

Why Do We Imitate? How? And Whom?

Why Do We Imitate? How? And Whom?



Akram Barakat

Al-Islam.org

[1] [1]

SHARES

Sub Title:

Author(s):

[Akram Barakat](#) [2]

Publisher(s):

[Al-Ma'arif Books](#) [3]

This text explores the multifaceted concept of imitation, examining its significance in linguistics, religion, and jurisprudence. It delves into the motivations behind imitation and its role in achieving human perfection. The text also examines evidence for imitation and outlines the conditions and methods for choosing who to imitate.

[Get PDF](#) [4] [Get EPUB](#) [5] [Get MOBI](#) [6]

Topic Tags:

[Taqlid](#) [7]

Miscellaneous information:

Introduction

God's prayers and peace be bestowed upon the noblest creature and the master of the mankind Prophet Muhammad bin Abdullah and upon his pure Household.

It is no secret that imitation has a great importance in the Muslims' life and that it has a great influence on the individual's behaviour and deeds and on the delineation of the features of the society which is through imitation associated to the prominent scholars.

When we come to examine the religious society which is honoured with its belongingness to The Household's) God's prayers and peace be bestowed upon them (creed, we notice that imitation represents a major element in the social education in all the fields and that it occupies a prominent position as regards what the parents teach their children at the threshold of being assigned with the religious responsibility.

Still, there are a lot of questions which are related to the details and issues of imitation which we have

been lately hearing from the people after the society had lost a group of great references who were succeeded by several references who are eligible to take hold of the jurisprudential reference. This has resulted in the emergence of questions, some of which are related to the proper way of the fulfilment of the religious imitation; some of which are related to the condition of the most knowingness in the reference; and some of which are related to other points.

These questions represented the reason for the writing of this study. I meant it to be small in its size and easy in its expression, so that the public will be able to understand it. We hope that it will illuminate the path of imitation by means of the lamp of the true religion, so that they will pass it precisely and safely. We hope from The Most High God that it be well accepted.

And Praise be to God,

The Lord of All the Worlds.

Akram Barakat

[1] [1]

SHARES

What Is the Meaning of Imitation?

Imitation in Linguistics

Linguistically, the word "imitation" [Taqlid] is derived from the necklace which is hung around the neck.[1](#)

We always hear the discourse which is ascribed to Imam Al-Husayn (God's peace bestowed upon him): "Death was decreed on the mankind as the necklace is put around the neck of the girl."[2](#) It is said, "I adorned him with a necklace" i.e. I put it around his neck.

The process of putting the necklace around the neck may be considered to be a sensible materialistic one, like when one is adorned with the national badge of honour i.e. the badge of honour is put around his neck.

This process may as well be considered to be an immaterial one when it is meant to assign someone with a certain trust or responsibility as we say for the one who is going to visit the purified shrines, "I assign you with the supplication and the visit" i.e. I entrust you with them as the necklace is put around the neck. This is equivalent in meaning to imposition. Under this meaning came the discourse of succession: God's prophet (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon him and his Household) assigned the succession to Imam Ali (God's peace bestowed upon him) i.e., he imposed it on him, put it around

his neck, and gave it over to him.³

Imitation In Religion

On the basis of this meaning, the scholars agreed on calling the acceptance of the other's saying without proof as [Taqlid] imitation. It is so because the imitator in the religious issues is actually putting the saying of the one imitated, whether true or false, as a necklace around his neck.

The Noble Qur'an dispraises those who imitate their fathers with respect to their creed. The Most High God says,

قَاتُلُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۖ أَوْلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ

"They say: Nay! we follow what we found our fathers upon. What! and though their fathers had no sense at all, nor did they follow the right way" (Surah Al-Baqara, 2: 170).

Imitation In Jurisprudence

Under the above-mentioned linguistic meaning, the term "imitation" was used in the Islamic jurisprudence. When one follows a certain jurisprudent in his religious opinion, he is then working on the responsibility of that jurisprudent as if he has put the necklace around the neck of the reference of imitation as an expression of assigning him with the responsibility on the Day of Judgement.

When one imitates the reference correctly, he will not be asked on the Day of Judgement for the details of the deeds which he performed on the responsibility of the reference of imitation. The one who is responsible for these deeds is the reference himself.

Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) defined the imitation in Tahreer Al-Waseela by saying, "The imitation is to work on the basis of the religious opinion of a certain jurisprudent.⁴

The meaning of the term "imitation" has a continuation under the title "How do we imitate?" Before, we are going to answer a question which is related to the origin of imitation i.e. "Why do we imitate?" Let us turn to it.

^{1.} Al-Tarihi, Moujammaa Al-Bahrain, Part Three, page 132.

^{2.} Al-Qazweeni, Al-Watha'eq Al-Rasmee, Page 7.

^{3.} Al-Tarihi, Moujammaa Al-Bahrain, Part Three, page 132.

^{4.} Tahreer Al-Waseela, Part One, Page 3.

Why Do We Imitate?

Why do we refer to the jurisprudent and follow him as regards the rules of Islam which he deduced?

The answer to this question takes us back to the main question which is related to the secret of the creation of the human being, the question which the human being finds in the depths of his soul. This is so because every human being since childhood is fond of perfection and aims at reaching it.

Upon analysing the movement of the human being since childhood, we come to find him labouring towards a certain aim which he considers to be his perfection. The baby believes at the start of his growth that his perfection is fulfilled when he crawls, so he works hard in order to crawl. When he starts crawling, he realizes that this is not his perfection; so he starts labouring towards walking, so that he may accomplish his perfection through this. After he has walked, he also realizes that he has not attained the desired perfection. Then, he starts labouring towards something else through which he hopes that his perfection will be attained. He thinks that to talk is this thing, so he labours towards it. He starts talking and may become fluent, yet he still feels the fire of the love of perfection blazing inside him.

Here, the human being may take a model whom he believes that his perfection is going to be fulfilled when he becomes like that model.

This model may be his father or his teacher or his leader... He may rise to the level of his model and even higher, yet he is still having that thirst to perfection inside him.

The Purpose of the Creation and the illusions of the People

When man grows up, he goes on looking for his perfection. Some people get to believe that the money achieves their perfection, so they turn to be the richest ones yet still feeling inner poverty.

Other people get to believe that the power achieves their perfection, so they take hold of the power yet still feeling inner disgrace.

And other people get to believe that fame achieves their perfection, so they become famous yet still having that spiritual thirst inside them.

At this, the human being realizes with his sound nature that he is labouring towards The Absolute Perfection which is void of any sin or default and that all that he conceived to be perfection is merely an illusion. This is so because The Absolute Perfection is not found in those materialistic things towards which he has been labouring. The human being knows The Absolute Perfection by means of his nature: How should not he know Him and He is the Creator of this nature?!

The deceased Imam of the nation Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) said, "O you who are

wandering in the valley of confusion and who are lost in the deserts of delusion. Rather you butterflies who are roving around the candle of the beauty of The Absolute Beauty, and you lovers of The Flawless, Eternal, and Constant Beloved, go back a little to the book of the innate nature and browse in the book of your souls, then you will find out that the Divine Power had written on it with the pen of the innate nature:

“Verily, I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth” (Surah Al-An’am, 6:79).[1](#)

The perfection of the human being is, therefore, fulfilled when he walks on the path of The Absolute Perfection. Even though he is unable to reach The Absolute because of his inner poverty, he draws near to Him in order to achieve his human perfection, as The Noble Qur'an depicted the perfection of the Master of the Mankind in the Saying of The Most High God:

“Then he [Jibreel] approached and came closer” (Surah An-Najm, 53:8).

Then, the talk, all the talk, must be about how the human being well walks on the path of his perfection.

The Role Of Imitation In The Accomplishment Of The Perfection Of The Human Being

Here emerges the role of imitation because this path has certain rules which are determined by The Creator. And the human being cannot, by means of his mental abilities and his other methods, know these rules which were decreed for the welfare of the human being in this life and in the hereafter, in his body and in his soul, in his individual and in his society.

From here emerged the need for the prophets and the messengers (God's peace bestowed upon them) to clarify for us the features and the laws of this path, so that we will be guided while walking on it.

The message of Islam carried the immortal laws for the process of the human being. With the death of the greatest illustrator of the doctrine Muhammad bin Abdullah (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon him and his Household) and with the disappearance of the last illustrator of the doctrine Imam Al-Houjja Al-Mahdi (May God hasten his honourable revelation), it has become urgently necessary that a group of people study these laws in order to acquaint the people with them. This is so because it is not possible that all the people have a direct study for the sources of these laws. The ones who study and come to know the laws are the jurisprudents.

But the ones who could not come to know these laws through study have an opened the door to get this knowledge through the dependence on those jurisprudents. This door is the imitation.

Therefore, the imitation, which means following the jurisprudents who studied and came to know the laws of God in the life of the human being, is resorted to the solution in order to know the laws in order

to pass over the path of perfection.

Summary

The answer to the question: "Why do we imitate?" is: We imitate in order to pass the path of perfection which is the aim of our creation in the manner which God wanted this passage to be not in the manners which our souls desire. In this lies the great importance of imitation.

Dear Brother

Having known why we imitate, let us move to know the answer of the next question which is related to our evidence for the dutifulness of imitation.

[1.](#) Manhajeyyat Al-Thawra Al-Islameyya, page 7.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Our Evidence for the Imitation

The jurisprudent scholars may set forth some Qur'anic verses as evidence for the dutifulness of imitation, such as the Saying of the Most High God:

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"So ask of those who know the Scripture if you know not" (Sura An-Nahl, 16:43).

They may also set forth some narratives like the one which is ascribed to Imam Al-Hassan Al-Askari (God's peace bestowed upon him): "People must imitate the jurisprudent who protects his religion, preserves himself, opposes his own wishes, and follows his master's order." [1](#)

But the question which is addressed to us, the non-jurisprudents, is: Can we prove the dutifulness of the imitation by means of these verses and narratives?

The answer is that we cannot because the proof by means of them is subject to several issues which are not available in the ordinary i.e. non jurisprudent person. As regards the narrative which is ascribed to Imam Al-Askari (God's peace bestowed upon him), how have we come to know that its ascription is well considered or not, so that we will build on it as evidence for the dutifulness of the imitation? And is this narrative contradicted by another one or not? And does this narrative carry the meaning of the

dutifulness of imitation or not?

With respect to the above-mentioned verse, we wonder about the ones who are meant by "...those who know the scripture...": Are they the Impeccable Imams only? Or does the verse include the scholars rather than the Imams also? For some people illustrate "...those who know the Scripture..." that they are the people of the Book. In addition, we wonder whether the imperative form of "...So ask of..." implies the dutifulness or not.

The ordinary, non-jurisprudent, person cannot afford the answers to these questions, so how will he depend on them as evidence in his imitation?

Pay Attention

Never say that we depend on the jurisprudents as regards the proof of the considerability of the ascription of the narrative and on the scholars as regards that the imperative form implies the dutifulness.

Never say that here at the start of your questioning about your evidence for the imitation because it will be an answer justifying the imitation by the imitation. Then, you will be an imitator, and your evidence will be the imitation itself.

This resembles to say: I imitate because that reference says that imitation is a duty which is imposed on the person who cannot be a jurisprudent and who cannot work on the basis of taking cautiousness. The one who says this is setting forth his imitation of the others as evidence for his imitation of the others. Is it sound that the very thing be evidence for itself?

Setting The Trajectory Right

What is, therefore, our evidence, we who have not been successful to jurisprudence, for the imitation?

Actually, the answer originates from our minds and from our examination of the state of the rational society. We realize that "when people face the needs of life, they find that they are so many, for there are medical, industrial, agricultural, geometrical, etc. needs."

"All the people know these needs very well. This is so because every human being, due to the naïve experience in his life, knows that if he is suddenly exposed to a cold weather, he may be afflicted with the symptoms of fever. Still, he does not come to know the ways of protection and cure but through the doctor who in turn does not come to know them but through study and labour. Likewise, is the case in the fields of building and construction, agriculture, and industry along with all their branches."

"From here, every human being has come to realize that practically he cannot by himself carry out the comprehensive scientific study and labour in all the fields of life. This is so because this usually goes

beyond the ability and the lifetime of the individual on the one hand; also, he cannot go so much deep in all the fields on the other hand."

"Consequently, the human societies have decided that a group of people specialize in one field of knowledge and study. And every individual, as regards the field in which he is not specialized, suffices with what he innately knows and depends, with respect to what exceeds the innate knowledge, on the specialists, thus assigning them with the responsibility of the discretion of the situation".

"This is a sort of labour division among the people which the human being has been innately following since the furthest ages."

"Islam was no exception to this. It followed the same base which the human being has been following in all the fields of his life, so it presented the tenet of jurisprudence and the tenet of imitation. Jurisprudence is the specialization in the sciences of the religion, and imitation is the dependence on the specialists."

"Every Muslim who has become religiously responsible and wants to get acquainted with the religious rules depends at first on his general religious innate. And as regards the religious rules which he cannot know by the innate nature, he depends on the specialized jurisprudent."

The Most High God did not assign every human being with the job of jurisprudence and with the undergoing of the scientific study and labor in order to get acquainted with the religious rules for the sake of saving time and dividing the human labor all over the fields of life."

"Moreover, The Most Glorified and High God did not permit that the non-jurisprudent and specialist tries to get a direct knowledge of the religious rules from the Qur'an and the Sunnah and depends on his own attempt. The Most High God decreed that the acquaintance with the religious rule must be through the imitation and through the dependence on the jurisprudent scholars."[2](#)

The answer which we, the non jurisprudents, must afford as regards the dutifulness of the imitation originates from our minds' reading of the state of the rational human society. By this, we will not be imitators in our answer but will be jurisprudentially trying to get acquainted by means of our minds with the dutifulness of the imitation.

Because of this, when Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) was asked in the first question in The Answers to the Consultations: "Is the dutifulness of the imitation an issue of imitation or jurisprudence?" he answered, "It is a mental jurisprudential issue."[3](#)

When the non-jurisprudent person faces the following question: "What is your evidence for the dutifulness of the imitation?" What must his answer be?

The Answer	True or False	The Reason
1. The Qur'anic Verse: "So ask of those who know the Scripture if you know not" (16:43).	False	Because one cannot make sure of who the ones meant are
2. The Narrative ascribed to Imam Al-Hasan Al- Askari ('a): "People must imitate the jurisprudent who protects his religion, preserves himself, opposes his own wishes, and follows his master's order."	False	Because one cannot make sure of the correctness of its ascription
3. To say that a certain jurisprudent says that the imitation is dutiful	False	Because it is a proof of the imitation by the imitation itself
4. The agreement of the rational people on that the non-specialist must refer to the specialist	True	This issue is based on the sound intuition of the mind

So have we seen that the human being, through the mental examination and through his being one of the rational individuals of this society, deduces that it is necessary, as regards the affairs of his religion, to refer to the specialists.

Here arises a question: Is the imitation dutiful on every human being? Or is it dutiful only on certain people rather than other people?

In other words, are there specific conditions for the dutifulness of the imitation? Or is it general for everybody?

Here is the answer.

1. Wasa'il Al-Shi'a, Part Eighteen, page 95.
2. The Martyr Al-Sadr, Al-Fatawa Al-Wadieha Pages 89 and 90.
3. Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat Part One, Page1.

[1] [1]

SHARES

On Whom Is the Imitation Dutiful?

Imitation is dutiful on whom the following two kinds of conditions are available.

The First Condition: A Constitutional Condition

This condition is in fact the assignment with which The Most High God honoured and favoured the human being because it indicates the capacity of the human being, on the contrary of the other creatures of the earth, to carry the divine responsibility. This is manifested in the Saying of the Most High God:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالجِبَالِ فَأَبْيَنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلُنَّهَا وَأَشْفَقُنَّ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا إِنْسَانٌ ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا

Truly We did offer Al-Amana (the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it (i.e. afraid of Allah's torment). But man bore it (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:72).

Accordingly, if the human being carries out what God imposed on him, he will be deserving of a great reward. On the other hand, if he disobeys the divine orders, he will be deserving of punishment and torture because he has been unjust with his own self and because he has betrayed the trust.

The Conditions Of The Religious Responsibility

There are certain conditions which must be available in the human being; otherwise, he will not be religiously responsible.

1- The Puberty: The person who has not reached puberty is not religiously responsible. He will not be punished in the hereafter for the bad deeds which he performed in this life. Still, the Grace of The Most High God may be bestowed upon his good deeds, so that he will attain their rewards in the hereafter.

For sure, the fact that no bad deeds will be recorded on the person who has not reached puberty does not mean that he is freed from the responsibility in this life. If he causes to the others any harm such as the spoil of their money, the stealing of their money, or the like, then he will have, once he reaches the stage of puberty, to carry the responsibility for what he did.

The Signs Of Puberty

There are certain signs of puberty. And the human being reaches puberty when any of these signs is fulfilled.

A- Reaching a certain age which differs between the male and the female

With respect to the male, he is considered to have reached the stage of puberty at the age of fifteen lunar years i.e. at about fourteen years and seven months of A.D. With respect to the female, she is considered to have reached the stage of puberty at the age of nine lunar years i.e. at about eight years

and nine months of A.D.

B- The ejection of the sperm

C- The growth of the tough hair on the sexual organ i.e. on the area which is located between the private part and the end of the belly

2- The Sanity: The insane person is not considered to be religiously responsible. His bad deeds will not be recorded till he is no more insane.

3 – The Ability: He who is not able to carry out the religious responsibility is then not asked to because the Most High God

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مُسْتَحْقِقًا

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope (Surah Al-Baqara, 2:286).

The Second Condition: A Cognitive Condition

This condition implies the state of not having reached the level of jurisprudence. The jurisprudent, who is able to deduce the religious rule from the evidences, can by himself determine for himself his religious responsibility on the basis of his comprehension of the divine doctrine because he is a scholar. And the imitation is the reference of the one who does not know to the one who knows. On the other hand, the scholar refers to himself not to anybody else.

In addition, the one who can work on the basis of taking cautiousness in a way by which he is able to determine for himself his religious responsibility and he is sure that his conscience is cleared as regards the unknown situation, then it is not dutiful on such a person to imitate; he may work on the basis of taking cautiousness. However, working on the basis of taking cautiousness is not that easy issue because one "must take into consideration all the jurisprudential possibilities of the case which taking them into consideration may be dutiful."[1](#)

When Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) was asked about the proportionality between imitation and working on the basis of taking cautiousness, he answered, as in The Answers to the Consultations, "Since working on the basis of taking cautiousness is conditional upon one's knowledge of its cases and upon one's knowledge of how to work on the basis of taking cautiousness, which only few know, in addition to that working on the basis of taking cautiousness usually requires spending the more time, it is better to imitate the jurisprudent who gathers in himself the required conditions."[2](#)

Summary

The ways of reaching the religious rule are:

- 1- Jurisprudence.
- 2- Working on the basis of taking cautiousness.
- 3- Imitation.

[1. Ajweebat Al-Istiqaat, Part One, Page 6.](#)

[2. The Previous Source, Part One, Page 5.](#)

[1] [1]

SHARES

In What Do We Imitate?

Having got acquainted with the conditions that must be available in the one who must imitate, we move to present the answer of the following question: What are the issues in which it is dutiful on the religiously responsible person who is neither a jurisprudent nor a worker on the basis of taking cautiousness to imitate?

The answer is that there are three frames, in the first two of which imitation is not dutiful but in the third of which imitation is dutiful.

The First Frame: The Basic Principles Of The Religion

Imitation is not permissible with respect to the basic principles of the religion; one must search and speculate on them in order to reach the truth.

The deceased Sheikh Muhammad Ridha' Al-Mudhaffar in his book *Aqa'id Al-Imamiyya* said, "We believe that our minds are what imposed on us to speculate on the creation and on knowing The Creator of the universe and that it is they that imposed on us to analyse the pretence of any one who is pretending prophecy and his miracle. Then, it is incorrect to imitate another one in these issues however important and high levelled he is."[1](#)

The Second Frame: The Necessities

There are certain deeds whose judgments are clear for the ones who are religiously responsible, such

as: praying, fasting, and performing pilgrimage. The dutifulness of these deeds is without any doubt necessary for all the Muslims. Therefore, neither imitation nor jurisprudence is a must in these deeds.

From here, the jurisprudents have been accustomed in their practical theses to exclude the necessities from the dutifulness of imitation for the one who is neither a jurisprudent nor a worker on the basis of taking cautiousness.

In *Tahreer Al-Waseela* [Editing the Means], Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred), "I declare that every religiously responsible person who has not reached the level of jurisprudence must, as regards the non-necessities in his worships and dealings and even in the desirable deeds and the permissible deeds, be either an imitator or a worker on the basis of taking cautiousness..."²

The Third Frame: The Unnecessary Branches

From the just mentioned saying of Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred), we deduce that the frame of the dutifulness of imitation with respect to the non-jurisprudent and the one who is not working on the basis of taking cautiousness includes, after excluding the basic principles of the religion and the necessities, all the deeds which are entitled by the following five judgments of religious responsibility: dutifulness, forbiddance, detest, desirability, and permissibility.

A Clarifying Chart Is it dutiful to imitate in

– The basic principles of the religion?	No
– The necessities?	No
– The unnecessary branches of the religion?	Yes

1. Tahqeeq Al-Tarihi, Pages 234-235..

2. Tahreer Al-Waseela, Part One, Page 7.

[1] [1]

SHARES

How Do We Imitate?

When people want to imitate a certain reference, some of them ask about how to imitate: Must we utter specific words as we utter the intention when we want to pray? If it is yes, then what must we say, so that our imitation will be correct?

The answer is that there is an agreement on that it is not conditional as regards the fulfilment of the imitation to utter anything or to have any perception in the mind. Imitation is fulfilled when the religiously responsible person works while being based on the religious opinion of the jurisprudent. Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) said, "The imitation is to work on the basis of the religious opinion of a certain jurisprudent." ¹

Here arises another question: Is the commitment to the religious opinion of the jurisprudent considered to be an imitation by itself? Or does it need that the commitment be added to the work on the basis of the religious opinion?

Some say that the commitment is sufficient without the work. If a person commits to work on the basis of the practical thesis of a certain reference, then this is enough for the imitation to be fulfilled even if that person has not worked yet. The deceased Sayyid Al-Tabatabaei Al-Yazdi (May his secret be sacred) said this opinion in *Al-Aourwa Al-Wothqa*²

On the other hand, other jurisprudents insisted on that one must, in addition to commitment, work on the basis of the religious opinion, so that his imitation will be fulfilled as we deduce from the previously mentioned saying of Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred).

The practical result of these two points of view is sensed in the following case: If a religiously responsible person has committed to the religious opinions of a certain jurisprudent and before he began to perform any work, that reference died, would what he had done till the death of the reference be considered as an imitation or not?

According to those who say that the commitment without work is sufficient for the correctness of the imitation, then what he had done till the dead of the reference is considered to be an imitation.

But according to those who say that the commitment by itself does not suffice but requires the adjoining of the work so that the imitation will be correct, then what he had done till the death of the reference is not considered to be an imitation.

This issue appears in the imitation of the dead person as it will be seen by the Help of The Most High God.

Till now, we have got acquainted with the meaning of imitation, its purposes, our evidence for imitation, on whom imitation is dutiful, in what it is dutiful, and how it is fulfilled. Still raised is the following question: Whom do we imitate? So, let us go on with our study.

¹. Tahreer Al-Waseela, Part One, Page 7.

². The publications of Al-Aalamee Institution in Beirut, Part One, Part 4. Sayyid Al-Khu'i (May his secret be sacred) commented on the previous religious opinion of Sayyid Al-Yazdi which says that the imitation is to base in the work on the other's religious opinion.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Whom Do We Imitate?

The jurisprudents stated several conditions which must be available in the reference, so that imitating him will be correct. These conditions are:

1- The Life: This condition means that the religiously responsible person must at the beginning of his religious responsibility refer to the still living reference. It is not permissible, according to the opinion of the prominent jurisprudents, to imitate the dead reference at the beginning of the journey of the religious responsibility.

Even more, the noble researcher Scholar Al-Tousi said, "It [Imitating the dead jurisprudent] is not permissible at all due to the ellipse of his eligibility when he died. And this is the current opinion among our contemporary peers especially the late one. Even more, we know no one whose saying is regarded to be considerable who demonstrates the opposite to this."[1](#)

And the problematicality is much more confirmed concerning the imitation of the dead person who has long been dead. This is due to the development which has been taking place in the jurisprudents' view of the religious evidences and in their consideration of certain scientific details which if the old jurisprudents had had a look on, this would have affected their deduction of the religious rules.

A Clarifying Example

We are going to mention a scientific example and we are going to try to clarify it.

From among the jurisprudential rules which affect the work of the jurisprudent and his deduction of the religious rules is that of "going along with" which means that when the human being is sure of a previous thing and then he doubts it, then he has to build on the original sureness and give no heed for the doubt. For example, if the religiously responsible person was sure that he was on ablution and then he doubted whether he slept after the ablution which might had undone his ablution, here will arise the rule of "going along with" to state for him: Build on your previous sureness and do not give any heed for the doubt which succeeded the sureness, for you are religiously on ablution.

When we review the history of this jurisprudential rule, we notice that some old jurisprudents (May their secrets be sacred), after they had examined its evidence, came to refuse it. They refused it because they did not find any considerable narrative which refers to it. After that period, the jurisprudents discovered, through their scholastic researches, some considerable narratives which exactly indicate this

rule to the extent that it has become indisputable for them.

Here we say, "Had the old jurisprudents considered the narratives referring to the rule of 'going along with', they would have changed, on its basis, their jurisprudential opinions." But factually they did not consider them, so how will it be permissible for us to imitate them?

The Continuous Imitation

What has been mentioned with respect to the non-permissibility of imitating the dead reference has to do with religiously responsible person who wants to start imitation. But the judgment differs for the one who used to imitate a certain reference who then died, for it is wrong to refer to the religious opinion of the dead reference in the issue of the imitation of the dead reference.

For example, if one was imitating Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) who used to permit to continue imitating the dead reference in some ways, then after the death of The Imam (May his secret be sacred), it will not be permissible for that person to depend on his religious opinion in this issue and thus continue imitating him. He will have to turn to the still living reference of imitation in whom the conditions of imitation are available. And then this reference will determine for him his judgment and his religious responsibility.

The still living jurisprudent may say to him, "You must continue imitating the dead reference in all his religious opinions as long as he is, in your point of view, more knowing than the still living jurisprudents." He may say to him this very first saying but not with respect to all his religious opinions i.e. with respect to what he is still remembering from the dead jurisprudent's religious opinions. He may give him the alternative to choose between going on imitating the dead jurisprudent and imitating the still living jurisprudent.

We are going to set forth the following theorem as a practical example. Suppose that a certain religiously responsible person was imitating Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred). After Imam Al-Khomeini had passed away, he found the conditions of the reference of imitation in Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us), so he referred to him and asked him, "What is my religious responsibility concerning the imitation?" Imam Al-Khamene'i's (May God lengthen his presence among us) answer will be as follows:

"You have three alternatives which you are permitted to choose any of:

- The first alternative is to continue imitating Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) with respect to all his religious opinions.
- The second alternative is to imitate me with respect to all my religious opinions.
- The third alternative is to continue imitating Imam

Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) with respect to all his religious opinions and to imitate me with respect to any religious opinion you wish even if the opinion of Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) is contradictory to mine as a religious opinion and not as a cautiousness. Yet after you have turned to my religious opinion, you are not permitted to go back to the religious opinion of Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) with respect to the religious opinions in which you turned to me.

If you, for instance, continue imitating The Imam (May his secret be sacred) but then you turn to me in the issue of the prayer of the traveller where my religious opinion is to perform the prayer completely and that of The Imam (May his secret be sacred) is to shorten the prayer, then you will have, after having turned to me with respect to this religious opinion, to perform the prayer completely and you will not be permitted to go back to Imam Al-Khomeini's (May his secret be sacred) religious opinion which implies the dutifulness of shortening the prayer.

Having done with the first condition of the reference of imitation, we move to the second condition, after which we will mention the other conditions.

2. – The Puberty: This condition is usually fulfilled in the jurisprudents even though it is said that some of our jurisprudents, like The Scholar Al-Hilli and Al-Fadel Al-Hindi, had reached the degree of jurisprudence before they reached the stage of their puberty.

3- The Reason: This is a clear condition.

4- The Masculinity: It is related that the scholars agreed on this condition for specific evidences which are mentioned in their proper place.

5- The Purity of the Birth: This condition implies that the reference of imitation be not born from adultery; this is due to the high sensitivity of the post of reference of imitation.

6- The Faith: This means that the reference must be abiding by the creed of The Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them) i.e. to be a believer in the twelve Imams. This is a clear condition derived from several narratives ascribed to The Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them), like Imam Abi Al-Hassan's (God's peace bestowed upon him) saying to Ali bin Souwayd, "Do not get the features of your religion from any one rather than our Shiite." [2](#)

7- The Justice: Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) explained this trait as follows, "It is a fixed aptitude which calls [the person] to the adherence to what God fearing implies from the abandonment of the forbiddances and the performance of the duties." [3](#)

The meaning of being an aptitude is that it is a steadfast trait in the soul which makes the human being perform without any affectation what is dutiful and abandon what is forbidden.

The Imam's (May his secret be sacred) illustration of justice as being a fixed aptitude comes against other illustrations which limit it to the performance of the duties and to the abandonment of the

forbiddances even if the human being does not have an aptitude to this."[4](#)

In order to clarify the difference between justice's being an aptitude which makes the human being perform the duties and abandon the forbiddance and its being limited to the performance of the duties and the abandonment of the forbiddances even if it is not an aptitude, we are going to set forth the following example.

The correct learning on the keyboard is fulfilled by putting the fingers in a special way on the board. At the start of the person's training, the trainee recognize exactly the situation of the fingers on the keys, and he may type correctly without any errors yet slowly and with affectation because he has not acquired the aptitude of typing on the keyboard. After a training period, we recognize that he is typing quickly without looking exactly at the position of his fingers on the keys and without any affectation. This is so because he has already acquired an aptitude in typing on the keyboard.

Likewise, the one who has the aptitude of justice, on the contrary to the one who does not have it, performs the duties and abandons the forbiddances without any affectation.

This is a clarifying example which is set forth in order to illustrate the meaning of the aptitude of justice with respect to some jurisprudents even though there is a little leniency in the resemblance.

Anyway, whatever the meaning of justice is, it is assuredly demanded in the reference because of the sensitivity of his post. Accordingly, Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) said in *Tahreer Al-Waseela [Editing the Means]*, "The reference of imitation must be a scholar, jurisprudent, just, pious in God's religion, not dedicated whole heartedly to this life, not devoted to it and to gain its power and wealth as a cautiousness and as is related in the discourse, "People must imitate the jurisprudent who protects his religion, preserves himself, opposes his own wishes, and follows his master's order."[5](#)

Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) confirmed the importance of the self-perseverance in the reference of imitation in his saying, "In accordance to the sensitivity and importance of the post of reference, it is conditional, as a dutiful cautiousness, that the reference of imitation be characterized, in addition to justice, with control of the tyrant soul and with no covetousness of this life."[6](#)

8- The Jurisprudence: The evidences of imitation focus on following the scholar who knows the Islamic laws and the way of comprehending them and deducing them from the evidences. At one time, the narratives express this by the jurisprudent: "...the jurisprudent who preserves himself...", and at other times by the knower and the perceiver.

The famous expression is the jurisprudent due to the great effort which the human being needs to exert in order to reach the stage of deducing the religious rules from the decreed evidences.

Jurisprudence is of two types. The first one is the complete jurisprudence. And the one who has a complete jurisprudence is called as the absolute jurisprudence. He is able, in the different fields of

jurisprudence, to extract the religious rule from its decreed evidence.

The second one is the incomplete jurisprudence. And the one who has an incomplete jurisprudence is called as the partial jurisprudence.

He is the one who jurisprudized in some religious issues rather than other ones, so he is able, in only a limited frame of the issues, to extract the religious rule.

And the jurisprudence which is a condition that must be available in the reference of imitation is the complete absolute jurisprudence. With respect to the incomplete jurisprudence, there is a specific detail which is going to be mentioned in its proper context.

We still need to talk about the most knowingness and its being a condition in the reference of imitation. It is in fact a critical and so important an issue for which we are going to dedicate the next paper. Let us go on.

- [1.](#) Al-Wafi, Page 300.
- [2.](#) Bihar Al-Anwar, Al-Majlisi, Part Two, Page 82..
- [3.](#) Tahreer Al-Waseela, Part One, Page 11.
- [4.](#) Refer to Al-Tanqeeh, Al-Ghourouri, Part One, Pages 252-253.
- [5.](#) The Previous Source, Page 7.
- [6.](#) Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat, Part One, Page 4.

[1] [1]

SHARES

The Most Knowingness of the Reference of Imitation

The Meaning Of The Most Knowingness

Before examining the most knowingness being a condition in the reference of imitation, it is indispensable to determine the meaning of the most knowingness. Even though this term appeared in neither a Qur'anic verse nor a narrative, it has powerfully appeared in the studies of the recent jurisprudents as a result of the ponderance and the analysis in the lores of the origins and the jurisprudence.[1](#)

Therefore, the meaning of the most knowingness has not been limited, with respect to the jurisprudents, to one frame; they have had two theories as regards specifying it.

The First Theory (The Personal) Most Knowingness

This theory is the one that has prevailed in the jurisprudential books in which the most knowing person is defined as being "the one who is the most knowing of the rules and the one who is more skilful than the others are in applying them on their branches."²

In order to clarify this, we set an approximate example from a practical science i.e. the medicine. Then, who is the most knowing among the doctors?

Is he:

1 – The one who is more acquainted with the old and modern medical theories than the others are?

2 – The one who is more acquainted with the details of the diseases than the others are?

3– The one who is the most knowing of the names of the medicines?

4– The one who is the most knowing of the medical theories and the details of the diseases and who is the most knowing of the application of these theories on the real states?

It is doubtless that the last one is the most knowing one among the doctors. Likewise, is the case with the most knowing one among the jurisprudents, he, in addition to his acquaintance with the decreed rules, must be more skilful in applying these rules on the branches than the others are, and he must have the best intuition in this application.

The scholar may widely know the jurisprudential rules. Still, when he wants to apply them on a detail upon which he comes such as the prayer of the one whose work is in traveling, he may not be here characterized with a more talent than that with which the others are characterized. Even though he knows the rules, he is not the most knowing one among the jurisprudents.

From here, the most knowing jurisprudent is the "most knowing of the rules and the one who is more skilful than the others in applying them on their branches."

The Second Theory: The Most Knowingness Of The Whole

This theory in determining the meaning of the most knowingness carries the previous meaning, yet it is distinguished from the first theory in that it has a hint which some jurisprudents insist on that the most knowingness is not fulfilled without it. Still, some jurisprudents suggested an addition to the previous meaning of the most knowingness and presented it as a basic element in the eligibility of the jurisprudent for the imitation. Here we are going to mention both the hint and the addition.

A Hint about the Concept of the Most Knowingness

The Sign of God Sayyid Mahmud Al-Hashimi referred to certain lores which, he believed, have a great (May his secret be sacred) influence on the most knowingness of the jurisprudent in his doctrinal jurisprudence of the issues which he wants to deduce. These lores are the following.

The first is the comprehension of the spirit of Islam which results from the precise acquaintance with the Qur'anic verses, the religious necessities, the Islamic taken for granted principles, and the jurisprudential premises. It also includes the complete abidance to what The Noblest Prophet (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon him and his Household) and the Pure Imams (God's peace bestowed upon them) performed. And this is fulfilled by means of knowing about the life of The Prophet (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon him and his Household) and Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (God's peace bestowed upon him) who had the authority and who were responsible for the government, so that we will know how to apply and how to carry out the Islamic rules.

The second is the comprehension to a certain extent of the contemporary culture and the legal and mental issues, such as: the bank issues, the Islamic economics issues, and the judiciary issues in Islam. Otherwise, the non-acquaintance with these issues may result in a great weakness in the jurisprudent's inference and clarification in these issues.

The third is the perception of the lores which were produced by the pure Impeccable Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them) in the theological issues and the moral issues in addition to the other lores which are present in the narratives and spread in the non-jurisprudential books. This is in fact so influential in the comprehension of the implied connotations of the discourses, in making advantage of them, and in the knowledge of the evidences.

Sayyid Al-Hashimi considered that it is indispensable to consider these issues and then to formulate a very exact definition for the most knowingness on its light.³

An Addition To The Conditions Of The Reference

The previously mentioned conditions of the reference of imitation were the common ones to be mentioned in the theses of the jurisprudents. The field developments which have taken place in the recent world have added to the responsibility of the post of the reference of imitation in the circle of its authority. Consequently, a group of great jurisprudents started to talk about another condition in the reference of imitation which represents an indispensable element in his eligibility for the post of reference.

Probably the first one to suggest this condition in his practical thesis was the Martyr The Great Sign of God Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr (May his secret be sacred), thus referring to this condition as being the practical eligibility. He (May his secret be sacred) said in *Al-Fatawa Al-Wadieha*, "If all the

religious conditions of the reference of imitation are available in the absolute jurisprudent, it is then permissible for the religiously responsible person to imitate him... And he will have the general religious authority of the affairs of the Muslims in condition he is eligible for this from both the religious and the practical aspects."⁴

Sayyid Al-Hashimi clarified the background of the condition of The Martyr Al-Sadr in his saying, "To refer to the reference is not like to refer to the doctor. The doctor may not be a Muslim person, yet we refer to him because we aim at benefiting of his experience and treatment. But the reference to the imitated jurisprudence is in fact a very important issue.

It is a sort of guardianship or at least a jurisprudential legal leadership, and it represents the whole power for setting the laws because the people take from the reference all the laws of their life since its beginning till its end."⁵

Then, Sayyid Al-Hashimi presented the condition of the Martyr Al-Sadr (May his secret be sacred) and confirmed it especially because the reference of imitation represents a kind of leadership for the society: "...because those who imitate him are, whether he desires so or not, following him with their looks, hearing, and hearts: What is their reference and the person who they imitate saying? What is he issuing as religious opinions? so that they will imitate him and follow him in their private and public life. And because of this, the reference of imitation must meet other special conditions which are summarized by the competence and the eligibility to lead those who are imitating him."⁶

He Is the Most Knowing yet Not the Reference

It is nice to relate a story which has to do with the condition of the competence and the eligibility of the reference of imitation. It is a story which happened to the deceased The Great Sign of God Sheikh Husayn Al-Holli (May his secret be sacred) whom many scholars used to regard to be the most knowing jurisprudent in his era in spite of the fact that the post of reference in his time was held by the great reference Sayyid Mohsen Al-Hakim (May his secret be sacred). Someone relates that he asked Sheikh Al-Holli (May his secret be sacred), "Why did not you take hold of the post of reference even though you are more knowing than Sayyid Al-Hakim is?" The surprised answer of this reverent scholar was what carries the following meaning: "Sayyid Al-Hakim succeeded in educating his children ." Probably, he was hinting, in his talk, to that from the conditions of the post of reference are the good management of this post and the competence for it, and Sayyid Al-Hakim (May his secret be sacred) was clearly endowed with this.

This condition of competence was not only mentioned in the book of The Martyr Al-Sadr, but also Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred), who had a long experience in the post of reference of imitation and who could transform the scholastic thesis into a really practical thesis as regards the issues of the individual and the society and the state, assured this in the call of Rajab 15th 1409 Hijra, which he addressed to the scholastic centers and to the scholars with respect to a group of peculiarities in the

reference of imitation. Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) said, "The jurisprudent must be acquainted with the issues of his time. The people and the youths and even the public cannot accept from their reference and jurisprudent to say, 'I do not express an opinion as regards the political issues.'"

"And from the comprehensive jurisprudent's peculiarities are to know the method of dealing with the tricks and the perversions of the culture which is dominating over the world; to have the economical vision and insight; to know how to deal with the economics which is dominating over the world; to know the policies and even the politicians and their set equations; to recognize the centralism and the strength and weakness points in the capitalist and communist poles which is in fact a recognition of the reality of the strategy which is dominating over the world. Moreover, the jurisprudent must be endowed with the skill, intelligence, and insight required for the sake of guiding a big Islamic society and even a non-Islamic one. In addition are the morals and the piety and the asceticism. The jurisprudent must also be a manager and an arranger."⁷

On the basis of this addition to the conditions of the post of the reference and on the basis of that hint about the meaning of the most knowingness, a new expression rose: it is "the most knowingness of the whole".

The Summary of the Sayings about the Conditions of the Reference

The previously mentioned points of view concerning the considered conditions in the reference of imitation can be summarized in the following two approaches.

The first approach considers the traditional conditions which are mentioned in the practical theses and which we have mentioned without any addition or hint about the meaning of the most knowingness. It, therefore, gets sufficed with the traditional meaning which we called previously: the private most knowingness.

The second approach includes a hint about the meaning of the most knowingness through adding several lores so that it will be fulfilled; and the addition of the condition of competence and eligibility in the reference of imitation so that imitating him will be correct.

Having got acquainted with the meaning of the most knowingness, we need to go back to the previous question: Is the most knowingness a condition in the reference of imitation? Here, it is essential to differentiate between the jurisprudent and the others.

The Most Knowingness and the Job of the Jurisprudent

As regards the jurisprudent, he determines for himself the answer on the basis of what he infers from the religious evidences despite the fact that the condition of the most knowingness in the reference is the

one common among the jurisprudents.

Even more, Thaher As-Sayyid Al-Murtadha states in *Al-thareeqaa* Book that it is from the taken for granted issues with respect to the Shiite. And it is ascribed to Al-Mohaqqiq the Second (May God be pleased with him) that it is agreed on it. It is still ascribed to some of the late scholars that The Second Martyr said that it is not dutiful to imitate the most knowing one.⁸

Sheikh Al-Ansari and the Imitation of the Most Knowing Jurisprudent From the comely narratives as regards the most knowingness of the reference is the story of the great reference Sheikh Mortada Al-Ansari whom the big reference of the Shiite and their unique scholar the author of Al-Jawaher [The Jewels] Sheikh Muhammad Hassan Al-Najafi (May his secret be sacred) before his death acknowledged his [Al-Ansari's] most knowingness and called the Shiite to imitate him.

However, after the author of Al-Jawaher had passed away, Sheikh Al-Ansari refused to take hold of the post of reference, demonstrating that one of his fellow scholars, namely Al-Mazendrani, was during their study in Karbala more knowing than he himself was. As a result of the insistence of Sheikh Al-Ansari, the post of the reference of imitation was suspended till a letter was sent to Sheikh Al-Mazendrani who acknowledged that during their study in Karbala, he himself was more knowing than Sheikh Al-Ansari was; but that his great colleague, after having completed his studies and researches in the scholastic Hawza, became more knowing than he himself was. And then Al-Mazendrani called the people to imitate Sheikh Al-Ansari who turned to be the general reference of the Shiite of The Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them).⁹

The Most Knowingness and the Job of the Non Jurisprudent

It is deduced from what has been mentioned that the jurisprudent answers for himself that question with respect to the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent on the basis of the evidences which he grasps their implied connotation. But as regards the non-jurisprudent, his method in the determination of the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent differs.

In order to clarify this, we set forth a question which is divided into three branches.

Is it correct for the non-jurisprudent in his determination of his job in the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent to depend on:

A- The Noble Qur'an?

B- The noble discourses?

C- One of the references of imitation?

The Answer

A- It is not accepted from the non-jurisprudent to refer to the Qur'an to determine this from its verses because this requires scholastic means, which he does not own, in order to arrive at the result that will clear his conscience. For example, it is not accepted from the jurisprudent to base on the Saying of The Most High God:

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

...So ask of those who know the Scripture if you know not. (16:43).

and build on that it is not conditional to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent since the verse specifies no one in particular. This is so because there is a group of premises which he has to answer, such as:

- 1- What is meant by "...those who know the Scripture"? Are they the scholars in general? Or are they the scholars of the people of the book? Or are they in particular the Impeccable Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them)?
- 2- Does the verse involve the creed issues in particular or does it include the jurisprudential branches as well?
- 3- Suppose that what is meant from "those who know the Scripture." are the scholars, then does the non-specification of the characteristics of "those who know the Scripture" imply the absoluteness or not?
- 4- Are there considerable narratives which are related to this verse, which specify its correct direction, and which may impose specific limits on it?

Therefore, the ordinary non jurisprudent person may not depend on the verses of The Noble Qur'an in order to decide whether it is dutiful or not to imitate the most knowing person.

B- In addition, it is not permissible that the non-jurisprudent refers to the narratives ascribed to The Impeccable Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them), such as referring to the following narrative which is ascribed to Imam Al-Hassan Al-Askari (God's peace bestowed upon him) and building on its absoluteness: "People must imitate the jurisprudent who protects his religion, preserves himself, opposes his own wishes, and follows his master's order". This is so because he cannot know the extent of the correctness of the ascription of this narrative, so that he will trust that it was produced by the Impeccable (God's peace bestowed upon them). In addition, the deduction from its significations has scholastic premises which he has not got acquainted with, so that he will reach a result which clears his conscience.

C- Moreover, it is not accepted that the non-jurisprudent relies on the opinion of a reference who is not

the most knowing one, so that he will determine on his basis his path in the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent. If this reference says that it is not dutiful to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent, then how can it be correct that the non-jurisprudent depends on his opinion as long as he has not made sure that he is the most knowing jurisprudent?! The correct may be the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent. This leads to the non-permissibility of imitating who says that it is not dutiful to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent as long as he himself is not the most knowing jurisprudent.

The Non Jurisprudent and the Correct Direction

On the basis of what has been mentioned, how does the non-jurisprudent determine his religious responsibility with respect to the issue of the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing reference?

The Answer

As the religiously responsible person turned with his mind and vision towards the rational society in order to know the dutifulness of imitation, he must also turn to the mind and to the rationality in order to determine the dutifulness of the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent. This is so because they represent the path to reach the result which clears his conscience in front of The Most High God from the religious responsibilities with which He assigned him. Then, the religiously responsible person comes to know that "his mind determines the necessity of the reference to the most knowing jurisprudent where there is a contradiction in the religious opinion between him and the one who is not the most knowing jurisprudent."¹⁰ This is so because the non-jurisprudent, after he has been confirmed that he is assigned with carrying out certain religious responsibilities which The Most High God decreed in His Divine Message, comes to know that he has to attempt at clearing his conscience from these religious responsibilities and at making advantage of them in his perfection process which The Most High God wants for him.

This non jurisprudent religiously responsible person has arrived to a conclusion that the easiest way to clear his conscience is the imitation. But he is now facing a question: Is he to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent or is he to imitate a jurisprudent who is not the most knowing among the others?

Before starting with the answer, we point out to that some people may conceive that they have the religious freedom as regards the imitation of either the most knowing jurisprudent or the one who is not the most knowing. Accordingly, it is correct that they imitate whomever they want. However, these people are going to give up this belief when they face the following two evidences which will drive them to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent.

The First Evidence: Imitating The Most Knowing Jurisprudent Is

A Guarantee For Salvation

He who faces the previous question concerning the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent and does not find a primary answer at reach can give the following answer: "If you imitate the most knowing jurisprudent, then you will be sure of the clearance of your conscience. On the other hand, if you imitate someone else, then you will remain in doubt concerning the clearance of your conscience. This is so because your religious responsibility implies either the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent in specific or the permissibility of imitating him and imitating other ones as a present alternative." After having got this primary answer, the mind of the non-jurisprudent human being will direct him for sure towards the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent.

When The Guardian Reference Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) was asked about his evidence for his cautiousness in the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent, he referred to the above mentioned point in his saying, "With respect to the evidence for it, it is...the judgment of the mind after the mind's turning between the specification and the alternativity."¹¹ The philosophy of the turn of the human being's mind here towards the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent lies in a background which represents a base in the motivation of the human being in this life. The title of this background is what follows: "The power of the potential thing not that of the potentiality is what motivates the human being."

In order to clarify this rule, we set forth the following example: Let us suppose that a man is riding a bike in the street. While moving on, he has a 70% potentiality that a low valued piece of money- let us suppose that it is 50 L.L- fell from him. We realize that this man does not stop but goes on moving even though the potentiality is 70% yet the potential thing is 50 L.L. On the other hand, if this same man has, while moving, a 5% potentiality that a million Lebanese liras fell from him, we realize that he stops without hesitation even though the potentiality of falling is 5% yet the potential thing is a million Lebanese liras.

This explains that the motivator of the human being is not the power of the potentiality because a 70% potentiality did not motivate him whereas a 5% potentiality did. The power of the potential thing is, therefore, what motivates him because the million liras motivated him whereas the fifty liras did not.

From here, we deduce that the power of the potential thing and not that of the potentiality is what motivates the human being.

We go back to the issue under question: Is it dutiful to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent, or is it permissible to imitate someone else? This mental background which is present in the human being and which represents a base in his movement says to him, "Regardless of the percentage of the potentiality of the dutifulness or not of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent, you have a strong potential thing to face i.e. the blessing or the torture of the hereafter. When you imitate the most knowing jurisprudent, you are guaranteeing the salvation. On the other hand, when you imitate the jurisprudent who is not the most

knowing one, you will be facing the potentiality of the non-clearance of the conscience and the divine claim regardless of the percentage of this potentiality."

This power of the potential thing, therefore, motivates the human being and directs him towards the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent.

The Second Evidence: Imitating The Most Knowing Jurisprudent Is The Alternative Of The Rational People

In addition to the previous evidence for the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent, the one wandering about whether it is dutiful or not to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent realizes in the life of the rational people and in their social process what guides him towards the determination of the answer. When the rational people face a problem which requires a solution from someone and when those presenting the solution are various and different in their competences with one among them being known for being the most competent and the most knowing, then they turn towards him without any hesitation.

Let us set forth as an example a person who is afflicted with a medical problem in his heart and needs a surgical operation for his heart. He finds ten doctors who are specialized in the cardiac surgical operation and he can perform his operation at any of them and at any time and without any variation in the cost. Yet he knows that one of them is the most knowing and competent and experienced. Then, he without any hesitation turns towards this most knowing doctor and not to anybody else. Likewise, is the case in all the affairs and issues of the rational people: When they recognize the most knowing among those belonging to the same specialization, then they turn towards him and not towards anybody else.

The jurisprudents consider this rational construction and this process as evidence to which they stick in order to prove the religious rules i.e. through adding the signature of The Impeccable which is understood from his non-interference to refuse this process: Had The Impeccable been discontent with the process of the rational people and their turn towards the most knowing person- for instance, he would have interfered to indicate the right process. Since he did not interfere, we come to understand his signature for this rational construction and his content with this, and we grasp the indication of the construction and the process of the rational people to the dutifulness of imitating the most knowing jurisprudent.

When Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) was asked about his evidence for the cautiousness in the dutifulness of the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent, he guides us through saying, "As regards the evidence for it, then it is the construction of the rational people."[12](#)

Summary

When the non-jurisprudent faces the following question: Is it dutiful to imitate the most knowing

jurisprudent, or is it permissible to imitate other jurisprudents rather than him? Then how can he reach the satisfying correct answer?

The Potentially	True Or False	The Reason
1. Referring to the Qur'an	False	Non competence as regards the determination of the meaning of the verses
2. Referring to the Ahadith	False	Non competence with respect to knowing the correctness of their ascription and to determining their meaning
3. Referring to the jurisprudent	False	Because if he is not the most knowing jurisprudent, then how will it be correct to depend on him?
4. Referring to the mind which calls the person to the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent	True	Because the cautiousness demands so and through this, one makes sure of the clearance of his conscience
5. Referring to the process of the rational people which call to the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent	True	Because the cautiousness demands so and through this, one makes sure of the clearance of his conscience (same reason as the previous point).

The Result

The only rational way for the religiously responsible person who is neither a jurisprudent nor a worker on the basis of taking cautiousness to guarantee the clearance of his conscience as regards the application of the divine rules is the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent.

How Do We Identify The Most Knowing Jurisprudent?

After the non-jurisprudent religiously responsible person has reached the result of the dutifulness of the imitation of the most knowing jurisprudent, he wanders about the method through which he can identify the most knowing jurisprudent. Here, he finds within his reach the following methods which the jurisprudents mentioned in their books after they had deduced them from the observed evidences.

The First Method: What Indicates The Knowledge

It is clear that the arrival of the religiously responsible person to the level of knowledge and certitude and sureness that a certain person is the most knowing one represents a method to clear his conscience in front of The Most High God. But the question here is about the method that leads the human being to

this knowledge.

The jurisprudents have suggested a scientific method to know the most knowing jurisprudent i.e. the personal test, which means that the religiously responsible person can go to the jurisprudents who are in the frame of the most a knowingness in order to listen to their inferences, scientific bases, and refutation of the occurring problematicalities; or he can read their scientific books and their researches in order to identify the most knowing jurisprudent among them.

It is no secret that the one who can do this test is the scholar who has reached an advanced scholastic level through which he can determine the most knowing jurisprudents. But the non-scholar religiously responsible person lacks this method, so he needs another one.

The Second Method: The Wide Spread

And here arises what the jurisprudents suggested under the title of "the wide spread" as a method to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent. This means that the most knowingness of a certain jurisprudent becomes wide spread in the scholastic circles or in the public circles. If this wide spread results in knowledge in the person who is exposed to it, then he will have got the method which clears his conscience.

The Delusive Wide Spread

Here we confirm that the wide spread in itself is not a correct method to clear the conscience. It is such a method when it results in knowledge and certitude. This issue is clarified when we examine the how of the emergence of the wide spread. It may emerge from a propaganda campaign which did not move from correct scholastic basis. Media may affect the formulation of a wide spread of an unreal case, and it plays a role in deluding the people about its reality.

Accordingly, is formulated the delusive wide spread of the truth of a certain case while the truth is exactly the opposite. There is no objection to that this case be the jurisprudence of a certain scholar or his most knowingness. From here, the wide spread which results in the certitude and sureness, and not any wide spread however it emerged, is the one which is depended upon as a method to prove the most knowingness.

Is the Reassurance about the Most knowingness a Method to Determine the Most Knowing Jurisprudent?

We have realized from what has been mentioned that it is permissible in the identification of the most knowing jurisprudent to depend on what results in knowledge. Then, it is permissible to depend on what results in reassurance?

It is indispensable to know at first the meaning of the reassurance, and then we will answer this

question.

The Meaning of Reassurance

The common meaning of reassurance is the peacefulness. The one who is reassured about something is the one whose soul is peaceful concerning it and thus is not worried.[13](#) The meaning of the Saying of The Most High God

وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأْنُوا بِهَا

“But are pleased and satisfied with the life of the present world...” (Surah Yunus, 10:7).

is that they are peaceful concerning it.

This meaning of reassurance was suitable to make "the reassurance" a special term which is meant to determine the percentage of the confidence of the soul concerning what it faces. Then, the reassurance represents a high degree of confidence which is a little bit lower than knowledge.

This issue is from the results of the era of the translations from the Greek language to the Arabic language where special terms were found in the Greek language with no like for them in the Arabic language. The translators, therefore, had to choose certain terms suitable in meaning in order to set them forth as suitable translations for the Greek terms.

For example, the Greek language has a term which shows the 100% confidence of the soul concerning what it faces, so the term "knowledge" was chosen as a translation for that term.

Also, the Greek language has a term which shows a higher than 50% and lower than 100% confidence of the soul concerning what it faces, so the term "Assumption" was chosen as a translation for that term even though in the Arabic language "assumption" may be used to mean "belief" which may be a 100% belief. For example, the Saying of The Most High God "So he assumed that we would not be capable of him" is explained as that he knew and believed that We will not bear heavily upon him. Still, the term "assumption" was used as a special term in equivalence to the Greek term.

Moreover, in the Greek language there is a term which shows a lower than 50% confidence of the soul concerning what it faces, so the term "illusion" was chosen for it in the Arabic language even though this term has, as it clearly known, another meaning in the root of the language.

The result which we arrive at is that the era of the translations produced new meanings for certain Arabic terms which have become terms special to the Arabic language and spread among the people to the extent that many people no more heed for the original meanings before that era.

We can summarize what has proceeded in the following:

The Arabic Term	The percentage of the confidence concerning what it faces
Knowledge (certitude/ sureness)	100%
Assumption	Between 50% and 100%
Illusion	Less than 50%

And the term "reassurance" also passed these changes, or specifications, of the meanings. Accordingly, it became a term which shows the percentage of the strong assumption which is 99% adjacent to knowledge. The term "reassurance" suggests, therefore, the highest degrees of assumption but does not reach the degree of knowledge and certitude.

Having got acquainted with the exact meaning of reassurance, we move to deal with the previous question: Is the reassurance about the most knowingness considered to be a method for the determination of the most knowing jurisprudent?

At first, what is meant by "the reassurance about the most knowingness"? It means the confidence of the soul with a percentage which is adjacent to knowledge concerning certain person's being the most knowing among the jurisprudents.

Here we must shed light on the meaning of the question before the answer since the real question is "Is the reassurance about the most knowingness a method that clears the conscience?" It is not: "Is the reassurance about the person (i.e. the jurisprudent) a method that clears the conscience?"

We are focusing on this because some people may ask themselves the second question and thus say, "I am reassured about a certain person, then is my imitation of him correct?" He means that he is psychologically comfortable about him because he is, for instance, a scholar who is known for piety and the good deed which makes the soul be confident and comfortable about him.

Here we say that this question is wrong in origin before we suggest any answer for it. This is so because the reassurance about which it is correct to ask is that of the most knowingness of the jurisprudent i.e. the soul's confidence concerning his being the most knowing among the jurisprudents with a high percentage which is adjacent to knowledge and certitude and not the psychological comfort with the other. Otherwise, one may have this psychological comfort and heart confidence towards a working reverent scholar who is not a jurisprudent. Then, where is the correct imitation in this?

Going back to the question: "Is the reassurance about the most knowingness a method that clears the conscience?" we answer as follows: Some jurisprudents did not, when they talked about the method by which to identify the most knowing jurisprudent, mention the reassurance beside the knowledge as is realized upon the revision of *Al-Aourwa Al-Wothqa*¹⁴ by The Great Sign of God Sayyid Al-Yazdi (May

his secret be sacred) with the comment of several references on it, and as is realized in *Tahreer Al-Waseela* by Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) where he says, "The jurisprudence is proved by the test and by the wide spread which results in knowledge..."¹⁵ i.e. without his mentioning of the reassurance beside the knowledge.

Other jurisprudents stated that the reassurance about the most knowingness is like the knowledge about it as regards the clearance of the conscience, as The Guardian Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) stated in *Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat* in his saying, "Realizing the jurisprudence or the most knowingness of the reference of imitation must be through either the test or attaining the knowledge whether by means of the wide spread which results in knowledge or by means of the reassurance."¹⁶

And the evidence for presenting the reassurance about the most knowingness as a religious method to imitate the most knowing jurisprudent is that even though reassurance is not a science in the common meaning i.e. the percentage of confidence in it is 100%, it is still considered an actual science. And it is observed in the process of the rational people that they follow it in their issues. Had it been evidence in religion, it would have been dutiful on The Prophet (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon him and his Household) and the Imams (God's peace bestowed upon them) to interfere to show that it is not religiously correct to abide by it. Since The Impeccable (God's peace bestowed upon him) did not interfere, we come to realize that it is true as evidence in the true Islamic doctrine.

To this the deceased The Great Sign of God Sayyid Al-Khou'e (May his secret be sacred) pointed out in his saying, "It also proved by the reassurance because it is an ordinary science; and it is rational evidence; and it was not deterred from in the sacred doctrine."

Summary

Till here, we have arrived at the following result:

The most knowingness of the jurisprudent is proved by means of:

1- what results in knowledge such as the personal test and the wide spread in case it results in knowledge

2- what results in reassurance such as the personal test and the wide spread in case it results in reassurance

We still have to talk about the third method.

The Third Method: The Testimony

This means the testimony of two just persons who are from the people of experience who are either

jurisprudents or scholars whose learning is on the borders of jurisprudence i.e. they arrived at the doors of jurisprudence but did not enter, yet have become capable of distinguishing the most knowing jurisprudent from the others. If two just persons from the people of experience give their testimonies for the most knowingness of a specific jurisprudent, then their testimony, as the jurisprudents have mentioned, is a religious method which is depended upon in order to determine the most knowing jurisprudent and thus imitate him.

The jurisprudents have admitted the religious correctness of this method on the basis of a decreed rule in the Islamic jurisprudence i.e. the subjects are proved by the testimony. This is so unless the doctrine interferes to clarify that the testimony is not enough by itself and that there is a need for other more conditions.

The subjects are what the judgements are given for. When the doctrine talks about the forbiddance of wine, then the judgement is the forbiddance and the subject is the wine. As regards the forbiddance, there are special methods to prove it. But as regards the wine which is the subject of forbiddance, what is the method to prove it i.e. to prove that this liquid in the cup is wine? Here arises the rule: the subjects are proved by the testimony which means that two just persons give their testimony that this liquid is wine, and then their saying is regarded to be evidence in proving its being wine.

If we reverse the subject and two just witnesses from the people of experience give their testimony that the liquid in the cup is vinegar and not wine, then their saying is also considered to be evidence on which it is correct to depend in order to drink the mentioned liquid.

And a certain person's being the most knowing among the jurisprudents is a subject which is proved by means of the testimony, as we mentioned above. Certain jurisprudents did not restrict the proof of the subject to the testimony; they even said that the saying of one trustworthy person, without the need of two just persons, is by itself enough to prove the subject. Those jurisprudents applied what they said on our search for the determination of the most knowing jurisprudent, and they were sufficed with the saying of one trustworthy person from the people of the experience in testifying the most knowingness, as the deceased Sayyid Al-Khou'e (May his secret be sacred) said in *Minhaj Al-Saleeheen*.¹⁷

A Clarifying Chart

In order to clarify what we have arrived at in this study, we present the following chart:

The Method of Determining the Most Knowing Jurisprudent	True or False
The personal test which results in knowledge or reassurance	True
The wide spread which results in knowledge or reassurance	True

The Method of Determining the Most Knowing Jurisprudent	True or False
The wide spread which does not result in knowledge or reassurance	False
The reassurance which means the 99% confidence of the soul concerning a certain person's being the most knowing jurisprudent	True
The reassurance which means the psychological comfort with one of the scholars (i.e. not on the basis of that he is the most knowing jurisprudent but on the basis of the comfort)	False
The testimony of two just persons from the people of experience for the most knowingness of a certain jurisprudent	True
The testimony of two scholars who are not from the people of experience for the most knowingness of a certain jurisprudent	False

How Do We Read The Evidence For Imitation?

It has been stated that the methods of the determination of the most knowing jurisprudent are three: the knowledge, the reassurance, and the testimony.

Since the first two ways (i.e. the knowledge and the reassurance) are not for many people usually within reach in the proper form which we have explained, the testimony has become the most prominent method in the recognition of the most knowing jurisprudent.

Upon examining the testimonies which are related to the imitation of the reference, we realize that they are stated in different expressions which are based on the different backgrounds of those providing the testimonies themselves. From here, it is indispensable to know how to read the testimonies in a correct and scientific way in order to make sure of their being a method that clears the conscience.

As an example of these testimonies, we set forth the testimonies which were given for the Muslims' Authority Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) and which were various as follows:

1- The Testimonies for the Clearance of the Conscience

There are many testimonies from this sort, among which we present the following:

1- The testimony of The Sign of God Sheikh Abbas Waaez Tobssi: "...Imitating His Eminence The Sign of God Al-Khamene'i is clearing for the conscience and is stronger for the Islamic regime and government."

Jumada the Second 29th, 1415 of Immigration

September 17th, 1973

2- The testimony of The Sign of God Ismael Firdawsi Bor: "...Imitating His Eminence The Great Sign of God Al-Khamene'i involves no problematicality and is clearing for the conscience."

September 15th, 1973

3- The testimony of The Sign of God Asadullah Imani: "...The reference of all the Shiite and the believers to the reverent Sayyid with respect to the religious opinions is going to be, by God's Will, correct and clearing for the conscience."

September 13th, 1973

4- The testimony of The Sign of God Sayyid Ali Akbar Qourash: "I believe that the reference and the permissibility of imitating His Eminence the reverent Leader The Sign of God Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) is a taken for granted issue."

Jumada the Second 27th, 1415 of Immigration

5- The testimony of The Sign of God Sheikh Abbas Mahfouthi: "Taking into consideration the conditions which must be fulfilled in the jurisprudent, I believe that imitating the Resistant His Eminence The Sign of God Al-Khamene'i is permissible."

6- The testimony of The Sign of God Sayyid Abbas Khatam Yazdi: "...On the basis of what we have realized concerning the availability of the religious qualifications of the reference and imitation in the character of the leader of the nation, the leader of The Islamic Resistance, the scholar, the resolute, the jurisprudent, the skillful The Sign of God Sayyid Ali Al-Husayni Al-Khamene'i (May his continuous blessings long for ever), we believe that imitating him (May God lengthen his presence among us) involves, by God's Will, no problematicality and clears the conscience."[18](#)

Jumada the Second 27th, 1415 of Immigration

Comment

It is noticed that all these testimonies revolve around the imitation of Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) being clearing for the conscience, and that these testimonies do not refer to the most knowingness. Such sort of testimonies may be based on the belief that the most knowingness is a condition that must be available in the reference. Or they may be based on a background where the witness does not regard the most knowingness as a condition in the reference of imitation; such a witness may believe that Imam Al-Khamene'i is an absolute jurisprudent whom it is permissible to imitate, and that he is the most eligible and the most fitting one to be imitated due to the

characteristics with which he is endowed. We can clearly realize this background in the testimony which is given by the Scholar Sheikh Abdulhadi Al-Foudli. It is as follows:

In the Name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful Praise be to God, and God's peace be bestowed upon His servants whom He chose.

Abiding by the theory of the most knowing jurisprudent in the imitation as regards the work and the application is to a little bit high extent difficult and embarrassing as a result of the difference concerning the concept of the most knowing jurisprudent and as a result of the semi impossibility of comparing among all the contemporary jurisprudents in order to determine who the most knowing one is, and as a result of the always contradiction of the testimonies without the presence of an authority in the determination of the most knowing jurisprudent... Moreover, we realize from the practical process of the followers of The Household (God's prayers and peace bestowed upon them) who used to refer to the jurisprudents of their time whom our pure Imams (God's peace bestowed upon them) ordered and guided us to refer to them that they used to vary in their scholastic levels.

In addition, the narratives of imitation include both the most knowing jurisprudent and the others who are not so: "People must imitate the jurisprudent who protects his religion, preserves himself, opposes his own wishes, and follows his master's orders." "As regards the happening events, refer to the narrators of our discourse, for they are my authority on you and I am God's authority on them." It is deduced from these narratives that it is permissible to imitate the preferred one even though who is better is present.

All of this leads to that if it is possible, and it is not possible in fact, to come to know and determine the most knowing jurisprudent, then it is still preferable and not dutiful to imitate him.

On this basis, we must, in compliance to the necessary and urgent requirements of our contemporary life, look for the most fitting one to take hold of the post of reference. And the most fitting jurisprudent here is the one who is endowed with the administrative and leading qualifications; who has a vision which assimilates all the aspects of the people's life and their conditions; and who is characterized with originality and independence and depth in inference.

Throughout my acquaintance with the inferential writings of The Great Sign of God Sayyid Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) and his practical religious opinions and his general Islamic attitudes, I find these characteristics [the above mentioned ones] available in his blessed character. Because of this, I called to imitate him and to labour towards unifying the leading reference in his character. This is so because choosing him for the mission fulfills for us the clearance from the responsibility in front of The Most High God and fulfills for us the loyalty to our great Islamic nation. I ask The Most Glorified God to help everybody to what He likes and is pleased with; He is the Granter of Success and He is the Aim.

Abdulhadi Al-Foudli

However, this sort of testimonies for the clearance of the conscience is not depended upon as a basis in imitation as long as there are testimonies for the most knowingness, and we realize this in the following sorts of testimonies.

2- The Testimonies for the (Special) Most Knowingness

We will set forth the following testimony as an example:

* The Testimony of The Sign of God Sayyid Ja'far Al-Husayni Al-Karimi for the Most Knowingness In the Name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

God's peace be bestowed upon you, Noble Brothers.

May The Most High God support you

And I invoke Him for you with the goodness of this life and the hereafter.

As regards what you asked me concerning the most knowingness of The Sayyid The Leader Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us), I say, "Throughout years, I have been sitting to The Sayyid The Leader and participating in the session of the Consultation of Giving the Religious opinion in the presence of His Eminence in addition to a number of the well known great jurisprudents (May their blessings long for ever). And I have found out that The Sayyid The Leader (May God lengthen his presence among us) is more accurate and faster moving and better deducing of the branches from the origins than the other great jurisprudents (May The Most High God protect them) are. If this is, and it is in fact, the standard of the most knowingness, then I have realized this standard in the discussions of The Sayyid The Leader (May God lengthen his presence among us). From here, I confess and acknowledge that he is the most knowing one among his contemporary peers. May The Most High God benefit us and you by his leadership, knowledge, and instructions.

Sayyid Ja'far Al-Husayni Al-Karimi

1419-11-26 of Immigration [19](#)

3- The Testimony for the (Whole) Most Knowingness

As samples, we set forth the following testimonies:

A- The testimony of The Sign of God Sayyid Mahmoud Al-Hashimi

After Sayyid Al-Hashimi presented his hint about the meaning of the most knowingness, as was previously mentioned, he said, "It is indispensable to point out that The Leader (The Sign of God Sayyid Ali Al-Khamene'i) is greatly characterized with this peculiarity; that he abides in the jurisprudence by the

deduction of the jurisprudential rules from the depth of the doctrine; and that he is not affected by the external factors. This is from the distinguishing features of the reverent Sayyid The Leader. Because of this, you realize that his religious opinions are usually the same like the religious opinion of the prominent scholars. He reverently and respectfully and appreciatively receives the sayings of the great scholars and then starts searching. This is from the important issues in the most knowingness and in drawing near to the truth and reality."[20](#)

On the basis of this background, The Sign of God Al-Hashimi called Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) to take hold of the post of reference after the death of The Great Sign of God Sayyid Al-Kalbaykani, "...And the moments pass in attendance to your Eminence's taking hold of the affairs of the reference and the administration of the scholastic Hawzas, thus hoping that your noble presence fills the happening vacancy in this issue."[21](#)

B- The testimony of The Sign of God Sheikh Muhammad Yazdi

In the same manner of the approach which Sayyid Al-Hashimi adopted, The Sign of God Yazdi gave the following testimony:

In the Name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful Amid the current disagreement among the great jurisprudents on the meaning of the most knowingness and on the how of accomplishing it, I believe that The Sign of God Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) is the most knowing and the most capable as regards the lores, the requisite issues for the imitation, and carrying out the responsibilities of the post of reference of the Islamic nation. From here, you can imitate him in all the necessary affairs, as I previously wrote.

Muhammad Yazdi[22](#)

18-12-1977 of Immigration

C- The testimony of The Sign of God Sheikh Ibrahim Jannati

In the Name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

It is taken for granted that the most knowingness is a condition in the reference. And the most knowing jurisprudent must be realized on the basis of the whole. From the conditions are the knowledge and the insight concerning the issues of the present time, and the reference must be capable of recognizing the variations and the internal and external relationships. So the most fitting and the most knowing jurisprudent as a whole is, in my opinion, His Eminence The Sign of God Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us).

Muhammad Ibrahim Jannati[23](#)

9-9-1973 of Immigration

In this manner did the testimonies for the most knowingness of Imam Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us) proceed, thus at one time taking into consideration the special most knowingness, at another time the most knowingness as a whole, and at a third time the most knowingness without any specification. On the basis of what we have presented, the case of the next testimonies for the most knowingness is clarified.

*The testimony of The Sign of God Ahmad Jannati for the most knowingness

In the Name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

The standard of the most knowingness is, according to my point of view, that the jurisprudent be the most capable of deducing the rules from its religious origins and proofs along with considering the time, place, and conditions. And I know no one among the candidates for the post of reference nowadays who is better and more powerful than the Sayyid The Leader (May God lengthen his presence among us) is. To add, the issue today is that of Islam and atheism and not only that of the branch judgments. Let the human being fear God and think about the consequences of the issues and the traps of the devils and their enmity to Islam and their determination to destroy its props and break down the true Muhammadian Muslims, And God is All Knowing about what they are doing. O God! We have relied upon You! And towards You we have turned! And to You is the end!

Ahmad Jannati²⁴

Rajab 6th, 1414 of Immigration

The testimony of The Sign of God Sheikh Muhammad Ali Al-Taskhiri for the most knowingness

Your Eminence The Sign of God Al-Taskhiri, what is your opinion as regards the imitation of the leader of the Islamic Revolution the Muslims' Authority Sayyid Ali Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us)?

God's prayers and peace be bestowed upon Muhammad the Master of the Prophets and upon his Pure Impeccable Household. Some of my believing brothers asked me to frankly express my opinion concerning the imitation of my sir noble The Leader of the Believers and the Muslims' Authority His Eminence The Great Sign of God Sayyid Ali Al-Khamene'i (May God lengthen his presence among us). Having been acquainted with his prolific knowledge, his right opinion in the various fields of the Islamic doctrine, and his visions as regards the individual and the society.

I acknowledge his being the most knowing jurisprudent. According to me, therefore, he (May God lengthen his presence among us) must be imitated. And God is witness on this.

I ask The Most Glorious and High God to grant him success in promoting this message, in leading this nation towards its highness and grace, and in achieving the aims which the deceased Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred) delineated. And God is the Granter of Success.

Thou Al-Houjja 6th, 1418 of Immigration

Makka Al-Moukarrama

And Praise be to God,

The Lord Of All The Worlds.

- [1.](#) Al-Hashimi, Nazra Jadeeda Fee Wilayat Al-Faqih, Page 26.
- [2.](#) Al-Ghourouri, Al-Tanqeeh, Page 204.
- [3.](#) Refer to the previous source, From page 29 till page 37.
- [4.](#) The Publications of Al-Taarof House, Page 115.
- [5.](#) Nazra Jadeeda Fee Weelayat Al-Faqih, Page 40.
- [6.](#) Nazra Jadeeda Fee Weelayat Al-Faqih, Page 41.
- [7.](#) The call of Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred), Pages 21 and 22.
- [8.](#) Refer to Al-Ghourouri, Al-Tanqeeh Fee Shareh Al-Aourwa Al-Wothqa [The Revision of the Explanation of the Firm Bond], Part One, Page 134.
- [9.](#) Refer to Clanter, Al-Makaseb [The Gains] Part One, The Introduction.
- [10.](#) This expression is mentioned in the studies of the dead Sayyed Abu Al-Qasim Al-Khu'i (May his secret be sacred) in Al-Tanqeeh, Part One, Page 134.
- [11.](#) Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat , Part One, Page 6.
- [12.](#) Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat Part One, Page 6.
- [13.](#) Refer to Al-Tarihi, Moujammaa Al-Bahrain, Part Six, Page 277.
- [14.](#) Al-Aourwa Al-Wothqa, Publications of Al-Aalamee Institution, Part One, Page 8.
- [15.](#) Tahreer Al-Waseela, Publications of Al-Montathar House, Part One, Page 6.
- [16.](#) Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat, Publications of the Islamic House, Part One, Page 11.
- [17.](#) Minhaj Al-Saleeheen ,Part One, Page 10.
- [18.](#) Refer to these testimonies in the following book: Marjeeaayat Al-Imam Al-Qa'id (May God lengthen his presence among us) [The Reference of The Imam The Leader].
- [19.](#) A member in The Teacher's University, A teacher of the high studies in Sacred Qom, A member in The Council of the Consultation of Giving the religious Opinion in the bureau of Imam Al-Khamene'i, He attended for 24 years the studies of Sayyed Al-Khu'i (May God be pleased with him and for 14 years the studies of Imam Al-Khomeini (May his secret be sacred).
- [20.](#) Nazra Jadeeda Fee Weelayat Al-Fakih [A New View of the Guardianship of the Jurisprudent], Pages 37 and 38.
- [21.](#) Marjeeaayat Al-Imam Al-Qa'id (Publications of Al-Maaref Islamic Cultural Association), Part One, Page 100.
- [22.](#) A member of The Council of the Maintenance of the Constitution in the Islamic republic, Member of The Council of Experts, Previous Head of the Judiciary Power.
- [23.](#) A member of The Council of Experts.
- [24.](#) Head of The Council of the Maintenance of the Constitution in the Islamic Republic, Temporary Leader of Tehran's Friday prayer.
- [25.](#) A member of The Teachers' University, The Secretary of the Global Meeting for the Approximation among the Sects.

Sources and References

- 1- The Noble Qur'an
- 2- Ajweebat Al-Istiftaat [The Answers to the Consultations]/ Sayyid Ali Al-Husayni Al-Khamene'i/ Publications of Al-Waseela House/ 1416 of Immigration/ Beirut
- 3 - Bihar Al-Anwar [The Seas of Lights] Sheikh Muhammad Baqer Al-Majlisi/ Publications of the Islamic Books House/ Tahran
- 4- Tahreer Al-Waseela [Editing the Means]/ Imam Rohoullah Al-Mousawi Al-Khomeini/ 1407 of Immigration/ Beirut
- 5- Al-Tanqeeh Fee Shareh Al-Aourwa Al-Wothqa [The Revision in the Explanation of the Firm Bond]/ Mirza Ali Al-Ghourouri Al-Tabreezi/ Publications of the Household Institution/ Kom
- 6- Aqa'ed Al-Imameyya [The Creeds of the Imamian Sect]/ Sheikh Muhammad Ridha' Al-Mudhaffar/ Comment by Muhammad Jawad Al-Tarihi/ Publications of Imam Ali Institution/ First Edition/ 1417 of Immigration/ Kom
- 7- Al-Aourwa Al-Wothqa [The Firm Bond] Sayyid Muhammad Kathem Al-TabatabaeiAl-Yazdi/ Al-Aalamee Publications/ Second Edition/ 1404 of Immigration/ Beirut
- 8- Moujammaa Al-Bahrain [The Collection of the Two Seas]Sheikh FakhruddinAl-Tarihi/ Comment by Ahmad Al-Husayni/ Publications of Al-Wafaa Institution/ 1403 of Immigration/ Beirut
- 9- Al-Fatawa Al-Wadieha [The Clear Religious opinions]/ The Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqer Al-Sadr/ Publications of Al-Taarof House/ Sixth Edition/ 1399 of Immigration/ Beirut
- 10- Manhajeyyat Al-Thawra Al-Islameyya [The Methodology of the Islamic revolution] Publications of Circulating the Imprints of Imam Al-Khomeini Institution/ Iran
- 11- Minhaj Al-Saleeheen [The Path of the Righteous Ones] Sayyid Abou Al-Qassem Al-Mousawi Al-Khou'ei/ Publications of Ousama House/ Damascus
- 12- Al-Makaseb [The Gains]/ Sheikh Mortada Al-Ansari/ Comment by Sayyid Muhammad Clanter/ Publications of the Book House/ Third Edition/ 1410 of Immigration/ Kom
- 13- Marjeeaayat Al-Imam Al-Qa'id [The Reference of the Imam the Leader]/ Published and Produced by Al-Maaref Islamic Cultural Association/ First Edition/ 1421 of Immigration/ Beirut
- 14- Nazra Jadeeda Fee Weelayat Al-Fakih [A New View of the Guardianship of the Jurisprudent]/

Sayyid Mahmoud Al-Hashimi

15- Imam Al-Khomeini's (May his secret be sacred) Call to the Scholars/ The gift of Baqeeyatollah Magazine

16- Al-Wafeeya [The Sufficient] Al-Fadel Al-Touni

17- Al-Watha'eq Al-Rasmeeya [the Official Papers]/ Sayyid Abdul Kareem Al-Husayni Al-Qazweeni/ Publications of Al-Shaheed Al-Sadr library/ Kom

18- Wasael Al-Sheeqa [The Means of the Shiite]/ Sheikh Muhammad bin Al-Hassan Al-Hor Al-Amili/ Comment by Al-Shirazi/ Publications of Reviving the Arabic Heritage House/ Fifth Edition/ 1403 of Immigration/ Beirut.

[1] [1]

SHARES

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/why-do-we-imitate-how-and-whom-akram-barakat>

Links

- [1] <https://www.addtoany.com/share>
- [2] <https://www.al-islam.org/person/akram-barakat>
- [3] <https://www.al-islam.org/organization/al-maarif-books>
- [4] <https://www.al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/165083>
- [5] <https://www.al-islam.org/printepub/book/export/html/165083>
- [6] <https://www.al-islam.org/printmobi/book/export/html/165083>
- [7] <https://www.al-islam.org/tags/taqlid>