Rulings of Sale]

It is known that a sale does not take place except with the realization of:

- 1- A sane seller.
- 2- A sane buyer.
- 3- A known commodity.
- 4- A defined price.
- 5- Then agreement between the seller and the buyer, and mutual consent between them, upon selling that known commodity for a defined price.

And it is stipulated that the seller be sane, because it is known of the invalidity of the transactions of children and the insane.

And that he be acting by choice, not coerced, due to His saying, *Exalted is He: "...except that it be a trade by mutual consent among you."* [An-Nisa':29] And the coerced is not consenting. And that he be the owner of the commodity that he sells, or an agent for its owner; for if the sale occurs from other than the owner of the commodity or his agent, that is from consuming the wealth of people wrongfully, and a trade by mutual consent does not occur.

- And that the sold commodity be from what Allah has permitted therein for His servants and made lawful for them; so if the commodity is from what Allah, *Exalted is He*, has forbidden to His servants, such as carrion and wine, the sale is not valid and is void.

And the evidence for the prohibition of selling carrion and wine and the like of what Allah, Exalted is He, has forbidden is His saying, *Exalted is He: "Forbidden to you is carrion..."* [Al-Ma'idah:3] and His saying, *Exalted is He: "Indeed, wine, gambling, [stone] altars, and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it..."*, [Al-Ma'idah:90] and when Allah, Exalted is He, forbade carrion, He forbade upon us every kind of benefiting from it; so its sale is not valid, nor consuming its price, and it is not permissible for the Muslim, regarding carrion, any act or any benefit.

And in the hadith: *"Allah cursed the Jews: the fats were forbidden to them, so they melted them, and they sold them, and they consumed their prices."*

And likewise, wine: it is not permissible for the Muslim to deal with it by any dealing whatsoever.

- There is affirmed for the buyer the options mentioned in *Al-Azhar* and its commentary if the cause of any one of them—or more—exists. So, if the buyer is satisfied with the commodity while the cause of the option exists, the sale is finalized and completed; and if he is not satisfied with the commodity, he has that he returns it to the seller, and the sale between them is annulled.

And the evidence for that is His saying, *Exalted is He: "...except that it be a trade by mutual consent..."*, [An-Nisa':29] for if the buyer knows the cause of the option before concluding the contract of sale, then he has no option; because he bought it while consenting to what is in it of deficiency and defect.

And Allah, *Glorified and Exalted is He*, said: *"And Allah has permitted sale and forbidden usury."* [Al-Baqarah:275]

Gathering: Ignorance

Ignorance is among the ugliest traits with which a human being is described, and the ignorant person, by ignorance, descends to a rank in which he and the rest of the animals are equal; and nothing raises the human being from this low rank except knowledge, and his rising from this rank is according to the measure of the knowledge he has.

And knowledge is of two kinds:

- 1- A kind that raises its possessor in the world, not in the Hereafter, and that is such as medical knowledge, and the knowledge of economics and agriculture and trade, and the sciences of industry in their various forms, and the knowledge of the characteristics of the earth, and the knowledge of the characteristics of the seas, and the knowledge of the characteristics of space, and the sciences of the characteristics of animals and birds and insects,

and the knowledge of engineering and construction, and... and... etc. And He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"They know what is apparent of the life of this world, but of the Hereafter they are heedless."* [Ar-Rum:7]

- 2- And the second kind of the two kinds of knowledge raises its possessor in the world and the Hereafter, and that is knowledge of the Noble Book and the Prophetic Sunnah, and knowledge of the basics of that.

And know that it is obligatory upon the Nations of the Muslims that there be among them scholars in every matter they need in their worldly life, and in what they need in their religion.

So, it is obligatory that there be among them scholars of medicine, and scholars of construction and engineering, and scholars of politics, and scholars of economics, and scholars of industry—peaceful and military—and... etc.

And it is obligatory that there be among them scholars who know what the Messenger (*May Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace*) brought of laws and rulings and beliefs and acts of worship and dealings and regulations—realized in the knowledge of the truth and its people—distinguishing between truth and falsehood, and knowing doubts, deceptions, illusions, myths, and intrigues... etc.

- Nations and peoples boast—each according to what it has—of the ancient manuscripts left across past centuries; and that is only because those ancient remnants carry, without doubt, indications of the people's deep-rootedness and authenticity in knowledge and learning.

As for the people who do not possess any intellectual remnant in their libraries from after their fathers across history, then it is a proof that that people are deeply rooted in ignorance and foolishness.

And the Yemeni people were, almost, the richest of peoples in this field; for their intellectual, heritage remnants became abundant until those who covet took from that heritage what filled the libraries of Turkey, Britain, some European countries, Egypt, and some Arab countries; and still, those who possess material greed sell dozens of manuscripts secretly and export them to some countries; and despite that continual plundering and great taking, the public and private Yemeni libraries still overflow with ancient manuscripts in all kinds of sciences.

Gathering: Astronomy in the Qur'an

Allah, *Exalted is He*, said: *"And We have made the night and the day two signs; then We erased the sign of the night and made the sign of the day giving sight, that you may seek bounty from your Lord and that you may know the number of years and the judgment."* [Al-Isra':12] And He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"The sun and the moon [move] by precise calculation."* [Ar-

Rahman:5] And He, *Glorified is He*, said: *"And [He created] the stars so that you may be guided by them in the darknesses of the land and the sea."* [Al-An'am:97] And: *"And the sun runs to its resting place. That is the determination of the Mighty, the Knowing. And the moon—We have determined for it phases until it returns like the old date-stalk. It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day; and all [of them] in an orbit are swimming."* [Ya-Sin:38-40] And there are many verses in this field.

And it is necessarily known that the reading of these verses does not suffice for the one who wants knowledge of the phases of the sun and the moon, and knowledge of the stars by which one is guided on land and sea; rather, whoever wants knowledge of what Allah, Exalted is He, intended must learn that from the people of knowledge of it.

So, the knowledge of the stars of agriculture is from this knowledge; and the agricultural stars known today are arranged and produced from the calculation of the phases of the sun throughout the whole year, for every day there is a phase.

And guidance by the stars continues until today on land and sea, and it is not possible to know guidance by the stars except by learning from those who possess knowledge of them.

For the stars of the sky are in continuous movement and do not settle; and what you see of the stars at one time you do not see at another time—rather you see others—and thus throughout the year; and knowledge of all that is not possible except by learning from an expert in it.

Gathering: The Science of Industry in the Qur'an

Allah, *Exalted is He*, said regarding Dawud (*Peace be Upon Him*): *"And We taught him the fashioning of coats of armor for you to protect you from your [enemy in] battle. So will you then be grateful?"* [Al-Anbiya':80] And He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of tethered horses..."*, [Al-Anfal:60] and He said: *"And from their wool, their fur, and their hair—furnishings and enjoyment for a time."* [An-Nahl:80] and He said: *"And Allah has made for you from your homes a place of rest, and made for you from the hides of the grazing livestock tents which you find light on the day of your travel and on the day of your stay..."* [An-Nahl:80].

And Allah, *Exalted is He*, has bestowed upon His servants, by what He has made for them of the ships that plow through the seas, and by what He has made for them in the seas of tender flesh, and of pearls and coral.

And He, *Exalted is He*, mentioned in the Qur'an silk and brocade, and garments of adornment, and gold and silver and iron and copper; and He bestowed upon His servants by what He brings forth for them of the

kinds of grains and fruits and produce; and He, *Exalted is He*, mentioned pens, writing, and sheets, and scales and measures, and... etc.—so all of that Allah, *Exalted is He*, has bestowed upon His servants.

And it is known that the ships sailing upon the surface of the water—like mountains—whose making Allah, *Exalted is He*, bestowed upon His servants, cannot be attained, nor can the servants of Allah benefit from them, except by learning the craft of shipbuilding. And the servants cannot benefit from what Allah, *Exalted is He*, intended them to benefit from of iron and copper and gold and silver except by learning to extract that from the earth and learning its crafting from the people of expertise. And they cannot establish justice in measure and weight except if the craft of measuring-vessels and scales exists. And they cannot prepare the tools of war and its equipment which Allah, *Exalted is He*, commanded to prepare except by learning the craft of iron and extracting it, and... etc.

All that with which Allah, *Exalted is He*, bestowed upon His servants depends, for its attainment, upon the specific knowledge of it; and this specific knowledge is not found in the Qur'an; rather, it is attained by learning it from the specialists who possess expertise.

So Allah, *Exalted is He*, did not teach us in the Qur'an how we weave garments from the threads of the silkworm, nor how we make them from the hair of sheep, camels, and goats, nor how we reach building houses from hides; and He did not teach us how we make sheets, ink, and pens.

From here you know that the Qur'an alone is not sufficient to reach what Allah, *Exalted is He*, wants for His servants of benefiting from what He has bestowed upon them of what we mentioned.

Gathering: The Science of Judging in the Qur'an

He, *Exalted is He*, said: *"O Dawud, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth and do not follow desire, for it will mislead you from the way of Allah..."*. [Sad:26]

And: *"And judge between them by what Allah has revealed..."*. [Al-Ma'idah:49]

And: *"And when you speak, be just—even if [it concerns] a near relative."* [Al-An'am:152]

And: *"Be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or the parents and the relatives."* [An-Nisa':135]

It is taken from what we mentioned:

- 1- That it is necessary for the one who takes the lead in judging to be a scholar of what Allah, *Exalted is He*, revealed in the Qur'an of laws and rulings: *"And judge between them by what Allah has revealed"*, because it is not possible for the judge to judge by what Allah, *Exalted is He*, revealed except if he is knowledgeable of it.

2- That the judge be just, adhering to God-fearness and scrupulousness; because Allah, *Exalted is He*, made justice a condition in the witness—otherwise his testimony is not accepted—so the judge is more deserving that justice be stipulated. And if the judge, in himself, is not just, then how can it be possible from him that he judge with justice and truth?!

- And He, *Glorified is He*, said: "*Say, 'Bring your proof, if you should be truthful.'*" [Al-Baqarah:111] Therefore, the judge does not act upon the claim of the claimant if he is not able to establish, upon it, an evidence.

- And the just evidence is the testimony of two upright, accepted men, or a man and two women in wealth and rights—not in the prescribed punishments and retaliation—so the testimony of women is not accepted. And all of this the Noble Qur'an brought.

- And it is known that what came in the Qur'an in this chapter is the foundations of judging and its rules.

- And what came in the Qur'an also from the legal rulings is the foundations of jurisprudential rulings, and in it are many of their details.

And it is possible for the one firmly grounded in knowledge, of kindled discernment, granted success with accord, right-guidance, and assistance, to refer what its ruling did not come in the Qur'an back to what its ruling did come in it, and to measure matters one against another.

And in judging there are appendages, branches, points, and conditions known by the scholars of *ijtihad* and the specialized judges—there is no choice for the judge but to know them; and judging with justice as it ought to be is not completed except with knowing them; and knowledge of them is only by learning from the people of knowledge of them.

- Along with completeness of knowledge and *ijtihad*, it is necessary for the one who wants judging and occupying its platform that he sits with judges and accompany them, so that he may know how the judge deals with the two litigants, and with the witnesses, and with the claims, and with the responses, and how he discusses the claims and the responses and the witnesses, and... etc.

Gathering: Advanced Industries in This Age

The human being, in this age, has reached—by his intellect and his thinking—advanced industries in all fields, and all of that indicates the greatness of the Creator of the human intellect, *Mighty and Majestic*.

It may be said: Why did the human intellect and his thinking not reach advancement in industry except in this recent time, not in the ancient times and the earlier centuries, while intellect and thinking have accompanied the human being since his existence upon the face of the

earth?

It may be said in answer: perhaps the secret in that returns to what divine wisdom has decreed—of the human being's reaching what he has reached in this time, not before it—of the causes. That is because mankind, in these two centuries, has multiplied until they almost filled the face of the globe, and the primitive methods, at that time, in the field of agriculture and industry were not able to provide the necessary needs of human beings of food, clothing, bedding, vessels, and conveyances—so Allah, *Exalted is He*, the Knowing, the Wise, inspired the human intellect toward making what covers the need of human beings in all the fields they need.

- So, Allah inspired them to discover electricity, and inspired them to employ it in industry in general; then He, Exalted is He, opened for them the doors of inspiration until they reached what they reached of advanced industries in the field of agriculture and irrigation, and in the field of transport and communication by land, sea, and air, and in all the fields that the human being requires. So blessed is Allah, the Creator, the Wise, the Knowing, Who taught the human being what he did not know.

Except that I see that this tremendous blessing which Allah, Exalted is He, has bestowed upon the human being in these ages is a blessing exposed to disappearance, and that is because of mankind's forgetting the One Who bestowed it upon them, and their turning away completely from thanking Him and remembering Him.

Allah, *Exalted is He*, has related in the Qur'an the greatness of His blessing upon Qarun: *"And We gave him of treasures that of which the keys would burden a band of strong men. When his people said to him, 'Do not exult. Indeed, Allah does not like the exultant.'"* [Al-Qasas:76] So Qarun forgot Allah's blessing upon him, and he replied to his people when they said to him what they said: *"He said, 'I was only given it because of knowledge I have.'"* [Al-Qasas:78]

So he became self-admiring until he saw and believed that what had come to him of excessive wealth and tremendous riches had only come to him by his acumen and his intelligence and his knowledge of ways of earning, and by his insight into the causes of trade and profit; so when he forgot Allah's blessing upon him and admired himself, Allah, *Exalted is He*, stripped from him what He had given him, and caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling.

- And the world today is self-admiring of what it has reached of astonishing development in all fields, while, in this development, they are heedless of the remembrance of the One Who granted them that, and completely forgetful of Him; and they believed, as Qarun believed, that they were only given what they were given by their knowledge and their

acumen. Therefore, **we said**: what we see of great advancement is exposed to disappearance: *"Until, when they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly..."*, [Al-An'am:44].

[They Know an Outward Aspect of the Life of This World]

Allah, *Glorified and Exalted is He*, said: *"They know an outward aspect of the life of this world, but of the Hereafter they are heedless."* [Ar-Rum:7] Mankind, by their intellects, reached the secrets that Allah, *Exalted is He*, placed within the earth and the air and the water and the animal, and their thoughts and intellects touched them.

And these knowledges were named "an outward aspect of the life of this world" because the intellect becomes directly acquainted with them.

And the intellect was to not stop at this stage of knowledge; rather, it must make those knowledges it became acquainted with a ladder to other knowledges, and a cause for new scientific discoveries. For if the human intellect were given the opportunity to contemplate those discovered secrets, it would reach new knowledges that are more important and greater than what it discovered in the first stage.

And these new, important knowledges are the knowledges that Allah, *Exalted is He*, wants His servants to know and to become acquainted with, and which will be a cause for their happiness in this world and the Hereafter.

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Majd Al-Din bin Muhammad bin Mansour Al-Mua'ydi,
Al-Imam Al-Hujjah, Al-Mujadded Lidin
(the Renewed of Religion) said,

"I swear by Allah, Most Highest, Most Greatest, an Oath that Allah, the All-Knowing, the Acquainted knows its truth that we have no purpose or inclination other than coming down at Allah's Judgment, and standing on the requirements of His command. And if we knew the truth in the side of the most extreme of creations whether Arabic, non-Arabic, Qurashi or Habashi, then we would accept it from him, and we would not refuse to follow him, and we will be among his helpers on it, and his followers. So, let the beholder say what he wants, and monitor only his Lord, and fear nothing but his sin. The Judge is Allah, and the appointment is the Day of Judgment, and all matters go back to Allah"



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