

The Truth As It Is

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We live in a world where every Muslim is judged by the actions of what other so called Muslims do. It is a very difficult situation to constantly need to defend yourself from people who think all the Muslims think the same.

The present book is a fresh breath for all of us, by giving us a clear picture of the main doctrines and religious injunctions of the Ja'fariyyah Imamite Shi'ah whose individuals live together with their brethren from the various Muslim sects. They are deeply concerned about maintaining the entity and dignity of the Muslims and are ready to sacrifice everything for it.

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Publisher's Foreword

The Ahl al-Bayt's heritage, which has been kept in reserve by their school and saved from waste by their followers, represents an all-inclusive school comprising the various fields of Islamic knowledge. This school has succeeded in raising minds that were initially ready to take along provisions from this source and presenting to the Muslim nation eminent scholars who, following the unshakable steps of the Ahl al-Bayt, are well-acquainted with the arguments and questions of the various sects and intellectual trends, inside and outside the Muslim community and are capable of providing excellent, irrefutable answers and solutions over successive ages.

On account of the responsibilities that it has undertaken, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) [1](#) World Assembly has taken the initiative to defend the sacredness of the Divine Mission and its realities, which the contrivers

of misleading factions and the inventors of anti-Islam trends have tried to confuse. It has also patterned after the steps of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the followers of their orthodox school that has always abided by refuting such ceaseless challenges and attempted to keep itself in confrontation with these enemies at the required level for all time and in all ages.

The experiments comprised by the writings of the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt School in this respect are really unique, because they hold a scientific amount of knowledge based upon reason and clear evidence, evading personal desires and discommended fanaticism, and conversing with versed scholars and thinkers through a speech accepted by reason and approved by sound nature.

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly has been attempting to provide for the seekers after truth a new stage of such abounding experiments, through a set of researches and writings compiled by contemporary authors belonging to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) School, and other authors upon whom Almighty Allah has bestowed the boon of joining this honorable school. Besides, the Assembly has published and revised a number of books of ancient brilliant Shi’ite scholars, in the hope that these books will be pleasant resources for truth-seeking souls and enable them to perceive the facts presented by the genuine school of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) to the entire world in an age when intellects are attaining perfection and souls and spirits are swiftly and inimitably interconnected.

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly would like to express special gratitude to His Eminence Shaykh Ja’far al-Hadi, the author of this book, and thank all the people who have contributed to this project.

Finally, we hope that we have fulfilled a part of our duty towards the Mission of our Great Lord Who

أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

“sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions; and Allah is enough for a witness.” (48:28).

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly
Cultural Affairs Department

^{1.} (‘a) is an acronym for “alayhi (‘alyhum, ‘alyhima, or ‘layha) al-salam.’ It is used throughout this book after mentioning the names of holy people to denote ‘May Almighty Allah bless him, her or them.’

The Need For Mutual Acquaintance

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

The Holy Qur'an reads,

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا

“(We have) made you tribes and families that you may know each other.”(49: 13).

When Islam dawned, peoples were so disunited that they ignored each other. Furthermore, they were involved in conflicting and wrangling against each other. With the spread of Islam among these peoples, ignorance of each other turned into mutual acquaintance, rivalry into cooperation, and dissociation into reciprocal relations. This change is one of the blessings of the monotheistic precepts of Islam, which was the prime motive of the emergence of a great, united nation that introduced to the world a magnificent culture and protected its individuals from the evils of oppressors and tyrants and succeeded to win the world's respect and become object of veneration in the eyes of all despots and arrogant rulers.

What happened is attributed to the unity and intimate relationship of this nation which discarded ethnic differences and differences in opinions, cultures, and customs or traditions. Reaching consensus on principles, fundamentals, obligatory acts, and duties contributed to achieving the unity. Unquestionably, unity is power while separation is weakness.

The new situation prevailed for a period of time. Then, the unity and acquaintance turned into disunity so that people began to ignore one another, the understanding turned into enmity so that some groups began to accuse each other of atheism, and sects began to wage campaigns against some other sects. As a result, the nation lost its might, its strength petered out, and tyrants belittled this nation, which once enjoyed a pioneering and leading status. This condition paved the way for foxes and wolves to move freely across the lands of this nation; and the strangers who are accursed by Almighty Allah and rejected by humanity gained control over its various parts. So, the fortunes of this nation were plundered, its sanctity was violated, and its honor became at the mercy of the immoral ones. The consequence was incessant collapses and defeats and relapses that afflicted Andalusia, Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, and Baghdad in the past, and Palestine and Afghanistan in the present time.

Consequently, the calls of the nation are no longer responded to, and its appeals for aid are no longer answered. The reason is because the malady is something else. So is the remedy. Almighty Allah has decreed that nothing can go into effect without natural causes; and “the last affair of this nation can be set aright by setting right its first affair.”

Now that the Muslim nation is facing the most hideous and vehement campaigns which target its entity, doctrines and unity as well as the devices intended to harm its sectarian and intellectual coexistence; is it not appropriate in this stage that Muslims in the world unite and strengthen their relations? The various Muslim sects share principles and consider the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Sunnah¹ as the source of law and believe that Almighty Allah is the One and Only Lord, Muhammad (S)² is their Prophet, and that the

Hereafter is the final return. Besides, all Muslims perform the same religious duties; i.e. prayer, fasting, pilgrimage to the Holy House of God at Mecca, defraying the poor-rate, struggling against the enemies of Islam, and abiding by that which is deemed lawful and abandoning that which is deemed unlawful by Islam and they all love the Holy Prophet and his Household—peace be upon them all—and all acquit themselves from their enemies, though the intensity of their feelings may differ in this concern.

Thus, Muslim sects are just like fingers of one hand all of which come together, though they slightly vary in length, width and shape or perhaps they are like a body, which has many parts of different shapes and forms and these parts all cooperate to stimulate a person's physical activity.

The comparison between the Islamic nation and the hand or the body can be an indication of the aforementioned fact.[3](#)

In the past, the scholars of the various Muslim sects and trends used to live side by side without any dispute. On many occasions, they used to cooperate with each other; they would explain theological or jurisprudential books of each other; attend the lessons of each other; applaud each other; support each other; license each other to narrate their reports; ask permission from each other to quote narrations from their books; follow each other in prayers; lead each other in prayers; declare the piety of each other; and approve of each other's sects. Moreover, the followers of the various sects used to live together amicably as if there were no disagreement and variance in opinions between them and when scholars from one sect criticized one from the other sect, they would often behave with utter decorum and observe the rules of scientific and objective discussion.

There are numerous irrefutable historical proofs of such profound cooperation through which the Muslim scholars were able to enrich Islamic culture, cite excellent example of sectarian freedom and attract the attention of the whole world and win their respect.

As a matter of fact, it is not impossible for the scholars of the Muslim nation to hold meetings and exchange views calmly with objectivity, sincerity, and good intention and discuss the disagreements between Muslim sects and have good acquaintance with the proofs and evidences of each sect in this respect.

It is also good and reasonable that each sect or group will present its beliefs and ideas and thoughts freely and openly so that the spurious accusations and arguments aroused against any sect may be known to all and everyone realizes the areas of similarity and difference and then apprehend that they have a lot in common and that the points of disagreement cannot affect their unity or prevent them from getting closer and closer.

The current work is a step on this way. It is hoped that it will be a good manifestation of the truth in its real sense so that everybody may know the truth as it is.

Almighty Allah is the patron of all success.

1. “The Holy Sunnah” refers to the Prophet Muhammad’s words, deeds, and confirmations.

2. The acronym (S) stands for ‘salla allahu ‘alayhi wa alihi.’ It is used throughout this book next to the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and it translates as ‘May Almighty Allah bless him and his Household.’

3. This is an indication of the Holy Prophet’s famous saying, “Muslims are just like a single body; when one of its organs feels pain, the other organs share it with sleeplessness and fever.” (Riyadh al-Salihin, pp. 167)

He—peace be upon him and his Household—is also reported to have said, “Verily the Muslims are one hand against their enemies.” (Bihar al-Anwar, 28: 104)

The Imamite Ja’fariyyah Shi’ah

(1)

(1) The Imamite Ja’fariyyah form a large group of Muslims in the present age, which amounts to about one fourth of the total number of the Muslims. Their historical roots extend to early Islam when Almighty Allah revealed the following verse:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِّ

“Those who have faith and do righteous deeds; they are the best of creatures”. (98:7).

On that day, the Holy Prophet, in the presence of his companions, put his hand on ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib’s shoulder and said,

“O ‘Ali: It is you and your *Shi’ah* (followers) who are ‘the best of creatures.’”¹

The followers of this sect, who are ascribed to Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq because of their adherence to his jurisprudential teachings, are also called *Shi’ah*.

(2)

The followers of this sect live densely in Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India. They also spread in big numbers in the countries of the Persian Gulf, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Russia, and the former Soviet Republics, as well as some European countries, such as England, Germany, France, and in American, African and South Asian countries. In these countries, they have their own mosques and scientific, cultural, and social centers.

(3)

The followers of Shi'ism belong to various nationalities and ethnic groups and they vary in language and color. The Shi'ah live side by side with their Muslim brethren from the other sects peacefully and amicably and cooperate with them honestly and sincerely in all aspects and at all levels. In this regard, they act according to the following holy texts:

The Holy Qur'an reads,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

“The believers are but a single brotherhood,” (49: 10).

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ

“And help one another in goodness and piety,” (5:2).

The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said,

“The Muslims must act as one hand against the others.”[2](#)

“The believers are like a single body.”[3](#)

(4)

Throughout the history of Islam, the Shi'ah have played an estimable and remarkable role in defending Islam and the honorable Muslim community. They led many governments and set up many states that contributed enormously to the Islamic civilization.

They have had many scholars and thinkers who contributed to the enhancement of the Islamic heritage by compiling hundreds of thousands of writings and books, small and big, in various fields including exegesis of the Holy Qur'an (*tafsir*), traditions of the Holy Prophet (*hadith*), doctrines, jurisprudence, principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*'ilm al-usul*), ethics, investigation of reported traditions (*'ilm al-dirayah*), biography of narrators (*'ilm al-rijal*), philosophy, sermons, politics, sociology, linguistics, and arts. They also wrote books on medicine, physics, chemistry, mathematics, astrology, and other physical sciences. Furthermore, they played a major role in founding many sciences.[4](#)

(5)

The Shi'ah believe in Allah: the One, the Single, the Unique, 'the eternally Besought of all; Who begets not, nor is He begotten.' They thus deem Him too Exalted to be corporeal or have direction, space, time, alteration, movement, ascension, descent, or any other quality that does not befit His matchless majesty, holiness, perfection, and excellence.

They believe that there is no object of worship save Almighty Allah, and that all decisions and legislation belong to Him, and all kinds of polytheism, overt and covert, are considered grave injustices and unforgivable sins.

They draw these beliefs from judicious reasoning supported by the Holy Qur'an and authentic Sunnah, regardless of the source.

With respect to beliefs, the Shi'ah rest neither on Israelite traditions (i.e. those quoted from the Torah and the Gospel) nor on Magian traditions that anthropomorphize Almighty Allah, ascribe to Him unfairness, injustice, nonsense, and vainness—Exalted and Great be He—or indict the Divinely purified Prophets, who are completely protected against sinning, of dreadful sins and unbecoming evil deeds.

(6)

The Shi'ah believe that Almighty Allah is Just and Wise; He has created all things through justice and wisdom; therefore, there is no futility in the creation, including inanimate, plant, animal, humankind, sky, or land, because absurdism is in violation of justice and wisdom; and the absence of justice and wisdom negates the existence of Godhead because the idea of the divinity of Almighty Allah necessitates that He is the source of all perfect excellencies and ideal attributes and that He, the Glorified, is free from any defect.

(7)

The Shi'ah believe that Almighty Allah, out of wisdom and justice, has sent Prophets and Messengers, granted them infallibility and expansive knowledge through Divine Revelation, and sent them to the human beings since the first day of man's existence on this earth, in order to show them the right path, help them attain the desired perfection, and guide them to the obedience to Almighty Allah, for this obedience is their means that takes them to Paradise and makes them win His mercy and pleasure.

The most eminent of these Prophets and Messengers are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, as well as those to whom the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Sunnah have referred—peace be upon them all.

(8)

The Shi'ah believe that whoever obeys Almighty Allah, carries out His orders, and abides by His laws in all aspects of life will be granted security (from the Divine chastisement), win (the Divine reward) and deserve praise and incentive even if he or she be 'an Abyssinian slave'. On the other hand, whoever disobeys Almighty Allah, disregards His commandments, and obeys the orders decided by other than Almighty Allah, will certainly lose, perish, and deserve condemnation and punishment, even if he or she be 'a Qurayshite chief', as is mentioned in a Prophetic tradition.

They also believe that Divine rewarding and punishment will be decided on the Resurrection Day when everyone will be called to account and be interrogated, the Scale of Justice (*al-mizan*) will be set up, and Paradise and Hellfire will be witnessed. All this follows the stages of the Grave Interrogation (*musa'alat al-qabr*) and the Intermediate World (*'alam al-barzakh*).

However, they reject transmigration of the souls claimed by those who deny the promised Day of Resurrection, because it contradicts the principles of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Sunnah.

(9)

The Shi'ah believe that Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib—peace of Allah be upon him and his Household—[5](#) is the last, the seal, and the most preferred of all the Prophets and Messengers. Almighty Allah has safeguarded him against flaws and slips and protected him from committing any act of disobedience to Him, be it grave or insignificant, whether before or after his prophethood, while disseminating the Divine Mission or on other occasions.

Almighty Allah revealed the Holy Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad (S) as an eternal constitution for man. Hence, the Holy Prophet (S) delivered the whole message and fulfilled this duty honestly and sincerely, sacrificing everything for it, no matter how precious it would be.

Shi'ite writers have compiled scores of books and researches on the Holy Prophet's life, personality, manners, characteristics and miracles.[6](#)

(10)

The Shi'ah believe that the Holy Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad (S), the Prophet of Islam, through Archangel Gabriel the Honest and was recorded by a group of major Sahabah,[7](#) at the head of whom was 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (S) and under his supervision and instruction. The Sahabah learnt the Holy Qur'an by heart and had a good command of it, computed its chapters, verses, words and letters, and then transferred it to the later generations. The Holy Qur'an is currently recited by all Muslims of divergent sects, "at hours of the night and at the two ends of the day." It has been preserved from adding, deleting, distorting, or alteration of any single character of it.

On this subject, Shi'ite scholars have written both voluminous and short books.[8](#)

(11)

The Shi'ah believe that before the Messenger of Allah (S) died, he had appointed 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib as his vicegerent and Muslims' leader (*imam*) after him so that 'Ali might lead the Muslims politically, guide them intellectually and solve their problems.

In the last year of his blessed lifetime and immediately after his last ritual pilgrimage (*hajj*), the Holy Prophet (S), by a Divine command, gathered the crowds of the Muslims who had just completed the rites of *hajj* and who were, according to some narrations, more than one hundred thousand in a place called '*Ghadir Khumm*' and declared 'Ali to be his successor. Several Qur'anic verses were revealed concerning this important event.[9](#)

The Holy Prophet (S) also ordered people to swear allegiance to Imam 'Ali ('a) by shaking hands with him. The grand personalities from the Muhajirun (emigrants of Mecca), the Ansar (people of al-Madinah), and eminent Sahabah were the first to pay homage and congratulate Imam 'Ali on this position.[10](#)

(12)

The Shi'ah believe that Imam 'Ali was appointed by a Divine Command to lead Muslims after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) and to take charge of all the responsibilities of the Holy Prophet (S) which he had in his lifetime—including the leadership of the Muslim community, guidance to rightness, educating, teaching, elucidating religious laws, solving complicated intellectual problems, and taking care of major social affairs. This means that he enjoys the qualifications that make the public have confidence in him just as they trusted the Prophet (S) so that he can lead the nation to redemption. Accordingly, the Imam has the same responsibilities of the Holy Prophet excluding the reception of Divine Revelation and prophethood, because prophethood was sealed by Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah (S), the seal of the Prophets and Messengers whose religion is the seal of religions, whose law is the seal of the Divine laws, and whose Book is the seal of the Divine Books.[11](#)

(13)

The Shi'ah believe that as long as Muslims were in need of an orthodox leader and an infallible guardian, appointing other Imams to succeed 'Ali ('a) as successor to and Imam after the Holy Prophet (S) was indispensable. This succession of leadership is necessary for establishing the roots of Islamic doctrines and precepts, preserving the principles of the religious law, and protecting the fundamentals of Islam against the dangers that threaten and have been threatening all Divine faiths and godly systems, and so the Holy Imams ('a) who are commissioned to play various roles and undertake various

responsibilities in various circumstances, present practical patterns and programs befitting all the conditions which the Muslim nation may face in the future.

(14)

In view of this fact and due to the Divine philosophy, the Shi'ah believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) has nominated eleven Imams to lead the Muslim nation after Imam 'Ali ('a). Hence, these Imams, along with Imam 'Ali, are called the Twelve Imams. [12](#) On various occasions, prophetic traditions and predictions refer to the number and tribe (namely, Quraysh) of these Imams though their names and peculiarities are not mentioned in some traditions.

Some of these traditions are mentioned in different forms in such sources like *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*, two reference books of Prophetic traditions which the Sunnites regard most authentic. These two reference books narrate that the Holy Prophet (S) has said,

“This religion will continue to exist (and on other occasions, *in constancy, might, or invulnerability*) as long as there are twelve princes (or *vicegerents*) all of whom belong to the tribe of Quraysh (or according to other books *to the family of Hashim*).”

In other reference books of merits, virtues, poetry, and literature, these Twelve Imams are mentioned by names.

Albeit the Prophetic traditions have not mentioned by name 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib and the eleven Imams ('a) from his offspring, these traditions are in accord with no school of thought except that of the (Twelver) Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah. Furthermore, there is no logical explanation for these traditions except that of the Shi'ah. [13](#)

(15)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that the Twelve Imams are as follows:

- Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, the Holy Prophet's cousin and son-in-law; i.e. the husband of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra', the Holy Prophet's daughter.
- Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn; sons of Imam 'Ali and Lady Fatimah, and grandsons of the Holy Prophet.
- Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, 'Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Sajjad.
- Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Baqir.
- Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq.

- Imam Musa ibn Ja'far al-Kazim.
- Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha.
- Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Jawad al-Taqi.
- Imam 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Hadi al-Naqi.
- Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-'Askari.
- Imam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Mahdi, the Awaited Savior.

They (peace of Allah be upon them all) are the Ahl al-Bayt (i.e. the Prophet's Household) whom the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) appointed by a Divine Command as leaders of the Muslim community on account of their infallibility, purity from faults and sins, and the boundless knowledge they inherited from their grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S), who ordered people to love the Ahl al-Bayt and obey them. In this respect, Almighty Allah addresses the Prophet in these words:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“Say: No reward do I ask of you for this except the love for my near relatives.” (42:23).

Also, He says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

“O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah, and be with the true ones.” (9:119). [14](#)

(16)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that these Immaculate Imams, against whom history has never recorded any slip or act of disobedience to Almighty Allah, in actions or words, have served the Islamic nation very much through their magnificent knowledge, and enriched Islamic culture with profound erudition and sound stances in the fields of doctrines, Islamic laws, ethics, arts, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, history, and future insights. Through their words and actions, the Holy Imams educated a group of men and women who, as a result, became pious figures whose precedence, knowledge, and good manners are recognized by everybody.

The Shi'ah also believe that though the Holy Imams were deprived of holding their position of the political leadership of the Muslim nation to which they were appointed, they were able to achieve their intellectual and social missions perfectly by safeguarding the principles of Islamic belief and

fundamentals of Islamic laws.

Had the Holy Imams been allowed to play their political role that was assigned to them by the Holy Prophet (S) according to a Divine decree, the Muslim nation would have certainly attained inclusive happiness, dignity, and glory, and Muslims would have preserved their unity and integrity and there would have been no division, mutual dispute, clashes, massacres, annihilation, humility, or subservience...[15](#)

(17)

For this reason and on account of the numerous narration-based and reason-based evidences in the books of Islamic doctrines, the Shi'ah believe that it is obligatory to follow the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) school of thought and comply with their approach, because it is the very approach that the Holy Prophet (S) had prescribed for the Muslim nation and it is the approach by which he ordered people to abide.

In the famous and soundly based narration known as *Hadith al-Thaqalayn* (The Tradition of the Two Weighty Things), the Holy Prophet (S) has been authentically reported to have instructed the Muslim nation to abide by the Holy Imams ('a), saying,

“I am leaving with you two weighty (i.e. precious) things; the Book of Allah and my offspring—the Ahl al-Bayt. If you adhere to these two, you shall never go astray.”

In addition to *Sahih Muslim*, this narration has been reported by tens of the scholars and narrators of traditions over the ages.[16](#)

This Prophetic decision of appointing people to be his vicegerents and successors was something common in the time of the former Prophets and Messengers—peace be upon them all.[17](#)

(18)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that the Muslim nation—may Allah exalt it—is required to study and discuss these matters and refrain from ill methods of revilement, offense, false impressions, false accusations, hyperbolic statements, and buffoonery.

They also believe that the scholars and thinkers of the various sects of Islam should convene scientific conferences so that they may investigate the assertions of their Ja'fariyyah Shi'ite brethren on honest, sincere, fraternal, and objective terms in order to present the evidence that supports their views, which are in accord with the Holy Qur'an, soundly based traditions of the Holy Prophet (S), judicious reasoning, historical facts, and general political and social evaluation at the time of the Holy Prophet and thereafter.

(19)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that the Sahabah (the Prophet's Companions) and the men and women who clung to the Holy Prophet (S) had served Islam because they sacrificed all that they had, including their lives, to spread and preserve their religion; therefore, all Muslims should respect these individuals, appreciate their service to Islam, and pray that Almighty Allah's good pleasure will embrace them.

However, this does not mean that all those who accompanied the Holy Prophet (S) were so decent and pure that their attitudes and deeds are above criticism. Of course, they are human beings who are not inerrant.

History confirms that some of the Sahabah strayed off the right path during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (S). The Holy Qur'an stresses this fact in some chapters and verses, such as Chapters of *al-Munafiqun* (No. 63), *al-Ahzab* (No. 33), *al-Hujurat* (No. 49), *al-Tahrim* (No. 66), *al-Fath* (No. 48), *Muhammad* (No. 47), *al-Tawbah* (No. 9).

An impartial criticism of certain situations of the Sahabah is not considered disbelief. Of course, the criterion of belief and disbelief is known to everybody. This criterion is represented in accepting or rejecting such principles like Almighty Allah's Oneness and Muhammad's Prophethood and other matters like the necessity of performing prayers, observing fasting, going on *hajj*, and the unlawfulness of intoxicants, gambling, and the like.

It goes without saying that every Muslim has to abstain from obscene language, revilement and lowly writings, because such behavior is unbecoming to a true Muslim who follows the Holy Prophet as an excellent example.

It is true that the majority of Sahabah were righteous, virtuous and worthy of respect and honor, but the application of the rules of investigating the biographies of the narrators of *hadith* (*al-jarh wal-ta'dil*) to the Sahabah is only intended to distinguish the authentic Prophetic tradition (*sunnah*) from the fabricated one, because, as is known to everyone, fabrication against the Holy Prophet (S) unfortunately increased after his departure just as the Holy Prophet (S) had predicted. This fact has led scholars of both sects, such as al-Suyuti, Ibn al-Jawzi, and others, to write valuable books on the methods of discriminating the traditions that the Holy Prophet (S) had definitely said from fabricated traditions.

(20)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe in the existence of the Awaited Imam al-Mahdi ('a). They rely on the many predictive narrations reported from the Holy Prophet (S) which confirm the existence of Imam al-Mahdi, being among the descendants of Lady Fatimah ('a) and, more specifically, the ninth descendant from Imam al-Husayn ('a). In view of the fact that Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari ('a) is the eighth descendant from Imam al-Husayn ('a), he departed life in AH 260 and had only one son named

Muhammad, this son must be Imam al-Mahdi ('a) who is also called Abu al-Qasim. [18](#)

Having seen him in person, a group of trustworthy Muslims have informed others about the birth of Imam al-Mahdi and about some of his characteristics and his father's appointing him as Imam after him. However, after the age of five, Imam al-Mahdi was hidden from public view when he learned that his enemies intended to kill him. So, Almighty Allah has preserved him for the future to the day when he will be sent to establish the just global Islamic government at the end of the age and purify the earth from injustice and prejudice with which it will be filled.

Imam al-Mahdi's existence for such a long age is neither strange nor odd, because the Holy Qur'an confirms that Prophet Jesus is still alive although he was born about 2006 years ago. Similarly, Prophet Noah lived for 950 years among his people calling them to worship Allah, and al-Khidhr –who was contemporary with Prophet Moses– is still alive, too.

Essentially, Almighty Allah has power over all things; His will is accomplished and none can reject or repel it. With reference to Prophet Jonah—peace of Allah be upon him and upon our Prophet and his Household—the Holy Qur'an reads,

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ

“But had it not been that he was of those who glorify Us,” (37: 143).

لَلَّيْلِ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

“he would certainly have tarried in its belly (i.e. the big fish) to the day when they are raised.” (37: 144).

A great number of prominent Sunnite scholars admit to the birth and existence of Imam al-Mahdi ('a) and mention the names of his ancestors and refer to his characteristics. The following scholars are among them:

A. 'Abd al-Mu'min al-Shabalnaji al-Shafi'iy; the author of '*Nur al-Absar fi Manaqib Al Bayt al-Nabiyy al-Mukhtar*'.

B. Ibn Hajar al-Haytami al-Makki al-Shafi'i, the author of '*al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah*', wrote the following about Imam al-Mahdi ('a):

C. “Abu'l-Qasim Muhammad al-Hujjah (i.e. the Argument of Allah over His creatures): When his father died, he was only five years old. Almighty Allah granted him wisdom. He is also named *al-Qa'im* (the Riser; i.e. the Imam who will rise to undertake the mission assigned to him) *al-Muntazar* (the Awaited).”

D. Al-Qanaduzi al-Hanafi al-Balkhi, the author of '*Yanabi' al-Mawaddah*' published in Turkey – Istanbul, during the Ottoman dynasty.

E. Muhammad Siddiq Hasan al-Qanuji al-Bukhari; the author of '*al-Idha'ah lima kana wama yakun bayna yaday al-Sa'ah*'.

In his book entitled '*Islamuna*', Dr. Mustafa al-Rafi'i, one of the recent scholars, has written about the question of Imam al-Mahdi's birth in details and delivered a rebuttal of all the doubts raised in this respect.

(21)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah offer the prayers, observe fasting, defray the poor-rate (*zakat*), pay the one-fifth tax (*khums*), go on the ritual pilgrimage (*hajj*) to the Holy House of God at Mecca, perform the rituals of the *hajj* (as obligatory in the first time and as recommended in later times), perform the single minor pilgrimage (*al-'umrah al-mufradah*) as a recommended act, enjoin good, and forbid evil, show loyalty to the true friends of Almighty Allah and confederates of the Holy Prophet, show hostility to the enemies of Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet, and fight for the sake of Almighty Allah all the unbelievers or polytheists who wage war against the Muslims and the conspirators who plot against the Muslim nation. Also, they abide to Islamic laws in performing economic, social, and family activities—such as business, matrimony, inheritance, education, breast-feeding, observing Islamic veil (*hijab*), and so on. They get such laws by means of *ijtihad*¹⁹ which their pious religious jurisprudents infer from the Holy Qur'an, the authenticated Sunnah, the confirmed narrations related from the Household of the Holy Prophet, reason and scholarly consensus.

(22)

The Shi'ah believe that each one of the obligatory prayers has an appointed time; and the appointed times of the daily (obligatory) prayers are five; the dawn (*fajr*), the noon (*zuhr*), the afternoon ('*asr*), soon after sunset (*maghrib*), and the evening ('*isha*').

Although they believe that it is preferable to offer each prayer at its appointed time, the Shi'ah offer '*asr* prayers soon after the *zuhr* prayers and they offer the '*isha*' prayers soon after the *maghrib* prayers too, following in this the Holy Prophet (S) who himself offered these couples of prayers in succession on some ordinary occasions; i.e. when there were no such problems like sickness, rain, or being on journey and when it was quite possible for him to offer each prayer at its appointed time separately and at times.²⁰ The Holy Prophet (S) did so in order to alleviate the Muslims' duty of performing obligatory prayers, a practice which seems normal in the present age.

(23)

The Shi'ah recite *adhan* (call to prayers) in the same way as the other Muslims do and they add the phrase, '*hayya 'ala khayr al-'amal* (Come to the best of deed)' after the phrase, '*hayya 'ala al-falah* (Come to prosperity)', because the former phrase was part of *adhan* in the time of the Holy Prophet (S), but 'Umar ibn al-Khattab cancelled it, under the pretext that this phrase, which indicates that prayer is the best of deed, distracts the Muslims' attention from participating in the holy wars.²¹ He also ordered that the phrase, "*al-salatu khayrun min al-nawm* (Prayer is better than sleeping)" would be added to the *adhan* (for the Morning Prayers only), although this phrase was not part of the *adhan* during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (S).²²

In view of the fact that the acts of worship and their introductory acts have to be done according to the command and will of Almighty Allah—the Source of legislation—in the sense that every part of such acts has to be on the basis of a general or particular statement from the Holy Qur'an or Sunnah; otherwise, it will be considered rejected heresy. Therefore, it is impermissible to add or delete anything from religious rituals or any religious affair based on a personal opinion.

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah also include in *adhan* the phrase, "*ash-hadu anna 'aliyyan waliyyu allah* (I bear witness that 'Ali is the intimate servant of Allah)" after the phrase, '*ash-hadu anna muhammadan rasulu allah* (I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah)'. In this, they rely on many narrations reported from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams stating that the phrase, "*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah*" is not mentioned or written above the gate of Paradise apart from the phrase, "*'Ali is the intimate servant of Allah*". However, this does not indicate that the Shi'ah claim that Imam 'Ali is a prophet, or a god, etc... Allah forbid!

As a result, it is not a problem to mention this phrase along with the two phrases of *shahadah* (i.e. testifying to Almighty Allah as the One and Only God and to Prophet Muhammad as His messenger) if it is said in the hope that this will be commended by Almighty Allah.

According to most Shi'ite scholars, this phrase is neither obligatory nor part of *adhan*.

This additional phrase is not considered unfounded addition to religious rituals and, as a result, it is not regarded as heresy, because, as has been previously cited, it is not said as part of the *adhan* or as something obligatory.

(24)

During prayers, the Shi'ah prostrate themselves on dust (highland), pebbles, rocks, or other (natural) parts of the earth or its plants (including mats made of plants) and excluding rugs, clothes, edible things, or jewelry, as is confirmed by many traditions reported by Sunnite and Shi'ite scholars. One of the Prophetic traditions says that the Holy Prophet (S) used to prostrate himself on dust or on the ground

directly and he used to order the Muslims to imitate him. According to one of these traditions, the Prophet (S) once noticed Bilal prostrating himself during a prayer with the edge of his turban between his forehead and the ground in order to avoid the burning heat of the ground. The Holy Prophet (S) moved the turban away from Bilal's forehead and said to him,

“O Bilal: Let your forehead touch the dust.”

Other narrations related from the Holy Prophet (S) say that the same thing happened to Suhayb and Rabah to whom the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“O Suhayb, let your face touch the dust.”

“O Rabah, let your face touch the dust.”^{[23](#)}

As has been cited in *Sahih al-Bukhari* and other reference books of *hadith*, the Holy Prophet (S) has said:

“The earth has been made for me a prostration-place and pure thing.”

Naturally, prostration on the earth and putting the forehead on it is the most appropriate state of prostrating oneself before Almighty Allah, because it is the most appropriate way of showing humility and meekness to the object of worship. Besides, this way of prostration reminds man of his origin. In this regard, Almighty Allah has said (in the Holy Qur'an):

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ

“From it (i.e. the earth), We created you, and into it We shall send you back, and from it will We raise you a second time.” (20:55).

Prostration is the highest degree of submission, and this cannot be achieved by prostrating oneself on carpets, rugs, textile, or precious jewelry; but by putting the most honorable part of the body; i.e. the forehead, on the cheapest thing; i.e. the soil.^{[24](#)}

Of course, the dust on which prostration is done has to be pure; therefore, the Shi'ah usually carry with them a piece of pure clay which can be at their disposal all the time.

Such pieces of clay may be taken from blessed lands, such as the land of Karbala' where Imam al-Husayn ('a), the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S), was martyred. Similarly, the Sahabah used to carry with them some pebbles from the land of Mecca to use them in prostration when they went on journeys. They regarded these pebbles as something blessed, for they came from a blessed place.^{[25](#)}

But, the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah do not insist on this act or abide by it at all times. They prostrate themselves

on any rock, provided that it be clean and pure, including the tiled floor of the Holy Prophet's Mosque and that of the Holy Mosque of Mecca.

In addition, the Shi'ah do not put their right hands on their left hands during prayers, because the Holy Prophet (S) did not do so. Besides, there is no evidence about the validity of such a thing; therefore, the Malikiyyah (a sect of Sunni Muslims) do not do so either.[26](#)

(25)

When the Shi'ah wash their hands for ritual ablution (*wudhu'*), they begin with elbows and end with the fingertips, not otherwise, a practice which they learnt from the Holy Imams who had learnt it from the Holy Prophet (S). Naturally, they knew better than anyone else of the way which their grandfather followed in doing ablution. This supports the idea that the Holy Prophet (S) had performed ritual ablution in this way.

The Shi'ah interpreted the Arabic preposition '*ila*' in the Qur'anic verse about the way of performing ritual ablution[27](#) into 'with' or 'including'. So did al-Shafi'i al-Saghir in his book of '*Nihayat al-Muhtaj*'.

For the same reason, the Shi'ah do not wash their feet and heads (in ritual ablution); rather they rub them with their wet hands. In this connection, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas is reported to have said:

"Ritual ablution includes two washings and two rubbings," and, "Two parts are washed and two others are rubbed (with water)."[28](#)

(26)

According to the Shi'ah, temporary marriage (*zawaj al-mat'ah*) is permissible. The Holy Qur'an points to this kind of marriage and its permissibility in the following holy verse:

فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً

"Then, as to those (women) whom you profit by, give them their wages as appointed." (4:24).

Besides, in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (S), the Muslims used to do this temporary marriage until the middle course of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab's reign.

This kind of legal marriage and permanent marriage (*al-zawaj al-da'im*) have a lot in common, such as:

A. The woman who wants to make a temporary marriage contract must not have a husband.

B. Like permanent marriage, temporary marriage contract is conditional on the woman's offer and the man's consent.

C. The money that has to be given to the woman by the man is called 'dowry (*mahr*)', but in temporary marriage, the money to be given to the woman is called 'wage (*ajr*)', as stated by the Holy Qur'an in the previously mentioned verse.

D. When the temporary marriage contract terminates and the two spouses separate, the woman has to observe the period of waiting (*'iddah*).

E. In temporary marriage when a child is born, it belongs to the father.

F. As in permanent marriage, polyandry is forbidden in temporary marriage.

G. In temporary marriage, children inherit their fathers and mothers, and otherwise.

However, temporary marriage differs from permanent marriage in the following:

A. The period of marriage has to be identified in temporary marriage.

B. Temporary husbands are not required to pay alimony to their wives (after the termination of their marriage contract).

C. Temporary spouses do not inherit each other.

D. When a temporary marriage contract terminates or the husband relinquishes the remaining period of marriage contract, separation takes effect automatically and then there will be no need for getting divorced.

Temporary marriage has been prescribed by the Shari'ah to enable men and women to satisfy their lawful and conditioned carnal desires when there is lack of marriage necessities, when one needs a spouse for some reasons or when one wants to meet one's carnal desires with dignity and honor.

Consequently, temporary marriage is primarily a solution for a serious social problem. It also contributes to preventing the Muslim community from falling into the filth of corruption and sexual explicitness.

It can also be resorted for ensuring legal mutual acquaintance between the spouses before marriage. It thus prevents one from unlawful meetings, fornication, sexual suppression, using other unlawful sexual behavior, such as masturbation, in the case of those who cannot stand having one wife only or those who cannot afford to marry and do not want to involve themselves in unlawful matters.

In any case, temporary marriage is confirmed by the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Sunnah, and the Sahabah's conduct for a considerable period. If this kind of marriage was considered adultery, then this would mean that adultery was permitted by the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet (S), and the Sahabah, and those who used to have this kind of marriage had, Allah forbid, committed adultery, for a considerable period.

In addition, there is no clear, solid evidence in the Holy Qur'an or the Holy Sunnah that temporary

marriage was abrogated.[29](#)

It is worth mentioning that although temporary marriage, which has been confirmed by the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Sunnah, is deemed legal by the Shi'ah, they prefer the permanent marriage and the formation of family to temporary marriage, because family represents the sound and firm cornerstones of a society. They have no inclination to temporary marriage, which is called '*mut'ah*' by Islamic law, although it is lawful and permissible.

It is noteworthy that the Imamite Shi'ah who follow the instructions of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah and the recommendations of the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), hold women in high esteem and great respect. The Shi'ite jurisprudential school and the reported instructions of the Holy Imams ('a) include interesting rulings and regulations with regard to the status, affairs and rights of women, especially concerning others' behavior towards her rights of possession, marriage, divorce, nurture, breast-feeding, and private acts of worship and transactions.

[\(27\)](#)

According to the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah, it is unlawful (*haram*) to commit such things like adultery (and fornication), homosexuality, usury, murder of respected souls, drinking intoxicants, gambling, cheating, trickery, deceit, swindle, monopoly, defrauding, usurpation, larceny, treason, betrayal, singing, dancing, false accusation (of adultery), false indictment, tale-bearing, corruption, injuring a believer, backbiting, revilement, obscenity, telling lies, and calumny, and all other offenses, be they great or small. They always try their hardest to turn away from such misdemeanors, and try to protect the community against such epidemics by means of publishing books on ethical and educational affairs, holding sessions and delivering lectures and sermons, like the Friday sermons...etc.

[\(28\)](#)

The Shi'ah put emphasis on the significance of noble character and high moral standards; therefore, they regularly listen to sermons and hold sessions and gatherings in their houses, mosques, and public places, in certain times and on some occasions with the desire for learning. For this reason, they take a great interest in the supplications (*ad'iyah*, sing. *du'a'*), reported from the Holy Prophet (S) and Imams ('a), and comprising outstanding value and rich contents, such as *Du'a' Kumayl*, *Du'a' Abu-Hamzah al-Thumali*, *Du'a' al-Simat*, *Du'a' al-Jawshan al-Kabir*,[30](#) *Du'a' Makarim al-Akhlaq*, and *Du'a' al-Iftitah*, which is recited at Ramadhan nights.[31](#)

They say these supplications with utter submission and spirituality together with weeping and earnest entreaty in order to achieve self-refinement and approach to Almighty Allah.

The Shi'ah take a special interest in visiting the graves of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams ('a) who are buried in the following places:

al-Baqi' Cemetery in the holy city of al-Madinah, Saudi Arabia, where Imam al-Hasan al-Mujtaba, Imam Zayn al-'Abidin, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, and Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq—peace be upon them all—are buried; the holy city of Najaf, Iraq where the holy mausoleum of Imam 'Ali is; the holy city of Karbala', Iraq where the holy mausoleum of Imam al-Husayn, as well as the holy tombs of his brothers, sons, cousins, and companions who were martyred with him on the tenth of Muharram, AH 61 (i.e. Day of 'Ashura') are; al-Kazimiyyah, Baghdad, Iraq, where the holy mausoleum of Imam Musa al-Kazim and Imam Muhammad al-Jawad is; the city of Samarra' Northern Baghdad, Iraq where the holy mausoleum of Imam 'Ali al-Hadi and Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari is; and the holy city of Mashhad, Iran, where the holy mausoleum of Imam al-Ridha is; and the cities of Qum and Shiraz, in Iran, where the tombs of the Holy Imams' sons, daughters, and descendants are; and Damascus, Syria, where the holy shrine of Lady Zaynab ('a), the heroine of Karbala' and daughter of Imam 'Ali ('a) is; and Cairo, Egypt, where the holy shrine of Lady Nafisah, one of the honorable ladies of Ahl al-Bayt ('a) is.

The Shi'ah go on pilgrimage to the mentioned places to show their respect for the Holy Prophet (S), because to respect the Holy Prophet's family is to respect the Prophet, and to honor his offspring is to honor him. Besides, the Holy Qur'an has praised and commended the families of 'Imran, Yasin, Abraham, and Jacob, though some of them were not prophets:

ذُرِّيَّةَ بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ

“They were descendants one of another.” (3:34).

Likewise, the Holy Qur'an has not objected to those who decided to build a mosque on the tombs of the Sleepers of Ephesus (*ashab al-kahf*) where Almighty Allah can be served. Referring to this fact, the Holy Qur'an has narrated:

قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا

“Those who prevailed in their affair said, ‘We will certainly raise a place of worship over them.’” (18:21).

Hence, the Holy Qur'an has not described their deed as sort of polytheism. Verily, a true Muslim genuflects and prostrates himself before none save Almighty Allah and serves none but Him alone. Such acts of servitude are done at the side of the tombs of such immaculate, pure saints, because these

places are blessed on account of the existence of these godly figures there.

This is just like Almighty Allah's honoring Prophet Abraham ('a) and his standing-place in Mecca and the Holy Qur'an thus reads:

وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى

“Appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Abraham.” (2: 125).

When a person offers a prayer behind that standing-place (of Prophet Abraham), it does not mean that this person has worshipped that place! And when a person serves Almighty Allah through the rituals between Mount al-Safa and Mount al-Marwah, it does not mean that this person has served these two mounts! Rather, when one does so, one has in reality chosen for performing acts of worship a place that is connected to Almighty Allah. There are certain occasions and places—such as the Day of 'Arafah (the ninth of Dhu'l-Hijjah), the land of Mina, and Mount 'Arafat—which enjoy special sacredness. This is because they are connected with Almighty Allah.

(30)

For the same reason which we have just stated, the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah—like the other cognizant Muslims who recognize the magnificent positions of the Holy Prophet (S) and his immaculate Household ('a) — show great interest in visiting the holy shrines of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). They visit them with the intention of honoring them, learning from them, renewing their pledge with them, and expressing their commitment to values for which these great people strove for the preservation of which they sacrificed their lives.

In their visits of these shrines, they recall the virtues of the people buried in these places, their striving for the cause of the faith, their devotion to offering prayers constantly, giving alms, and acting steadfastly against all the harm and torment that they had to suffer. In addition, through these visits, people express their sympathy for the wronged descendants of the Holy Prophet (S).

Didn't the Holy Prophet (S) exclaim after the event of the martyrdom of his uncle Hamzah, saying:

“How is it that nobody weeps over Hamzah?”[32](#)

Didn't he weep over the death of his dear son, Ibrahim?

Didn't he regularly visit the graves at *al-Baqi'* Cemetery?

Didn't he urge people to regularly visit the graves and say that they remind you of the Hereafter?[33](#)

Attending the shrines of the Imams ('a), who are among the Household of the Holy Prophet, and recalling their life styles and heroic combative stances remind the subsequent generations of the gross

sacrifices that these great personalities made for Islam and Muslims, and implant in them the spirits of courage, bravery, altruism, and the martyrdom in the cause of Almighty Allah.

Indeed, visiting the graves of the Holy Imams is one of man's civilized and sensible acts. Nations usually commemorate their great personalities and founders of civilizations in various ways, because this kind of commemoration fills them with pride before others and makes other nations embrace their values and establish close relations with them. For this very reason, the Holy Qur'an praises the stances of the prophets (‘a) and pure people and relates what happened to them.

(31)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that the Holy Prophet (S) and the Immaculate Imams can intercede with Almighty Allah for the people, and so they entreat Him through the intercession of the Holy Prophet (S) and Imams to forgive them, grant them their needs, and cure the sick among them. The Holy Qur'an has allowed them and even encouraged them to do so:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا

“And had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Messenger had asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Oft-returning to mercy, Merciful.” (4:64).

Regarding the right of intercession (*shafa'ah*) granted to the Holy Prophet (S) by Almighty Allah, the Holy Qur'an reads,

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ

“Verily your Lord will give you, so that you shall be well pleased.” (93:5).

It is thus unreasonable that Almighty Allah, Who has granted His Noble Messenger the right of intercession for the sinful ones and awarded him the right of mediation (*wasilah*), will prevent the people from asking the Messenger to intercede with Him for them, or deprives the Messenger of this right!

The Holy Qur'an recounts that Prophet Jacob's sons asked their father to intercede with Almighty Allah for them, saying,

يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ

“O our father! Ask forgiveness of our faults for us. Surely, we were sinners.” (12:97).

This infallible prophet did not reject their request, but he responded:

سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

“I will ask for you forgiveness from my Lord. Surely, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (12:98).

Again, none can claim that the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams are dead and that returning to them for mediation is of no avail!

As a matter of fact, the Prophets in general and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) in particular are alive. Almighty Allah says about the Muslims and Prophet Muhammad:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا﴾

“And thus We have made you a medium (just) nation that you may be the bearers of witness over the people and that the Messenger may be a bearer of witness over you.” (2: 143).

وَقُلْ اْعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“And say (to them): Work; so Allah will see your work and so will His Messenger and the believers.” (9: 105).

Evidently, like the perpetuity of the sun and the moon and the continuity of day and night, this holy verse goes into effect incessantly until the Resurrection Day.

Similarly, the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (‘a) are martyrs and as Almighty Allah says in various places of His Book, martyrs are ever-living.

(32)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah celebrate the birthdays of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams who are from his descendants—peace be upon them all. They also commemorate the anniversaries of their death. On such ceremonies, they mention their virtues, merits, and exemplary stances, which have been authentically reported by the Holy Qur'an that mentions, praises, and draws the attentions to the virtues of the Prophets and Messengers so that people may follow them, learn lessons from them, and gain true guidance.

Of course, in such celebrations, they refrain from committing forbidden acts; such as unlawful mixture of opposite sexes, eating or drinking forbidden things, exaggeration in praise and applause or other deeds

that contradict the spirit of the holy Islamic law, go beyond its acknowledged regulations, are incongruous with the sacred Qur'anic texts and the authenticated Sunnah, or are incompatible to a general rule, which has been truly inferred from the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah in a sound way.

(33)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah have recourse to a number of books comprising Prophetic traditions and the traditions narrated from his Immaculate Household, such as '*al-Kafi*' by Shaykh al-Kulayni, a trustworthy scholar, and '*man-lā-yahdharuhu'l-faqih*' by Shaykh al-Saduq, and '*Tahdhib al-Ahkam*' and '*al-Istibsar*' by Shaykh al-Tusi. These are invaluable reference books in the field of *hadith*.

Albeit that these books comprise authentic narrations, neither their compilers nor the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah call them *sahih* (pl. *sihah*), that is fully authentic; therefore, the Shi'ah do not consider all narrations mentioned in these books authentic; rather they accept authenticated narrations and reject the ones which are inauthentic, unsound, or do not accord with the science of investigating reported traditions (*'ilm al-dirayah*), biography of reporters (*'ilm al-rijal*) or the rules of the science of *hadith*.

(34)

In the fields of doctrines, jurisprudence, supplications, and ethics, the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah have recourse to other books which contain various narrations reported from the Holy Imams, such as '*Nahj al-Balaghah*' that is a collection of the sermons, epistles, and aphorisms of Imam 'Ali ('a) compiled by al-Sharif al-Radhi; '*Risalat al-Huquq* (The Treatise on Rights)' and '*al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah*' (also known as the psalms of Islam) by Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) ; '*al-Sahifah al-'Alawiyyah*' comprising the prayers of Imam 'Ali ('a) ; and Shaykh al-Saduq's books of '*Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha*', '*al-Tawhid*', '*al-Khisal*', '*Ilal al-Shara'*', and '*Ma'ani al-Akhbar*'.

(35)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah also rest on the authentic narrations on different topics which are reported from the Holy Prophet (S) in the reference books of *hadith* of their Sunnite brethren³⁴ without any fanaticism or stringency.

This idea is affirmed by the Shi'ite writings, both old and recent, that comprise narrations reported by the Holy Prophet's companions and his wives as well as eminent Sahabah and reporters, such as Abu-Hurayrah and Anas ibn Malik, when these traditions are not inconsistent with the Holy Qur'an, the authentically proven practices of the Holy Prophet (S), judicious reason, or scholarly consensus.

(36)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that all ordeals and misfortunes, which the Muslims faced in the past and those which they are facing today are attributed to two factors:

First: Muslims' abandonment of the Prophet's Household (i.e. Ahl al-Bayt) who enjoy all the qualifications required for the leadership of the Muslim nation and their disregard of Ahl al-Bayt's directives and instructions, especially the Ahl al-Bayt's explanation of the Holy Qur'an.

Second: The separation, dispersion, disagreement, and dispute among the Muslim sects and groups.

In view of that, the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah always do their best to promote unity of the various groups of the Muslim nation and stretch out the hand of affection, and fraternity to all Muslims.

In this respect, scholars of the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah have constantly cited opinions from non-Shi'ite jurisprudents in such areas like Muslim jurisprudence, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, and theology, as in Shaykh al-Tusi's book of '*al-Khilaf*' on jurisprudence and Shaykh al-Tabrisi's book of '*Majma' al-Bayan*' on exegesis of the Holy Qur'an. This book has been praised by the most eminent scholars of al-Azhar University. Another example is Nasir al-Din al-Tusi's book of '*Tajrid al-I'tiqad*' on doctrines. A commentary on this book was written by 'Ala' al-Din al-Qawshaji, a non-Shi'ite scholar.

(37)

Eminent scholars of the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah stress the importance of organizing more dialogues between the religious scholars of various Muslim sects to discuss the various aspects of jurisprudence, doctrines, and history of Islam. They also believe that scholars of different sects of Islam are in urgent need for reaching mutual agreement on the Muslims' contemporary issues, and refraining from accusing each other of false things or poisoning the atmosphere by exchanging revilement so as to pave the way for creating a logic-based convergence between the various parties and multiple sections of the Muslim nation. This step can contribute to the futility of the attempts made by the enemies of Islam and prevent them from infiltrating into the Muslim nation, because the enemies try to find fatal gaps in order to direct their blow to all Muslims excluding no sect or group.

Hence, the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah do not charge any Muslim with unbelief (i.e. *kufr*) except the one or group on whose unbelief all Muslims agree.

The Shi'ah neither feel hostility to Muslim sects nor allow any to conspire against them. Furthermore, they respect the ideas adopted by the Muslim sects and jurisprudential schools concerning religious laws. They therefore consider that the past deeds of the person who converts from any other Muslim sects to Shi'ism are acceptable, adequate, and permissible. Hence, one who converts to Shi'ism, one's prayers, fasting, *hajj*, *zakat*, and matrimonial, divorce and sale contracts, as well as other transactions,

which one did according to the rulings of his previous jurisprudential school, are ruled acceptable.

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah and their brethren of other Muslim sects live together amicably.

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah do not agree with the Imperialistic factions, such as Baha'ism, Babism, Qadiyanism, and the like. They oppose and fight such factions.

Under certain circumstances, they practice *taqiyyah*; i.e. hiding one's beliefs from the others. It has been confirmed by the Holy Qur'an and is practiced by other Muslim sects at times of extremist sectarian clashes. However, the Shi'ah practice *taqiyyah* for two matters:

First: to avoid bloodshed for nothing,

Second: to maintain the unity of the Muslims and safeguard it against harm and danger.

(38)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that the intellectual, cultural, scientific, and technological failing is one of the causes of the Muslims' present backwardness and that this problem can be solved by awakening the Muslims, men and women, and raising their intellectual, educational, and scientific levels by establishing scientific faculties—universities and institutions—and utilizing modern scientific achievements in order to solve the economic, constructive, and industrial problems and to strengthen the self-confidence of the Muslims to help them turn towards work and activity in order to attain self-sufficiency and put an end to the state of dependence and subordination to the foreigners.

Accordingly, whenever the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah resided, they established scientific and educational centers. They also joined the universities and institutions of the country where they live and many of them are graduates in science and technology and hold various high positions.

(39)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ites are linked with their religious scholars and jurists by *taqlid*; that is, they have recourse to them in religious questions. They therefore refer to the scholars and act according to their verdicts in all fields of life, because these scholars and jurists represent the general deputies of the Twelfth Imam ('a). And because these scholars and jurists do not depend upon governments in their economic affairs, they have won full confidence of the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ites.

The Shi'ite centers of religious education (namely, *hawzah*), which graduate versed scholars in Shi'ite jurisprudence, support the *hawzah* students and the finances for education comes from the money of the one-fifth tax (i.e. *khums*) and the poor-rates (i.e. *zakat*) paid by people voluntarily to these jurists as a religious obligation, just like prayers and fasting.

The Shi'ah present clear-cut evidence to support the fact that it is incumbent upon a person to pay the one-fifth of his or her profits some of which can be found in Sunnite reference books of *hadith*.^{[35](#)}

(40)

The Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah believe that the Muslims have the right to set up Islamic governments that rule according to the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah and preserve the rights of the Muslims, establish just and sound relations with the other countries, defend the territory against invasions, and guarantee the Muslims' independence in the cultural, economic, and political aspects so that they can be as mighty as Almighty Allah wants them to be and as the Holy Qur'an says:

وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

“And to Allah belongs the might and to His Messenger and to the believers.” (63:8).

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“And be not infirm, and be not grieving, and you shall have the upper hand, if you are believers.” (3: 139).

The Shi'ah believe that Islam is a perfect and most comprehensive religion and it has its own governmental system of rule; therefore, Muslim scholars need to unite and exchange views so as to define this system of rule and help this great nation resolve the endless problems it encounters. It is Allah Who is the ultimate Supporter and Helper:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

“Oh you who believe: If you help (the cause of) Allah, He will help you and make firm your feet.” (47:7).

This presentation gives a clear picture of the main doctrines and religious injunctions of the Ja'fariyyah Imamite Shi'ah whose individuals live together with their brethren from the various Muslim sects. They are deeply concerned about maintaining the entity and dignity of the Muslims and are ready to sacrifice everything for it.

All praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

^{1.} Tafsir al-Tabari.

^{2.} Musnad Ahmad, 1:215.

3. Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab, pp. 27.
4. Refer to Sayyid Hasan al-Sadr: Ta'sis al-Shi'ah li-'Ulum al-Islam (The Shi'ah: the Founders of Islamic Sciences).
5. Whenever they pray to Almighty Allah for sending blessings upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S), the Imamite Shi'ah abide by attaching his Household to him, because according to some of the most reliable Sunnite reference books of traditions, and many other books, the Prophet himself ordered the Muslims to do so.
6. Refer to the following books: Shaykh al-Mufid: Kitab al-Irshad, al-Tabrisi: I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda, al-Majlisi: Bihar al-Anwar (a 110-volume encyclopedic book), Sayyid Muhsin al-Khatami: al-Rasul al-Mustafa (a currently published encyclopedia).
7. Sahabah are the companions of the Holy Prophet (S) and, terminologically, all those who saw, heard, or witnessed the Holy Prophet (S) regardless of their age. However, various opinions have been expressed in this regard. For more information, see Ahmad Husayn Ya'qub: The Conception of the Sahabah's Ultimate Decency; translated by Badr Shahin, Ansariyan Publications – Qum, 1999.
8. Refer to the following books: al-Zanjani: Tarikh al-Qur'an, Muhammad Hadi Ma'rifat: al-Tamhid fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an.
9. The Qur'anic verses revealed on this occasion were as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“O Messenger! Make known that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, for if you do it not, you will not have conveyed His message. Allah will protect you from mankind. Lo! Allah guides not the disbelieving folk.” (5:67).

لْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

“This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor to you, and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam.” (5:3).

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ

“A questioner questioned concerning the doom about to fall upon” (70:1).

لِلْكَافِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ

“the disbelievers, which none can repel.” (70:2).

10. Refer to 'Allamah al-Amini: al-Ghadir, as quoted from several reference books of history and exegesis of the Holy Qur'an.
11. In this respect, Shi'ite authors have written many books of various sizes and styles.
12. Because they acknowledge twelve Imams, the Ja'fariyyah Shi'ah are also called the Twelver Shi'ah.
13. Refer to al-Ha'iri al-Bahrani: Khulafa' al-Nabi (The Vicegerents of the Holy Prophet).
14. Refer to the various reference books of Prophetic traditions, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an and virtues that are dependent upon al-Sihah al-Sittah (the six most reliable reference books of Hadith that the Sunnites consider most reliable) as well as other independent books of both Sunnite and Shi'ite authors.
15. For more details, refer to Asad Haydar: al-Imam al-Sadiq wa'l-Madhab al-Arba'ah.
16. Refer to al-Washnawi: Risalat Hadith al-Thaqalayn, which was certified by the al-Azhar University about three decades ago.
17. Refer to al-Mas'udiy: Ithbat al-Wasiyyah, as well as the reference books of traditions, tafsir and history written by both Shi'ite and Sunnite scholars.
18. It has been cited in the reference books of hadith (sihah), as well as many other books of Sunnite and Shi'ite authors, that the Holy Prophet said,
“At the end of the Age, a man from my offspring, who has my name and my epithet, shall appear to fill the earth with justice and fairness as it will be filled with injustice and prejudice.”
19. In the Shi'ite jurisprudence, ijtihad means making all possible efforts to deduct religious laws from their sources.
20. This fact has been narrated in Sahih Muslim as well as other reference books of traditions.

[21.](#) This issue is mentioned in al-Qawshaji al-Ash'ari's book 'Sharh Tajrid al-I'tiqad'. It is also mentioned in other books, such as 'al-Musannaf' by al-Kindi, 'Kanz al-'Ummal' by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, and others.

[22.](#) Refer to reference books of hadith and the history of Islam.

[23.](#) For more details, refer to the following reference books: Sahih al-Bukhari, Kanz al-'Ummal by al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, al-Musannaf by 'Abd al-Razzaq al-San'ani, and al-Sujud 'ala al-Ardh by Kashif al-Ghita'.

[24.](#) Refer to al-Yawaqit wa'l-Jawahir by al-Sha'rani al-Ansari (An Egyptian writer in the 10th century A.H.).

[25.](#) Refer to al-Musannaf by al-San'ani.

[26.](#) Refer to Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, and Sunan al-Bayhaqi. For more details about the Malikiyyah's view concerning this issue, refer to Bidayat al-Mujtahid by Ibn Rushd al-Qurtubi or to other books on the Malikiyyah jurisprudential school.

[27.](#) The verse of Ablution reads as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ ۚ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ ۚ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“O you who believe: When you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands with the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles; and if you are under an obligation to perform a total ablution, then wash yourselves and if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy, or you have touched the women, and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith. Allah does not desire to put on you any difficulty, but He wishes to purify you and that He may complete His favor on you, so that you may be grateful.” (5:6).

[28.](#) Refer to reference books of hadith as well as al-Fakhr al-Razi's book of Tafsir al-Kashshaf; Exegesis of the Verse of Ablution (5:6).

[29.](#) For more details, refer to the traditions on temporary marriage in the reliable reference books of hadith of the various Muslim sects.

[30.](#) This supplication comprises 1000 of Almighty Allah's attributes, ordered so nicely and properly.

[31.](#) All these supplications, as well as many others, have been compiled in an encyclopedic book entitled 'Mawsu'at al-Ad'iyah al-Jami'ah (Encyclopedia of Comprehensive Supplications),' which has been lately published. They are also available in the books of supplications well known and currently held by the Shi'ah.

[32.](#) This event is mentioned in the books of history of Islam and biography of the Holy Prophet (S).

[33.](#) Refer to al-Sabki al-Shafi'i: Shifa' al-Asqam, pp. 107, and Sunan Ibn Majah, 1:117.

[34.](#) It is necessary to allude to the fact that the Imamite Shi'ites are also ahl al-Sunnah, because they accept the words, deeds, acts, and confirmations confirmed by the Holy Sunnah, including the Holy Prophet's frequent commandments concerning the abidance by his Household. The Shi'ah thus abide by the Holy Sunnah precisely and practically. This can be noticed in their doctrines, jurisprudential precepts, and books of traditions. Recently, an encyclopedic book of more than ten volumes, comprising the traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) in the Shi'ite reference books, has been published. This book is entitled 'Sunan al-Nabi'.

[35.](#) For more details, refer to the argumentative proofs on the obligation of khums presented by books of Shi'ite jurisprudence.

- [1] <https://www.al-islam.org/person/jafar-al-hadi>
- [2] <https://www.al-islam.org/organization/abwa-publishing-and-printing-center>
- [3] <https://www.al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/116502>
- [4] <https://www.al-islam.org/printepub/book/export/html/116502>
- [5] <https://www.al-islam.org/printmobi/book/export/html/116502>
- [6] <https://www.al-islam.org/person/badr-shahin>
- [7] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/shia>
- [8] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/beliefs>