The life of Imam ‘Ali Bin Musa al-Ridha’

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This is an inquiry into the life of Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', the eighth Imam from the Household of the Prophet. The text includes a biography, a detailed history of his life and death, a throughout research of his works, debated and discussions, and his doctrinal researches, a collection of his wise sayings and lastly the Ziyarat of the Imam with a brief description of the benefits of its recitation.

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Publisher's Preface

Some years ago, while I was paying a visit to the Holy Shrine of the eighth Imam, my master, 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, I asked myself: "Is it possible for me to find favor with my Imams, the guides and rightly-guided ones who have said in their traditions: 'May Allah have mercy on him who enlivens our affairs,?" So it came to my mind that I had to find a book on the life of the eighth Imam in order to translate it into English.

After I had asked the advice of some professors, I chose the book entitled the Life of Imam al-Ridha' by Shaykh Ba'qir Sharif al-Qarashi. Then I gave the book to Mr. Ja'sim al-Rasheed in order to translate it into English, and he agreed to this suggestion; I thank him, and praise belongs to Allah.

After an arduous effort and diligent striving, this great book has been translated into English, that it may be an important reference before those who desire to study and to inquire into the lives of the Imams of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them. We ask Allah, the Great and Almighty, to help us enliven more works about the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, and on *Tashayyu';* surely He is powerful over everything.

****

In the Name of Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate

“Surely Allah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of ‘Umra’n above the nations. Offspring, one of the other; and Allah is Hearing, Knowing.” Qur’an (***3: 33 –34***)

“Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House, and to purify you thoroughly.” Qur’an (***33: 33***)

“Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives; and whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein; surely Allah is Forgiving, Grateful.” Qur’an (***53:23***)

Foreword

by His Eminence, Imam al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-A‘la’ al-Sabzwa’ri, may his blessings lastmay his blessings lastmay his blessings last

In the Name of Allah the Merciful, the Compassionate,

Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. Blessing and peace be on the noblest of His creatures Muhammad and his Household, the good, the pure. The pure Imams, peace be on them, are the mediations of the Holiest Grace, the means of Divine mercy, and the testamentary trustees of Allah, may His name be exalted, on earth. Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, has endowed them with knowledge and cognition through which they set the foundations of the religion and pillars of Shari‘a. The gallant, affectionate, infallible Imam ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him, was unique in being able to affirm Divine knowledge through debating with the leading scientists of religions and followers of false beliefs. He established right and refuted wrong, and his holy words have become the axis of studies and foundation of perfection.

A group of scholars–may Allah, the Exalted, reward them with the best reward–has undertaken the task of collecting, interpreting, and explaining these words. Among those whom Allah, the Most High, has singled out for this great dignity is, Shaykh of traditionalists, the Hujja, Shaykh Ba’qir al-Qarashi, whom Allah, the Exalted, has endowed with His special favor and placed him among those who are guides to the righteous Imams, peace be on them, and explain their words and their characters. May Allah, the Most High, appreciate his efforts and grant him success to exalt the word of the truth and to manifest the reality. Verily, He is All-hearing, and answers to prayers!

Jama'di al Tha'niya 26th, 1412 A. H.
'Abd al-A'la' al-Sabzwa'ri

Dedication

I submit this humble effort to the great position of the pioneer of the intellectual and cognitive renaissance in Islam, the Prophet's descendant, Imam Ja'far al-Sa'diq, peace be on him. I have made this research about his grandson Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, while hoping that he will kindly accept, so it would be a treasure for me on the Day of Resurrection.

The Author

Introduction

1

This is an inquiry into the life of Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, the eighth Imam from the Household of the Prophet. He is Allah's light, His gift, and His treasure. He and his fathers, the leaders of Islamic Thought, are in no need of praiser's praise and describers' description, for Allah, the Exalted, praised them, took away uncleanness from them, and purified them from deviation. Regarding them He, the Exalted, has said: "

Verily Allah intends to keep off from you every kind of uncleanness and to purify you people of the House with a thorough purification.[1]"

He has also imposed love for them on all the children of Islam. Moreover He, the Exalted, has said:

"***Say: I demand not of you any reward for it*** (***the toils of preaching***) ***except the love of my relations***.[2]"

Their grandfather the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, associated them to the Qur'an when he said: "I am going to leave among you the *thaqalayn*. If you cleave to them, you will never go astray after me; one of them is greater than the other that is the Book of Allah which is a cord stretching from the sky to the earth and my offspring from my family. They will never scatter (from each other) until they come to me at the Pool (*hawd*). Hence, think! How will you treat them after me?[3]" Also he, may

Allah bless him and his family, regarded them as the life-ships of this community. He has said: “Verily my Household among you are like Noah’s Ark, which whoever embarked was safe, and whoever missed drowned. Verily my Household among you are like the gate of *Hitta* among the children of Isra”il, through which whoever entered was forgiven.4”

Al-Ma’mu’n asked ‘Abd Allah b. Matar, who was an eminent thinker and poet at his time: “What is your opinion of the Household (of the Prophet)?” “What shall I say about the clay which was plunged into the water of the Message and planted in the water of the Inspiration? Nothing will spread from it except the musk of guidance and ambergris of piety,” replied ‘Abd Allah with these brilliant words.

These golden words controlled al-Ma’mu’n’s heart, hence he, and in the presence of Imam al-Ridha’, ordered the mouth of ‘Abd Allah to be stuffed with pearls.5”

All the exalted values and genuine principles of which man boasts were in the Imams of the Household (of the prophet), peace be on them, for they were some of their elements and qualities.

؟2؟

As for the inclinations and qualities of Imam al-Ridha’, they were like those of his fathers, the great Imams. He freed himself from the world, renounced its beauties, and turned away from its embellishment, dedicated himself to Allah, devoted himself to Him, and clung to obedience to Him. He had knowledge of the precepts of the religion, inclusively encompassed the law of the Lord of the messengers, helped the weak, relieved the deprived, and accomplished the needs of the needy and other qualities which placed him at the top of honor and glory in the world of Arabs and Muslims.

Imam ‘Ali al-Ridha’, peace be on him, possessed these original values in all their forms and kinds, for he completely freed himself from the world and divorced it three times, just as his grandfather Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, did. Hence, he paid no attention to its vanities and embellishment. This clearly appeared when he undertook the succession, which was the greatest office in the Islamic State, hence he was the second character after al-Ma’mu’n.

Nevertheless, he rejected all the seductions of government and authority. He intensely hated the popular festivals and all kinds of honoring and magnifying which the people would hold for their kings and rulers. He announced this when he said: “Man’s waking behind a man is a trial for the followed and abasement for the follower.6” The narrators have said: “Imam ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’ would go to the bath-house, but the owner of the bath-house did not recognize him. It happened that there was a soldier in the bath-house and the soldier asked the Imam to rub and clean him. The Imam responded to his request. When the soldier came to know of the Imam, he became fearful and terrified. However, the Imam calmed his fear and made him know that he rendered him a human service.”

Among his high moral traits is that he would eat with his boys and retainers. He hated to distinguish

himself from them. There are other high moral traits which he inherited from his grandfather, the greatest Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family.

؟3؟

The Imams of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, had their own brilliant policy and method in the world of government and policy. They thought that government should be a means for establishing pure justice and truth, spreading love and friendship among men. They though that government should be a means for refreshing peoples, achieving their welfare, security, and prosperity. They thought that government was worthless if it did not achieve these noble aims through which peoples become happy. Listen to what the master of the Household (of the Prophet), Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, when he said to his helper and adviser, ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Abba’s to whom he held up his sandals made of fiber and asked him:

“Ibn ‘Abba’s, how much do you value these sandals?”

“They have no value,” Ibn ‘Abba’s retorted.

“By Allah, they are more lovable to me than these affairs of yours but for the fact that I must establish (what is) true and ward off (what is) false,” explained the Imam.

The dictionary of policy has no words greater or more exalted than these words said by Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful and greatest Muslim thinker, peace be on him. Authority has no value unless it establishes fairness and justice, wards off falsehood and tyranny.

This is the path which Allah has chosen for His servants, that they may be righteous, and that they may enjoy a government which stands on neither deception nor misleading nor playing with the fates of the community.

؟4؟

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, appeared on the arena of the political life in Islam, and he was the most brilliant politician in Islamic history. He was steadfast in his political attitudes, so he was not deceived by the bright ways and false hopes of al-Mu’mu’n, the ‘Abba’sid king, when he abdicated the throne and entrusted it to him. This abdication of the throne was not real; nor was it true at all; rather al-Ma’mu’n had decided that in order to achieve his political goals; probably the most important one of these goals is that he wanted to suppress those burning revolts which were about to burn the ‘Abba’sid government and to fold its flag. Among those revolts was that of Abu’ al-Sara’ya’. It is worth mentioning that Abu’ al-Sara’ya’ was an inspired military commander like Abu’ Muslim al-Khurasa’ni, who had overthrown the Umayyad government. Moreover al-Ma’mu’n wanted to conciliate the Iranians and all supporters of the Household (of the Prophet) whom the previous ‘Abba’sid governments had wronged,

persecuted, and deprived of their natural rights.

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was fully aware of the political reasons which urged al-Ma'mu'n to abdicate the office of the caliphate and to hand it over to him, peace be on him. He, peace be on him, vigorously refused to undertake it. When al-Ma'mu'n was despair of him, he threatened him with death, so the Imam reluctantly responded to him according to the following conditions:

A. He (Imam al-Ridha') would not command; nor would he prohibit.

B. He would not remove any person from his office.

C. He would not appoint any person in any of the state offices.

These conditions indicate that the Imam was the apparent successor of al-Ma'mu'n, and that the government of al-Ma'mu'n was illegal, for if it had been legal, he would not have mentioned these conditions.

Only few days ago and all the people came to know that the Imam had deep faith and that al-Ma'mu'n had nothing except cunning. They understood that al-Ma'mu'n wanted to achieve his political aims. When al-Ma'mu'n had achieved his goals, he assassinated the Imam, for he was unable to remove him from the office of regency. We will explain this matter in the chapters that follow.

5

Among the aims of this book is to give proof of the Imam's abundant knowledge of philosophy, theology, medicine, jurisprudence, and so on. This can be indicated objectively through his debates with the great philosophers and scholars from different countries and cities. It is worth mentioning that al-Ma'mu'n had asked them to come to Khurasa'n in order to examine the Imam. He held a private and secret meeting with them and promised to give them a lot of money if they could silence the Imam with their arguments and render him incapable of answering them, that he might use this incapability as a means for slandering and defaming the Shi'ites who believed that the Imams of the Household (of the Prophet), peace be on them, were the most knowledgeable of the community, and that Allah endowed them knowledge and excellencies just as He had endowed His prophets and His testamentary trustees.

The scholars responded to al-Ma'mu'n's summons and asked the Imam about the vaguest and most difficult matters. The historians have said: "The scholars asked Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' more than twenty thousand questions about various matters, and he skillfully answered them. Then they admired his abundant knowledge and most of them believed in his Imamate." As a result al-Ma'mu'n was forced to prevent the scholars and others from meeting the Imam. Meanwhile he kept him under intense observation lest the people should admire him.

It is worth mentioning that these debates were recorded by some of the Imam's students, but we have

not found them yet. Perhaps they are part of the manuscripts which Arab and Islamic world has lost.

Anyhow, the Shi'ite historians have reported a small group of these debates which are of great importance. For they, though few in number, show the Imam's abundant and scientific wealth, and they indicate that he was a unique thinker and scholar in the world of Islam.

6

Some books of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, have been reported and mentioned in the books of some historians and biographers such as Ibn al-Nadim, al-Tu'si, and others. They are as follows:

A. Tibb (Dissertation) of Imam al-Ridha'

It is a great, medical account which the Imam wrote according to al-Ma'mu'n's request and is called *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya* (the Golden Dissertation). It contains the Imam's health programs on foods which improves man's body and protects it from maladies. It also contains his general prescriptions such as refraining from eating too much food which gives rise to high blood pressure, diabetes, arteriosclerosis, and other dangerous diseases. It is certain that if one puts into practice the Imam's prescriptions, he will need no medicine.

As this dissertation is of great importance, some meritorious people have explained it according to modern medicine. Among them is Dr. al-Sayyid Sa'hib Zayni.

B. Imam al-Ridha"s Musnad

It contains some traditions which the Imam, peace be on him, has reported from his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. It was printed in Cairo. 'Alla'ma 'Abd al-Wa'si' b. Yahya' al-Wa'simi printed and commented on it.

C. Jawa'm' al-Shri'a

It contains outstanding, religious precepts and mother, juristic problems. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, dictated it to al-Fadal b. Sahl, the prime minister of al-Ma'mu'n. That was according to al-Ma'mu'n's request. This dissertation has been mentioned in Tuhaf al-'Uqu'l and other Shi'ite books. We have reported it from them and mentioned it in the book. These books are part of the Imam's scientific wealth.

As for the jurisprudence of Imam al-Ridha', we have indicated that it is not among his works; rather it belongs to other than him and is ascribed to him.

Anyhow, the narrators have reported from the Imam a large group of outstanding precepts and moral teachings. Islam wants its followers to adopt such precepts and teachings, that they may develop their

life.

7

This book includes biographies of some great scholars and narrators who studied under the Imam, peace be on him, narrated his traditions and his wise sayings, and wrote books about them. It is certain that mentioning such biographies will enhance the research about the Imam's life, for it shows that the scholars in that time took great care of taking knowledge and sciences from the Imam. The narrators and historians have unanimously agreed that the Imam was a unique Muslim thinker, and that he derived his own knowledge from that of his pure fore-fathers, peace be on them, who were the guardians of the knowledge of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and inheritors of his wise sayings.

8

This book contains an inquiry into the time of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, for such a time was full of economic, scientific, social, political, and other events which had great effects on the life of the people.

Mentioning such events is necessary for every researcher. It is worth mentioning that psychology and sociology have established that events in every time have direct effects on man's life and intellect.

The time of the Imam was full of important events of which is that Ha'ru'n al-Rashid created a conflict between his two sons al-Amin and al-Ma'mu'n. This conflict resulted in destroying Baghdad, the most beautiful capital in the Middle East, and murdering a large group of people. Another example of these events is the revolt of the inspired leader, Abu' al-Sara'ya', and other great revolts which were about to destroy the 'Abba'sid government and to fold its standard.

Yet another example of the events in that time was the matter of creating the Qur'an. It was a hidden or neglected theological problem, but it was al-Ma'mu'n who moved it and it led to shedding blood without any right, spreading disorders and discords among the Muslims.

However, through his political cleverness, al-Ma'mu'n could overcame all those events he faced. Then he forced Imam al-Ridha' the hope of the Muslim community, peace be on him to accept the succession after him and made the people busy thinking of this great event. Accordingly, he was able to suppress all those revolts against him.

9

We have deeply and inclusively probed into the characters of the 'Abba'sid kings with whom Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, coincided. As a result we have concluded that their characters are similar to those of the Umayyads, who spent the property of Allah on themselves and enslaved His servants. After

this serious research on their characters, we have come to know that they did not perform any good deed; nor did they pay attention to the interests of the Muslims. Rather, they were absorbed in satisfying their pleasures and desires. They spent on their red nights in Baghdad millions of the funds of the Muslims. They enriched singers, abusers, and the dissolutel; meanwhile they subjected the people to poverty and unhappiness.

Moreover, they ordered the innocent to be whipped, imprisoned, and killed by sword; at the head of those innocent were the ‘Alawide Sayyids who demanded nothing except establishing social justice. They ordered their tax collectors to show rudeness and brutality toward farmers, craftsmen, and manufacturers. As a result the tax collectors destroyed the people’s bodies by whip and went too far in wronging the people.

؟10؟

As for inquiring into Islamic history, it must be objective, honest, far from doctrinal and traditional trends, for this history has many subjects which have hidden the truth and concealed realities, so it is incumbent on (us) to spend more efforts in order to distinguish the right from the wrong and the true from the false. An example of these subjects is that noble attributes and great titles were given to the Umayyad and the ‘Abba’sid kings; they were given the titles as Allah’s vicegerents on earth, while this noble title represents fairness, justice, and law. I (the author) seek refuge in Allah from such titles which were given to persons like Yazid, Marwa’n, al-Walid, and other ‘Abba’sid kings who turned the life of the people into an unbearable inferno.

Some historians and authors think that the measure of one’s highness and great position is his sitting on the throne of government and his seizing the reins of general authority over a country. This is incorrect; the measure of one’s exaltedness in Islamic viewpoint is the services which he renders to his community in the fields of economy, culture, security, and prosperity. If Muslim historians and authors deprive kings of these titles and give them to those who render great services to the community, then they will render great service to Islamic history, for the orientalists and others who harbor malice against Islam have criticized Islam because of such kings who acted in a manner different from Islamic justice and fairness. They think that these kings represent Islam in their conducts and works. If those who criticize Islam probe into Islamic precepts, they will find them noble, creative, comply with justice and nature, have nothing—praise belongs to Allah—which complies with injustice. Rather they will find that Islamic precepts oppose injustice, and that the irregular behavior of some Muslim kings does not represent Islam.

؟11؟

This is not the first book to be written about the life of Imam ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him. Rather many books have been written on his life in Arabic and other than it, and the most important of

them is al-Sayyid Ja'far Murtada's *the Life of Imam al-Ridha'*, peace be on him, for this book is rich in information.

It is worth mentioning that all the books written on the personality of this great Imam have not encompassed its realities yet. This a far-fetched hope, for the Imam, peace be on him, had boundless intellectual wealth like that of the leading Imams, peace be on them, who were guardians of righteousness, and inheritors of the knowledge of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

12

Before I end this introduction to the book, I would like to thank His Eminence, our great professor, the Hujjah of Islam and Muslims, Shaykh Husayn al-Khalifa for his care, favor, and help with printing some of my books; I would particularly like to thank His Eminence al-Hujjah, the great 'Alla'ma, my brother, Ha'di Sharif al-Qarashi for the creative efforts he rendered to me, his valuable notes on the book, his checking some of the books I made use of, and his encouraging me to serve the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on. I ask Allah, the Exalted, to reward him just as He rewards the righteous from among His servants. Verily He is the Supporter of purpose and success.

Holy Najaf,
Shawwa'l 14th, 1411 A. H.
Ba'qir Sharif al-Qarashi

1. Qur'an, 33, 22.
2. Ibid., 41, 23.
3. Al-Tirmidhi, Sahih, vol. 2, p. 308. Asad al-Gha'ba, vol. 2, p. 12.
4. Majjma' al-Zawa"id, vol. 9, p. 68. Al-Hlya, vol. 4, p. 306. Ta'rikh Baghdad, vol. 2, p. 19.
5. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 71.
6. Al-Ya'qu'bi, Ta'rikh.

Chapter 1: The Great Baby

Before we speak about the birth of the pure Imam Abu' Muhammad, peace be on him, and the affairs accompanied it, we will mention his brilliant, exalted lineage, which is related to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who is the source of flow, bestowal, good, and mercy to mankind. So which lineage is more exalted and greater than that of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who is one of the fruit of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and one of his brilliant branches. The following is an outline about his noble origin.

His Father

As for the father of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, he is Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Imam Ja'far al-Sa'diq b. Imam Muhammad al-Ba'qir b. Imam Zayn al-'Abidin b. Imam al-Husayn b. Imam 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on them.

In the world of lineage, there is no lineage more exalted or purer than this lineage. It is certain that the pure Imams are the successors of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and his testamentary trustees (of authority). In the chapters that follow, we will mention an outline about his father Imam Musa', peace be on him.

His Mother

As for the mother of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, she was endowed with all qualities of honor and virtue, through which the Muslim woman becomes exalted, such as chastity, purity, and great soul. She is among the glorious women in Islam. His mother was a slave-wife, and this quality does not decrease her position, for Islam has made piety and good deeds as a measure to differentiate men from each other, and everything other than this measure is not important.

The narrators have reported many narrations about how Imam al-Ka'zim married this glorious lady. The following are some of them:

1. She was among the noble non-Arabs and was the retainer of Mrs. Hamida, the mother of Imam Musa', peace be on him. She was among the meritorious women in her intellect, her religion, and her honoring her mistress, Hamida. She did not sit before her in order to honor and magnify her. So Hamida said to her son Imam Musa': "My little son, surely Takktum is a slave-girl. I have never seen a slave-girl better than her. I have no doubt that Allah will manifest her children. I have granted her to you and advise you to treat her kindly.[1]"

2. Hisha'm b. Ahmed has reported: "Abu' al-Hasan the First (Musa' al-Ka'zim) said to me: 'Did you know that one of the people from al-Maghrib has come?' 'No,' I replied. 'Indeed,' he, peace be on him, said, 'a man from the people of al-Maghrib has come to Medina. So come with us.' He rode off and I rode with him until we came to the man. There he was, a man of al-Maghrib. He had with him slave-girls. 'Show us your wares,' I told him. He showed us nine good slave-girls. However, all the time Abu' al-Hasan was saying: 'I have no need of those.' Then he told him: 'Show us something else.' 'I have nothing except a sick slave-girl,' he replied. 'what is (wrong) with you (not) to offer her (for sale) he (Abu' al-Hasan) said. The man refused and went away. On the next day he (Abu' al-Hasan Musa'), peace be on him, sent for me and told me: 'Ask him how much is the maximum he wants for her? Whatever he says, tell him that you will take her.' I went to the man and he said to me: 'I would not take less than such-and-such a sum. 'I will take her,' I said. 'She is yours,' he replied, 'but tell me about the man who was with you, yesterday.' 'He was a man from the Banu' Ha'shim,' I told him. 'Which Banu' Ha'shim?' he

asked. ‘From among their chiefs,’ I answered, ‘I do not have more (information) than this. ‘I want more than (this sum of money),’ he demanded. ‘I have nothing more than this,’ I explained. Then he said: ‘I will tell you that when I bought her from a remote area of al-Maghrib, a woman from *Ahl al-kita’b* (the people of the Book, i.e. Jews and Christians) met me and asked me who this maidservant was whom I had with me. I told her that I had bought her for myself but she said it was not appropriate that she should be with the like of me. It is fitting that this slave-girl should be with the best person on earth, for she will soon give birth to a son such as has not been born in the east or the west.’ I took her to Abu’ al-Hasan (Musa’). It was not long afterwards that she gave birth to ‘Ali (al-Ridha’).2”

3. It was reported that Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, said to his companions: “By Allah, I have bought this slave-girl according to Allah’s command and inspiration.” He was asked about this statement and he replied: “While I was sleeping my grandfather and my father came to me, and there was with them a piece of silk cloth. They spread the piece, and suddenly there was a shirt in which was the picture of this slave-girl. Then they said: ‘Musa’, from this slave-girl you will have the best of the people of the earth after you.’ Then my father ordered me: ‘If a baby-boy is born for you, name him ‘Ali.’ Then he said: ‘Allah, the Great and Almighty, will manifest justice and mercy through him. Blessed is he who believes in him, and woe unto him who shows enmity toward him and denies him!’3”

These are some of the narrations which have been reported about how Imam Musa’ al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, married this noble lady. He showed sincere love for her, and she enjoyed admiration and respect in his house.

Her Name

As for the name of this pure lady, the narrators have differed over it. They following are some of their opinions about it:

1. Takktum, many historians think that her name is Takktum. Concerning this name the poet composed the following lines when he praised Imam (‘Ali al-Ridha’), peace be on him: ‘Ali, the magnified, is the best of the men in soul, father, family, and grandfathers. Takktum has brought him to us for knowledge and clemency. He will be the eighth Imam who will deliver the proof of Allah.4

This is an Arabic name with which ladies from among the Arab women were called, and concerning it the poet says:
The two imaginations circled and increased in malady the imagination of Takkna’ and the imagination of Takktum .5

2. Al-Khayzara’n.6

3. Arwa’.7

4. Najjma.8

These are some of the views which have been mentioned about her name. Confirming the most correct one of these names is not useful for readers.

Her Reverential Fear

This pure lady was among the worshipful women. She devoted herself to the acts of obedience to Allah, for she followed the behavior of her husband, Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, the Imam of the Allah-fearing and those who turn to Allah, the Most High, in repentance. Among the qualities of her worship is that when she gave birth to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, she said: "Help me with (finding) a wet nurse." She was asked: "Has your milk decreased?" "I do not want to tell a lie," she replied, "the milk has not decreased, but I want to perform a part of my prayers and glorification."[9] Have you seen how this angelic lady adored Allah and devoted herself to Him. She asked (the people) to help her with finding a wet nurse for her baby lest it should divert her from performing her prayers and glorification.

When Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was born, the earth shined; waves of delight and happiness spread through the Household of the Prophet, May Allah bless him and his Household. As for Imam al-Ka'zim, he received with more delight the news of the birth of his blessed baby, so he hurried to his wife and congratulated her on her baby, saying: "I congratulate you, Najjma. It is a mark of nobility for you from your Lord!"

Imam al-Ka'zim took his blessed baby, folded it with a white piece of cloth, and performed the religious rites for it. He said the *adha'n* in its right ear, said the *iqa'ma* in its left ear, called for sweet water and rubbed its lower jaw with it, and then he returned it to its mother and said to her: "Take it, for it is the rest (*baqiyat*) of Allah on His earth.[10]"

The first picture which the Prophet's grandson (Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him) saw in the world of existence was that of his father, the Imam of the Allah-fearing and leader of the monotheists; and the first voice which he heard was:

"Allah is Great!"

"There is no god but Allah!"

These brilliant words are the secret of existence and song of the Allah-fearing.

Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, named his blessed baby with the name of his grandfather Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, that he might get blessing seek good omen in this name, which stood for the greatest personality created in the world of Islam and had all good qualities of the world.

His Nicknames

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was given a group of noble nicknames. Each nickname represented one of his noble qualities. The following are some of them:

1. Al-Ridha'

The historians and narrators have differed over the person who gave this exalted nick-name to the Imam, peace be on him, to the extent that it has prevailed him and become a name through which he is recognized. The following are some of the statements:

A. Al-Ma'mu'n

A group of the historians has maintained that it was al-Ma'mu'n who gave him this nick-name to him[11], for he was satisfied with him and appointed him as his successor.[12] Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him, refuted this statement before a group of his companions, saying: "Verily Allah, the Blessed and Most High, named him al-Ridha', for he was the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, the Great, in His heaven, of His Messenger, and of the Imams, the blessings of Allah be upon them, after him."

Al-Bizanti asked him: "Weren't all your past forefathers, peace be on them, the pleasure of Allah (*Ridha'* al-Allah), the Exalted, the Great, of His Messenger, and of the Imams after him?"

"Yes," replied Imam al-Jawa'd.

"Why has only your father been named al-Ridha'?" al-Bizanti asked.

"Because both his opposing enemies and obedient supporters were pleased with him, while this did not happen to any of his fathers, so only he was called al-Ridha'.[13]"

B. Imam Musa

Some narrators believe that it was Imam Musa al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, who gave this nick-name to his son. Sulayma'n b. Hafs reported: "Imam Mu'sa b. Ja'far named his son 'Ali al-Ridha'. He would say: 'Summon to me my son al-Ridha'.' I asked him: 'To my son belongs pleasure (*al-Ridha'*).' He answered: 'My son is al-Ridha'.' When he addressed him, he said: 'O Abu'' al-Hasan.'[14]" These are some statements about giving him this noble nick-name. Ahmed al-Bizanti gave the reason for giving this nick-name to him, saying: "He was given the nick-name of al-Ridha' because he is the good pleasure of Allah, the Most Exalted, in His heaven, the pleasure of His Messenger, and of the Imams after him on His earth.[15]"

2. Al-Sa'bir

2. Al-Sa'bir [16]

He was given the nick-name of *al-Sa'bir* (the patient) because he was patient toward the troubles and misfortunes caused to him by his opponents and enemies.

3. Al-Zaki

3. Al-Zaki 17

Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, was pure, noble, and honorable.

4. Al-Wafi

4. Al-Wafi 18

As for loyalty, it was one of the Imam's qualities, for he was loyal to his community and homeland.

5. Sira'jj Allah

5. Sira'jj Allah 19

The Imam was the *Sira'jj* of Allah (the Lamp of Allah). He guided the misled and the perplexed (to the right path).

6. Qurrat 'Ayn al-Mu'minin

6. Qurrat 'Ayn al-Mu'minin 20

Among his noble nick-names is *Qurrat 'Ayn al-Mu'minin* (the delight of the eye of the believers), for he was their ornament, their pride, their cave, and their stronghold.

7. Makkyadat al-Mulhidin

7. Makkyadat al-Mulhidin 21

He was given the nick-name of *Makkyadat al-Mulhidin* (the stratagem of the unbelievers), for nullified their vague errors and refuted their imaginations. This was through his debates which were held in the 'Abba'sid palace, and with which he established the originality of Islamic principles and values.

8. Al-Siddiq

8. Al-Siddiq 22

He was given the nick-name of *Al-Siddiq* (the very truthful one), for he was like Yu'suf (Joseph), who ruled Egypt. He led Islamic world and had an absolute leadership over it.

9. Al-Fa'dil

9. Al-Fa'dil [23]

He was given the nick-name of *al-Fa'dil* or the most meritorious one, for he was the most meritorious and perfect of all the people of his time. These are some of the noble nick-names which were given to him; they display his exalted character and great importance.

His Kunya

The Imams of the Household (of the Prophet), peace be on them, would give *kunya* to their children when young, and this is an example of Islamic education aiming at improving personality and making child feel that he or she has position with his family. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was given the following *kunyas*:

1. Abu' al-Hasan

His father Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, gave him this *kunya*.[24] He, peace be on him, said to 'Ali b. Yaqtin: "O 'Ali, this son of mine – and he pointed to Imam al-Ridha'– is the master of my children, and I have given him my *kunya*.[25]" Imam al-Ridha' was given the *kunya* of Abu' al-Hasan. As this *kunya* was common between them, Imam al-Ka'zim was called: Abu' al-Hasan the past, and Imam al-Ridha' was called Abu' al-Hasan the second, that the people might distinguish between the two *kunyas.*

2. Abu' Bakr

This *kunya* was rare. He was not known for it, but rarely. Abu' al-Salt al-Harawi narrated: "One day al-Ma'mu'n asked me a question, and I answered: 'Concerning the question, Abu' Bakr (i.e. al-Ridha') said such-and-such. So al-Ma'mu'n asked me: 'Which Abu' Bakr our Abu' Bakr or Abu' Bakr of the populace (*'amma*)? 'Our Abu' Bakr,' I replied."

'Isa' said: "I asked Ibn al-Salt: 'Who is your Abu' Bakr? "Ali b. Musa',' he answered, 'he was given this *kunya*.'[26]"

The Year of his Birth

The historians have differed over the year in which Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was born as well as they have differed over the month in which he was born. The following are some of their statements in this regard:

1. He was born in the year 147 A. H.[27]

2. He was born in the year 148 A. H.[28] This year is famous with the narrators.

3. He was born in the year 150 A. H.[29]

4. He was born in the year 151 A. H.[30]

5. He was born in the year 153 A. H.[31] It was the year in which his grandfather al-Sa'diq died.[32]

These are some statements about the year of his birth. The historians have also differed over the month in which he was born. The following are some of their statements:

1. He was born on Thursday or the night of Thursday, the eleventh of (the month of) Rabi' al-Awwal.[33]

2. He was born on Thursday[34], the 11th of (the month of) Dhi al-Qi'da.[35]

3. He was born on the 7th of (the month of) Shawwa'l. It was said (that he was born on) the 8th of it, and it was said on the 6th of it.[36]

These are some of the statements which the historians and the narrators have mentioned.

His Characteristics

Many historians said that Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was brown or deep brown.[37] It was said that he was white and had a medium height,[38] and that he was like his grandfather Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.[39] As he was like his grandfather in his characteristics, he was similar to him in his noble moral traits, which distinguished him from the other prophets.

His Solemnity

As for the solemnity of Imam Abu' Muhammad (al-Ridha'); faces were humbled in fear of it, for it was similar to that of the prophets and the testament of trustees (of authority) whom Allah clothed in His light. All those who saw him respected him. An example of his solemnity was that when he sat with the people or rode off with them, none was able to raise his voice because of his great solemnity.[40] The reporters have said: "When he (i.e. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him) came to al-Ma'mu'n, the chamberlains and the servants hurried to raise the curtain for him. When they heard that al-Ma'mu'n wanted to pledge allegiance to him, they said to each other that if he (the Imam) came, they would not honor or magnify him as they would do.

The Imam came as usual, and his solemnity moved them, so they honored him as they would do. Then they blamed one another and swore (by Allah) that if he returned they would not honor him. When the Imam, peace be on him, came on the following day, they stood for him and greeted him, but they did not raise they curtain for him, so a wind came and raised it for him. When he wanted to leave, the wind also raised the curtain for him. As a result they said to each other: 'Surely this man is of great importance, and Allah takes care of him, so return to your serving him.'[41]"

The Imams of the Household (of the Prophet), peace be on them, had importance and standing with Allah, the Most High, for it was He who supported and directed them to correctness, as He did toward His prophets and His messengers.

The Inscription of his Ring

As for the inscription and words engraved in ring, they more likely represent one's inclinations and desires. The following (words) were engraved in the ring of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him:

Wali Allah (the Friend of Allah).42

He had another ring in which it was engraved:

Al-'Izzah Lilla'h (Might belongs to Allah).43

These inscriptions represent the Imam's great devotion to Allah, the Most Exalted, and his clinging to Him.

His Childhood

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, grew up in the greatest and most exalted house in Islam. It was the house of the Imamate and center of revelation. *The house which Allah permitted to be exalted and in which His name may be remembered.* Imam al-Ridha' grew up in this noble house dominated by high Islamic education. For wherein the young respected and honored the old, and the old felt compassion for the young; noble moral traits spread; nothing was heard except reciting the Book of Allah; and nothing was done except good deeds and what brought man near to his Lord.

Educationists have maintained that house is among the most important factors which form person and build his character. If love, friendship, exalted habits, good customs, and sweet words dominate house, child will grow up soundly, be far from complexity and double personality. If house is corrupt and is full of hatred and detest, child will be complex and corrupt.

As for the house where Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, grew up, it was the most exalted one in the world of Islam, for it was the center of virtue and noble moral traits; it brought up the best of mankind and the Imams of truth and justice in Islam. In addition to house, environment plays an important role in bringing up person. As for the environment in which Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, grew up, it included the best men and scholars who studied under his father Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him.

All intellectual factors and means of exalted education were available for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so he grew up within this educational frame just as his great fathers (the treasures of Islam) did.

His Behavior

As for the behavior of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, it was a wonderful example of his fathers, who dined their souls and freed them from every inclination which had no relation with truth and reality.

The behavior of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, is distinguished by showing steadfastness toward the truth and rejecting falsehood. He ordered al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abba'sid Caliph, to fear Allah and blamed him for his behavior which opposed the reality of religion. However, al-Ma'mu'n became displeased with the Imam and committed the most horrible crime when he assassinated him, peace be on him. We will explain this matter in the chapters that follow.

The Imam's behavior toward his household and his brothers is another example of his showing steadfastness toward the truth. The Imam turned away from those who deviated from Allah's laws. He swore (by Allah) that he would not speak with his brother Zayd until he met Allah, the Most High. That was when Zayd committed something contrary to Allah's law.

As for his behavior toward his children, it is distinguished by his showing marvelous, educational manners toward them, especially toward his son Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him. He did not call him with his name; rather he addressed him with his *kunya*. He said: "Abu' Ja'far (al-Jawa'd) wrote to me, and I wrote to Abu' Ja'far.44" He called him with his *kunya* because he wanted to honor and magnify him.

1. 'Iyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, pp. 14-15.
2. Ibid., pp. 17-18. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 487. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 102.
3. Yousif b. Ha'tam al-Sha'fi'i, al-Durr al-Nazim fi Mana'qib al-A'imma.
4. 'Iyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 15. In this book it has been mentioned that some people have ascribed this poetry to the uncle of Abu' Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's.
5. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/80.
6. Tadhkirat al-Khawa's, p. 361. Bhar al-Ansa'b, p. 28. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 2.
7. Al-Shaykha'ni al-Qa'diri, al-Sira't al-Sawi, p. 169 (photographed). Nu'r al-Abbsa'r, p. 138.
8. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha'd, p. 342.
9. 'Iyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/80.
10. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 88. 'Iyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 18.
11. Abu' al-Fida", Ta'rikh, vol. 2, p. 24. Ibn al-Athir, Ta'rikh, vol. 5, p. 183.
12. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 4.
13. 'Ilal al-Shara'i'. A'la'm al-Wara. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 2.
14. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 3.
15. Ibid.
16. Jawharat al-Kala'm fi Madh al-Sa'da al-A'la'm, p. 143.
17. Al-Sira't al-Sawi, p. 199.
18. Tadhkirat al-Khawa's, p. 361. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 210.
19. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 210.
20. Ibid.
21. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 4.
22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p. 3.
25. Ibid.
26. Maqa'til al-Ta'libiyyin, p. 561.
27. Nu'r al-Abbsa'r, p. 138.
28. Gha'iyat al-Ikhtisa'r, p. 148. Bahr al-Ansa'b, p. 28. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 486. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha'd, p. 341. Al-Durr al-Maslu'k (photographed), p. 139. Akhba'r al-Diwal, p. 114. Jawharat al-Kala'm, p. 143. Al-Kaf'ami, Musba'h. Roudat al-Wa''izin. Mir'a't al-Jina'n, vol. 2, p. 11.
29. Al-Mujaddidu'n fi al-Isla'm, p. 87.
30. Sir al-Silsila al-'Alawiya, p. 38.
31. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 153. Kashf al-Ghumma. Da''irat Ma'a'rif al-Qarn al-'Ishrin, vol. 6, p. 665.
32. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/77-78. (It has been mentioned) in al-Irsha'd that he was born five years after the death of his grandfather Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him. An account similar to this has been mentioned in al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 210.
33. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 87.
34. Al-Durr al-Maslu'k, p. 139.
35. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/77.
36. Mir'a't al-Jina'n, vol. 2, p. 12.
37. Akhba'r al-Diwal.
38. Al-Shaykha'ni al-Qa'diri, al-Sira't al-Sawi fi Mana'qib Al al-Nabi, p. 199.
39. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 210.
40. Haya't al-Imam al-Jawa'd.
41. Akhba'r al-Diwal, p. 114. Jawhart al-Kala'm, p. 145. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 58.
42. Al-Durr al-Maslu'k, p. 139. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 4.
43. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 210.
44. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 14, p. 283.

Chapter 2: His Qualities

As for the qualities of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, they represent all virtues. All noble qualities gathered in him. Allah endowed him with all outstanding qualities just as He endowed his great fathers. He endowed him with nobility and made him an eminent figure for the community of his grandfather (the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family). So the Imam guided the perplexed and the straying (to the truth), and he enlightened minds. The following are some of his noble qualities:

As for the noble traits of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, they were part of those of his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, by which he was distinguished from the rest of the prophets. Through his exalted manners, (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, was able to develop man and saved him from the ill traits of those who lived in the pre-Islamic period. As for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, he had the high noble qualities of his grandfather.

Concerning his noble traits, Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's has said: "I have never seen nor have I ever heard that there is a person more meritorious than Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He never turned

away from anyone; nor did he interrupt anyone; nor did he refuse to do someone a favor he was able to do; nor did he ever stretch out his leg before an audience; nor did he ever lean upon something while his companion did not; nor did he ever call any of his servants or attendants a bad name ; nor did he ever spit or burst into laughter; rather, his laughter was just a smile. When he was ready to eat, he seated with him all his attendants, including the doorman and the groom. He slept little at night. He spent most of his nights from beginning to end (in praying or reciting the Qur'an). He did abundant charity, most of which was at dark nights.[1]"

These words display the Imam's noble moral traits, which are as follows:

A. He did not turn away from any of the people, whether they were his friends or his enemies; rather, he received them warmly and smiled at them.

B. He did not interrupt anyone while he was speaking; rather, he let him talk until he finished his talking.

C. Among his exalted morals is that he did not stretch out his legs before those who sat with him; rather, he sat politely.

D. He did not lean upon something while his associate did not.

E. He did not call any of his retainers or attendants a bad name even if they mistreated him.

F. He did not show haughtiness toward them; rather, he seated them with him when he was ready to eat.

G. He prayed abundantly and spent his nights in praying and reciting the Book of Allah.

H. He did a lot of good for the poor; he gave alms to them at dark nights lest none should recognize him.

These are some of the Imam's noble moral traits which Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's had witnessed. Another example of his morals is that when he undertook regency, the most exalted office in Islamic state, he did not order any of his supporters and retainers to carry out his many affairs; rather, he himself carried them out. The narrators have said: "When he was in need of taking a bath, he hated to order anyone to prepare the bath for him. He went to the public bath-house in the city. The owner of the bath-house never thought that the deputy (of al-Ma'mu'n) would come to a public bath-house and wash in it; rather, he thought that the kings would take a bath in their own houses. When the Imam entered the bath-house, there was a soldier in it. The soldier removed the Imam from his place and ordered him to pour water on his head, and the Imam did. Then a man who recognized the Imam entered the bath-house, and he shouted at the soldier, saying: 'You have ruined yourself! Why have you ordered the son of the daughter of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, to give you a massage?' So the soldier felt extremely embarrassed; he kissed the Imam's foot and apologized to him, saying: 'O Son of Allah's Messenger, why did you obey me when I ordered you?' However, the Imam smiled at him and said to him gently. 'It is a reward. I did not want to disobey you in what I was rewarded.'[2]"

Another example of his exalted morals is that when he was ready to eat, he seated with him his retainers even the doorman and the groom.[3] In this manner he taught them that there was no color discrimination among men, and that they were equal. Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's has said: " I heard 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' saying: 'I swear by emancipation and when I swore by it, I would emancipate one of my slaves till I emancipated each and every one of them that I do not see myself as better than that (and he pointed to a black slave of his who remained in his service) on account of my kinship to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, except if I do a good deed which would render me better.[4]"

A man said to him: "By Allah, no person on the face of earth is nobler than you in father."

He, peace be on him, said: "Reverential fear made them noble and obedience to Allah preserved them."

Another person said to him: "By Allah, you are the most meritorious of the people."

The Imam answered him, saying: "Do not exaggerate; he who fears Allah and obeys Him is better than me. By Allah this verse has not been abrogated: ***'O men! Surely we have created you of a male and female, and made you nations and tribes that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the most Allah-fearing of you; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.***'[5]"

It has been narrated that the Imam has composed poetry in this respect:

I have worn the garment of riches through chastity and begun walking high-headed.

I do not associate with *al-nisna's*[6] but I associate with men.

If I see the rich show pride, I show pride toward them through despair (of them).

I do not show pride toward the poor; Nor do I show weakness toward bankruptcy.[7]

This poetry is evidence for his noble moral traits, which the entire world lauds and all the Muslims admire.

His Renunciation the World

An example of the qualities of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, is that he renounced the world and turned away from its pleasures and embellishments. Muhammad b. 'Abba'd tells us about the Imam's ascetic conduct, saying: "Al-Ridha' used to sit on a leaf mat during the summer and on a straw sack during the winter; he used to put on coarse clothes, but when he went out to meet the public, he put on his very best.[8]"

The narrators have said: "Imam (al-Ridha') used to wear a silk clothe. Sufya'n al-Thawri met him and blamed him for wearing such a cloth, saying: "I think that you had better wear a clothe cheaper than this one.' However, the Imam took his hand gently and put it into his sleeve; suddenly, there was a coarse

clothe under that silk one; and he, peace be on him, said to him: ‘Sufya’n, the silk is for men and coarse clothes are for the Truth (Allah)9’”

Renouncing the world was the most prominent quality in Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. The narrators have unanimously agreed that when he became the heir apparent (of al-Ma’mu’n), he paid no attention to any of the aspects of the authority and of magnification which men showed toward their kings.

His Munificence

There was nothing more lovable with the Imam than doing kindness to men, and especially the poor. The historians have mentioned numerous examples of his munificence. The following are some of them:

1. When the Imam was in Khurasa’n, he spent on the poor all what he had on the Day of ‘Arafa, so al-Fadl b. SAhl criticized him for this, saying: “Surely, this is a loss!” “Rather it is a profit,” the Imam answered, “you do no damage when you spend something for reward and generosity.10”

It is not an act of damage when something is spent on the poor and the weak for Allah’s good pleasure; rather, it is an act of loss when something is spent on unlawful deeds like those of kings and ministers who spend a lot of money on singers and the mischievous.

2. A man came to the Imam, greeted him, and said to him: “I am one of those who love you and your fathers. I have returned from the hajj. My money has finished. I have nothing with me to reach a stage, so I ask you to send me back to my homeland. When I arrive in it, I will give what you have given to me as alms to the poor on your behalf.” The Imam said to the man: “Sit down, may Allah have mercy on you.” Then he turned to the people and spoke to them until they scattered. None stayed with him except Sulayma’n al-Ja‘fari and Herthama. The Imam asked them for permission and entered the house. Then he came out, closed the door, and said: “Where is al-Khurasa’ni?” Al-Khurasa’ni stood for him. The Imam, peace be on him, said to him: “Take this two hundred dinars, spend it on your need, and do not give it to the poor as alms on my behalf.” The man went away with happiness because the blessing of the Imam had included him. Then Sulayma’n al-Ja‘fari turned to the Imam and asked him: “May I be your ransom, you gave to the man a lot of money and had mercy on him, but why did you cover your face from him?”

He, peace be on him, replied: “I did that less I should see the abasement of begging on his face because of my accomplishing his need. Have you not heard the tradition of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family: ‘He who secretly does a good deed is like him who performs the hajj seventy times; and he who openly performs an evil deed is abandoned.’ Have you not heard the statement of the poet: ‘When I someday come to him in order to seek my need, I return home without losing face.’11”

3. Yet another example of his munificence is that he ordered the most delicious food to be put on a tray and to be given to the poor, and he recited this verse: "***But he would not attempt the uphill road***." Then he said: "Allah knows that not everyone is able to emancipate a slave, so He has regarded munificence as a path leading to the Garden."

4. Another example of his munificence and generosity is that a poor man said to him: "Give me according to the extent of your kindness."

The Imam answered him: "I cannot afford that."
The poor man paid attention to his own mistake, so he said again: "Give me according to mine."

The Imam smiled at him and said: "Yes, I will do this."

Then he ordered two hundred dinars to be given to the poor man.12 The Imam's acts of munificence cannot be counted. If the Imam had given to the poor man all his money, he would have felt that such a gift was not equal to his munificence and mercy, which was an extension to that of his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

5. Another example of his exalted acts of munificence is what has been narrated by Ahmed b. 'Ubayd Alla'h on the authority of al-Ghaffa'ri, who said: "A man from the family of Abu' Ra'fi', the retainer of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, called so-and-so, had me in his debt. He demanded payment from me and insisted on my paying him. When I realized that, I prayed the Morning Prayer in the mosque of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, and I set out to see al-Ridha', peace be on him. On that day, he was in the valley of al-'Arid. When I got near his door, he came out. He was wearing a shirt and a clock (*Ridha'*). When I looked at him, I felt ashamed before him. When he reached me, he stood and looked at me. I greeted him it was the month of Ramada'n. I said: 'May I be your ransom, your retainer so-and-so has me in his debt. By Allah, he has spread reports of me around.'

"By Allah, I was thinking to myself, that he would tell him to leave me alone. By Allah, I had not told him how much I owed nor had I given specific details about anything. He told me to sit down until he came back. I was still there at the time when I prayed the sunset prayer. I had been fasting and I had become troubled and wanted to leave. Suddenly, he came. There was (a crowd of) people.

"Beggars were begging from him and he was giving them alms. Then he retired from them and went into his house. He came out and called me. I rose and went in with him. He sat down and I sat down with him. I began to talk to him about the governor of Medina. When I had finished, he said to me: 'I do not think that you have eaten yet?' 'Yes,' I replied.

"He called for food for me and it was put in front of me. He told the servant to eat with me. The servant and I had our fill of food. When we had finished, he said: 'Raise the cushion and take what is under it.

“I raised it and there was (many) dinars. I took them and put them in my sleeve. He told some of his servants to accompany me to my house, and they did. I went to my house and called for a lamp. I examined the dinars and they were forty-eight dinars. I only owed the man twenty-eighty dinars. On a dinar of them it was engraved: ‘The debt to the man is twenty-eighty dinars and the rest is yours.’[13]”

These are some acts of his generosity, and they show his noble soul which was created for kindness to people.

His Entertaining Guests

The Imam, peace be on him, entertained guests, bestowed liberally upon them, and he himself served them. One day a person stopped at him and he spoke to him at night. When the lamp changed, the guest hurried to set it right, but the Imam went ahead of him and he himself set it right and said to his guest: “We are the people who do not employ their guests.[14]”

His Releasing Slaves

The most lovable thing to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, was releasing slaves and freeing them from slavery. The narrators have said: “He (Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him) released one thousand slaves.[15]”

His Kindness to Slaves

The Imam, peace be on him, did a lot of good and kindness for the slaves. ‘Abd Allah b. al-Salt reported on the authority of a man from the people of Balakh, who said: “I was with Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, during his journey to Khurasa’n. One day he called for food and gathered his black and non-black retainers around it. Hence I asked him: ‘May I be you ransom, could you please isolate food for these (retainers)? As a result, he blamed me for this and said: ‘The Lord, the Blessed and Exalted, is One, the mother is one, and reward will be according to deeds.’[16]”

Surely, the Imams of the Household (of the Prophet), peace be on them, behaved in such a manner in order to abolish color discrimination among men and to show that they were in one mosque, and that nothing discriminated one person from another except reverential fear and good deeds.

His Knowledge

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, thoroughly encompassed all sciences and knowledge. The historians and the narrators have unanimously agreed that he was the most knowledge of the people of his time, the most meritorious of them, and the most learned of them in the precepts of religion and other sciences such as philosophy and medicine. Talking about the Imam’s abundant knowledge, ‘Abd al-Sala’m al-Harawi has said: “I have never seen a person more knowledgeable than ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-

Ridha'. When a religious scholar sees him, he bears witness for him (as being the most knowledgeable) as I do.
Al-Ma'mu'n gathered for him in assemblies a number of the scholars of religions, the jurists of Islamic law, and theologians. However, he overcame them to the extent that they acknowledged his excellence (over them) and confessed their feebleness before him. I heard him say: 'I used to take my place at the theological center (*rouda*) and the number of the learned scholars in Medina was quite large. Yet when a question over-taxed the mind of one of those scholars, he and the rest would point at me, and they would sent me their queries, and I would answer them all.[17]"

The Imam was the most learned of the people of his time and was the highest authority in Islamic world; religious scholars and jurists would send to him their questions about Islamic precepts.

Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's has said: "When al-Ridha' was questioned about a certain thing, he answered it. I have never seen that there is a person more knowledgeable than him. Al-Ma'mu'n examined him with questions about all things, and he answered them.[18]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was the most eminent Muslim thinker, so he was able to develop the cultural and scientific life of the Muslims.

Al-Ma'mu'n has said: "I think that there is no person on the face of earth more learned than this man (i.e. Imam al-Ridha').[19]"

His (i.e. Imam al-Ridha"s) debates in Khurasa'n, Basrah, and Ku'fa give evidence for his being the most knowledgeable on the face of earth. During those debates he was questioned about the most difficult problems and he answered them, so all the religious scholars of his time yielded to him and acknowledged his excellence over them.

His Knowledge of all Languages

Another example of his being the most knowledge person is that he could speak all languages. Abu' Isma"il al-Sindi has reported: "When I was in India, I heard that Allah had an Arab proof, so I went out to seek him. I was guided to al-Ridha' (peace be on him), and I went to him. I could not speak Arabic. I greeted him in Sindi, and he greeted me in my own language. I asked him in Sindi, and he answered me in it. I said to him: 'I have heard that Allah has an Arab argument, and I have gone out to seek him. He, peace be on him, said to me: 'It is I; ask (me) about whatever you desire.' I asked him about my questions, and he (peace be on him) answered them in my own language.[20]"

Abu' al-Salt al-Hurawi has said: "Al-Ridha', peace be on him, spoke to people in their own languages. I asked him about this (quality), and he replied: 'O Abu" al-Salt, I am Allah's proof over His creatures. Allah does not appoint over a people a proof who does not speak their own language. Have you not heard the words of the Commander of the faithful: 'We have been given sound judgment. Is this not his

knowledge of languages?'21"

Ya'sir al-Kha'dim (the retainer) has narrated: "Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, had in his house Byzantines and Slavs. He was close to them. He heard them speak in Slavic and Romanian, saying: 'We are visited in our homeland every year, but we are not visited here.' In the following morning he (al-Ridha') sent someone to visit them.22"

Shaykh Muhammad b. al-Hasan has composed a poem concerning this quality, saying:

And his knowledge of all languages is the clearest miracle and sign.23

His Prophecies

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, had foretold many events before they happened, and they happened just as he had predicted. These prophecies clearly confirm the original faith of the Shi'a who say that Allah, the Exalted, endowed the Imams of the Household (of the Prophet) with excellence and inner knowledge, just as He had endowed His messengers. The following are some of the Imam's prophecies:

1. Al-Hasan b. Bashsha'r narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', who said: "'Abd Allah (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) will kill Muhammad (i.e. al-Amin)." I (al-Hasan b. Bashsha'r) asked him: "Will 'Abd Allah b. Ha'ru'n kill Muhammad b. Ha'ru'n?" "Yes," he replied, "'Abd Allah who is in Khurasa'n will kill Muhammad b. Zubayda who is in Baghdad." Then he recited this poetry line

Surely successive spites expose you and bring out the hidden malady.24

Some days ago and al-Ma'mu'n killed his brother al-Amin. We will mention this event in the chapters that follow.

2. Another example of the Imam's inner knowledge is that when Muhammad b. Imam al-Sa'diq rose in Mecca and summoned the people to himself and broke the pledge of allegiance to al-Ma'mu'n, Imam al-Ridha' went to him and said to him: "O Uncle, do not accuse your father or your brother (i.e. Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him) of lying, for this authority will not go well with you." However, Muhammad b. Imam al-Sa'diq paid no attention to the Imam's advice, and he announced his revolt against al-Ma'mu'n. Shortly after that, the troops of al-M'mu'n headed by al-Jalu'di attacked Muhammad and his fighters and defeated them. Then Muhammad asked al-Jalu'di for security, and he gave it to him. Then he went up on the pulpit and abdicated authority, saying: "This authority belongs to al-Ma'mu'n and I have no right in it.25"

3. Al-Husayn, the son of Imam Musa', peace be on him, has said: "We were youths from the Banu' Ha'shim. While we were sitting around al-Ridha', peace be on him, Ja'far b. 'Umar al-'Alawi passed by us shabby. We looked at each other and laughed at him, so al-Ridha' said: 'In the near future he (Ja'far b. 'Umar al-'Alawi) will have a lot of money and many followers.' A month ago, Ja'far became the

governor of Medina and enjoyed good conditions.26”

4. Muhawil al-Sijista’ni has narrated: “When Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, was commanded to go to Khurasa’n, I was in Medina. Al-Ridha’ entered the mosque in order to say farewell to Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. He said farewell to him several times. Throughout this (time) he went and came back to the grave. He wept and wailed aloud, so I walked towards him and greeted him, and he greeted me. I congratulated him, and he said to me: ‘Leave me, for I am going to go out of the neighborhood of my grandfather; I will die in exile, and be buried beside Ha’ru’n.’ I went out to follow him on the road until he arrived in Khurasa’n. He stayed in it for a time, and then he was buried by Ha’ru’n.27”

The matter was just as the Imam had predicted. He went to Khurasa’n, and did not return from it. He was assassinated by al-Ma’mu’n, the ‘Abba’sid Caliph, and was buried beside Ha’ru’n al-Rashid.

5. Safwa’n b. Yahya’ has reported:“ When Abu’ Ibra’him (i.e. Imam al-Ka’zim) passed away and Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, spoke (i.e. undertook the office of the Imamate), we were afraid for him. He was told: ‘You have made public a great matter and on account of that, we fear for you from this tyrant (i.e. Ha’ru’n al-Rashid).’ ‘Let him try as hard as he can,’ he answered, ‘he will find no way to harm me.28”

The matter happened as he had predicted. Ha’ru’n al-Rashid did not mistreat him. The Imam underlined this meaning to his companions. Muhammad b. Sina’n has reported: “I (i.e. Muhammad b. Sina’n) said to Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’ during the days of Ha’ru’n: ‘Surely, you have made yourself famous through this matter and your sitting in the assembly of your father, while the sword of Ha’ru’n is dripping blood (i.e. the blood of the Household of the Prophet and their followers). He, peace be on him, said: ‘Allah’s Messenger (may Allah bless him and his family) has encouraged me when he said: ‘If Abu’ JAhl takes a hair from my head, then bear witness that I am not a prophet.’ For this reason I say to you: ‘If Ha’ru’n (al-Rashid) takes a hair from my head, then bear witness that I am not an Imam.’29”

Several times the Imam , peace be on him, announced that Ha’ru’n would not mistreat him, and that he would be buried beside him. Hamza b. Ja‘far al-La’rija’ni has narrated: “Ha’ru’n went out of the gate of the Sacred Mosque, and ‘Ali went out of the gate and said: ‘How remote the abode is! And how near the meeting is! Surely, Tu’s will gather me and him together!30”

The Imam has stressed his burial beside Ha’ru’n in many traditions. Musa’ b. Ha’ru’n has narrated: “While Ha’ru’n al-Rashid was delivering a speech in the Mosque of Medina, I saw ‘Ali (al-Ridha’), and he said to me: ‘You will see that I and he (Ha’ru’n al-Rashid) will be buried in one house.’31”

6. Another example of the Imam’s inner knowledge is the calamity of the Bara’mika. Regarding their calamity, Musa’fir has reported: “I (i.e. Musa’fir) was with Abu’ al-Hasan ‘Ali al-Ridha’, Yahya’ b. Kha’lid al-Barmaki passed by and covered his face with a handkerchief (to escape) from the dust. He (Abu’ al-Hasan ‘Ali al-Ridha’) said: ‘Wretched ones who do not know what will happen to them during this year.’”

Then the Imam added: “The more surprising thing than this is that I and Ha’ru’n will be like these (two fingers of mine).” Then he joined his forefinger and middle finger together.

Musa’fir reported: “By Allah, I did not understand the meaning of al-Ridha’’s words concerning Ha’ru’n until his death and burial beside him.32”

7. Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ has reported on the authority of Habib al-Naba’ji, who said: “I saw Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, in a vision. He came to al-Naba’ji33 and stopped at the mosque where the pilgrims stopped every year. I went to him and greeted him. There was before him a tray made of palm leaves, and there was Sayha’ni dates in the tray. He gave me a handful of these dates. I counted them and they were eighteen. I asked (a person) to explain the vision, and he told me that I would live for eighteen years. Twenty days ago, while I was on my farm, a person came and told me about the coming of al-Ridha’ from Medina and his stopping at that mosque. I saw the people going to him, so I went to him. I saw him sitting in the place where Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, sat in the vision. There was before him a tray made of palm leaves, and there was Sayha’ni dates in it. I greeted him, and he, peace be on him, greeted me. He asked me to come nearer to him and gave me a handful of these dates. I counted them and they were equal to those which Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, had given to me. As a result I said: ‘Increase me, O Son of Allah’s Apostle!’ He said: ‘If Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, increased you, we would increase you.’34”

8. Ja‘far b. Sa’lih has narrated: “I came to al-Ridha’ and said to him: ‘My wife is pregnant, so supplicate Allah to make her give birth to a male.’ As a result he said: ‘They are twins.’ I went away and said: ‘I will name one of them Muhammad and the other ‘Ali.’ Then I came to him, and he said to me: ‘Name one of them ‘Ali and the other Umm ‘Amru’.’ When I went to Ku’fa, my wife had given birth to a male and a female, so I named the male ‘Ali and the female Umm ‘Amru’.35”

The narrators have mentioned many prophecies indicating that Allah endowed the Imam with knowledge just as He had endowed His righteous friends and servants.

His Acts of Worship and Reverential Fear

One of the most prominent qualities of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, is his devotion to Allah, the Exalted, and his clinging to Him. We can clearly see this quality in his acts of worship which represent great part of his spiritual life standing on light, Allah-fearing, and piety. One of his companions has said: “When I saw him (al-Ridha’), I mentioned these words of Him, the Exalted: *They used to sleep but little in the night*.” Concerning his acts of worship, al-Shibra’wi has said: “Throughout the night he (al-Ridha’) performed ablutions, prayed, and slept. In this manner he (continued) until the morning came.36”

The Imam, peace be on him, was the most Allah-fearing of the people of his time and the most obedient of them to Allah, the Most High. Al-Ma’mu’n sent Raja’’ b. Abu’ al-Dahha’k to Medina in order to bring

the Imam to Khurasa'n. The latter went and accompanied him on the road from Medina to Maru. He has reported the following about his acts of worship: "By Allah, I have never seen a man more (earnest) than him in seeking protection in Allah (the Great and Almighty), mentioning Him in all his times, and fearing Him. When he rose in the morning, he performed the morning prayer. When he finished his prayer and said the *taslim*, he sat in his place of prayer and (began) glorifying Allah, praising Him, saying: 'Allah is Greater! There is no god but Allah! O Allah bless the Prophet and his family, may Allah bless him and his family.' He continued these phrases until the sun rose. Then he prostrated himself in prayer for a long time.

Then he went to the people to speak to them and to preach to them until it was forenoon. Then he renewed his ablution and returned to his place of prayer. When the sun came near to descending (from its midday zenith), he stood and prayed six *rak'as*. In the first *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-Hamd* and the sura *qul ya' ayyuha' al-ka'firu'n*. In the second *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-Hamd* and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad*. In every *rak'a* of the four-*rak'a* prayers he recited the sura *al-Hamd lilla'h* and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad*, and then he recited the taslim. Then he recited his personal prayer in the second *rak'a* before the kneeling and after the recitation. Then he said the *adha'n* (the call to prayer). Then he prayed two *rak'as*. Then he said the *iqa'ma* (the declaration of standing for prayer) and performed the noon prayer. When he recited the *taslim*, he glorified Allah, praised Him, and said: 'Allah is Greater! There is no god but Allah!' He continued these phrases for a long time. Then he performed *Sala't al-Shukr* (the prayer for giving thanks). In it he said: 'Thanks be to Allah,' for one hundred times. When he raised his head, he stood and prayed six *rak'as*. In each *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-Hamd lilla'h* and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad*. After each two *rak'as* he recited the *taslim*. Then he said his personal prayer in the second *rak'a* before the kneeling and after the recitation. Then he said the *adha'n* (the call to prayer). Then he prayed two *rak'as* and said his personal prayer in the second *rak'a*. When he recited the *taslim*, he stood and performed the afternoon prayer. When he recited the *taslim*, he sat in his place of prayer, glorified Allah, praised Him, and said: 'Allah is Greater! There is no god but Allah!' Then he prostrated himself in prayer and said one hundred times: 'Thanks be to Allah.'

"When the sun set, he performed the ritual ablution, said the *adha'n* and *iqa'ma*, and performed the three *rak'as* of the evening prayer. Then he said his personal prayer in the second *rak'a* before the kneeling and after the recitation. When he recited the *taslim,* he sat in his place of prayer, glorified Allah, praised Him, and said: 'Allah is Greater! There is no god but Allah.' He recited these phrases for a long time. Then he performed *Sala't al-Shukr* (the prayer for giving thanks). Then he raised his head and did not say anything until he stood and prayed four *rak'as*, finishing each two *rak'as* with the taslim. Then he said his personal prayer in the second *rak'a* before kneeling and after the recitation. In the first *rak'a* of these four *rak'as,* he recited the sura *al-hamd* and the sura *qul ya' ayyuha' al-ka'firu'n.* In the second *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-hamd* and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad.* Then he recited the *taslim*. Then he sat and recited personal supplications until he entered into evening. Then he broke the fast. Then he stayed until about third of the night passed. The he stood and performed the night prayer in four *rak'as*. Then he said his personal prayer in the second *rak'a* before kneeling and after the recitation. When he

recited the *taslim*, he sat in his place of prayer mentioning Allah, the Great and Almighty, glorifying and praising Him, saying: 'Allah is Greater! There is no god but Allah!' He said these phrases for a long time. After saying his personal supplications, he performed *Sala't al-Shukr*, and then he went to bed.

"At the last third of night he got up glorifying and praising (Allah), saying: 'Allah is greater! There is no god but Allah!' And he asked Him for forgiveness. Then he cleaned his teeth with the *miswa'k* (cleaning stick for teeth). Then he performed the ritual ablution. Then he stood and performed the late night payer. He said eight *rak'as*. After each two *rak'as*, he recited the *taslim*. In the first two *rak'as* of them, he recited the sura *al-hamd* and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad* thirty times.

"Then he performed the prayer of Ja'far b. Abu' Ta'lib, which is four *rak'as*. After each two *rak'as,* he recited the *taslim*. After the second *rak'a* of each two *rak'as,* he said his personal prayer before kneeling. He regarded it as (part) of the late night prayer. Then he performed the other two *rak'as*. In the first *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-hamd* and the sura *al-mulk*. In the second *rak'a* he recited the sura al-*hamd* and the sura *hal ata' 'ala' al-insa'n*. Then he stood and performed the two *rak'as* of *al-Shaf*a'. In each *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-hamd* one time and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad* three times. He said his personal prayer after the second *rak'a*. Then he stood and performed (the prayer of *al-witr*), which is one *rak'a*. In it he recited the sura *al-hamd,* the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad* three times, the sura *qul a'u'dhu bi Rab al-falaq* one time, and the sura *qul a'u'dhu bi Rab al-na's* one time. Then he said his personal prayer before the kneeling and after the recitation. He would say (the following) in his personal prayer:

"'O Allah, bless Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad. O Allah, guide us through him whom You guided, make us well through him whom You made well, attend to us through him to whom You attend, bless us in that which You have given, protect us from the evil of what You decreed, for You decree and none decrees against You. Verily he whom You befriend is not lowly, and he toward whom You show enmity is not exalted, blessed are You and high exalted!'

"Then he said seventy times: 'I ask Allah's forgiveness and seek repentance from Him.' When he recited the *taslim,* he sat and recited supplications for a long time. When the dawn approached, he stood and prayed the two *rak'as* of the dawn. In the first *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-hamad* and the sura *qul ya' ayyuha' al-ka'firu'n.* In the second *rak'a* he recited the sura *al-hamad* and the sura *qul huwa Allah ahad*. When the dawn broke, he said the *adha'n* and the *iqa'ma* and performed the prayer of the early morning in two *rak'as*. When he recited the *taslim,* he sat and recited supplications until the sun rose. The he performed *Sala't al-Shukr* (the prayer for giving thanks).[37]"

This tradition in detail displays: the obligatory prayer of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him; his supererogatory prayers; the suras of the Holy Qur'an which he recited in them; and the supplications which he recited after his prayers. This means that he was always busy worshipping Allah, the Exalted.

The love for Allah dominated the Imam's heart, sentiments and feelings, to the extent that it was one of

his qualities.

His Supplication during his Personal Prayer (qunu't)

The Imam, peace be on him, would supplicate with this supplication during his personal prayer (*qunu't*): "The flight is toward You, O Possessor of presence and desire. The desire is for You, O He through whom is pride. You, O Allah, can see the whisperings of souls, observe the movements of hearts, and know of hidden secrets without affectation and tyranny; and You, O Allah, can see all things; but toward Your clemency they have shown audacity, disobedience, arrogance, and obstinacy; (and You can see) what Your friends suffer out of effacing the tracks of the truth, obliterating its marks, the increase of ill–deeds, the continuation of their people toward them, the appearance of falsehood, the generality of unjust and mutual consent on that (regarding) dealings and sundries; it (unjust) has become familiar and become as one of the obligatory and legislated things.

"O Allah, hasten toward him whom you help is successful, and him whom You support is not afraid of the blame of anyone, and severely punish the unjust; be neither merciful nor affectionate to them.

"O Allah, so rush toward them!

"O Allah, be quick toward them!

"O Allah, grant them not a respite!

"O Allah, punish them early in the morning and at midday, in the early dawn and by night, when sleeping, in the forenoon while playing; scheme against them when scheming; and take them by surprise while safe!

"O Allah, scatter them; disperse their helpers; decrease their aids; defeat their soldiers; reduce their limits; uproot their glory; and weaken their determinations!

"O Allah, grant us their sides; make us possess their districts; change their blessings; replace with peace our caution of them and their aggression (against us); make use control them thoroughly! O Allah, so do not withhold Your punishment, which if occur among people, *evil shall then be the morning of the warned one!*[38]"

This supplications gives an account of the vengeance of the Imam, peace be on him, on the oppressive and tyrannical rulers of his time who drowned Islamic world in hardships and tragedies and forced the Muslims to performed what they hated. This is one of the political supplications which narrate the conditions of that time.

His Supplication during the Prayer forgiving Thanks (Sala't al-Shukr)

Sulayma'n b. Ja'far has narrated: "We visited Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, while he was performing the prayer for giving thanks (*sala't al-Shukr*). He lengthened his prostration in prayer. Then he raised his head and we asked him about his long prostration. He told us that he prayed with the following supplication. He urged us to (supplicate) with it. Then he ordered us to write it, and we wrote it." The supplication is as follows:

"O Allah, curse those who altered Your religion, changed Your favor, accused Your Messenger (may Allah bless him and his Household), opposed Your religion, turned away from Your way, were ungrateful for Your boons, returned Your words to You, disdained Your Messenger, killed the (grand) son of Your Prophet, distorted Your Book, denied Your signs, sat in the assembly which was not appropriate for them, and which the people carried on the shoulders of the Household of Muhammad!

"O Allah, curse them with curses following each other, gather them and their followers blue-eyed in the Hell-fire!

"O Allah, we seek nearness to You through cursing them and renouncing them in this world and the next!

"O Allah, curse those who killed the Commander of the faithful and al-Husayn b. 'Ali and Fa'tima, daughter of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his Household.

"O Allah, increase them in chastisement to chastisement, humiliation to humiliation, abasement to abasement, and disgrace to disgrace!

"O Allah, drive them away to the Fire with violence and return them to Your painful chastisement with a return!

"O Allah, gather them and their followers in the Hell-fire in group! O Allah, divide their gathering; scatter their affair; make their words disagree with each other; disperse their unity; curse their Imams; kill their leaders, their masters, and their eldest ones; curse their heads; break their banners; spread terror among them; and leave not any dweller of them!

"O Allah, curse Abu' Jahl and al-Walid with curses following one another! O Allah curse them with a curse through which curse every angel brought nigh, every prophet sent out, and every believer whose heart You examine for faith! O Allah curse them with a curse from which the inhabitants of the Fire seek refuge, and which does not come into anyone's mind! O Allah, curse them in Your hidden secret and Your manifest openness, chastise them with a chastisement in the ordination, and let their partners be their followers and their lovers! Verily You hear supplication!"[39]

This supplication shows that the Imam was indignant with some Caliphs who controlled without any right the general authority of the country, and hence they brought about woe and destruction to Islamic world through preventing the pure Household of the Prophet from undertaking authority while they were the most learned of others in the affairs and precepts of Isla'm. This great supplication is one of the political supplications.

The Imam uses Supplication as Weapon

Yet another quality of the Imam's spiritual life is that he practiced supplication as a weapon through praying to Allah and referring to Him in all his affairs, for he found in it (supplication) a spiritual enjoyment which none of the enjoyments of life equaled it. We will mention his statements concerning the importance of supplication before we present some of his supplications.

Supplication is the Weapon of the Prophets

The Imam urged his companions to supplicate Allah and said to them: "Adhere to the weapon of the prophets!"

"What is the weapon of the prophets?" he was asked.

"Supplication," he replied.40

Concealing Supplication

The Imam advised his companions to conceal supplication, and that man should supplicate his Lord secretly, that none may know of him. He, peace be on him, has said:

"A servant's secret supplication equals seventy open supplications.41"

Slowness in Answering Supplication

The Imam spoke about the reasons for the slowness in responding to supplication. Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr has narrated: [I (i.e. Ahmed) said to Abu' al-Hasan (i.e. Imam al-Ridha'): May I be your ransom, I have asked a need from Allah since so-and-so year, and something have entered my heart because of slowness (in answering it). He, peace be on him, declared:] "O Ahmed, beware of that Satan makes a way against you in order to make you despair (of Allah's mercy). Abu' Ja'far (i.e. Imam al-Ba'qir), the blessings of Allah be upon him, said: 'The believer asks his need from Allah, the Great and Almighty, but He delays responding to him out of love for his voice and listening to his wailing.'"

Then he said: "By Allah, what Allah, the Great and Almighty, sets behind the believers in this world is

better than what He sets before them therein. What a thing is the world? Abu' Ja'far would say: 'The believer's supplication during ease should be similar to that of his during hardship. He should not flag (in supplicating) when he is given. Therefore, be not tired of supplication, for it is of great position with Allah, the Great and Almighty. Adhere to patience, seeking the lawful, and tightening your bonds of kin. Beware of showing open enmity toward men, for we, the members of the House, tighten ties with him who cut us and treat kindly him who mistreats us, hence we, by Allah, see through that the good final result. If the possessor of a favor (strives for gathering) sample funds, then he is not satisfied with anything. When favors become abundant, the Muslim is in danger because of the duties incumbent upon him and the trial through them.'"

"Tell me, if I say some words to you, will you trust them?" asked Imam al-Ridha'.

"May I be your ransom, if I do not trust you, then whom shall I trust?" retorted Ahmed, "You are the proof of Allah over His creatures."

"Therefore, have more confidence in Allah, for you will meet him, replied the Imam, "don't Allah, the Great and Almighty, say: *And when My servants ask you concerning me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on me*[42]*;* don't He say: *do not despair of the mercy of Allah*[43]*;* and don't He say: *and Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty*.[44] Therefore, have confidence in Allah more than you have in other than Him. Place nothing in your soul except good, and you will be forgiven.[45]"

The Imam has mentioned the causes which hold back supplication and delay response and, in addition, he has urged (Muslims) to follow the morals of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them.

His Amulet (hirz)

The Imam, peace be on him, would use this holy supplication as weapon: "In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. O He to whom there is neither likeness nor similitude! You are Allah! There is no god but you; nor is there a creator except You! You perish the creatures and You remain! You are clement toward him who disobeys You! And Your good pleasure is in forgiveness![46]"

He also clung to this great supplication: "I have submitted, O my Protector, to you; I have submitted my own soul to You; I have entrusted the whole affairs of mine to You! I am Your servant, son of Your servant. So hide me in Your cover from the evil from among Your creatures, protect me from every harm and evil through Your kindness, and spare me the evil of every possessor of evil through Your power!

"O Allah, I seek protection in You from him who schemes against me or desires ill for me! Close the eyes of the oppressive from me, for You are my helper! There is no god but You, O Most Merciful of the merciful and Lord of the worlds! I ask you to be sufficient against harm, (to give me) well-being,

recovery, help against the enemies, and success for what You love and accept, O Our Lord! O Lord of the worlds! O All-compeller of the heavens and earth! O Lord of Muhammad and his good, pure Household! Your blessings be upon all of them![47]"

The Imam, peace be on him, submitted himself and all his affairs to the One, the Subducer who has power over all things. He clung to the above-mentioned supplication, that Allah might turn away from him the trickery of aggressors and oppression of wrongdoers.

Some of his Supplications

Some holy supplications have been reported from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. They are as follows:

1. The following is his supplication in seeking security and faith: "O He who gives me evidence for Himself and humiliates my heart through certainty in Him, I ask from You security and faith in this world and the next!"[48]

This supplication, though short, contains a proof of the Oneness of Allah; the proof is that Allah makes His creatures profess His existence through the wonders of this universe.

2. He, peace be on him, would supplicate with this great supplication: "O Allah, give me guidance; make me steadfast toward it; muster me according to it; make me safe with the safety of him upon whom there is neither fear nor sorrow nor impatience; You are worthy of reverential fear and worthy to forgive![49]"

3. He taught the following holy supplication to his companion and student, Musa' b. Bukayr. He said to him: "Memorize what I write to you. Supplicate with it during every hardship of which you are afraid." The supplication is as follows: "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. O Allah, my many sins have made me lose face before You, prevented me from being worthy of Your mercy, and kept me away from deserving Your forgiveness! I have adhered to Your boons and clung to supplicating You, for You have promised those who are like me in acting extravagantly (against their own souls), making errors, and despairing of Your mercy through Your words: *Say: O My servants who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.*[50] You have warned those who despair of Your mercy and said: *And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord but the erring ones.*[51] Then You have summoned us through Your mercy to supplicate You, thus You have said: *Call upon me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud for My mercy shall soon enter hell abased.*[52]

"O my Lord, hopelessness has covered me, and despair of Your mercy has wrapped me! O my Lord, You have promised to reward him who has good opinion in You and to punish him who has bad opinion in You! O Allah, my eye has been seized by good opinion of You in releasing my neck from the Fire, covering my slips, releasing (me) from my stumble! O Allah, Your words, which have neither alteration

nor change, are true:

(***Remember***) ***the day when We will call every people with their Imam***.[53]

That is the Day of Resurrection when the trumpet shall be blown and what is in the graves shall be raised. I believe, witness, confess, do not deny, do not renege, conceal, announce, manifest, and hide that You are Allah, there is no god but You, One with no partner with You, that Muhammad is Your servant and messenger, may Allah bless him and his Family, and that ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, master of the testamentary trustees, inheritor of knowledge of the prophets, emblem of religion, destroyer of the hypocrites, the fighter against the Renegades (*Ma’riqin*), my Imam, my proof, my handle, my path, my guide, and my argument. I do not trust my deeds though pure; nor do I see that they will save me though righteous but through (showing) friendship to him, following his example, acknowledging his great virtues, accepting from those who delivered them, and submitting to those who narrated them. I confess that his testamentary trustees from among his grandsons are Imams, arguments, guides, lamps, guideposts, lighthouses, masters, and pious. I believe in their secret, their openness, their outward, their inward, their present, their absent, their living, and their dead. In that there is neither doubt nor suspicion nor change when You turn away (from that).

“O Allah, summon me on the day of my mustering and my resurrecting through their Imamate, and save me, O My Protector, from the heat of the Fires through them, and supply me with the repose of the Gardens! Surely, if You release me from the Fire, I will be one of the achievers. O Allah, I rose in the morning of this day of mine (while) I have neither confidence nor hope nor asylum nor place of flight nor shelter except those through whom I seek access to You, seeking nearness to Your Messenger Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Family, then ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, al-Zahra’’, the Leader of the women of the worlds, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and the one after them who will pave the way for the hidden proof from among his children, hoped for the community after him.

“O Allah, make them in this day and after it my fortress against detested things and my stronghold against fears; save me through them from every enemy, tyrant, oppressor, sinner, the evil of what I know, what I deny, what has hidden from me, what I see, and the evil of every crawling creature that You have taken by the forelock! *Surely You are on a straight path*.

“O Allah, through my seeking access through them to You, seeking nearness to You through showing love for them, fortifying myself with their Imamate, open for me the doors to Your provision; spread upon me Your mercy; make Your creatures love me; turn me aside from their detest and their enmity! *Verily You are powerful over everything*.

“O Allah, there is reward for everyone (who) seek access (through them to You); there is right for all the possessors of intercession, hence by him whom You have appointed as Your friend and placed ahead my request, I ask You to make me recognize the blessing of this day of mine, this month of mine, and this year of mine!

“O Allah, they are my place of flight and my help during my hardship, my ease, my well-being, my tribulation, my sleep, my wakefulness, my departure, my residence, my difficulty, my facility, my openness, my secret, my morning, my evening, my movement, my habitation, my secret, and my publicity! O Allah, through them, disappoint me not of Your favor; cut not my hope from Your mercy; disappoint me not of Your repose; tempt me not with the closure of the doors to provisions and of the ways to them; open for me an easy opening from You; appoint for me a way out from every hardship and a road for every plenty! Surely, You are the Most Merciful of the merciful. May Allah bless Muhammad and his pure Household! Amen, Lord of the world![54]”

This supplication gives an account of the firm clinging of the Imam to Allah, the Exalted, and his absolute obedience to Him. Also it gives an account of the outstanding merits of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on him, who are the emblems of religion and gatekeepers of the wisdom of the Master of messengers.

4. The Imam, peace be on him, would recite this supplication for seeking provision and plentiful livelihood. He would recite it after each obligatory prayer. It is as follows: “O He Who possesses the needs of the askers and knows the minds of those who are silent! There is a present hearing and ready response to every request from You. There is encompassing, inner knowledge of all those silent before you. I ask You by Your truthful promises, Your generous benefits, Your boundless mercy, Your conquering authority, Your everlasting kingdom, Your perfect words, O He whom the obedience of the obedient does not profit nor does the disobedience of the disobedient harm, bless Muhammad and his Household; provide me with some of Your bounty; and give me that through which You provide me with well-being, through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful![55]”

5. This is another example of his holy supplications: “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. O Allah! O Possessor of comprehensive power, boundless mercy, uninterrupted kindnesses, successive boons, beautiful benefits, and great gifts! O He who created (men) and provided (them) with the means of subsistence, inspired (them) and made (them) utter, originated (them) and made laws (for them), is exalted and high, ordained and did well, formed and did excellently, advanced an argument and delivered (it), bestowed lavishly upon (men), gave (them) generously, granted (them) and did a favor for (them)! O He who is exalted in mightiness, so swift sight escapes Him, and is close in gentleness, so misgiving thoughts pass Him! O He who is unique in kingdom, so there is no equal for Him in the kingdom of His authority and is One in magnificence, so there is no rival in the invincibility of His station. O He by whose magnificence the subtlest of imaginations is bewildered and the swiftest of the eyes of mankind fall short of knowing His might! O He who knows the thoughts of the hearts of men and sees the glances of beholder’s eyes! Faces are humble in awe of Him; necks are submissive to His mightiness and majesty; hearts are afraid out of fear of Him; and limbs tremble in terror of Him! O All-apparent! O All-hearing! O All-high! O Exalted! Bless him who makes prayer honorable through calling down blessings upon him; take vengeance on him who has wronged me, made light of me, dismissed the Shi‘ites from my door; let him taste the bitterness of abasement as he has made me taste it; make

him outcast among those who commit abominable acts and those who are impure! Praise belongs to Allah! May Allah bless Muhammad and his good, pure Household![56]"

This supplication is abounding with praising and lauding Allah with the most beautiful kind of laudation. Also it is filled, especially at the end of it, with oppression, harm, and persecutions which were brought about to the Imam by al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abba'sid Caliph, who dismissed the Shi'ites of the Imam, and made light of him. That was when Islamic world admired the position of the Imam and his great personality, and when it came to know that al-Ma'mu'n had an insignificant character void of morals which were necessary for the office of the caliphate over the Muslims. This supplication demonstrates that the Imam was so displeased with al-Ma'mu'n that he invoked Allah against him.

6. Yet another example of his holy supplications is following: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. O Allah, to You belongs praise for repelling afflictions which come down, the misfortunes of adversity, calamities, and the continuous rush of the lavishness of favors! To You belongs praise for Your wholesome bestowal and Your praiseworthy trial! To You belongs praise for Your great beneficence, Your dear good, Your easy imposing, and Your repelling difficulties! To You belongs praise for Your making fruitful little gratitude, Your giving abundant reward, Your lessening the weight of heavy sins, Your accepting narrow excuse, Your lifting up burdensome time, Your making easy difficult places, and Your preventing Your decisive command! To You belongs praise for driving away tribulations, abundant favor, repelling fearful things, and abasing the tyrannical! To You belongs praise for little obligation, plentiful reduction, strengthening the weak, and aiding the troubled! To You belongs praise for your abundant disregard, Your lasting bounty, Your taking away the barrenness of land, Your praiseworthy acts, and Your uninterrupted gifts! To You belongs praise for delaying immediate punishment, leaving sudden chastisement, making easy the paths of return (to You), and sending down the rain of clouds! Verily, You are All-gracious, All-Bestower![57]" This supplication contains a group of phrases which laud and praise Allah, the Exalted, the Creator of the universe and Giver of life.

These are some of the Imam's supplications which reveal part of his spiritual life, namely he devoted himself to Allah, communicated with Him, and held fast to His cord. With this supplication we will end our speech about some qualities of the Imam's holy character.

1. Haya't al-Imam al-Jawa'd, p. 37.
2. Nu'r al-Abbsa'r, p. 138.
3. 'Uyyu'n al-Tawa'rikh (photographed), vol. 3, p. 227.
4. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p.28.
5. Ibid.
6. Al-Nasna's is an imaginary man-like animal.
7. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 361.
8. 'Uyyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 178. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 361.
9. Haya't al-Imam al-Jawa'd, p. 39.
10. Ibid., p. 40.
11. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 28.
12. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 361.

13. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p.28.
14. Ibid., p. 18.
15. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 58.
16. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 18.
17. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 107.
18. 'Uyyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 180. Imam al-Jawa'd, p. 42. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f.
19. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2.
20. Al-Majjlisi, Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 15.
21. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 333.
22. Ibid.
23. Nazhat al-Jalis, vol. 2, p. 107.
24. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 335. Jawhart al-Kala'm, p. 146.
25. Al-Biha'r, vol. 12, p. 13.
26. Al-Fusu'l al-Muhimma, p. 229. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 13.
27. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 59. Akhba'r al-Diwal, p. 114.
28. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/97.
29. Ibid.
30. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 59.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. The house of the pilgrims of Basrah
34. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 103. Ja'mi' Kara'ma't al-Awliya'', vol. 2, p. 156. Nu'r al-Abbsa'r.
35. Jawharat al-Kala'm, p. 146.
36. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 59.
37. Al-Biha'r, vol. 12, pp. 26-27. The tradition also includes the explanation of some of his supplications, his acts of worship, and his reciting some suras during his supererogatory prayers.
38. Muhajj al-Da'awa't, p.73.
39. Muhajj al-Da'awa't, p.320.
40. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 368.
41. Ibid., p. 476.
42. Qur'an, 2, 186.
43. Ibid., 39, 53.
44. Ibid., 2, 268.
45. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 489.
46. Muhajj al-Da'awa't, p. 44.
47. Al-Musba'h, p. 217.
48. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 579.
49. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/197.
50. Qur'an, 39, 53.
51. Ibid., 15, 56.
52. Ibid., 40, 60.
53. Ibid., 17, 71.
54. Muhajj al-Da'awa't, pp. 315-317.
55. Al-Musba'h, p. 168.
56. Ibid., p. 292. Al-Biha'r, vol. 12, p. 24.
57. Ibid., 415.

Chapter 3: Impressions Of His Character

Imam Abu' Muhammad al-Ridha', peace be on him, is famous for his outstanding merits and talents. He has dominated the minds of religious scholars throughout generations and times, and they have expressed their own beautiful laudation and glorification regarding his own character. The following are some of them:

1. Imam al-Ka'zim

Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, praised his son Imam al-Ridha' and preferred him to the great Sayyids from among his sons. He ordered them to serve him and to refer to him in the affairs of their religion. Concerning him, he said to them: "This is your brother 'Ali b. Musa', who is the scholar of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household. Question him about your beliefs and memorize what he says to you, for I heard my father Ja'far say: 'The scholar of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household, is in your loins. Would that I met him, for he is the namesake of (Imam 'Ali), the Commander of the faithful.'1"

Imam al-Ka'zim announced that his great son would be the scholar of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household. This was the greatest medal which he gave to him, for the family of Muhammad were the origin of knowledge and wisdom in Islam; and the Imam (al-Ridha') was their master in this noble quality. We will mention some other words reported from Imam al-Ka'zim regarding the qualities of his son.

2. Al-Ma'mu'n

Al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abbasid King, announced the excellence and exalted position of Imam al-Ridha', on several occasions of which are following:

A. He said to al-Fadal b. SAhl and his brother: "I do not know anyone more meritorious (*afdal*) than this man (i.e. 'Ali b. Musa') on the face of earth.2" According to this statement of al-Ma'mu'n, the Imam was the most learned and meritorious of the scholars in the world in all sciences and knowledge.

B. He praised Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, in the letter which he sent to the 'Abba'sids who were displeased with him when he intended to entrust the office of the caliphate to the Imam. The letter says: "Al-Ma'mu'n did not pledge allegiance to him (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') but discerning of his affair, knowing that none on the face of earth is clearer than him in merit, more manifest than him in chastity, more pious than him in piety, more ascetic than him in renouncing the world, freer than him in soul, more pleasing than him to the special associates and the general populace, and firmer than him in Divine essence. The pledge of allegiance to him confirms with the good pleasure of the Lord.3"

These words specify some of the exalted qualities which were in the Imam, peace be on him, and which distinguished him from the rest of the people. They are as follows:

1. The Imam was the most clear of the people in merit and knowledge.

2. He was the most chaste of the people on the face of earth.

3. He was the most ascetic of the people in renouncing the pleasures and embellishment of life.

4. He was the most generous of the people towards the deprived.

5. The special associates and the general populace acknowledged that he was the most meritorious person, and that none had qualities similar to those of him.

6. He was the firmest of the people in Divine essence, for he did not fear the blame of a blamer regarding Allah.

7. The pledge of allegiance of al-Ma'mu'n to him confirmed with the good pleasure of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted.

8. In the document in which he pledged allegiance to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, al-Ma'mu'n has said: "His (al-Ma'mu'n's) choosing 'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib was after asking Allah for the best and exerting himself in accomplishing His right toward His servants and His earth concerning the two houses in general (i.e., the 'Abba'sid House and the 'Alawide Family, may Allah increase it in honor). That is because he (al-Ma'mu'n) has seen his (the Imam's) brilliant excellence, his plain knowledge, his manifest piety, his pure asceticism, his renouncing the world, and his being safe from the people. It has become clear for him that reports, tongues, and words have unanimously agreed upon him. Besides, he is still know his excellence when young and adult, so he has appointed him as his successor after him.[4]"

These words praise the noble qualities which distinguished Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, from the rest of the 'Alawide and the 'Abba'sid family. These qualities are as follows:

1. Brilliant excellence and plain knowledge.

2. Refraining from what Allah, the Exalted, prohibited.

3. He never wronged anyone, for he was the source of good and mercy for mankind.

4. Renouncing the world.

5. The Muslims agreed unanimously on him.

Al-Ma'mu'n realized these exalted qualities of the Imam, and it was they which urged him to appoint the

Imam as his successor, just as he has said in the above mentioned statement.

3. Ibra'him Bin al-'Abba's al-Sawli

(Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's al-Sawli), a creative writer and famous poet, has said: "I have never seen nor have I heard that anyone is more meritorious than Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha'. Do not believe him who claims that he has seen the like of him in his excellence.[5]"

The Imam was the model of outstanding merits and talents. There was none like him in his time, for he was among the pillars of thought and virtue in the world of Islam.

4. Abu' al-Salt al-Harawi

Abu' al-Salt, 'Abd al-Sala'm al-Harawi, who was among the great figures of his time, has said: "I have never seen anyone more learned than 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha'. When a (religious) scholar sees him, he bears witness for him just as I do. Al-Ma'mu'n gathered for him a number of the scholars of religions, the jurists of Islamic law, and the theologians. However, he (al-Ridha') overcame them, to the extent that they acknowledged his excellence over them.[6]"

These words give an account of the great scientific abilities of the Imam, peace be on him, for he was the most knowledgeable and meritorious of the people of his time. This can clearly be seen in the debates which al-Ma'mu'n held in his palace in order to test the Imam. Al-Ma'mu'n had gathered the scholars of the countries and cities, and they tested the Imam with the most difficult questions; yet he answered them skillfully. So the scholars admired him, confessed their feebleness before him, and acknowledged his excellence over them.

5. Al-Raja" Bin Abu' al-Dhha'k

Al-Raja" Bin Abu' al-Dhha'k, a military commander, has said: "By Allah, I have never seen anyone more devout to Allah than him, praised Allah throughout his times more than he did, and feared Allah, the Great and Almighty, more than he did.[7]"

These words show the spiritual side in the Imam's character, for he was the most religious of all the people; he praised Allah and feared Him more than they did.

6. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid

The leader of the Shi'a, Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Nu'ma'n al-'Ukkburi al-Baghda'di, better known as al-Shaykh al-Mufid, has said: "The Imam who undertook (the office) (*qa"im*) after Abu' al-Hasan Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on them, was his son Abu' al-Hasan 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on them, because of his merit over all his brothers and the members of his House (*Ahl Baytihi*), because of

the knowledge, forbearance and pity which he showed, and which the Shi'a (*kha'sa*) and the non-Shi'a (*'a'mma*) agreed on with regard to him and recognized him for.[8]"

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid has mentioned some qualities which distinguished Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, from the rest of his brothers and the members of his House. These noble qualities and peculiarities are as follows:

1. Knowledge.

2. Forbearance.

3. Piety

7. Al-Wa'qidi

Al-Wa'qidi has said: "'Ali (al-Ridha') heard the *hadith* from his father, his uncles, and others. He was trustworthy and gave religious precepts in the Mosque of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, at the age of more than twenty. He belonged to the eighth class of the next generation from among the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*).[9]"

Al-Wa'qidi has mentioned two of the Imam's qualities which are as follows:

1. Trustworthiness.

2. His giving religious decisions at the age of over twenty.

8. Jama'l al-Din

Jama'l al-Din Ahmed b. 'Ali, a genealogist, better known as b. 'Anba, has said: "Imam al-Ridha' was given the *kunya* of Abu' al-Hasan. None of the Ta'libiyyin of his time was like him. Al-Ma'mu'n pledged allegiance to him, minted dirhams and dinars in his name, and ordered his name to be mentioned on the pulpits.[10]"

Al-Sayyid Jama'l al-Din has mentioned that none was like the Imam in his time; he was unique in his time due to his talents and geniuses.

9. Yousif b. Taghri Bardi

Jama'l al-Din Abu' al-Maha'sin Yousif b. Taghri has said: "Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ha'shimi, al-'Alawi, al-Husayni was a learned Imam. He was the chief of the Ha'shimites of his time and was the greatest of them. Al-Ma'mu'n magnified him, honored him, yielded to him and extremely mentioned him, to the extent that he made him his successor.[11]"

These words shed light on some qualities of the personality of the Imam , peace be on him, which are: He was learned. He was the chief of the Ha'shimites and was the greatest of them. As he had a great character, al-Ma'mu'n appointed him as his successor.

10. Ibn Ma'ja

Ibn Ma'ja has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha') was the chief of the Ha'shimites. Al-Ma'mu'n magnified and honored him. He designated him as his successor and took the Pledge of allegiance to him (from the people).[12]"

Ibn Ma'ja highlights one of the Imam's qualities, which is that he was the chief of the Ha'shimites. Of course, the Imam was the master of the people of his time, for the Ha'shimites were the master of the people because of their good manners, their exalted ethics, and their excellent behavior.

11. Ibn Hajar

Ibn Hajar has said: "Al-Ridha' was among the men of knowledge and merits; he had noble lineage.[13]"

12. Al-Ya'fi'i

Al-Ya'fi'i has said: "The great, magnified Imam, the descendant of the noble Sayyids, 'Ali b. Mu'sa al-Ridha', was one of the twelve Imams, the possessors of the laudable deeds; the Imami Shi'a have followed them and adopted their doctrine.[14]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was the most brilliant star in the world of Islam. He was among the Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, who enlightened intellectual life and strengthened the pillars of truth and justice on earth. The Shi'ites proudly follow them, and adopt their traditions on religious precepts. They follow them not because of bigotry or blind imitation; rather, it is incumbent on them to follow them because of the definite arguments and decisive proofs. For example, the Holy Qur'an has made it obligatory on men to show love for them; (Allah) has purified them from uncleanness and deviation from the right path; the Prophet has regarded them as ships of deliverance and security for mankind and associated them with the Firm Revelation (the Qur'an). If religious proofs permitted the Shi'ites to follow other than their doctrine, they would do.

13. 'Amir al-Ta"i

'Amir al-Ta"i has commented on the book entitled *Sahifat Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, which is one of Imam al-Ridha"s works, saying: "'Ali b. Mu'sa al-Ridha', the Imam of the Allah-fearing and model of the grandsons of the Master of messengers related to us...[15]"

Imam al-Ridha' was the chief of the Allah-fearing and Imam of worshippers. In the previous chapters we

mentioned examples of his acts of worship and his reverential fear, which are evidence for what al-Ta"i has mentioned.

14. One of the Imams

One of the Imams has said: "'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha"s deeds are laudable. His excellence and outstanding merits are like successive phalanxes. Showing friendship toward him is praiseworthy from beginning to end. His qualities are wonderful. His mastership and nobility became high out of honor.

"As for the glory of his fathers, it is more famous than luminous lamp and more shining than the round side of the sun. As for his ethics, his characteristics, his qualities, his signs, and his marks, they are excellent in pride and sufficient in high degree! He walked on the path which he inherited from his forefathers, and the children inherited (this path) from him. They are equal, like the teeth of a comb, in good, noble origin. So I magnify this family, who is high in rank and exalted in position. He was as high as heaven in nobility and was higher than the bright stars in position and place. He had perfect qualities, so he is not excluded from them.[16]"

These words are arranged. They contain rhymed prose. They display that the writer showed love to the Imams, peace be on them. May Allah accept their intercession with Him for the writer.

15. Ha'shim Ma'ru'f

'Alla'm, late al-Sayyid Ha'shim Ma'ru'f al-Husayni has said: "Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was distinguished by wonderful noble moral traits which helped him attract both Shi'a (*kha'sa*) and non-Shi'a' (*'a'mma*). He took these ethics from the essence of the Message with which he was entrusted, and which he safeguarded and inherited.[17]"

This statement reports one of the qualities of the Imam, peace be on him, which is his exalted morals. It is worth mentioning that his morals were similar to those of his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who was the master of all prophets.

16. AL-Dhahabi

AL-Dhahabi has said: "He (al-Ridha') is Imam Abu' al-Hasan b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq b. Muhammad al-Ba'qir b. 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib al-Ha'shimi al-'Alawi. He was the master of the Ha'shimites of his time; he was the most clement and noblest of them. Al-Ma'mu'n honored him, yielded to him, and magnified him to the extent that he appointed him as his successor.[18]"

Al-Dhahabi, known for showing enmity toward the *Ahl al-Bayt* (peace be on them), has acknowledged the outstanding merits of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

17. Mahmu'd Bin Wihayb

Mahmu'd Bin Wihayb al-Baghda'di has said: "He (al-Ridha'), may Allah be pleased with him, had numerous miracles, so he was the unique of his time.[19]"

Imam al-Ridha' was the unique of his time because of his abundant knowledge, his reverential fear, his piety, his clemency, and his munificence. None was like him in excellence and talents.

18. 'Arif Tha'mir

'Arif Tha'mir has said: He (Imam al-Ridha') is regarded as one of the Imams who played a great role on the arena of the Islamic events in his time.[20]"

During the short period of his undertaking the office of regency, Imam al-Ridha' could manifest the origin values of Islamic policy, for he ordered al-Ma'mu'n to establish justice and fairness among the people, prevented him from wasting the properties of the state and from other matters which we will mention in the chapters of this book, and which support al-Sayyid 'Arif Tha'mir's statement concerning the Imam and his fathers, who played a great role on the arena of the Islamic events of his time.

19. Muhammad Bin Sha'kir al-Kutubi

Muhammad Bin Sha'kir al-Kutubi has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him) is one of the twelve Imams. He was the master of the Ha'shimites of his time."

20. 'Abd al-'Al

'Abd al-'Al al-Sa'idi has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha'), peace be on him, had abundant knowledge and piety. Abu' Nu'a's was asked: 'Why have you left praising 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' while he has all (good) qualities?' He replied: 'I cannot praise the Imam whose father Gabriel served. By Allah, I have left praising him in order to magnify him. The like of me can say nothing concerning the like of him.[21]"

The Imam had outstanding qualities which none can count. For example, he had abundant knowledge and piety which distinguished him from the rest of the people.

21. Yousif al-Nabaha'ni

Yousif al-Nabaha'ni has said: "'Ali b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq, peace be on them, was one of the great Imams, the lamps of the community from among the Household of the Prophet, the origin of knowledge, gnosticism, and generosity. He had a great position and famous reputation. He had many miracles of which are that he foretold that he would die of eating (poisoned) grapes and pomegranates. The matter happened just as he had predicted.[22]"

The Imam, peace be on him, was a brilliant branch of the Prophetic family through whom Allah exalted the Arabs and the Muslims, in addition to his clear lineage, so he was among the pillars of excellence and honor. He had famous miracles, just as al-Nabaha'ni has said in the above-mentioned statement.

22. 'Abd al-Qa'dir Ahmed

'Abd al-Qa'dir Ahmed al-Yousif has said: "The history of the Imam is full of great qualities (such as) abundant knowledge, inherited infallibility, and unique holiness like that of the infallible Imams who descended from his loins. He was the great figure of guidance during his time; he was the model of reverential fear, piety, clemency, and ethics. What could I possibly say concerning the life of one of Allah's testamentary trustees? What could my pen possibly write concerning introducing him?

"Is mentioning his name not full introduction? His name is part of Allah's light, which guides him who seeks sanctuary from it toward the rightist way leading to public righteousness.

"The Imam devoted his own life to exalting the position of the Muslims. All his deeds issued from the thought of faith leading to the righteousness of the people and the good pleasure of the Lord of the worlds.[23]"

The history of the Imam is full of outstanding merits such as knowledge, reverential fear, piety, clemency, and high moral standards. The Imam is the model of all man's values; none has qualities like those of him except the Sayyids from among his fathers and children. Therefore, man has the right to boast of such qualities of the Imam.

23. Yousif Bin Oghla'

Yousif Bin Oghla', Sibt b. al-Jawzi, has said: "'Ali b. Musa', better known as al-Ridha' (consent), was munificent, just, worshipful, and ascetic. Were it had not been for his fear of al-Ma'mu'n, he would not have responded to regency.[24]"

All noble traits such as, munificence, justice, worship, and asceticism gathered in the personality of Imam Abu' Muhammad al-Ridha', peace be on him. Accordingly, he has occupied the top of honor and glory in the world of Islam.

24. Al-Zargali

Khayr al-Din al-Zargali has said: "'Ali b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq, whose nickname is al-Ridha', is the eighth Imam of the Imami (Shi'a) and was among the great and meritorious Sayyids from among the members of the House, *Ahl al-Bayt*.[25]"

25. Muhammad Jawa'd Fadl Allah

'Alla'ma Muhammad Jawa'd Fadl Allah has said: "Imam al-Ridha' is one of the bases of Islamic thought and among its starting points full of knowledge. The secrets of the Message and the keys of its treasures reached him after (the death) of his father Imam Musa' b. Ja'far. So his knowledge was part of the Message and his giving was part of its grace.

"He is one of the twelve Imams from among the members of the House, *Ahl al-Bayt*, who enriched Islamic thought with various kinds of knowledge such as dictating to their students or answering him who questioned them or debating with the great scholars of other religions.[26]"

Imam al-Ridha' is one of the treasures of Islam; among the brilliant fruits of the great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his Household; and one of his blessings which embraced all languages on earth. Through him Allah has enriched Islamic thought, and made clear the purpose. He has made him an eminent figure on His earth in ordered to guide the perplexed and those who go astray.

26. Ahmed al-Khazraji

Ahmed al-Khazraji has said: "'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, al-Ha'shimi, Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', narrated on the authority of his father. 'Abd al-Sala'm b. Sa'lih and a group (of narrators) reported several copies (of books) on his authority. He was the master of the Ha'shimites. Al-Ma'mu'n magnified and respected him, entrusted the caliphate to him, and took the pledge of allegiance (from the people) to him. He (al-Ridha') died of poison at Tu's.[27]"

Al-Khazraji indicates that some students of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, reported many books on his authority. It is certain that the books concern the rules of Islamic law, manners and norms of Islam. Al-Khazraji also shows that the Imam died of poison; I (i.e. the author) also believe that al-Ma'mu'n gave him poison to drink in order to get rid of him, for he saw that all the Muslims magnified and honored him. We will mention this matter in the chapters that follow.

27. One of those who show love for him

One of those who showed love for the Imam and admired him has said: "The importance of 'Ali al-Ridha' b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq, peace be on them, surpassed the *Ahl al-Bayt;* his position raised him among them; and his proof manifested, so the Caliph al-Ma'mu'n loved him, made him a partner in his caliphate, entrusted the affairs of his kingdom to him, and married his daughter to him before the witnesses. His (al-Ridha''s) excellences were high; his qualities were outstanding; his honorable soul was Ha'shimite; and his noble origin was prophetic. His miracles are more than to be counted and more famous than to be mentioned.[28]"

28. Al-Shabra'wi

Al-Shabra'wi has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha'), may Allah be pleased with him, was generous, great, dignified, and respected. His father Musa' al-Ka'zim showed abundant love toward him. He gave to him the country estate which he bought for thirty thousand dinars.29"

Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, was very loyal to his son Imam (al-Ridha'). He preferred him to the rest of his children, entrusted with him the office of the Imamate, and gave to him this country estate. Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim showed love for his son not because of his feelings and desires; rather, he loved his son because he felt that he was one of the bases of Islam and of the testamentary trustees of the greatest Prophet, as it has been mentioned in the authentic traditions.

29. Abu' Nu'a's

Abu' Nu'a's, a famous poet, praised and lauded Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He composed poetry concerning him two times, which are as follows:

1. The poets who coincided with the Imam composed poetry concerning him and lauded him except Abu' Nu'a's. The people criticized Abu' Nu'a's for this attitude30, and he composed these wonderful poetry lines:

It is said to me: You are the most unique of all the people in the techniques of famous statement.

You have a style of essential words,

which produces pearl in the hands of him who has it.

So why have you left praising the qualities of Ibn Mu'sa?'

I have said: I cannot find the right way to praise the Imam

whose father Gabriel served!

The people have memorized these poetry lines and regarded them as part of the wonderful Arab poetry, for these lines suit their feelings, their admiration, and their magnification toward the Imams of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them. It is worth mentioning that al-Dhahabi, known for harboring malice against the *Ahl al-Bayt*, has commented on the last line, saying: "I (i.e. al-Dhahabi) say: 'It is not permissible to say that Gabriel was the retainer of his (al-Ridha"s) father. There is something missing in the text, and the Ra'fidites (the Shi'a) have forged a lie against 'Ali al-Ridha'.31"

The members of the House, *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, have great position with Allah, for they had stood the good test for His sake to the extent that their limbs were cut off, and they were liable to indescribable persecutions. They had adopted such a brave attitude in order to raise high the world of

Allah's religion and to spread justice among men, but al-Dhahabi and his errant companions had not understood this attitude of the Imams.

2. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, went out mounting an active mule. Abu' Nu'a's came nearer to him, greeted him, and said to him: "O Son of Allah' Messenger, I have composed some poetry lines concerning you. I want you to hear them from me."

"Recite them," the Imam demanded.

Abu' Nu'a's recited them, saying:

They (the *Ahl al-Bayt*) are purified, and their garments are pure.

Blessings are called down upon them whenever they are mentioned.

He who is not an 'Alawide when we ascribe him,

then he had no object of pride in the bygone times.

These people are the *Ahl al-Bayt* who have the knowledge of the Book and what the suras have mentioned.[32]

These poetry lines are part of the most splendid poetry. Abu' Nu'a's has quoted the first hemistich from the Holy Qur'an, for Allah, the Exalted, has said: "*Verily Allah intends to keep off from you every kind of uncleanness and to purify you, people of the House, with a thorough purification*." Allah purified them from deviation, kept off from them every kind of uncleanness, and made them a model of His servants, that the perplexed may follow them.

Imam al-Ridha' admired these poetry lines and said to Abu' Nu'a's: "You have brought us some (poetry) lines which none had composed before you."

Then the Imam turned to his retainer and asked him: "How much money do you have?"

"Three hundred dinars," replied the retainer.

"Give them to Abu' Nu'a's," the Imam commanded.

When Abu' Nu'a's had gone home, the Imam said to his retainer: "Perhaps, Abu' Nu'a's regards this money as little, so send him the mule.[33]"

30. Di'bil al-Khaza"i

Di'bil al-Khaza"i abundantly lauded and elegized Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. The following are some of his poetry lines concerning him:

Ibn Musa' (al-Ridha') along with exalted qualities have departed;

Noble knowledge has followed him;

Both guidance and religion have followed him just as intimate friend does.[34]

The meaning of these poetry lines is that Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, had all kinds of honor and excellent traits, so knowledge and religion followed him. He was distinguished by these noble qualities, which were part of his nature.

31. Al-Sa'hib Bin 'Abba'd

Al-Sa'hib Bin A'bba'd adored Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so he has greeted him in these poetry lines:

O you who intend to go and visit Tu's,

land of purity and sanctification,

recite my greetings to al-Ridha' and stop by

the most honorable grave of the best buried one.

By Allah! By Allah! This is an oath which has issued

from a sincere one who is clinging to friendship!

Verily, if I possessed my own need,

I would resided at Tu's, the inhabited.

Verily, it is the place of the martyr wrapped in

righteousness, famous for exaltedness and praise.

Then al-Sa'hib b. 'Abba'd has said:

O son of the Prophet through whom Allah broke

the backs of the arrogant tyrants!

O son of the testamentary trustee who was the most

meritorious of powerful men, attained perfect pride and

naturally accompanied glory![35]

In another short poem, he has said:

O visitor who early got up, ran, and walked like lightning

when it flashes, recite my greetings to my master al-Ridha',

who is at Tu's, the grandson of the chosen Prophet, son of

al- Murtada', the testamentary trustee, who attained firm

exaltedness and built white glory!

Say to him: (These greetings) are from a loyal one

who regards friendship as obligatory![36]

32. Ibn al-Hajja'j

Ibn al-Hajja'j composed abundant poetry concerning praising Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. These two lines are part of it:

O son of him from whom noble deeds are reported,

and exalted morals are taken!

O he who has given the name of al-Ridha', 'Ali b. Mu'sa,

may Allah be pleased with his father and him![37]

33. 'Abd Allah Bin al-Muba'rak

Praising the Imam', 'Abd Allah Bin al-Muba'rak composed this poetry line:

This is 'Ali (al-Ridha'); he leads guidance and

is the best of the youths of Quraysh in origin.[38]

34. Al-Sawli

Concerning lauding the Imam, al-Sawli has said:

'Ali (al-Ridha'), the magnified, is the best of the people

in soul, father, family, and grandfathers.

Takktum has brought him to us for knowledge, and

clemency. He is the eighth Imam who will deliver

the proof of Allah.[39]

35. Ibn Hamma'd

Lauding Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, the poet Ibn Hamma'd has said:

My yearning has driven it (my soul) to Tu's and to him

whom Tu's has embraced.

At that place is al-Ridha', who is a precious scholar and

learned man; the Ocean of knowledge and wisdom when

compared (with men); and light of Allah which none can

extinguish.[40]

36. Al-Arbali

Praising the Imam in a poem and yearning for visiting his grave, 'Ali b. 'Isa' al-Arbali has said:

O diligent rider, stop the camels when arrive in the land of Tu's!

Do not be afraid of their being tired, and leave hitting

them during stopping and taking a rest.

Kiss the ground when you see the earth of the Shrine of

the best of mankind, 'Ali b. Musa'.

Recite to him my greetings, which are like the perfume of musk, (and say to him that these greetings are) from Ali b.'Isa.

Say: That precious place receives the peace of Allah every time.

The one who remembers Allah is still reciting glorification and hallowing in the house.

(It is) the house of honor. The one who goes straight to it
will continue sending his hopes and the camels to it.

(It is) the house of glory. Praise and laudation is still devoted to it.

What could I possibly say in praising the people whose

glory Allah has established with an establishment?

What could I possibly say in praising the people whose

name Allah has sanctified with a sanctification?

They are the guides of mankind. They are the most

generous of all people.

Their origins and souls are noble.

When a drought occurred, they gave generously like rain.

When a vague error became dark, they appear like suns.

They gave honor to horses, pulpits, and camels when they

ascended them.

They are the people whose love removes worries, and

whose qualities make clear the pages.

They are noble in birth, good in origin, pure in ancestry,

and meritorious in root.

No friend became unhappy through them when he made

friends with them.

I supported them with my praising them when I did not

join the army.

They have filled my heart with friendship and hope, and I

have filled the pages with my praising them.

So you realize that I am obedient to them and showing

love toward them, and that to other than them I am

disobedient and obstinate.

O ‘Ali al-Ridha’, I send you affection leaving the heart hot

out of love.

(You are) my faith; my faith is in you; and in my heart,

for you, there is love leaving passion and steadfastness.

I do not think that the malady (of my own heart) recovers

through other than you; nor is the wound (of my own

heart) cured with other than you.

I wish I could visit your lofty shrine and kissed your

sociable land.

If it is difficult for me to visit you in wakefulness, then

you visit me in sleep and quench my thirst (for visiting

you).

1. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 107. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/100. Al-Biha’r.
2. A‘ya’n al-Shi’a 4/Q2/133.
3. Al-Biha’r, vol. 12, p. 133.
4. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 125. Al-Biha’r, vol. 12, p. 44.
5. Kashf al-Ghumma.
6. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/99-100.
7. Biha’r al-Anwa’r.
8. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha’d, p. 34.
9. Tadhkirat al-Khawa’s, p. 361.
10. ‘Umdat al-Ta’lib fi Ansa’b Al Abu’ Ta’lib, p. 198.
11. Al-Nuju’m al-Za’hira, vol. 2, p. 74.
12. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/85. Khula’sat Tahdhib al-Kama’l, p. 278.
13. Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 7, p. 389.
14. Mir’a’t al-Jina’n, vol. 2, p. 11.
15. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/188.
16. Al-Fusu’l al-Muhimma, p. 245.
17. Sirat al-A’imma al-Ithna’ ‘Ashar, vol. 2, p. 359.
18. Ta’rikh al-Isla’m, vol. 8, p. 34.
19. Jawa’hir al-Kala’m, p. 143.
20. ‘Uyyu’n al-Tawa’rikh, vol. 3, p. 226.
21. Al-Mujaddidu’n fi al-Isla’m, p. 87.
22. Ja’mi‘ Kara’ma’t al-Awliya”, vol. 2, p. 156.

23. Al-Imam ‘Ali al-Ridha’ Wali ‘Ahd al-Ma’mu’n, p. 1.
24. Mir’a’t al-Zama’n, vol. 6, p. 41.
25. Al-A‘la’m, vol. 5, p. 178.
26. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’.
27. Khula’sat Tahdhib al-Kama’l, p. 678.
28. Al-Itha’f bi Hub al-Ashra’f, p. 88.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibn Tolo’n has mentioned in his book al-A’imma al-Ithna’ ‘Ashar, pp. 98-99: “Abu’ Nu’a’s was blamed for leaving lauding the Imam (al-Ridha’), hence one of his companions said to him: ‘I have never seen anyone more impudent than you. You have said something concerning wine, mountain, and singing, but you have said nothing concerning ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, who is in your time.’ He said: ‘By Allah, I have left this to honor and magnify him. The like of me can say nothing concerning the like of him.’ Then, after an hour, he composed these lines.”
31. Ta’rikh al-Isla’m, vol. 8, p. 35.
32. Khula’sat al-Dhahab al-Masbu’k, p. 200.
33. Al-Itha’f bi Hub al-Ashra’f, p. 60. Nazhat al-Jalis, vol. 2, p. 105. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 107.
34. Di‘bil, Diva’n, p. 108.
35. ‘Uyyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, p. 4.
36. Ibid., p. 6.
37. AL-Mana’qib, vol. 4, p. 343.
38. Ibid.
39. ‘Uyyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, p. 15.
40. AL-Mana’qib, vol. 4, p. 350.

Chapter 4: Under The Care Of His Father

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, lived under the wing of his father, Imam Musa’ al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, for twenty five years and some months. He witnessed various kinds of ordeal and misfortune which befell his father, who worried and frightened the ‘Abba’sid government, for he was the focus of the attention of the Muslims and the place of their hope for saving them from the ruling ‘Abba’sid band, who went too far in wronging the people and forcing them (to do) what they disliked.

In addition to this is that great part of the Muslims adopted the Imamate of Imam al-Ka’zim, for they regarded him as the lawful successor after the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his Household, and worthier of his office and position than Ha’ru’n (al-Rashid) and the rest of the ‘Abba’sid kings, with whom the Imam coincided. The high rank of Imam al-Ka’zim made the ‘Abba’sid kings sleepless, so they harbored malice against him, took all measures to persecute and torture him.

Anyhow, I (the author) will mention a brief outline about the personality of Imam al-Ka’zim and its good effects on that of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.

Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, is famous in the world for his outstanding qualities, through the fact that there were gathered in his noble character all the elements of virtue, fundamentals of wisdom and

morals, of which are the following:

A. His Scientific Talents

Without doubt Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, was the most learned of the people of his time and most knowledgeable of them in all sciences. He was the highest authority in the science of Islamic jurisprudence and tradition. So the religious scholars and the narrators surrounded him in order to record his religious edicts, his wonderful wise sayings and morals. Imam al-Sa'diq, the most eminent figure of this community and pioneer of its renaissance, bore witness to the abundant knowledge of his son when he said to 'Isa': "If you ask this son of mine (Imam Musa') about what is between the two sides of the Qur'an, he will answer you about it with knowledge.1"

He has also said concerning his son's outstanding merit: "He (Imam al-Ka'zim) has knowledge of wisdom, understanding, munificence, and knowledge of what the people need regarding their religious affairs over which they differ."

The religious scholars have reported from Imam al-Ka'zim all kinds of science and written many books about them, so they have named him 'the Scholar'. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid has said: "The people have reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan (Musa'), and they have become very numerous; he was the most knowledgeable in the law during his time.2"

Imam Musa', peace be on him, improved and developed scientific life; he was the most brilliant of the Muslims in spreading Islamic culture.

B. His Acts of Worship and his reverential Fear

The narrators have unanimously agreed that Imam al-Ka'zim was the greatest of the people in obeying Allah and was the most worshipful of them, that he had calluses like those of the camel because of his abundant prostration for Allah, just as his grandfather Imam Zayn al-'Aabidin, peace be on him, had. So he was given the nick-name of *Dhi al-Thafana't* (the Possessor of the calluses). An example of his acts of worship is that he would weep when he stood for prayer before the Almighty Creator, whispered to Him or supplicated Him.3

The narrators have said: "He (Imam al-Ka'zim) used to pray supererogatory prayers throughout the night so that he would make them extend until the morning prayer, then continue them until the sun rose. He would remain prostrating himself before Allah without raising his head from prayer and praising Allah until the sun came near to descending (from its midday zenith).4"

Another example of his acts of worship is that at the beginning of the night, he entered the mosque of his grandfather, Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his Household, prostrated himself before Allah, and said with fear of Him: "How great sin is with me! Therefore let forgiveness seem good to You, O

Worthy of reverential fear, O Worthy to forgive!”

He continued this supplication with turning to Allah in repentance, sincerity, and weeping until the morning.5

When the unjust ‘Abba’sid tyrant, Ha’ru’n al-Rashid, put him in a dark prison, he devoted himself to worshipping Allah and thanking him for this trial, saying: “O Allah, You know that I used to ask You to give me free time to worship You. O Allah, You have done that. To You be praise.6”

The tyrant, Ha’ru’n, towered over the prison from the top of his palace and saw a garment thrown in a certain place and did not change its place. The garment amazed him, and he asked al-Rabi‘: “What is that garment which I see in that place every day?”

Al-Rabi‘ answered him, saying: “That is not a garment. That is Musa’ b. Ja‘far. He prostrates himself (before Allah) every day from the sunrise until the sun came near to descending (from its midday zenith).”

Al-Rabi‘ answer amazed Ha’ru’n, the tyrant, and he said: “He is indeed among the monks of the Ha’shimites.”

Al-Rabi‘ asked Ha’ru’n to release the Imam and not to oppress him in prison, saying: “O Commander of the faithful, why have you imprisoned him?”

“How far! That is necessary,7” retorted Ha’ru’n.

In my book entitled the *Life of Imam Musa’ Bin Ja‘far*, I (the author) have in detail mentioned Imam al-Ka’zim’s acts of worship and his obedience to Allah. Generally speaking Imam al-Ka’zim’s acts of worship indicate that he was the Imam of the Allah-fearing, master of the worshippers and monotheists of his time.

C. His Asceticism

Imam al-Ka’zim renounced the world, turned away from its pleasures and embellishment. He preferred obeying Allah to all things, and his house was void of all the pleasures of life. Ibra’him b. ‘Abd al-Hamid spoke about him, saying: “I visited him in his house where he used to pray. Suddenly, there was nothing in it except a coarse clothe, a sword fixed (to the wall), and a copy of the Qur’an.8” Imam al-Ka’zim always mentioned to his companions the life of the great, revolutionary companion, Abu’ Dharr al-Ghifa’ri, who divorced the world and paid no attention to any of its pleasures. He has said: “May Allah have mercy on Abu’ Dharr, for he would say: ‘May Allah dispraise the world on my behalf, for I always have two loaves of barely bread: I eat one in lunch and the other in supper; and I have two woolen cloaks: I use one as a loincloth and the other as a garment.’9”

Imam Musa', peace be on him, took care of the lives of the immortal, great figures from among the companions of his grandfather, the master of the messengers. He praised their behavior and mentioned their laudable deeds before his companions and his students, that they might follow their example.

D. His Clemency

As for clemency, it was among the most prominent qualities of our master al-Ka'zim, peace be on him. Proverbs were coined about his clemency and his restraining anger. The narrators have said: "He pardoned him who mistreated him and forgave him who aggressed against him." The narrators have mentioned numerous examples of his clemency of which are the following:

1. A man from the family of 'Umar b. al-Khatta'b was in Medina trying to harm Abu' al-Hasan Musa', peace be on him. Whenever he saw (Abu' al-Hasan) he would curse him and curse 'Ali, peace be on him. One day some of those who used to attend his gatherings said to him: "Let us kill this sinner."

He forbade them from (doing) that most firmly and rebuked them severely.

He asked about the descendant of 'Umar and was told that he had a farm on the outskirts of Medina. He rode out to him and found him at his farm. As he entered the farm with his donkey, the descendant of 'Umar cried out: "Do not tread on my sown land."

Yet Abu' al-Hasan, peace be on him, continued to tread on it with his donkey until he reached him. He dismounted and sat with him. He greeted him with a smile and laughed at him.

"How much have you paid to sow your land?" he asked.

"One hundred dinars," (the other man) answered.

"How much do you hope to acquire from it?" Imam al-Ka'zim asked.

"I do not know the unknown," was the reply.

"I only asked you about what you hope it would bring you," reported (Abu' al-Hasan).

"I hope that it will bring me two hundreds dinars," he answered.

Abu' al-Hasan took out a purse in which was three hundred dinars and said: "This is (the price) of what you have sown in its present condition (i.e. what you have spent to sow it and what you hope to gain from it). May Allah provide you with what you hope for from it."

The descendant of 'Umar kissed his hand and asked him to forgive him his (former) hasty words about him. Abu' al-Hasan, peace be on him, smiled at him and went away.

In the evening Abu' al-Hasan went to the mosque and found that descendant of 'Umar sitting there.

When the latter saw him, he called out: “Allah knows best where to put His (prophetic) mission.”

His companions jumped (in surprise) towards him and said to him: “What is the story (behind what you say), for you used to speak quite differently from this.”

“You have heard what I have said now,” he replied and began to speak on behalf of Abu’ al-Hasan, peace be on him. They opposed him and he opposed them.

When Abu’ al-Hasan returned to his house, he said to those who attained his gatherings and who had asked about killing the descendant of ‘Umar: “Which was better-what you wanted or what I wanted? I put right his attitude to the extent which you have now become acquainted with. I was sufficient to the evil that was in him.[10]”

The Imam Abu’ al-Hasan (Musa’ al-Ka’zim) treated with kindness those who hated him and show enmity toward him, so he was able to uproot evil inclinations from their souls, washed their brains which was full of ignorance and defect, and put before them the worlds of Him, the Exalted: “Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend.”

Another sign of his clemency is that he passed by a group of his enemies among whom was Ibn Hayya’jj, who ordered one of his followers to cling to the bridle of the Imam’s mule, and he did. The Imam understood his purpose, so he dismounted the mule and gave it to him.[11] In this manner the Imam gave the people an ideal example of clemency and tolerance. He, peace be on him, advised his son to cling to this noble quality. He said to him: “O My little son, I advise you to follow this commandment, which whoever memorizes takes advantage of it: When a comer comes to you and makes you hear a detested thing in the right ear and then moves to the left ear and apologizes to you and says, ‘I have said nothing,’ then accept his apology.[12]” Through this commandment, we can clearly understand Imam al-Ka’zim’s abundant forbearance and tolerance. This is one of the information means leading to unity.

E. His Munificence

Imam Musa’ al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, was the most generous of all the people and the most abundant of them in giving to the miserable and the deprived. It is worth mentioning that he asked them to conceal his gifts and not announce them, for he sought reward from Allah, the Exalted. The narrators have said: “He went out in the darkness of night carrying gifts to the miserable and the weak, and they did not know the person who gave these gifts to them. His gifts to them were ranging from two hundred dinars to four hundred dinars.[13] His family would say: ‘We are amazed by those who complain of paucity and poverty while the gifts of Musa’ reach them!’[14]”

The history books are full of examples of his kindness to the poor. He lavishly spent on them, so he freed them from need to begging. The biographers have unanimously agreed on that he thought that the best way for spending money was to meet the hunger of the hungry and to clothe the naked. I (the

author) have mentioned numerous example of his generosity in my book the *Life of Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim*, peace be on him.

F. His Helping the Distressed

One of the most prominent qualities of Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, was that he helped the distressed and saved them from the ordeals and misfortunes which befell them. This was one of the most beloved things to him. He gave a religious decision to his Shi'ites in order that they might join the government of Ha'run al-Rashid, provided that they should be kind to people. He is well-known for this religious edict, which says: "The explanation of the work with the ruler is (showing) kindness to people."

The narrators have said: "A person from among the people of al-Ray was in enormous debt to the government of al-Ray. He was unable to repay them and was afraid that the government would confiscate his properties and punish him severely, so he asked the people about the governor, and they told him that he was one of the Shi'ites of Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him. He traveled to Medina (Yathrib). When he arrived in it, he met the Imam and complained to him of his state. Soon the Imam responded to him and wrote a letter to the governor of al-Ray, saying: 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Know that Allah has shade under His Throne. None resides in it except him who shows kindness to his brother, relieves his sorrow, and delights him. This is your brother. Greetings.'"

The man took the letter and went to Mecca in order to perform the hajj. After he had finished performing the hajj, he headed for his homeland. When he reached it, he went to the governor. He knocked at the door of his house. The governor's retainer came out and asked him: "Who are you?"

"The messenger of the patient one, Musa' b. Ja'far," was the answer.

The retainer hurried to his master and told him about that. The governor came out bare-footed. He received the man, embraced him, kissed him on the forehead, and eagerly asked him about the Imam. The man answered him and then handed him the Imam's letter. The governor took it with admiration and kissed it. When he read it, he ordered all his money and clothes to be brought. Then he gave most of them to the man and asked him: "Brother, have I delighted you?"

"Yes, by Allah, you have increased me in pleasure," retorted the man.

Then the governor ordered the record to be brought, his debts to be canceled, and him to be discharged from them. The man went out while waves of happiness and delight covered him. He decided to show kindness to the governor through going to the Sacred House of Allah, praying for him, and telling the Imam about his kindness toward him. When the time of the hajj came, he traveled to the Sacred House of Allah. When he arrived at it, he sincerely supplicated for the governor of al-Ray, and told the Imam about his kindness toward him. The Imam was very pleased with this attitude of the governor. Then the

man turned to the Imam and asked him: “My master, has this (deed) delighted you?”

“Yes,” replied the Imam, “it has also delighted Allah, the Exalted, my grandfather Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his Family, the Commander of the faithful, and me.[15]”

This initiative represents the Imam’s care of helping the distressed, and with it we will end our speech about some of his qualities.

The Imam with Ha’ru’n

Imam al-Ka’zim suffered from different kinds of painful ordeals and misfortunes in the time of the tyrant, Ha’ru’n, who spared no effort to wrong and punish him. He spent his bloom of youth in the shadows of Ha’ru’n’s prisons and was prevented from seeing his family and Shi‘ites. We will mention a brief outline about the Imam’s sufferings in the time of Ha’ru’n

The Imam is arrested

The Imam had a personality greater than that of Ha’ru’n in Islamic world, for the Muslims loved and respected him. Ha’ru’n was indignant with the Imam, for he had not enjoyed such love and respect.

The narrators have said: “One of the reasons which moved Ha’ru’n to imprison the Imam is that he (Ha’ru’n) surrounded by the nobles, eminent figures, ministers, and high-ranking officials of his state went to pay a visitation to the tomb of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, saying: ‘Peace be on you, Apostle of Allah! Peace be on you, cousin.’”

He was seeking to show his proud position over the others by his blood relation with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, for he undertook the office of the caliphate through this means. As for Imam Musa’ al-Ka’zim, he was standing beside him. He greeted the great Prophet, saying: “‘Peace be on you, Apostle of Allah! Peace be on you, father!” Ha’ru’n al-Rashid lost his mind. The expression on his face changed and the anger in it became transparently obvious. That is because the Imam was closer than him to the Prophet and more adjacent to him than others. So the tyrant, Ha’ru’n, became angry and asked the Imam: “Why did you say that you were closer to Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, than me?”

The Imam gave to him a definite, undeniable proof, saying: “If Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his Household, was resurrected and asked you for your daughter’s hand, would you respond to him?”

“Glory belongs to Allah,” retorted Ha’ru’n, “I seek to show my proud position over the Arabs and non-Arabs through this (deed).”

The Imam, peace be on him, continued to establish proofs against him regarding his being closer to the

Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, than him, saying: “However, Allah’s Messenger does not ask me for my daughter’s hand; nor do I marry (her) to him, for he is our father, not your father; therefore, I am nearer to him than you.”

Then the Imam established another proof against Ha’ru’n’s words, saying: “Is it permitted for Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, to visit your womenfolk while they are unveiled?”

“No,” Ha’ru’n replied.

The Imam explained: “However, he has the right to visit my womenfolk, and it is permitted for him to do that; therefore, I am nearer to him than you.[16]”

Ha’ru’n al-Rashid became angry and found no way to refute the Imam’s argument. Accordingly, he harbored malice against the Imam, went to the tomb of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and said to him: “May my father and mother be your ransom, O Apostle of Allah, I apologize to you for something I want to do. I want to imprison Musa’ b. Ja‘far because he is intending to bring division into your community and to cause the shedding of its bleed.”

Ha’ru’n thought that his apologizing to the Prophet for committing a crime would profit him and release him from this responsibility on the day when the wrongdoers would be losers.

On the following day he ordered the police to arrest the Imam, and they arrested him while he was standing and praying by the head of his grandfather, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. They interrupted his prayer and did not give him any respite to complete it. They shackled him and took him out of that holy place while he was weeping bitter tears, complaining to his grandfather, and saying: “I complain to you, O Allah’s Messenger!”

The Imam was shackled and brought before the tyrant, Ha’ru’n al-Rashid, and he turned away from him rudely and spoke to him.[17]

His Imprisonment in Basrah

The Imam was shackled and taken to Basrah. Hasan al-Sari was entrusted with guarding and safeguarding him. On his way to Basrah, the Imam met ‘Abd Allah, son of the late al-Azdi. He gave him a letter and ordered him to hand it over to his successor Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and told him that he (Imam al-Ridha’) was the Imam after him.[18]

The caravan walked. It covered the desert until it arrived in Basrah. That was on the seventh day of Dhu al-Hijja. Hasan handed the Imam over to ‘Isa’ b. Ja’far, who imprisoned him in one of the houses of the prison, locked the doors of the prison, an did not open them except twice a day: one time when the Imam wanted to perform the ritual ablution, and the other when the food was brought to him.

The Imam devoted his time to the acts of worship and obedience to Allah. He fasted by day and prayed by night. He spent most his time in praying, prostrating, supplicating, and reciting the Qur'an. He regarded his being free for the acts of worship as one of Allah's favors toward him. He would say: "O Allah, You know that I used to ask You to give me free time to worship You. O Allah, You have done that. To You be praise.[19]"

Ha'ru'n orders the Imam to be killed

Ha'ru'n ordered 'Isa', governor of Basrah, to kill the Imam, peace be on him. However, this matter troubled 'Isa, and he sought the advice of his close associates. They prevented him and made him fear the consequence of the affair. He responded to them and wrote a letter to Ha'ru'n saying: "The affair of Musa' b. Ja'far and his stay under my detention has been going on for along time. I have become well-acquainted with his situation. I have set spies on him throughout this period and I have not found him (do anything except) open his mouth in worship. I set someone to listen to what he said in his prayer. He has never prayed against you or against me. He has never mentioned us with malice. He does not pray for himself except for forgiveness and mercy. Either you send someone whom I can hand him over to or I will let him free. I am troubled at detaining him.[20]"

This letter displays that 'Isa was afraid of killing the Imam, and he (the Imam) stayed under his detention for one year.[21]

His Imprisonment in Baghdad

(Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid responded to the request of his governor, 'Isa. He ordered the Imam to be taken to Baghdad. The Imam was taken to it and was accompanied by the police and the guards. When he reached it, al-Rashid ordered him to be detained under al-Fadl b. al-Rabi'. Al-Fadl took him and imprisoned him in his house. He did not detain him in the public prisons because he feared that a discord would occur and the public opinion would run in disorder because of the Imam's exalted position and his great personality.

The Imam, peace be on him, devoted himself to the acts of worship and obedience to Allah. So al-Fadl admired his acts of worship. 'Abd Allah al-Qazwini has narrated: "I (i.e. 'Abd Allah al-Qazwini) visited al-Fadl b. al-Rabi'. While he was sitting on the top of his house, he said to me: 'Come nearer to me.' I went nearer to him to the extent that I (stood) beside him. Then he said to me: 'Overlook the house.'"

'Abd Allah towered over the house, and al-Fadl asked him:

-What can you see in the house?

-I can see a garment thrown (on the ground)

-Look well!

‘Abd Allah considered, looked carefully, and said:

–A man prostrating himself in prayer.

–Can you recognize him?

–No, I can’t.

–That is your master.

–Which master?

–Are you pretending not to know of ‘Ali?

–I’m not pretending, but I don’t know that I have a master.

–That is Abu’ al–Hasan, Musa’ b. Ja’far.

‘Abd Allah was one of those who adopted Imam al–Ka’zim’s Imamate. Then al–Fadl told him about his acts of worship, saying:

“I (i.e. al–Fadl) visit him day and night. I did not find him at any time but in the state about which I am telling you. He prays the dawn prayer, then he says his personal prayers at the end of his prayer for an hour until the sun rose. He remains prostrating himself until the sun comes near to descending (from its midday zenith). He has ordered a retainer to tell him about the sun’s coming near to descending. I do not know when the retainer says: ‘The sun has come near to descending.’

“Suddenly, he stands and begins praying without renewing his ritual ablution, so I come to know that he does not sleep during his prostration; nor does he slumber. He continues praying until he performs the afternoon prayer. When he has performed the afternoon prayer, he performs one prostration. Then he continues praying and his personal prayer until he performs the evening and night prayers. When he has performed the evening and night prayers, he breaks the fast by eating roasted meat which is brought to him. Then he renews the ritual ablution and prostrates himself in prayer. Then he raises his head and slumbers. Then he stands and renews the ritual ablution and continues praying until day dawns. I do not know when the retainer says: ‘Day has dawned!’ Suddenly, he jumps and performs the dawn prayer. This is his behavior since he has been handed over to me.”

These are the acts of worship of Imam al–Ka’zim, the master of the Allah–fearing and Imam of those who turn to Allah in repentance. He showed love for Allah, served and obeyed Him.

When ‘Abd Allah came to know that al–Fadl admired the Imam’s acts of worship, he warned him against carrying out Ha’ru’n’s order regarding killing the Imam, saying: “Fear Allah! Do not bring about an event removing blessing. You know that when someone does evil for someone, his blessing perishes.”

Al-Fadl confirmed ‘Abd Allah’s statement, saying: “They sent for me more than one time and ordered me to kill him, but I did not respond to them.[22]”

Al-Fadl did not kill the Imam; nor did he expose him to a detested thing because he was afraid of Allah’s wrath and punishment in this world and the next.

His Textual Nomination for the Imamate of al-Ridha’

Imam Musa’, peace be on him, appointed his son Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, as an Imam and high authority after him, that he might lead his Shi‘ites and the community. Many ordinances (*alwa’h*) were brought out of the prison. In them it was written: “My testament (*‘ahd*) is to my eldest son.[23]”

Imam Mu’sa took great care of appointing his son as an Imam after him. He entrusted this affair to a large group of his eminent Shi‘ites, of whom are the following:

1. Muhammad Bin Islma”il

Muhammad Bin Islma’‘il al-Ha’shmi has narrated: “I (i.e., Muhammad b. Islma’‘il) visited Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’ b. Ja‘far. He complained of a severe (pain), so I asked him: ‘I ask Allah not to let us see it (i.e. missing you). To whom shall (we refer)?’”

He, peace be on him, replied: “To my son ‘Ali. His writing is my writing. He is my testamentary trustee and my successor after me.[24]”

2. ‘Ali Bin Yaqtin

‘Ali Bin Yaqtin has reported: “I (i.e. ‘Ali Bin Yaqtin) was with Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’ b. Ja‘far, peace be on him, and was with him his son ‘Ali. He said: ‘O ‘Ali, this son of mine is the master of my children and I have given him my *kunya* (i.e. both were called Abu’ al-Hasan).’ Hisha’m b. Sa’lim was in the assembly. He struck his face with the palm of his hand and said: ‘We belong to Allah, by Allah, he has announced his death for you.’[25]”

3. Na‘im Bin Qa’bu’s

Na‘im Bin Qa’bu’s has reported, saying: [Abu’ al-Hasan (Musa’), peace be on him, said:] “My son ‘Ali is the eldest of my children, the most attentive of them to my words, and the most obedient of them to my order. He examined the leather case (*Jafr*) and the scroll (*Al-ja’mi‘a*). Only a prophet or the testamentary trustee of a prophet may examine them.[26]”

4. Da’wud Bin Kuthayr

Da’wud b. Kuthayr al-Raqqi has narrated, saying: [I (i.e. Da’wud b. Kuthayr) said to Musa’ al-Ka’zim:]

“May I be your ransom, I have grown old. So take my hand and save me from hell-fire. Who is our leader (*sa’hib*) after you?”

“This is your leader after me,” he said and pointed to his son Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’.[27]

5. Sulayma’n Bin Hafs

Sulayma’n b. Hafs al-Marwazi has reported: [I (i.e. Sulayma’n b. Hafs) visited Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’ b. Ja‘far. I wanted to ask him about the proof over the people after him. When he looked at me, he began saying:] “O Sulayma’n, my son ‘Ali is my testamentary trustee. He is the proof over the people after me. He is the most meritorious of my children. If it happen that you remain alive after me, bear witness to him for this matter before my Shiites and the people of my authority, who ask you about my successor after me.[28]”

6. ‘Abd Allah al-Ha’shimi

‘Abd Allah al-Ha’shimi has said: [We were beside the grave (i.e. the grave of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family). Suddenly, Abu’ Ibra’him Musa’ b. Ja‘far came toward us hand in hand with his son ‘Ali. Then he said:] “Do you know who I am?” “You are our master and our eldest one,” we said. “Name and ascribe me,” he demanded. “You are Musa’ b. Ja‘far,” we said. “Who is this?” he asked and pointed to his son. “He is ‘Ali b. Musa’ b. Ja‘far,” we replied. “Witness that he is my agent in this world during my lifetime and my testamentary trustee after my death.[29]”

7. ‘Abd Allah Bin Marhu’m

‘Abd Allah b. Marhu’m has reported: [I went out of Basrah and wanted to go to Medina. When I covered part of the road, I met Abu’ Ibra’him (i.e. Musa’ b. Ja‘far), who wanted to go to Basrah. He sent for me and I went to him. He gave me a letter and ordered me to carry it to Medina. I asked him: ‘May I be your ransom, to whom shall I hand it over?’ He replied:] “(Hand it) over to my son ‘Ali, for he is my testamentary trustee, the one who will undertake my affair, and the most meritorious of my children.[30]”

8. ‘Abd Allah Bin al-Harth

‘Abd Allah b. al-Harth has narrated: [Abu’ Ibra’him summoned us and we gathered. Then he said:] “Do you know why I have summoned you?”

“No,” we answered.

“Witness that this son of mine is my testamentary trustee (*wasi*) and the one who will superintend my affair, my successor after me. Who has a debt (to be collected) from me, let him collect it from this son of mine. Whoever I have made a promise to, let him get its fulfillment from him. Whoever has to meet me, will only do so through his correspondence.[31]”

9. Haydar Bin Ayyu'b

Haydar b. Ayyu'b has reported: [We were at a place called al-Qaba' in Medina. Muhammad b. Zayd b. 'Ali was at the place. He came after the time in which he used to come to us. We asked him: 'May Allah make us your ransom what delayed you from coming?' He answered:] "Abu' Ibra'him summoned us today. We were seventeen men from among the children of 'Ali and Fa'tima, peace be on them. He made us witness that his son 'Ali was his testamentary trustee and his deputy during his lifetime and after his death, and that his order valid against him and for him." Then Muhammad said: "O Hayder, by Allah, he entrusted the Imamate to him today, and the Shi'ites will profess him after his death." I (i.e. Hayder) said: "However, may Allah protect him, what is this?" He (i.e. Muhammad b. Zayd b. 'Ali) answered: "O Hayder, he made him as (his) testamentary trustee. This means that he entrusted the Imamate to him.32"

10. Al-Husayn Bin Bashir

Al-Husayn b. Bashir has said: [Abu' al-Hasan Musa' b. Ja'far appointed for us his son 'Ali just as Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, appointed 'Ali on the Day of Ghadir Khum. He said:] "O People of Medina or he said O People of the Mosque, this is my testamentary trustee after me.33"

11. Ja'far Bin Khalaf

Ja'far b. Khalaf has narrated: [I (i.e. Ja'far b. Khalaf) heard Abu' al-Hasan Musa' b. Ja'far say:] "Happy is the person who does not die until he sees a successor belongs to him. Allah has made me see my successor, who is this son of mine. He pointed to him (i.e. al-Ridha').34"

12. Nasr Bin Qa'bu's

Nasr Bin Qa'bu's said: [I (i.e. Nasr b. Qa'bu's) said to Abu' Ibra'him Musa' b. Ja'far: 'I have asked your father who would be after you and he told me that you would be. Therefore when Abu' 'Abd Allah (Ja'far al-Sa'diq), peace be on him, died, the people went to right and left while I and my companions declared (our support) for you. Therefore tell me which of your children will be (the Imam) after you.' He said:] "My son 'Ali.35"

13. Muhammad Bin Sina'n

Muhammad b. Sina'n has narrated: [I (i.e. Muhammad b. Sina'n) visited Abu' al-Hasan (Musa') the year before he went to Iraq. 'Ali, his son, was sitting in front of him. He looked at me and said:] "Muhammad, this year there will be some disturbance but do not be worried by that."

"My Allah make me your ransom, what will that be?" I asked, for he had filled me with anxiety.

"I will go to this despot," he answered, "but he will not receive any evil from me nor from the son who will

be after me."

"May Allah make me your ransom, what will happen?" I asked.

"Allah leads astray the oppressors," he told me, "and Allah does what He wishes."

"Whoever wrongs the right of this son of mine and denies his Imamate after me is like those who wronged 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, and denied his right after the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family," he replied.

"If Allah supports me in my life, may I submit to his right and declare (your belief in) his Imamate," I said.

"True, Muhammad," he said, "Allah will support you during your life and you will submit to his right and declare (your belief) in his Imamate, and the Imamate of the one who will be (Imam) after him."

"Who will that be?" I asked.

"His son Muhammad," he answered.

I said: "(I give) consent (*Ridha'*) and submission to him.36"

These are some texts narrated on the authority of Imam Musa', peace be on him, concerning the Imamate of his son Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Imam Musa' took great care of the Imamate of his son, for he wanted to refute those who believed in his Imamate only, to abolish their vague errors, and to warn the Muslims against them.

The Imam's Commandments

Imam Musa', peace be on him, appointed his son al-Ridha' as a testamentary trustee after him. He entrusted him with two commandments which included his authority over his endowments, his deputyship on his behalf over his private and general affairs, his binding his children to yield to his commands. He also entrusted Imam al-Ridha' with marrying the ladies from among his daughters, for he was the most knowledgeable of others in (choosing) qualified (husbands for them). He ordered him not to marry them to anyone except a believing, pious person who would respect their place and position.

As for the second commandment, we have mentioned it in our book the *Life of Imam Musa'*, peace be on him, so there is no need to mention it, for I (i.e. the author) do not want to mention anything which I have already written.

The Prison of al-Sindi

(Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid ordered the Imam to be detained in the prison of al-Sindi b. Sha'hik. It is worth mentioning that al-Sindi b. Sha'hik merciless and wicked. He turned away from all moral values. He did

not believe in the hereafter; nor did he respect Allah. He treated the Imam rudely, turned away from him, troubled him during his eating and drinking, and shackled him. The narrators have said: "He (i.e. al-Sindi b. Sha'hik) fettered him (Imam Musa') with thirty pounds of iron."

As usual, the Imam devoted himself to performing the acts of worship. He performed prayers, recited the Qur'an, glorified and praised Allah for giving him free time to worship Him.

Imam Musa' sends a Letter to Ha'ru'n

The Imam sent Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid) a letter in which he expressed his displeasure with him, saying: "No day of tribulation passes me until a day of ease passes you, so that we will all perish and (be resurrected) on the endless day when those who say false things shall be losers.37"

This letter gives an account of the Imam's pain and sorrow in prison and, in addition, it shows that the Imam will judge the tyrant (i.e. Ha'ru'n) on the day when those who say false things shall be losers.

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid orders the Imam to be assassinated

The tyrant (i.e. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid) entrusted al-Sindi or other than him from among his statesmen with assassinating the Imam, and he put fatal poison in dates and forced the Imam to eat them. The Imam (Musa') ate some of them, and al-Sindi said to: "Eat more!"

The Imam look at him and said to him: "It is sufficient for you that you have accomplished your need.38"

The poison circulated through the Imam's body, and he suffered from severe pain. Then the cruel police surrounded him. Al-Sindi accompanied him, said rude words to him, and prevented him from having first aids, that he might hasten his decreed end.

During that terrible period, the Imam led a life of tribulation and misfortune, for the poison destroyed his limbs, al-Sindi and his police violated his sacredness and dignity.

The Imam joins the Most High Comrade

The poison circulated through all parts of the body of the Imam, peace be on him, and he suffered from severe pain and ache, so he summoned al-Sindi and asked him to bring him his retainer (*mawla'*), who was staying at the house of al-'Abba's b. Muhammad at the cane-market (*mashra'* at *al-Qasab*), and who had to wash and shroud the Imam's body. Al-Sindi asked the Imam to permit him in order to shroud his body, but he refused and said: "I am a member of the House (of the Prophet). The giving of dowries for our women, the performing of pilgrimages on behalf of those of us who have not made the pilgrimage, and the shrouding of our dead can only be performed by one of our retainers (*mawa'li*) who is pure. I already have my shroud.39" Al-Sindi brought him his retainer and entrusted him with washing

and shrouding him.

When the Imam was in a critical condition and was about to meet the decreed end, he summoned al-Musayyab b. Zahra and said to him: "I have told you about (my) departure to Allah, the Great and Almighty. When I ask you to give a drink of water and you see that I relax, and that my face turns yellow, red, green, and changes colors, tell the tyrant (Ha'ru'n al-Rashid) about my death."

Al-Musayyab said: "I went on watching him until he, peace be on him, asked me to give him a drink of water and he drank it. Then he summoned me and said: 'O Musayyab, this dirty one (i.e. al-Sindi b. Sha'hik) will claim that he will undertaking washing and burying me. Far be it from him! Far be it from him! When I am carried to the cemetery known as the cemetery of Quraysh, bury me in it, do not raise my grave higher than four separated fingers, and do not take anything of my earth to get the blessing of it, for each earth of us is forbidden except that of my grandfather al-Husayn b. 'Ali, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, has made it cure for our Shi'ites and friends."

Al-Musayyab said: "Then I saw a person like him sitting beside him. I recognized my master al-Ridha', peace be on him, when he was a boy, so I wanted to ask the person, but my master Musa' shouted at me and said: 'Didn't I prevent you (from doing such a deed)?' Then the person disappeared. I came to the Imam and found him a motionless body. He passed away, so I told (Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid about (his death).40"

The Imam's soul departed to its Almighty Creator. The angels of the Most Merciful (Allah) escorted it carrying bouquet of flowers from the Garden. The souls of the prophets, the testamentary trustees, the chosen ones, and the good received it.

My master Abu' al-Ridha', you went to the Abode of Immortality after you had delivered your message, raised the word of Allah high on earth, defended the rights of the persecuted, and opposed tyranny. So how great your achievements toward Islam are!

My master Abu' al-Ridha', you suffered from various kinds of hardships created by the tyrant of your time. He detained you in his prisons, prevented you from having anything, and prohibited you from seeing your Shi'ites, your children, and your family. That is because you did not follow him; nor did you justify his evil acts. You led the anti-oppression and tyranny front. You condemned his reckless policy standing on looting the Muslims' properties and spending them on his pleasures and his red nights. Therefore, peace be on you! Peace be on you on the day when you were born, on the day when you died, and on the day when you will be raised from the dead!

The Police investigate the Event

The police held an investigation into the cause of the death of the Imam. They spared no effort to prove that the Imam had died normally, that they might clear the tyrant (Ha'ru'n) of the charge of murder. Al-

Sindi b. Sha'hik himself investigated. This matter has been mentioned by many narrators of whom is 'Amru' b. Wa'qid, who said: [Al-Sindi b. Sha'hik summoned me at the night. I was in Baghdad. I feared that he would do evil for me, so I asked my family (to prepare) my needs. I said: 'We belong to Allah and to Him is our return.' Then I rode to him. When he saw me, he said:]

"O Abu'' Hafs, have we terrified and annoyed you?"

"Yes," I replied.

"There is nothing here except good," he explained.

"Will you send a messenger to my family to tell them about me?" I asked.

"Yes," was the answer.

When my fear became calm and terror went away from me, al-Sindi asked me: "O Abu'' Hafs, do you know why I summoned you?"

"No," I answered.

"Do you recognize Musa' b. Ja'far?" he asked.

"Yes, by Allah, I recognize him," I replied, "and there was a friendship between us for a long time."

"Do you think that there is in Baghdad anyone who recognizes him?" he asked.

"Yes," was the answer.

Then he (Abu' Hafs) nominated for him persons from among those who recognized the Imam. Al-Sindi b. Sha'hik summoned them and asked them: "Do you know people who recognize Musa' b. Ja'far?" They nominated some people for him and he summoned them. He went on summoning people throughout the night until day dawned.

When over fifty witnesses were present before him, he summoned his notary and ordered him to write their names, their houses, their works, and their characteristics. When the notary had finished writing that, he told al-Sindi about it. The latter went out of his place, turned to 'Amru' and said to him: "Abu'' Hafs, stand up and remove the shroud from the face of Musa' b. Ja'far." 'Amru' removed the shroud from the face of the Imam. Then al-Sindi b. Sha'hik turned to the people and said to them: "Look at him!" The people began to come and look into his face. Then he (i.e. al-Sindi b. Sha'hik) asked them: "Do you witness that this is Musa' b. Ja'far?"

"Yes," they replied.

Then he ordered his boy to remove the shrouds from the Imam, and he did. Then he turned to the

people and asked them: “Do you see on him any mark which you regard as abominable?”

“No,” they answered.

Then he ordered their testimonies to be written, and they went away.[41] Then he brought the jurists and notable men of Baghdad in (to see him). Among them was al-Haytham b. ‘Adi. (Al-Sindi) made them give testimony that he had died normally. Ha’ru’n al-Rashid took measures similar to these, that he might clear himself of committing the crime or, at least, he was not responsible for it.

The Imam is put on the Bridge

Imam Musa’ al-Ka’zim, the Prophet’s descendant, was put on the bridge. The police surround him and uncovered his face, so the close, the far, and passers-by looked into his face while he was dead. In this manner the tyrant (i.e. Ha’ru’n al-Rashid) tried to abase the Shi‘ites, to disdain their sacred beliefs, and to hurt their feelings. This procedure was one of the severe persecutions from which the Shi‘ites suffered. Shaykh Muhammad Mulla has said:

Who informs Islam that his leader has died out of poison in the Prison of al-Rashid?

Error has become delighted at his death; and
right has hold a funeral ceremony for him!

His coffin has been placed on the Bridge of al-Rasa’fa; the
angels have surrounded him in magnifying!

Shaykh Muhammad ‘Ali al-Ya‘qu’bi, an excellent orator, has said:

Why was Musa’ placed on the bridge dead and no

monotheist escorted him to the grave-yard?

They carried him while the iron round his legs rang and

the hills sighed for him!

The Horrible Announcement

What terrible the disaster was! What awful the misfortune was! Al-Sindi violated all sacred beliefs of Islam. He had to order his headsmen to say to the people: “Attend the funeral of the good one, son of the good one!” However, he ordered them to announce: “This is Musa’ b. Ja‘far whom the Ra’fidites (Shi‘ites) claim is last Imam (*al-qa”im*) who will not die. So (come and) look at him!” The headsmen, who were slaves and rouges, set out and roamed through the streets of Baghdad making this painful announcement at the top of their voices.[42]

Sulayma'n prepares the Imam for Burial

Sulayma'n was on the top of his palace towering over the Tigris. He saw the police and some military units walking through the streets while the people were worried and frightened. This view terrified him, so he turned to his sons and their boys and asked them: "What is the news?"

"This is al-Sindi b. Sha'hik announcing (the death of) Musa' b. Ja'far," they replied.

They told him about al-Sindi's horrible announcement, and he feared that a discord would occur, and that the situation would lead to illaudable results, so he shouted at his sons, saying: "You and your boys go down and take Musa' from their hands. If they prevent you (from taking him), then hit them and tear up their black uniforms![43]"

Sulayma'n's sons along with their boys and their guards set out towards the police and took the holy corpse from their hands. The police did not resist them, for Sulayma'n was the uncle of the Caliph and the most notable figure in the 'Abba'sid family.

They brought the Imam's body before Sulayma'n, and he ordered them to walk through the streets of Baghdad and to make an announcement opposite to that of al-Sindi b. Sha'hik. As a result they shouted at the top of their voices: "Come and attend the funeral of the good one, son of the good one!"

The people came from everywhere and escorted Musa' al-Ka'zim, the Imam of the Muslims, master of the Allah-fearing and the worshippers. The Shi'ites went out striking their chests and shedding tears. The ladies from among their womenfolk went out weeping and wailing for the Imam.

The funeral processions walked through the streets of Baghdad, sang the songs of sorrow and sadness, and asked some people to carry censers in front of the coffin of the Imam. They took him to a place at the market, so the place was afterwards called perfume seller market (*suq al-rayya'hin*). Honoring the Imam, they built the place lest the people should tread on it with their feet.[44] Then an inspired poet praised the Imam with these marvelous lines:

I already said to the man who undertook washing him: Why didn't you obey him and weren't among those loyal to him?

Put aside your water from him, and then wash him with

what the eyes of glory shed when they wept for him!

Remove and set aside from him the scent for embalming

and perfume him with his praise!

Order the noble angels to carry him in honor! Don't you

see that they are beside him?

Do not weaken the necks of the men through carrying

him; those (the angels) carried him because of his abundant favor![45]

The silent, sad people walked and headed for the Tibn Gate. They entered the cemeteries of Quraysh and dug a grave for the great Imam. Sulayma'n b. Abu' Ja'far, though bewildered, laid him in the grave. He buried him and his good qualities such as clemency, generosity, knowledge, and honor.

The escorters left numbering the Imam's outstanding merits and began talking about their painful loss which resulted from his death. Allah's peace and blessings be upon the Imam's soul, which has filled the world with excellences, traditions, and laudable deeds.

Imam al-Ridha' undertakes the Great Leadership

After the death of his father, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, undertook the great religious leadership and the general authority over the Muslims. The scholars and the jurists surrounded him and recorded his opinions in the fields of morals, religion, learning and knowledge.

His Travel to Basrah

After the death of Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, traveled to Basrah in order to produce evidence in support of his Imamate and in order to disprove the vague errors of those who deviated from the truth. He stopped at the house of al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-'Alawi and held in it a session for a group of the Muslims among whom was 'Amru' b. Hadda'b, who deviated from the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on him, and showed stubbornness toward them. He also summoned to session the Catholic and the Rabbi. Then he turned and said to them: "I have summoned you in order that you may question me about the Prophet's traditions and the Imam's signs which you may not find with anyone except with us, the members of the House, so come and question me!"

'Amru' b. Hadda'b hastened and asked him: "Muhammad b. al-Fade al-Ha'shimi told us that you knew all that which Allah sent down, and that you knew all languages?"

The Imam, peace be on him, confirmed the statement of Muhammad b. al-Fadl concerning him, saying: "Muhammad b. al-Fadl is right; I told him about that."

'Amru' hastened to say: "First of all I want test you through languages. This is a Roman; this is an Indian; this is a Persian; and this is a Turkish. We have brought them before you."

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Let them say whatever they desire. I will answer each of them in

their own language, Allah willing."

The non-Arabs stood before the Imam and questioned him, and he, peace be on him, answered them in their own languages. So they admired him. Then the Imam turned to 'Amru' and asked him: "Do you believe me when I tell you that you will be tried in these days by murdering one of your blood relations?"

"No," was the answer, "for none knows the unseen except Allah, the Most High."

The Imam disproved 'Amru''s statement, saying: "Doesn't Allah, the Most High, say: *The Knower of the unseen, so He does not reveal His secrets to any except to him whom He chooses as an apostle.* Allah is pleased with His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his Household , and we are the inheritors of the Messenger whom Allah informed of whatever He willed of His secrets, and he (the Messenger) informed us of what was and what will be to the Day of Resurrection.

"What I have told you about, son of Hadda'b, will occur five days later on. When that has occurred, you will come to know that you oppose Allah and His Apostle."

The Imam added, saying: "As for you, you will lose your sight and become blind. So you will see neither a plain nor a mountain, and this will happen a few days later on. You will perjure and be infected with leprosy."

Muhammad b. al-Fadl swore by Allah that the matter was just as the Imam had predicted.

Then 'Amru' b. Hadda'b was asked: "Was al-Ridha' truthful in what he had foretold?"

"By Allah I knew that he was truthful at the time when he told me," answered b. Hadda'b, "but I showed myself patient."

Then the Imam turned to the Catholic and asked him: "Has the Bible produced evidence in support of the prophecy of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family?"

"If the Bible has given proof of him, we would not deny him," retorted the Catholic.

"Could you tell me about the *sakana* which you have in the third Book?" asked the Imam.

"It is one of Allah's attributes," replied the Catholic, "it is not permitted for us to reveal it."

"If your Lord acknowledges that it is the name of Muhammad, Jesus acknowledges him and gives good news to the children of Isra''i'l of him, then you should acknowledge him and do not deny him."

The Catholic accepted that, saying: "If you do, I will acknowledge, for I do not oppose the Bible; nor do I deny it.

The Imam continued establishing proof against him, saying: "Take (an example) from the third part in

which Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, has been mentioned and Jesus given good news of him."

"Give me (an example of) what you have said," retorted the Catholic.

The Imam began reciting him the part of the Gospel in which the Messenger Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, has been mentioned. Then he asked the Catholic: "Who is this described one?"

"Describe him!" the Catholic demanded.

The Imam, peace be on him, began describing him, saying: "I will not describe him but through what Allah has described him. He is the owner of the she-camel, rod, and the cloak; the illiterate Prophet whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Bible; (who) enjoins them (to do) good and forbids them (from doing) evil; makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things; removes from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them; and guides (them) to the best path leading to (Allah), the most just way, and the most straight road.

"I ask you, O Catholic, by the right of Jesus, the Spirit of Allah and His Word, have you found this description of this Prophet (may Allah bless him and his family) (written) in the Gospel?"

The Catholic bowed his head, thought deeply and felt that the earth was narrow though it was wide. He could not deny the Bible, so he answered the Imam, saying: "Yes, this description is in the Bible. Jesus has mentioned this Prophet in the Bible, but the Christians have not proved true that he is your Prophet (*sa'hip*)."

Then the Imam went on establishing arguments against him and disproving his imaginations, saying: "As you have not denied the Gospel and acknowledged the description in it concerning Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, then take the second Book, for it has mentioned him, his testamentary trustee (i.e. Imam 'Ali), his daughter Fa'tima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn."

The Catholic and the Rabbi came to know that the Imam was learned in the Torah and the Bible, and that he had knowledge of all that which was mentioned in both of them. They thought of a way to get rid of the Imam's arguments. They doubted the Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, of whom Moses and Jesus gave good news. They said: "Moses and Jesus gave good news of him, but we have not decided that he is this Muhammad. It is not permitted for us to acknowledge his prophecy because of his name Muhammad. We doubt whether he is your Muhammad or other than him!"

The Imam continued disproving their vague errors, saying: "You have regarded doubt as an argument. Has Allah appointed from among the children of Adam a prophet whose name is Muhammad other than (this) Muhammad? Have you found him (written) in one of the Books which Allah sent down upon all the prophets?"

They refrained from answering and found no vague error to cling to it. They insisted on obstinacy and denial, saying: “It is not permitted for us to confess before you that Muhammad is your Muhammad. If we acknowledged Muhammad, his testamentary trustee, his daughter and her two sons according to what you had mentioned, then you made us adopt Islam unwillingly!”

The Imam added, saying: “As for you, O Catholic, you are safe, in the protection of Allah and of His Apostle. Nothing which you hate will issue from us toward you.”

The Catholic retorted: “As you have given my security, this Prophet whose name is Muhammad, the testamentary trustee whose name is ‘Ali, this daughter whose name is Fa’tima, these two grandsons whose names are al-Hasan and al-Husayn are in the Torah, the Bible, and the Zabu’r (David’s Psalms).”

“Is this truthfulness and justice?” asked the Imam.

“Yes, it is truthfulness and justice,” replied the Catholic.

The Catholic kept silent and acknowledged the truth, so the Imam turned to the Rabbi and said to him: “Listen, O Rabbi, to the Book so-and-so of David’s Psalms.”

The Rabbi said: “May Allah bless you and your father, give me (an example of) what you have.”

The Imam began reciting to him the first Book of David’s Psalms until he reached the names of Muhammad, ‘Ali, Fa’tima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn. Then he asked him the following questions: “I ask you, O Rabbi, by the right of Allah, is this in the Zabu’r of Da’wud (David’s Psalms)?”

“Yes, this is itself and their names are in the Zabu’r,” answered the Rabbi.

“By the right of the ten verses which Allah sent down upon Musa’ (Moses), have you found the description of Muhammad, ‘Ali, Fa’tima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn (written) in the Torah, and that they are ascribed to justice and excellence?”

The Rabbi acknowledged that. Then the Imam continued reciting another Book of the Torah. The Rabbi admired the Imam’s abundant knowledge, eloquence, and his interpreting what was mentioned concerning the Prophet, ‘Ali, Fa’tima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn. Then he said: “By Allah, O (grand)son of Muhammad, were it not for the presidency which I attained over all the Jews, I would have believed in Ahmed (i.e. Prophet Muhammad) and follow your order. By Allah Who sent down Torah upon Musa’ and Zabu’r upon Da’wud, I have never seen anyone better than you in reciting the Torah, the Bible, and the Zabu’r; nor have I seen anyone better than you in interpreting these Books.”

The Imam’s debate with them lasted for a long time until the timing of the noon prayer came, so the Imam, peace be on him, stood and led the people in the noon prayer, and then he went to carry out his personal affairs. On the following day he returned to his assembly, and they brought a Roman slave-girl

before the Imam, peace be on him, that they might test the Imam. The Imam spoke to her in her own language in the presence of the Catholic. He had knowledge of her own language, so he asked her: “Whom do you love more Muhammad or Jesus?”

“In the past I loved Jesus more,” replied the slave-girl, “for I did not recognize Muhammad. After I had come to know of Muhammad, I loved him more than Jesus.”

The Catholic turned to her and asked her: “You have adopted the religion of Muhammad, then do you detest Jesus?”

The slave-girl opposed his statement and said: “I seek refuge in Allah; rather I love Jesus and believe in him, but I love Muhammad more than him.”

The Imam turned to the Catholic and asked him to translate her words to the people, and he translated them to them. Then the Catholic asked the Imam to debate with a Christian from the Sind, for he had knowledge of Christianity and debates. The Imam debated with him in his own language. Al-Sindi adopted Islam and acknowledged the Imamate of the Imam, peace be on him. Then the Imam, peace be on him, asked Muhammad b. al-Fadl to take the Christian to the bath-house, that he might bathe and purify his body from the dirt of polytheism. Muhammad took him to the bath-house and clothed him in clean clothes. Then the Imam ordered the Christian to be taken to Medina (Yathrib) to learn some of his sciences. Then the Imam said farewell to his friend (the Catholic) and went to Medina al-Munawara.[46]

The Imam travels to Ku’fa

The Imam, peace be on him, left Medina (Yathrib) and headed for Ku’fa. When he arrived in it, he was received warmly. He stopped at the house of Hafs b. ‘Umayr al-Yashkuri. The scholars and the theologians surrounded him. They asked him about various questions and he answered them. Then he held a session and summoned to it Christian and Jewish scholars. Debates occurred between him and them and led to his victory over them and their inability to debate with him. Then the Imam turned to those who attended the meeting and asked them: “People, isn’t the fairest of all people he who argues with his opponent through his religion, his Book, and his law?”

“Yes,” all of them replied.

“Know that there is no Imam after Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, except him who does what Muhammad, peace be on him, had done when the Command came to him,” the Imam, peace be on him, replied, “none is appropriate for the Imamate except him who argues with the communities through the proofs of the Imamate.”

“What is the evidence for the Imamate?” a Jewish scholar asked the Imam, peace be on him.

He, peace be on him, answered: “He must be learned in the Torah, the Gospel, the Zabu’r (David’s

Psalms), and the Holy Qur'an, that he may be able to argue with the people of the Torah through their Torah, the People of the Bible through their Bible, and the people of the Qur'an through their Qur'an. He must be learned in all languages, that each language may be obvious to him, and that he may be able to debate with each people in their own language. In addition to these qualities, he must be Allah-fearing, clear from every aspect of uncleanness, pure from any defect, just, fair, wise, affectionate, merciful, forgiving, sympathetic, truthful, pitiful, kind, honest, and trustworthy.47"

Then the Imam debated with some anti-Imamate attendants and forces; he disproved their vague errors and rendered them incapable of debating with him. Accordingly, the Shi'ites clung to him, peace be on him, and increased their faith in his abundant, scientific abilities. With this matter we will end our speech about the role of the Imam before and after the death of his father.

1. Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 1, p. 138.
2. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha'd, p. 272.
3. Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 1, p. 139.
4. Kashf al-Ghumma.
5. Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 4, p. 293. Kanz al-Lugha, p. 766.
6. Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 4, p. 293.
7. Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 1, p.142.
8. Al-Biha'r, vol. 11, p. 265.
9. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 134.
10. Ta'rikh Baghda'd, vol. 13, p. 28-29.
11. Al-Biha'r, vol. 11, p. 28-29.
12. Al-Fusu'l al-Muhimma, p. 22.
13. Ta'rikh Baghda'd, vol. 13, p. 28.
14. 'Umdat al-Ta'lib, p. 185.
15. Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 1, pp. 161-162.
16. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 456-457.
17. Ibid., p. 465.
18. Tanqih al-Maqa'l.
19. Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 2, p. 466.
20. Al-Fusu'l al-Muhimma.
21. Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 2, p. 468.
22. Ibid., pp. 469-471.
23. Ibid.
24. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 88.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Al-Fusu'l al-Muhimma, p. 225.
28. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 26.
29. Ibid., pp. 26-27.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 30.

35. Ibid., p. 31.
36. Ibid., pp. 32–33.
37. Al–Bida'ya wa al–Niha'ya, vol. 10, p. 183.
38. Haya't al–Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 1, pp. 499–500.
39. Maqa'til al–Ta'libyyin, p. 504.
40. Haya't al–Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, vol. 2, pp. 514–515.
41. Ibid., p. 519.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Al–Anwa'r al–Bahiyya, p. 99.
45. Al–Ittha'f bi Hub al–Ashra'f, p. 57.
46. Al–Biha'r, vol. 12, pp. 21–23. I (i.e. the author) have reported the account freely.
47. Ibid., p. 23. I (i.e. the author) have reported the account freely.

Chapter 5: His Debates And His Arguments

The time of the Imam, peace be on him, is famous for the debates and arguments which spread among the great figures of religions, of Islamic schools, and of others. Violent discussions took place among them on numerous theological researches, especially as it concerns the fundamentals of religion. Theology books and others are full of different kinds of such an ideological conflict accompanied by evidence which the theologians have produced in support of their own beliefs.

One of the matters which led to violent arguments and discussions between the Shi'ites and the Sunnis was that of the Imamate. The Shi'ites maintained that the Imamate was similar to the Prophecy, which was not subject to the choice and election of the community; rather it was decided by Allah, the Exalted, Who chose for it whomever He willed from among His righteous servants whose hearts He examined for faith. Also they made a condition that the Imam should be infallible of errors, the most learned of the community, and the most knowledgeable of it in the affairs of Islamic law and all sciences of life.

However, the Sunnis denied that in general. It is worth mentioning that the debates during the time of the Imam took place among the great figures of Islamic schools in the palaces of the kings and of their ministers. For example, the Bara'mika held meetings in their own palaces and summoned to them theologians from among the Sunni (religious) scholars.

The theologians debated with the great scholar, Hisha'm b. al–Hakam, and discussed with him the matter of the Imamate, and he disproved their vague errors with firm argument and inclusive proof. Without doubt the Bara'mika held such sessions and discussed such a matter not because of some scientific reasons; rather they wanted to understand the definite evidence which the Shi'ites produced in support of their beliefs in the Imamate.

Al-Ma'mu'n appointed Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as his heir apparent. However, he was not sincere in this purpose; nor did he believe that the Imam was more appropriate than him for the caliphate. He (al-Ma'mu'n) ordered all his governors in Islamic world to summon the great (religious) scholars, who were experienced in different kinds of science, to go to Khurasa'n in order to question the Imam about the most difficult scientific matters. When they came to him (al-Ma'mu'n), he mentioned the matter before them and promised to enrich those who would question the Imam and render him incapable of answering them. Generally speaking, he appointed him as his heir apparent for the following political reasons:

1. Al-Ma'mu'n intended to destroy the beliefs of the Shi'ites and to efface their traces. (He wanted the religious scholars) to render Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, incapable of answering them, that he might use his incapability as means to cancel the beliefs of the Shi'ites, who maintained that the Imam should be the most learned of the people of his time and most knowledgeable of them in all kinds of science. Of course, if the Imam had been incapable of disproving the scholars' beliefs, he would have shaken the entity of the Shi'ites and abrogated their beliefs in the Imams of the members of the House, A*hl al-Bayt*, peace be on them.

2. If the Imam had been unable to answer the religious scholars' questions, al-Ma'mu'n would have been able to remove him from regency. In other words al-Ma'mu'n would have been able to achieve his political aims through the Imam, for he had told the people that he nominated him for that important office because he was the most learned of the community, and when he had concluded that he was not the most learned of it, he removed him from the office. Meanwhile, his mass media would have announced that the Imam had fallen short of answering the scholars' questions, that it might respond to the 'Abba'sid family's feelings. It is worth mentioning that the members of this family were displeased with al-Ma'mu'n when he nominated the Imam for regency, so they removed him from the caliphate and pledged allegiance to Ibra'him, the singer, as we will see in the chapters that follow.

Anyhow, the leading scholars had prepared the most difficult scientific questions and asked the Imam about them, and he skillfully answered them with. The narrators have mentioned: "He (Imam al-Ridha') was asked about more than twenty thousand questions in different times to the extent that al-Ma'mu'n's palace became a scientific center, that the leading scholars admired the Imam's talents and abilities, that they announced to the people the Imam's great abilities in knowledge and excellence, and that most of them believed in his Imamate. So Al-Ma'mu'n prevented the scholars from debating with the Imam lest they admired him." The narrators have mentioned some questions. We will mention them along with the Imam's answers to them as follows:

'Umra'n al-Sa'bi'i's Questions

'Umra'n al-Sa'bi'i was a great philosopher and was the spiritual leader of the tribe of the Sa'bi'a during the time of the Imam, peace be on him. He was summoned by al-Ma'mu'n in order to examine the

Imam, and he had prepared for him the most difficult and vaguest philosophical questions. The researcher, Shaykh Muhammad Taqi al-Ja'fari, has explained 'Umra'n's questions and commented on them, saying: "This debate contains the most important and vaguest theological questions about transcendental wisdom, which tires researchers' intellects when they reflect on it.

Experts have not given enough answers to these questions, for other questions may arise from the questions, and the arising questions may be vaguer than the previous ones themselves. 'Umra'n, in this narration, raised these vague questions and they were answered by Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, the eighth of Allah's proofs over His servants and of His testamentary trustees on His earth. What the Imam explained during this debate is a clear way which cannot be effaced by the dust of the material veils which are raised by limited reasons in the fortress of dark, sensible things. In this manner the realities which incomplete reason cannot recognize manifest themselves to those who cling to the beliefs of the members of the House of Prophethood, the source of Message, the place of the angles who came one by one, and descending place of Revelation."

We will mention al-Sa'bi'i's questions along with the Imam's answers to them just as al-Shaykh al-Sadu'q has mentioned in (his book) *'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha'*. We will also mention some extracts of al-Shaykh al-Ja'fari's commentaries on them. The delegation who accompanied 'Umra'n (al-Sa'bi'i) presented a group of questions. After the Imam, peace be on him, had answered the questions of the delegation including eminent Christian and Jewish (religious) scholars, he said to them: "People, if any of you is familiar with Islam and wants to question (me), then let him question (me) without any shame."

'Umra'n al-Sa'bi'i, an expert in theology, addressed the Imam with politeness and admiration, saying: "O Scholar of the people, were it not for that you invited (me) to question you, I would not question you. I entered Ku'fa, Basrah, Syria (Sha'm) and al-Jazira. There I met some theologians but none of them was able to establish for me that the One, namely Allah is One who has no second, not other than Him standing through his oneness. May I question you?"

('Umra'n) al-Sa'bi'i put forth his deep question, and (said) that the (religious) scholars of Ku'fa, Basrah, Syria (Sha'm) and al-Jazira were not able to answer it. He asked the Imam to answer it. The Imam smiled at him, saying: "If there is (a person called) 'Umra'n al-Sa'bi'i among the group (of the people), then you are he."

"I am he," replied 'Umra'n.

"'Umra'n, question (me). You must be just. Beware of nonsense and injustice," declared the Imam.

('Umra'n) al-Sa'bi'i bowed his head, and then he said to the Imam with politeness and magnification: "By Allah, my master, I want nothing except that you establish for me a thing to which I will cling and (which I) do not pass."

('Umra'n) al-Sa'bi'i expressed his good intention, for he wanted to understand the reality and nothing

else.

The Imam, peace be on him, said: “Question (me) whatever you desire.”

The session was full of (religious) scholars and leaders; among them was al-Ma’mu’n. They kept silent, that they might listen to ‘Umra’n al-Sa’bi’i’s questions and to the Imam’s answers to them. Then (‘Umra’n) al-Sa’bi’i put forth his questions as follows:

Question1: “Can you tell me about the first being and about what he created?” As for the thing about which (‘Umra’n al-Sa’bi’i) questioned, it is the first thing and the first material from which Allah created all things. The thing about which he questioned was not the existence of Allah, the Almighty Originator. That is because Allah’s existence can easily be recognized by those who have awareness and will, and have no doubt, for all things in the universe display the existence of their Creator, and for it is impossible for effect to exist without any cause. Now, let us listen to the answer of the Imam, peace be on him, to this question:

Answer1: “As for the One, He has always been One Being; He has neither limits nor accidental qualities; and He will always remain so. Then He created unprecedented, different creatures with accidental qualities and different limits, (i.e. He created them) not through a thing which He established nor through a thing which He limited nor according to a thing which He imitated or adopted as a previous exemplar for them. Then, after that, He made the creatures, choice and non-choice, different and harmonious (in) types and tastes. He (created them not) for a need of them nor for an excellent rank which He did not attain but through them nor did He see for Himself an increase or a decrease in what He created.”

This paragraph gives an account of the answer of the Imam, peace be on him, as follows:

Firstly, Allah, the Exalted, is One; there is nothing with Him; He has neither limits nor accidental qualities like those possible being; He is One Being; He has always been and will always remain so. His Oneness is neither numeral nor qualitative nor generic; rather it means that He is not associated with material and immaterial things. He occupies the most perfect rank; none of possible beings is like Him, for they are ascribed to Him as made things ascribed to maker, so Blessed is Allah!

Secondly, the view of the Bedouins was that every image should depend and occupy a certain matter. This view is right regarding things other than the Necessary Being, the Most High. As for Him, He does not create things from previous things nor from things which He had created. Rather He says to thing ‘be’ and it is. He originated the creation of things not according to thing which He imitated or adopted as a model. He has the greatest power which originates the creation of things of which He has no need, for He is the Only Source of favor toward creatures.

The Imam, peace be on him, turned to ‘Umra’n (al-Sa’bi’i) and asked him: “‘Umra’n, did you understand this (matter)?”

“Yes,” he replied, “by Allah, master.”

“The Imam added:” “Know, ‘Umra’n, that if He had created what He created for a need, He would have not created anything except those whom He asked for the help in His needs, and that He should have created a hundred fold of what He created. That is because the more the helpers are, the more powerful their leader (*sahib*) is. As for need, ‘Umra’n, it is impossible, for whatever He creates, other needs arise, but you can say that the creatures need each other. As a result I can say that He did not create the creatures for a need, and He preferred some of them to others while He had no need of those whom he had preferred; nor had He a vengeance on those whom He had abased.”

This statement completes that which is before it (and shows) that Allah, the Exalted, created the creatures while He had no need of them; rather they have need of His favor, His mercy, and His bestowal. He is absolutely munificent, so he spreads mercy and beneficence over all beings and creatures. An example of His bounty is that He prefers some of His creatures to others while He is in no need of those whom He prefers; nor has He a vengeance on those whom He abases.

Question2: “Master, was the Being known to Himself by His Own Self?”

This question is very deep. Al-Shaykh al-Ja‘far has explained it as follows: “You may get a thing and establish it as reality through a scientific discovery. That thing divides into its own identity and dismisses other than it, and thus it is bounded. Stone cannot be obtained scientifically unless the nonexistence of all its opposites is added its identity. (In other words), the scholar cannot recognize and attain being unless he dismisses all things except it. This was the reason for ‘Umra’n’s question about whether He, the Exalted, recognized Himself by Himself. At that time, if the Imam’s answer had been ‘Yes’, ‘Umra’n would have asked another question: “Did recognizing Himself by Himself require dismissing reasonable beings other than Him?”

Answer 2: Imam, peace be on him, said: “Knowledge is acquired by something which negates its opposites, so that the thing itself would be existing through what it is negated, without the existence of anything which contradicts its existence, a need arises to negate that thing about itself by defining what is known about it.” Then the Imam turned to ‘Umra’n and asked Him: “‘Umra’n, did you understand?”

“Yes, by Allah, master,” replied ‘Umra’n. The result of the answer of the Imam, peace be on him, was that what al-Sa’bi’i had mentioned would be correct if the known being was compared with many things opposing it, so it required dismissing those things in order to get the known (being). However, as for Allah, the Exalted, Creator of the universe and Giver of life, He had nothing to compare Himself with it, so He was in no need of dismissing it in order that He might decide His will through that dismissal.

Question 3: “Tell me, then, by what means did He come to know what He knew with mind or without mind?"

By this question al-Sa’bi’i intended to force the Imam to confess that Allah, the Exalted, was compound,

for He had mind.

Answer 3: “If it had been by mind, would He then find anyway not to appoint for that mind a bound where knowledge ended?”

The Imam wanted (to say) that it was necessary for mind to recognize His reality and essence. Then he asked him the following question: “Then what is that mind?”

Al-Sa’bi’i kept silent and was unable to say anything, for the Imam did not leave any room for him to establish his belief. Then the Imam turned to him and said: “Is it all right if I ask you about the mind and you define it by another mind? If you answer in the affirmative, then you would make both your claim and statement void.”

The Imam established perfect argument and definite proof of the voidness of the belief of al-Sa’bi’i, who thought that Allah, the Exalted, could be recognized by mind. Accordingly, there should be another mind to recognize the selfness of Him, the Exalted. This mind depends on another mind, and so on. This matter leads to an endless chain. If the second mind depends on the first mind, it will result in vicious circle. The philosophers and theologians have unanimously agreed that both matters (i.e., endless chain and vicious circle) are not corrupt because they result in corrupt matters. Then the Imam completed his argument and his proof, saying: “‘Umra’n, is it not incumbent on you to know that the One cannot be described by mind, and it is not said that He has more than one deed, work, and make. None imagines that He has views and members like those of the creatures. Therefore, understand that and correct (your beliefs) with it as long as you have come to know of (it).”

The Imam, peace be on him, wanted (to say) that Allah’s different deeds and works were not similar to those of possible beings who were in need of means and mediations such as intellect and all manifest members to carry them out; it is impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to have such means and mediations.

Question 4: “Do you not tell me how the bounds of His creatures are?”

‘Umra’n questioned (the Imam) about the bounds which distinguish the creatures from each other. The Imam answered him:

Answer 4: “You have asked, then know that the bounds of His creatures are of six kinds: touched, weighed, seen, that which has no taste (soul), seen but has no weight nor touch nor sense nor color nor taste, ordination, accidental qualities, shapes, length, width. Among them are act and movements which make things, do them, change them from state to state, increase them, and decrease them. As for works and deeds, they set out, for they have no time more than that which is ordained for their need. When it (deed) finished by thing, it sets out with movement, and effect remains. It takes the same course of speech which goes and its effect remains.”

The Imam’s answer is full of mentioning characteristics and qualities by which things are distinguished,

whether they are living beings or not.

Question 5: “Master, will you not tell me about the Creator? If He is One, there is nothing other than Him and nothing is with Him, has He not changed (His Essence) through His creating the creatures?”

This question means that the natural realities founded by Allah, the Exalted, require changing the Almighty Creator due to their change. This means that they are united with Him in His selfness; this is impossible.

Anwer 5: “He (Allah) is Eternal. He, the Great and Almighty, does not change through His creating the creatures, but the creatures change through His changing them.”

The result of the answer of the Imam, peace be on him, is that the Almighty Creator is the Maker and Founder of all things and is Eternal, so He requires no change out of the change of possible beings and creatures.

Question 6: “Master, with what have we recognized Him?”

Answer 6: “With other than Him.”

All seen and the unseen things in the universe are evidence for the existence of the Almighty Creator. We have recognized Him through His creatures, and believed in Him through His marvelous make. He has become manifest and clear during this time in which man has invaded outer space. The great make of Him, the Exalted, has manifested itself for mankind through what He has deposited in this space, such as the stars which are neither counted nor numbered, and which move according to regulation and accuracy. If they oppose their course, they will collide and disappear, and no trace of them will remain. So glory belongs to Allah, the Wise Originator!

Question 7: “Which thing is other than Him?”

Answer 7: “His desire, His name, His attribute, and the like. All these are originated, created, managed.”

We have recognized Allah, the Exalted, through His will, His name, and His attributes, which are evidence for Him, may He be glorified. In the Supplication for the Morning, (it has been mentioned): “Oh He who demonstrates His Essence by His Essence.” All the beings in the universe depend on Him as the made depend on the maker.

Question 8: “Master, which thing is He?”

Answer 8: “He is light, namely He guides His creatures from among the people of the heaven and the earth. You have no right against me than my professing His oneness.”

Through his question, ‘Umra’n intended to know the reality of Allah, the Exalted. He imagined that He, the Exalted, was like the rest of possible beings. This is impossible. Man does not know his own body

and the small systems therein, so how can he know the essence of the Almighty Creator, the Shaper and Originator of the worlds? The Imam answered that he came to know of Allah through His manifest attributes, such as His guiding His creatures and other clear proofs which demonstrate the existence of their Almighty Creator.

Question 9: "Master, was He not silent before (creating) the creatures and then He spoke?"

Answer 9: "Silence is not except out of utterance before it. An example of that it is not said that the lamp is silent and does not utter; nor is it said that the lamp shines, so what does it want to do toward us, for light is from the lamp, not out of an act or make from it; it is not a thing other than it. When it shines for us, we say: 'It has shined for us, so that we may seek light through it.' In this manner you can understand your affair."

The meaning of the answer of the Imam, peace be on him, is that silence and utterance follow one another in a matter which accepts them like the succession of talent and non-talent. As for the utterance of Allah, it is not like the utterance of those speakers from among possible beings. In other words utterance and silence do not hold good for Him as they hold good for possible beings. The Shi'ites believe that utterance is one of the attributes of action, and that it does not persist in the essence of Him, the Exalted, as the persisting of the essential attributes. That is because it is He, the Exalted, who creates utterance and speech when He wills (to create them). Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, gave an example of that through the lamp, for it is not said that the lamp is silent, does not utter and, also ascribing the addition to the lamp, it is not optional for it (to utter). This is one of the possibilities regarding the explanation of the speech of the Imam, peace be on him.

Question 10: "Master, the knowledge I have says that the Being is changed in His essence by His action of creating."

Answer 10: "'Umra'n, does your statement mean that the being does not in any way change its essence except when it affects its own essence in a way which changes it? Can you say that the fire changes its own nature, or that the heat burns itself, or have you seen anyone seeing his own vision?"

'Umra'n had already mentioned this question; nevertheless the Imam, peace be on him, answered it, and he, peace be on him, increased it in explanation. He said to him: "The being does not in any way change its essence. For example, the actions which issue from soul do not bring about increase therein nor decrease. Yet, there is another example which is the eye. Though vision issues from it, it does not bring about increase therein nor decrease."

Question 11: "Will you not tell me, master? Is He in the creatures or are the creatures in Him?"

Answer 11: "He is above all that, 'Umra'n. He is not in the creatures; nor are the creatures in Him; He is exalted above that. I will teach you what you do not know, and there is no strength except in Allah. Tell me about the mirror: are you in it or is it in you? If neither one of you is in the other, then how did you

come to see your own reflection in it, ‘Umra’n?”

The Imam, peace be on him, made it impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to exist in His creatures or they exist in Him. He gave an example of that through the reflection in the mirror; it is not in the mirror; nor is the mirror in it; rather it is light which brings about seeing the reflection in the mirror and it is not in any way in it. Ibn al–Fa’rid says:

Through His Unity all many (things) has lasted for it, so

it has become correct and every cause has come to it.

The essence of union has become single for Himself, even

if its units fall under it.

I looked but did not see (anything) except pure unity

already covered by many (things) without any partner. Regarding this matter there are deep philosophical researches, but we have not mentioned them lest the book should be too long.

Question 12: “Through the light between myself and it?”

This question is related to that which is before it, and we have explained it.

Answer 12: “Can you see of that light more than what you can see with your own eyes?”

“Yes,” replied ‘Umra’n.

“Then show it to us,” demanded the Imam.

‘Umra’n kept silent, not knowing what to say. For the Imam did not leave any room for him to defend his own beliefs. Then the Imam continued his talk, saying: “I do not see the light except leading you and the mirror to come to know each other without being in either one of you. There are many such examples which the ignorant simply cannot observe, and the greatest example belongs to Allah.”

The Debate is being postponed

The time of the prayer came. It was necessary for the Imam to postpone the debate, so he turned to al–Ma’mu’n and said to him: “(The time of) the prayer has just come.” ‘Umra’n feared that the debate between him and the Imam would not be resumed, so he said to him: “Master, do not interrupt my questions, for my heart has sympathized (with you).”

The Imam, peace be on him, promised him to resume the debate, then he rose and performed the obligatory prayer.

The Debate is being resumed

The session returned. It was attended by al-M'mu'n, the eminent religious scholars, and high ranking commanders. Then the Imam turned to 'Umra'n and said to him: "'Umra'n, question me."

Question 13: "Master, will you tell me about Allah, the Great and Almighty? Does He exist in His reality or in description?"

Answer 13: "Verily, Allah is the Originator, the One, the First Being. He has always been One. There is nothing with Him. He is single without a second with Him. He is neither known (i.e. in His reality) nor unknown nor clear nor ambiguous nor remembered nor forgotten nor a thing to which the title of a thing is applied nor from a time He was nor to a time He will be nor on a thing He stood nor on a thing He stands nor on a thing He depends nor in a thing He is hidden. All that was before the creation.[1] As for the whole you have applied to Him, it was attributes which appeared later, and translation through which understands he who understands.

"Know that the meaning of origination (*ibda'd'*), will, and intention is one, but their titles are three. The first was His origination (*ibada"*), His will, and His intention which He made the origin of all things, evidence for all perceived things, separator for all vague things. All things were separated by these words, such as the name of right and wrong, action, done, meaning other than meaning. All affairs gathered on them. When He originated the words, He did not make meaning for them other than themselves. They came to an end and had no existence, for they were originated with an origination.

"The light in this place, which is the light of the heavens and the earth, is the first action of Allah. As for the letters, they are the done (thing) which the speech concerns. All the acts of worship were from Allah, the Great and Almighty. He taught them to His creatures. They are thirty-three letters. Twenty-eight letters of them indicates the letters of Arabic. Twenty-two of the twenty-eight letters shows the letters of Assyrian and Hebrew. Five letters of them were changed (and are) in the rest of the languages of non-Arabs in the regions. These five letters were derived from the twenty-five letters, so the letters became thirty-three. As for the five different (letters), it is not permissible to mention them more than what we have mentioned. Then He made the letters after He had counted them and numbered them firmly. So His sign was like these words of Him, the Exalted: *'Be and it is.'* Make, be from it, and the made be from it. So the first creature of Allah, the Great and Almighty, was the origination which had neither weight nor movement nor hearing nor color nor sense; the second creature was the letters which had neither weight nor color. They were heard and described; (none) looked at them. As for the third creature, it was all the kinds which were sensed, touched, with taste, and seen. As for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, was before the letters which indicate nothing other than themselves." Al-Ma'mu'n admired (this answer) and did not understand most meanings of these deep words which we will leave without any explanation, for it takes us a long time to explain them. Then he asked the Imam: "How they (i.e. the letters) indicate nothing other than themselves?"

The Imam answered him and explained the matter for him, saying: “Surely, Allah, the Blessed and Most High, never gathered a thing from them for another meaning. When He created from them four or five or six words or more than that or less than that, He created them for a certain meaning, and they were not for anything except for an originated meaning, which was nothing before that (time).

Question 14: “How can we come to know of that?”

Answer 14: “As for the way and explaining knowledge, it is (as follows): You mention the letters when you want nothing other than themselves. You mention them one by one when you say: *Alif, ba”, ta” tha”, jeem, ha”, kha”,* until you finish them. You will find no meaning other than them. When you gather them and make from them letters and make from them the name and adjective for a certain meaning, you will not seek the meaning of what you have meant. They are proof of their meanings and the cause of the thing described by them. Did you understand them?”

“Yes,” was the answer.

The Imam continued his speech about explaining the meanings of the letters when they were put together, saying: “Know that it (the letter) is not an adjective of that which is not described nor a bound of that which is not bounded. As for the attributes and the names, they indicate perfection and existence, not an example of encompassment, as the bounds, which are squaring, making triangle, and making hexagon. That is because Allah, the Great and Almighty, is known by the attributes and the names, not by limits, such as length, width, littleness, muchness, color, weight, and the like. Nothing of these limits is applied to Allah, that His creatures may know Him through knowing themselves, according to the necessity which we have mentioned.

“However, Allah, the Great and Almighty, is indicated by His attributes, known by His names, and His creatures are proofs of Him, that the willing seeker concerning that may be in no need of the vision of an eye nor hearing of an ear nor touching of the palm of hand nor encompassment of a heart. If His attributes, great be His laudation, do not indicate Him; His names do not summon to Him; the knowledge of the creatures does not perceive His core; the creatures will worship His names and His attributes, not His core. If this is such, then the one god will be other than Allah, for his attributes and his names are other than him. Did you understand, ‘Umra’n?”

“Yes, master, increase me,” replied ‘Umra’n.

The Imam continued his interesting speech after he had gained mastery over those who attended the session. He said: “Beware of the statement of the ignorant from among the of blindness and error who claim that Allah, the Great and All-holy, exists in the hereafter for reckoning concerning reward and punishment, and He is not in the world for the acts of obedience and hope. If Allah, the Great and Almighty, has defects in this world, he will never be in the next. However, the people have gone astray, become blind, and deaf toward the truth while they do not know. That is according to the words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *And whoever is blind in* (*the world*)*, he shall also be blind in the hereafter and*

more erring from the way.2 I mean that he is blind toward the existing realities. Those who have intellects know that the proof of what is there (in the next world) is not but through what is here (in the world). He who takes the knowledge of that (world) according to his own view, seeks its existence and perceiving it through his own soul, and not through other than it, increases himself nothing of the knowledge of that (world) but fairness, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, has placed the knowledge of that (world) with special group of people who think, know, and understand."

Question 15: "Master, tell me about origination: Is it creation or other than creation?"

Shaykh al-Ja'fari commented on this question, saying: "This is also one of the questions which have tired the minds and reasoning of mankind, for it is (the question) which has brought about the disunity of the different ways and sects. Some of them say: Origination such as materials, images, reasons, souls, and the like is absolutely impossible whether it is from the Necessary Being or from the possible being. Others have absolutely regarded it as possible. Others have confined the possibility of origination to Allah, the Exalted, in general, namely that He, the Exalted, is powerful to originate any being He wills without any material before it, and change befalls it. They have also said: 'It (origination) requires His absolute power and the ability of the object. Yet others follow other ways.3"

Answer 15: "Rather it (origination) is still creation and is not perceived through stillness. It becomes creation for it is something originated. It is Allah who originates it and it becomes His creature. Allah, the Great and Almighty, creates it, and there is no third (thing) between them, and no third (thing) is other than them. So what Allah, the Great and Almighty, creates is His creature. Perhaps, the creature is still, moving, different, harmonious, known, and ambiguous. All the bounded things are the creatures of Allah, the Great and Almighty. Know that all the things which the senses find for you are meanings perceived by the senses, and every sense demonstrates what Allah, the Great and Almighty, has placed in its perception, and the heart understands all of that. Know that the One who is standing without any ordination or bounds created creatures ordained by bounds and ordination, and what He creates is two creatures: the ordination and the ordained. In each of them there is neither color nor weight nor taste. He makes one of them perceive the other and makes them perceive in their nature. He does not create a single thing standing in its nature without other than it which He wills to be proof of His selfness and His existence, so Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, is Single and One; there is no second with Him in order to make Him stand, to support Him and to hide Him. The creatures hold each other through the permission and will of Allah, the Exalted. Men have differed over this subject to the extent that they have gone astray, become perplexed, and sought salvation from darkness with darkness through their describing Allah, the Exalted, with their own qualities, so they have become very far away from the truth. If they describe Allah, the Great and Almighty, with His own attributes, and describe the creatures with their own qualities, they will profess understanding and certainty, and will not defer over (Him). When they seek that toward which they are perplexed, they become confused. *Allah guides whomever He wills to the straight path*."

Question16: “I witness that He is just as you have described. However, I have another question.”

“Question whatever you desire.”

“I want to question you about the All-wise (Allah): In which thing is He? Does anything encompass Him? Does He change from state to state? Is He in need of a thing?”

Answer 16: “I will tell you, ‘Umra’n, so understand Whom you have questioned about. He is the most ambiguous matter which the creatures face. As for those whose reasons are different and whose clemency is distant, they do not recognize (Him). As for those who are just and have reasons, they are able to recognize (Him). As for the first (thing) of that: If the creation of what He creates is out of His need of it, it is permissible for one to say: He changes according to what He creates because of His need of that. However, He, the Great and Almighty, does not create anything out of need, and He is still firm, not in a thing nor on a thing, but it is the creatures which hold each other, enter in one another, and come forth from each other. As for Allah, the Great and All-holy, He holds the whole of that through His power. He does not enter a thing and comes out of it. The preservation of it does not tire Him, nor is He incapable of holding it. None of the creatures knows how that is except Allah, the Great and Almighty, His messengers whom He informed of it, the people of His secrets, those who keep His command, and His guardians who undertake His Law. Rather His command is like the twinkling of an eye. If He wills a thing, He only says to it: *Be, so there it is*, in accordance with His desire and will. Nothing is nearer to Him than a thing; nothing is farther from Him than a thing. Did you understand, ‘Umra’n?”

“Yes, master,” replied ‘Umra’n.

Whatever knowledge is given to man, he is incapable of understanding his own soul and his wonderful small systems, so how can he recognize or encompass the Almighty Creator, the Originator of the worlds and Giver of life. Ibn Abu’ al-Haddid says:

Intellect has become perplexed concerning You, O Wonder of the universe!

Whenever my mind comes a span of the hand nearer to You, it becomes a mile far.

You have perplexed the possessors of reason and confused brain.

Surely, the human brain is limited, so how can it recognize the reality of Allah, the Exalted. Yes, we have recognized Him and believed in Him through His creatures, for every atom in this universe displays the existence of the Almighty Creator, Who knows all things in the heaven and the earth.

Al-Sa’bi’i becomes Muslim

‘Umra’n al-Sa’bi’i acknowledged the many scientific abilities of the Imam, peace be on him, such as his definite answers to the most difficult philosophical questions, which none was able to answer except the

testamentary trustees of the prophets whom Allah endowed with knowledge and sound judgment. Accordingly, he embraced Islam and began saying: “I witness that Allah, the Most High, is as you have described, and witness that Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is His Servants sent with guidance and the religion of the truth.”

Then he prostrated himself in prayer before Allah and submitted to Him. The religious scholars and the theologians admired the Imam’s knowledge and talents, hence they told the people about his excellence and abundant knowledge. As for al-Ma’mu’n, he drowned in pain, harbored malice against the Imam, envied him, and then left the session.

Muhammad Fears for the Imam

Muhammad b. Ja‘far, the Imam’s uncle, feared al-Ma’mu’n for the safety of the Imam. He attended the session and saw the Imam’s domination over ‘Umra’n al-Sa’bi’i, who was an excellent philosopher of the time, so he summoned al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Nawfali, the Imam’s companion, and said to him: “Have you not seen what your companion (the Imam) brought?” “No, by Allah,” said al-Nawfali, “I think that ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’ has never gone into anything, and we do not know him through it. He always speaks about theology in Medina and the theologians gather before him.”

Then al-Nawfali informed him of the Imam’s knowledge and excellence, saying: “The pilgrims come to him and ask him about the lawful and the unlawful, and he answers them. Perhaps he goes into theology when someone comes to him and debates with him.”

However, Muhammad expressed his fear of al-M’mu’n for his nephew, saying: “I fear that this man (i.e. al-Ma’mu’n) will envy him, give him poison (to drink), and creates an affliction against him. So advise him to refrain from these things.”

As for al-Nawfali, he had good opinion of al-Ma’mu’n, did not fear him for the Imam, so he said to Muhammad: “The Imam (i.e. al-Ma’mu’n) wants nothing except to examine him, that he may know whether he (the Imam) has something of the knowledge of his fathers.”

Muhammad was not satisfied with al-Nawfali’s statement, for he thought that al-Ma’mu’n was wicked, so he said to al-Nawfali: “Say to him (al-Ridha’): Your uncle dislikes this chapter (of theology) and asks you to refrain from these things for several reasons....”

The Imam’s uncle was right in his intuition, for he knew that the ‘Abba’sid family harbored malice against the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and showed enmity toward them. Moreover, (‘Umra’n) al-Sa’bi’i’s questions and his adopting Islam at the hand of the Imam moved the spites of al-Ma’mu’n and he assassinated him, as we will see in the chapters that follow.

Al-Nawfali related to the Imam, peace be on him, Muhammad’s words, and he thanked him for them and prayed for him.

The Imam honors ‘Umra’n

Through his debates, the Imam made ‘Umra’n adopt Islam. (This was a great achievement), for the latter was the most prominent scholar of his time. The Imam sent for him. When he came, the Imam , welcomed and received him with honor. Then he gave him garments and ten thousand dirhams. ‘Umra’n was pleased with that, so he prayed for the Imam and thanked him for that, saying: “May I be your ransom, you have followed the deeds of your grandfather, the Commander of the faithful.”

‘Umra’n came frequently to the Imam and made used of his abundant knowledge. After that, as the historians say, he became a summoner to Islam. The theologians from among the possessors of statements and innovations came to him and asked him about the most important questions. He answered their questions to the extent that he made them avoid him. Al-Ma’mu’n gave him ten thousand dirhams and, in addition, al-Fadl gave him some money. Then the appointed him as a governor over the charities of Balkh, and he did right things.[4]

The Questions of Sulayma’n al-Maru’zi

As for Sulayma’n al-Maru’zi, he was skilled in philosophy and experienced in theological researches. He was the most prominent religious scholars in Khurasa’n. Al-Ma’mu’n invited him, met him with friendly reception and honor, and said to him: “My cousin, ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him, has come to me from al-Hija’z. He likes theology and theologians. Will you come to us on the 8th day of Dhu al-Hijja (*youm al-Tarwiya*) in order to debate with him.”

Sulayma’n was afraid of that. He thought that the Imam would be unable to answer his questions, and that the ‘Alawides would harbor malice against him. Accordingly, he apologized to al-Ma’mu’n, saying: “I dislike to question him in your session and among a group of the Ha’shimites. The people will regard him as defective when he debate with me on theology. Defects are not permissible for him.”

Al-Ma’mu’n made covenant with him and promised that no harm or detested things would befall him. He said (to him): “I have invited you because I know that you are learned (in theology). I have no intention except that you silence him (Imam al-Ridha’) in one argument.”

This statement demonstrates that al-Ma’mu’n had evil intention toward the Imam, harbored malice against him, and showed enmity toward him. Sulayma’n felt safety from any aggression against him, and then he said to al-Ma’mu’n: “(I will be) sufficient, Commander of the faithful, bring us together and do not dispraise me.” Meanwhile al-Ma’mu’n sent his messenger to the Imam and asked him to come in order to debate with Sulayma’n. The Imam responded to that and attended along with a delegation from among his eminent companions including ‘Umra’n al-Sa’bi’i, who became a Muslim at the hand of the Imam. Then a debate took place between Sulayma’n and ‘Umra’n al-Sa’bi’i on *al-bida”*. Sulayma’n denied *al-bida”* while ‘Umra’n confirmed it. Then Sulayma’n sought the Imam’s view about it and he confessed it. He established it through some verses from the Holy Qur’an. Then al-Ma’mu’n turned to

Sulayma'n and said to him: "Question Abu' al-Hasan about whatever you desire. You must listen well and be fair." Sulayma'n asked the Imam the following questions:

Question 1: "What is your view about Him whom has made will as name and attribute such as All-living, All-hearing, All-seeing, and All-powerful?"

Answer 1: "You want to say that things were originated and became different because He desired and willed, and you do not want to say that things were originated and became different because He is All-hearing and All-seeing. This is proof of that they (i.e. will and desire) are not similar to All-hearing, All-seeing, and All-powerful."

Sulayma'n interrupted the Imam, saying: "He has always been willing."

The Imam answered him: "Sulayma'n, His will is (something) other than Him."

Sulayma'n numbered (some attributes) to show that Allah, the Exalted, was united with His intention. So, the Imam disproved Sulayma'n's vague error, saying:

"You have proved along with Him something other than Him which has always been."

"I have not proved (that)," replied Sulayma'n

"Is it (the will) originated?" asked Sulayma'n.

"No, it is not originated," answered the Imam.

The Imam confused Sulayma'n and he began saying contradictory statements. He (Sulayma'n) sometimes said that will was eternal and sometimes said that it was originated. Therefore, al-Ma'mu'n shouted at him and asked him not to show obstinacy and to show fairness in his speech, saying: "You must be fair. Do you not see that the people of consideration are around you?"

Then al-Ma'mu'n turned to the Imam and said to him: "Abu' al-Hasan, debate with him on theology, for he is the theologian of Khurasa'n."

The Imam asked him: "Is it (the will) originated?"

Sulayma'n denied the origination of the will, so the Imam answered him:

"Sulayma'n, it is originated. If thing is not eternal, it is originated; if it is not originated, it is eternal."

Sulayma'n interrupted (the Imam) saying: "His (Allah's) will is (part) of Him just as His hearing, His sight, and His knowledge are (parts) of Him."

The Imam disproved his statement, asking: "Did He will Himself?"

“No,” was the answer.

The Imam began confuting his statement, saying: “Therefore, the willing is not like the All-hearing and the All-seeing.”

Sulayma’n (answered) at random, for the Imam left no room for him to defend his own vague errors. He (Sulayma’n) said: ‘Surely, He willed Himself just as He heard Himself, saw Himself, and recognized Himself.”

The Imam confuted his statement, asking: “What is the meaning of that He willed Himself? Did He will to be a thing? Did He will to be All-living, All-hearing, All-seeing, and All-powerful?”

Sulayma’n did not know what to say, so he answered: “Yes.”

“Did that occur through His will?” asked the Imam.

“Yes,” was the answer.

The Imam began refuting Sulayma’n’s statement and showing the contradiction therein, saying: “Your statement: ‘He willed to be All-living, All-hearing, and All-seeing,’ has no sense. Was that through His will?”

As the matter was deep, Sulayma’n said: “Yes, that was through His will.”

The people in the session burst into laughter. Al-Ma’mu’n laughed at the contradictory speech of Sulayma’n. However, the Imam turned to the people and asked them to show gentleness toward Sulayma’n. Then he asked him: “Sulayma’n, do you think that He (i.e. Allah, the Exalted) has altered from state to state and changed due to it? This is something through which Allah is not described.”

Sulayma’n became feeble and kept silent, so the Imam turned to him in order to establish proof against him, saying: “Sulayma’n, I want to ask you a question.”

“Question (me), may I be your ransom,” replied Sulayma’n.

“Tell me about you and your companions: Do you debate with the people on theology according to what you understand and know or according to what you do not understand and know?”

“Rather, according to what we understand and know,” answered Sulayma’n.

The Imam began establishing proof against Sulayma’n’s vague errors, saying: “The thing which the people know is that the willing is other than will, that the willing is before will, that the doer is before the thing done. This (statement) disproves your statement: ‘Will and the willing is one thing.’”

Sulayma’n said: “May I be your ransom, isn’t that of Him as the people know and understand?”

The Imam continued refuting Sulayma'n's vague errors, saying: "I think that you have claimed the knowledge of that without knowledge and said: 'Will is like hearing and seeing.' If you have such a view, then it is something which is neither known nor is understood."

Sulayma'n became perplexed and was unable to answer because of the many scientific abilities of the Imam, peace be on him. The Imam resumed his debate in order to complete proof against him, saying:

"Sulayma'n, does Allah know all those who are in the Garden and the Fire?"

"Yes," Sulayma'n retorted.

The Imam opposed him, saying: "Is what Allah, the Exalted, knows (part) of that?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"If it is to the extent that nothing of it remains but is, will He increase them or cut them off from it (the fruit of the Garden)?"

"Rather, He increases them," replied Sulayma'n.

The Imam disproved his statement, saying: "From your statement I see that He increases them what is not in His knowledge that it will be."

Sulayma'n said: "May I be your ransom, the willing has no limit."

The Imam continued disproving Sulayma'n's vague errors, saying: "In your view, is that His knowledge does not encompass what therein (in the Garden) if He does not know the limit of that (which is in the Garden). If His knowledge does not encompass what therein, He does not know what is therein before it is. Allah, the Great and Almighty, is High above that!"

Sulayma'n began apologizing and putting right his view, saying: "Verily, I said that He did not know that, for it has no limit, and for Allah, the Great and Almighty, described them (the people of the Garden) with everlastingness, and we hated to make cessation for them."

The Imam went on refuting his vague errors and his descriptions, saying: "His knowledge of that does not bring about His cutting them from it, for He may know that; then He increase them; then He does not cut them off from it. This is what Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said in His Book: ***So oft as their skins are thoroughly burned, We will change them for other skins, that they may taste the chastisement***.[5] And He said to the people of the Garden: ***A gift which shall never be cut off***.[6] And He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***And abundant fruit, neither intercepted nor forbidden***.[7] Therefore, He, the Great and Almighty, knows that, so He does not cut them off from increase. Have you seen that He renews what the people of the Garden eat and drink?"

"Yes," was the answer.

“Does He cut them (the people of the Garden) off from it (fruit), while He puts (another) in the place of it?” asked the Imam.

“No,” was the answer.

The Imam, peace be on him, continued establishing his beliefs, saying: “If He puts (another) in the place of it, then it (the fruit) is everlasting; therefore they are not cut off from it.”

Sulayma’n went on clinging to vague errors and imaginations which the Imam had already disproved through undeniable proofs, saying:

“Yes, He cuts them off from it and does not increase them.”

The Imam opposed that and confuted it with these words of him: “Therefore, He destroys (them) therein. This (statement), Sulayma’n, cancels everlastingness and opposes the Book, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: ***They have therein whatever they wish and with Us is more yet***.[8] And He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***A gift which shall never be cut off***.[9] And He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***Nor shall they be ever ejected from it*** (the Garden).[10] And He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***Abiding therein forever***.[11] And He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***And abundant fruit, neither intercepted nor forbidden***.”

Sulayma’n was silent, not knowing what to answer after the Imam had closed before him all avenues of argument. Then the Imam asked him: “Sulayma’n, tell me about will: Is it an action or not?”

“Rather, it is an action,” replied Sulayma’n.

“Therefore, it is originated, for all actions are originated,” declared the Imam.

All possible beings are effects, made, and originated. As for the Necessary Being, the Most High, it is impossible for Him to have the qualities of the possible being. Sulayma’n was unable to say anything and began contradicting himself, saying:

“It (i.e. will) is not an action.”

As for Sulayma’n, he had already admitted that it was an action. As a result, the Imam turned to him and asked him: “Is there anyone besides Him who, too, is eternal?”

Sulayma’n dodged and did not answer the Imam’s question, saying: “Will is the brining forth.”

The Imam answered: “This is the thing because of which you criticized Dira’r[12] and his companions, saying that everything Allah, the Great and Almighty, has created in heaven or earth, ocean or land such as dog or pig, monkey, human or an animal is Allah’s will, and that Allah’s will lives, dies, goes away, eats, drinks, marries, feels pleasure, wrongs, commits immoral acts, disbelieves, becomes a polytheist, so He renounces it and repeats Himself through it, and this is its bound.”

The Imam, peace be on him, demonstrated Dira'r's corrupt viewpoints which Sulayma'n and his companions had criticized. He refuted all these corrupt viewpoints before Sulayma'n, but the latter did not understand the Imam's statement and said: "It (i.e. will) is like hearing, seeing, and knowledge."

Sulayma'n repeated what he had already said that will was like hearing and seeing. The Imam had already confuted this corrupt statement, yet he, peace be on him, asked him: "Tell me: Are hearing, seeing, and knowledge made?"

"No," was the answer.

The Imam criticized Sulayma'n for his contradictory statement, saying: "How did you negate Him? You sometimes said that He did not will and sometimes you said that He willed, and that it (i.e. will) was not one of His actions."

Sulayma'n said at random: "Surely, that is like our statement: He sometimes knows and sometimes does not know!"

The Imam answered with inclusive proof, saying: "That is not the same, for negating the known is not like negating knowledge; negating what is willed is (not like) negating will, for if the thing is not willed, there will be no will. Knowledge may be established even if the known is not like seeing. Man may be knowing even though he is not the one who enlightens (others). Knowledge may be established even if it is not the known."

Sulayma'n answered: "It (i.e. will) is made."

The Imam invalidated Sulayma'n's statement, saying: "Therefore, it (will) is originated and is not like hearing and seeing, for hearing and seeing are not made, and this is made."

Sulayma'n said: "It (will) is one of His eternal attributes."

The Imam answered him, saying: "Therefore man must be eternal, for his quality is eternal."

Sulayma'n began dodging in his speech and said: "No, because He did not do it (will).

As a result, the Imam criticized him for that and said: "Khurasa'ni, what numerous your errors are! Are things not according to His will?"

Sulayma'n insisted on his error, saying: "No."

The Imam answered him: "If things are not according to His will nor His desire nor His command nor His practice, then how are they? High is Allah above that!"

Sulayma'n became perplexed. He was unable to say anything. Then the Imam continued confuting Sulayma'n's vague errors and imaginations, asking him: "Will you not tell me about these words of Him,

the Great and Almighty: *And when We wish to destroy a town, We send Our commandment to the people of it who lead easy lives, but they transgress therein*?[13] Does He not mean by that that He creates His own will?"

"Yes," Sulayma'n retorted.

The Imam answered him: "If He creates His own will, then your statement is that will is He or a futile thing of Him, for it is not (possible) for Him to create Himself and does not change His state. Exalted is Allah above that."

Sulayma'n opposed (the Imam), saying: "By that He does not mean that He creates His own will?"

"So what does He mean?" asked the Imam.

"He means doing a thing," was the answer.

The Imam rebuked him, saying: "Woe unto you! How many times have you repeated this matter? I told you that will is created, for the action of a thing is originated."

"Therefore will has no sense," declared Sulayma'n.

"Do you think that He describes Himself with will which has no sense? If will has no old or new meaning, then your statement, 'Allah, the Great and Almighty, has always been willing' is groundless."

Sulayma'n began clinging to vague errors, saying: "I mean that will is one of Allah's eternal actions."

The Imam answered him, saying: "Do you not know that thing is not done and eternal and new at the same time?"

Sulayma'n became perplexed after the Imam had disproved all his vague errors and made clear for him that every possible thing was created and not eternal, and that the will of Allah was not like the qualities of the possible being.

The Imam continued establishing his proofs against Sulayma'n, saying: "There is no harm on you. Complete your questions."

"Will is one of His attributes," declared Sulayma'n.

The Imam criticized him for repeating this statement, saying: "How many times have you said that it is one of His attributes? Is His will originated, or has it always been so?"

"Originated," was the answer.

The Imam said: "*Alla'hu Akbar!* You are telling me that His attribute is originated. Had it been one of His attributes, an eternal one, then He willed nothing, for the thing which has always been so is not done."

Sulayma'n began contradicting himself, saying: "Things are not a will, and He did not will anything."

The Imam answered him, saying: "You have hissed, O Sulayma'n! He did and created as long as His will and His creation are eternal! This is the attribute of someone who does not know what he is doing. Exalted is Allah above all of that."

Again Sulayma'n contradicted himself and said: "Master, I have already informed you that will is like hearing, seeing, and knowing."

As a result, al-Ma'mu'n shouted at Sulayma'n, saying: "Woe unto you, Sulayma'n! How you have erred and how often you have repeated yourself? Stop it and take another (matter), for you seem to be unable to provide any answer better than that."

The Imam turned to al-Ma'mu'n and said to him: "Leave him, Commander of the faithful. Don't interrupt his questions, for he will regard it as an argument (against me)."

Then the Imam looked at Sulayma'n and said to him: "Speak, Sulayma'n."

Sulayma'n continued saying: "I have already informed you that will is like hearing, seeing, and knowing."

The Imam replied to him: "There is no harm, tell me about the meaning of this. Is it one meaning or different meanings?"

"One meaning," came the answer.

"Is the meaning of will one?" asked the Imam.

"Yes," was the answer.

The Imam answered him with an irrefutable answer, saying: "If its meaning is one, then it will be the will of standing, sitting, life, and death. If His will is one, parts of which do not go ahead parts, and parts of which do not oppose parts."

Sulayma'n replied, saying: "Surely, its meaning is different."

The Imam understood that Sulayma'n was uncertain, so he asked him: "Tell me about the willing: Is He the will or other than it?"

"Rather, He is the will," replied Sulayma'n.

The Imam answered him: "In your view, is the willing different when He is the will."

"Master, the will is not the willing," explained Sulayma'n.

Yet the Imam understood that Sulayma'n was not sure, so he said to him: "Will is originated; otherwise

there is (something) other than Him along with Him."

"Will is one of His names," said Sulayma'n.

"Did He name Himself with that?" asked the Imam.

"No," replied Sulayma'n, "He did not name Himself with that."

"Therefore, you have no right to name Him with what He did not name Himself," said the Imam.

Sulayma'n dodged and said: "He described Himself that He was willing."

The Imam said: "His attribute is not His selfness. That He is willing is telling of that He is will and is not telling of that will is one of His names."

"That is because His will is His knowledge," declared Sulayma'n.

The Imam asked: "If He knows thing, does He lose (His) will."

"Yes," was the answer.

"If He does not will thing, does He not know it?" asked the Imam.

"Yes," replied Sulayma'n.

The Imam began explaining Sulayma'n's corrupt views, saying: "From where did you say that? What is the evidence for that His will is His knowledge? He may know what He does not will by no means, and that is these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *And if We will, We should certainly take way that which We have revealed to you*.[14] Therefore, He knows how He takes it away, but He never takes it away."

Sulayma'n said: "That is because He finished the affair, so He did not increase anything therein."

The Imam replied, saying: "This is the statement of the Jews. So why did He, the Exalted, say: *Call upon Me, I will answer you*.[15]"

As for Sulayma'n, he denied that and said: "By that He meant that He had power over it."

The Imam asked him: "Does He promise what He does not fulfill? Why did He say: *He increases in creation what He wills*?[16] And He, the Great and Almighty, said: *Allah makes to pass away and establishes what He wills* [17], while He finished this matter."

Sulayma'n became perplexed after the Imam had closed before all avenues of argument. Wherever he went, the Imam faced him with an irrefutable argument and inclusive proof in order to invalidate his viewpoints. Then the Imam, peace be on him, continued confuting Sulayma'n's vague errors, saying:

“Sulayma’n, did He know that a human being would be and He did not will to create a human being by no means? That a human being will die today and He will not make him die today?”

“Yes,” retorted Sulayma’n.

The Imam hastened to refute these contradictory words of Sulayma’n, asking: “Does He know that what He wills exists or does He know what He will not exists?”

Sulayma’n opposed the Imam, saying: “He knows that both of them exist.”

The Imam answered him according to his contradictory statement, saying: “Therefore, He knows that man is living and dead, standing and sitting, blind and seeing at the same time. This is impossible.”

Sulayma’n began saying more contradictory statements regarding the questions of the Imam, saying: “May I be your ransom, He knows that one of them exists.”

The Imam said: “There is no harm (on you), which of them exists the one which He wills to be or the one which He wills not to be?”

Sulayma’n began saying at random, not knowing what to say, and not knowing his contradictory statements: “He wills what He wills to be!”

The people including al-Ma’mu’n burst into laughter. As for Imam al-Ridha’, he smiled at Sulayma’n and said to him: “You have erred and left your statement: He knows that a person will die today and He does not will to make him die today, that He wills to create creatures and He will not to create them. If your knowledge is not enough (to understand) what He wills not to be, then He knows only what He wills to be.”

Sulayma’n tried to correct his statement, saying: “My statement is that will is neither He nor a thing other than Him!”

The Imam indicated Sulayma’n’s contradiction, saying: “If you say that will is not He, then you have regarded it as (something) other than him. If you say that will is not (a thing) other than Him, then you have regarded it as Him.”

Sulayma’n asked: “Does Allah know how He creates thing?”

“Yes,” replied the Imam.

“Surely, this establishes thing.”

The Imam answered him with a wise answer, saying: “You have said something impossible. That is because man may build a wall even if he does not build, sew even though he does not sew, make thing well despite he does not make it. Sulayma’n, do you know that He is One without anything with Him?”

“Yes,” was the answer.

“Does this establish thing?”

As for Sulayma’n, he denied what he said previously, saying: “He does not know that He is One without anything with Him.”

“Do you know that?” asked the Imam.

“Yes,” came the answer.

“Therefore, You, Sulayma’n, more knowledgeable than Him!”

“The matter is impossible,” declared Sulayma’n.

The Imam asked him: “Is it impossible in your view that He is One without anything with Him, that He is All-hearing, All-seeing, All-wise, All-powerful...?”

“Yes,” was the answer.

The Imam answered with a wise answer, saying: “How did He, the Great and Almighty, say that He was One, All-living, All-hearing, All-seeing, All-wise, All-powerful, All-knowing, All-aware, while He did not know that and His being accused of lying? Exalted is Allah above that.”

The Imam added, saying: “How does He will to create that which He does not know how to create and what it is? If creator does not know how to create thing before he creates it, then he is perplexed. Exalted is Allah above that, a great exaltation!”

Sulayma’n said at random: “Will is power.”

The Imam replied: “He, the Great and Almighty, always has power over what He will. There is no escape from that, for He, the Blessed and Exalted, said: *And if We will, We should certainly take away that which We have revealed to you*. If will is power, He wills take it away because of His power.”

Feebleness appeared on Sulayma’n’s face, and he stood perplexed before this Ocean of knowledge and merit. As a result, he kept silent. Al-Ma’mu’n turned to him and praised the Imam’s talents saying: “Sulayma’n, this is the most learned of the Ha’shimites!”

This debate contains very important theological researches which show that the Imam has great scientific abilities which demonstrates the beliefs of the Imami Shi‘ites, who maintain that the Imam should be the most learned of the people of his time. This debate aborted the attempt of al-Ma’mu’n, who intended to render the Imam incapable of answering even one question, that he might use his incapability as means to defame the beliefs of the Shi‘ites concerning the Imam. Shaykh al-Sadu’q, may Allah make shine his grave, has commented on this debate, saying: “Al-Ma’mu’n brought to Imam al-

Ridha' the theologians of the sects and misleading inclinations in order to disable him through one of them. That is because of his envy toward him and his scientific position. All those who debated with him (al-Ridha') on theology acknowledged his merit and his arguments against them. That is because Allah, may His name be blessed, refuses (everything) except raising His word, completing His light, and making shine His proof. In this manner He, the Blessed and Exalted, promised in His Book, saying: *Most surely We help our apostles and those who believe in this world's life*.[18] By *who believe* He means the leading Imams and their followers who know them and learn from them through helping them with argument against those who oppose them as long as they live in the world. In this manner He will behave toward them in the next world. Surely, Allah, the Great and Almighty, does not break promise.[19]"

The Imam debates with Abu' Qurra

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, disproved the vague errors which were raised about Islam. Abu' Qurra headed for Khurasa'n in order to examine the Imam, peace be on him. He asked Safwa'n b. Yahya', a close associate of the Imam, to ask the Imam for permission to come in to him. The Imam gave him permission. When Abu' Qurra was honored by standing before him, he asked him about things concerned the lawful, the unlawful, religious duties, and (Islamic) precepts, and he answered them. Then he asked him about some matters concerned the Oneness of Allah, which are as follows:

Question 1: "Tell me, may Allah make me your ransom, about the words of Allah to Musa' (Moses)."

Answers 1: "Allah knows better with which language He spoke to him, in Assyrian or in Hebrew."

Abu' Qurra took out his tongue and said: "I am asking you about this tongue. The meaning of that: Did He speak to him with a tongue like that of man?"

The Imam disproved Abu' Qurra''s vague error, saying: "Glory belongs to Allah! He is free from the things you are ascribing to Him! I seek refuge in Allah! He is not like His creatures nor does He speak in the same manner in which they speak. However, there is nothing like Him, the Blessed and Exalted; nor there are speakers and doers like him."

"How is that?" asked Abu' Qurra.

He, peace be on him, said: "The speech of the Creator to the creature is not like the speech of a creature to a creature. He (Allah) does not speak through the opening of a mouth and a tongue. However, He says (to the thing): "Be." The command and prohibition through which He addressed Musa' was with His will without any hesitation in (His) heart."

The speech of Allah, the Exalted, is not through the organ (i.e. the tongue) just as the speech of man, for it is impossible for Him to speak with tongue. There is nothing like him.

Question 2: "What is your view of the Books?"

Answer 2: “The Torah, the Bible, the Zabu’r (David’s Psalms), the Qur’an, and all the revealed Books are the words of Allah. He sent them down to men as light and guidance. All of them are originated and are other than Allah, Who says: ***Or that He may produce a reminder for them.***[20] And He says: ***There comes not to them a new reminder from their Lord but they hear it while they sport.***[21] Allah originated all the Books which He sent down.”

Question 3: “Will the Books perish?”

Answer 3: “The Muslims have unanimously agreed that all things except Allah will perish. (Everything) other than Allah is the action of Allah. As for the Torah, the Bible, the Zabu’r (David’s Psalms), the Qur’an, are the action of Allah. Do you not hear that the people say: ‘The Lord of the Qur’an,’ that the Qur’an will say on the Day of Resurrection: ‘My Lord, I made so-and-so thirst by day and sleepless by night, so accept my intercession for him.’ As for the Torah, the Bible, and the Zabu’r, they are also created and have Lord. They were originated by Him whom nothing resembles. They are guidance for those who have minds. As a result, he who claims that they are as eternal as He is, then he manifests: Allah is not the first, not eternal, not one, speech as eternal as He is and has no beginning, and He is not Allah.”

Question 4: “We have been told that all the Books will come on the Day of Resurrection while men are on one level standing for the Lord of the worlds and looking until they (the Books) return into Him, for they are part of Him and He is part of Him; therefore, the come to Him?”

Answer 4: “In this manner the Christians said that al-Masih (i.e. Jesus Christ) was the Spirit of Allah, part of Him, and would return into him. In this manner the Magians said that the fire and the sun were part of Him and would return into him. Exalted is our Lord above that He is parted and different. It is the parted which is different and harmonious. That is because every parted thing is imagined. As for plenty and smallness, they are created and demonstrate the creation of their Creator.”

Question 5: “We have been told that Allah divided ocular vision and (His) speech between two prophets. He gave His speech to Musa’, and His vision to Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family?”

Answer 5: “Who brought the message from Allah to the *thaqalayn* (i.e. the jinn and men): the eyes attain Him not; they comprehend Him not in knowledge; there is nothing like Him? Wasn’t Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, (who brought these beliefs?)”

“Yes,” was the answer.

The Imam, peace be on him, made clear the matter to him and explained to him what was vague, saying: “How does a man come to all creatures and tells them that he has come from Allah, that he summons them to Allah through Allah’s command and says: ‘The eyes attain Him not; they comprehend Him not in knowledge; and there is nothing like Him.’ And in spite of all that, he should still claim, ‘I have seen Allah with my own eye; I have comprehended Him in my knowledge; and Allah has the form of a

man?' Do you not feel any shame? Even the unbelievers could not charge the Prophet with first bringing one thing from Allah and then, in a different way, announcing some other thing quite contrary to the first."

Question 6: "He (Allah) says: ***And indeed he*** (***the Prophet***) ***saw Him in another descent***?[22]"

Answer 6: "After this verse there is another verse which demonstrates what the Prophet had seen, and in which Allah says: ***His heart does not lie of what he saw***. Allah says that the heart of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, did not belie of what his eyes did see. He says: ***Indeed he*** (***the Prophet***) ***saw one of the greatest signs of his Lord***. Therefore the signs of Allah are other than Allah. He says: ***They do not comprehend Him in knowledge***.[23] Now, if eyes could see Allah, then people could comprehend Him in knowledge."

Question 7: "Do you deny the traditions?"

Answer 7: "When the traditions are contrary to the Qur'an, I deny them. (Besides) all Muslims unanimously believe that Allah cannot be comprehended by knowledge, that the eyes do not attain Him, and that there is nothing like Him."

The Imam, peace be on him, appointed a measure for the correctness and incorrectness of the traditions. The measure is that if the tradition agrees with the Qur'an (in meaning), then it is correct; otherwise it is incorrect.

Question 8: "What is the meaning of these words of Him, the Exalted? ***Glory belongs to Him Who made His servant go on a night from the Sacred Mosque to the remote mosque of which We have blessed the precincts***.[24]"

Answer 8: "Allah, the Exalted, told that He made him go, and then He (i.e. Allah) told (us) why He made him go namely Allah told (us) about the reason for this travel by night, saying: ***So that We may show to him some of Our signs***.[25] Therefore, the signs of Allah are other than Allah. Allah has shown the reason and explained why He did that toward him and what he (the Prophet) did see. And He said: ***Then in what announcement would they believe after Allah and His communications***?[26]"

Question 8: "Where is Allah?"

Answer 8: "The 'where' is a place. This is the question of one who is present about one who is absent. As for Allah, the Most High, is not absent; nor was there an eternal thing before Him. He is everywhere. He is Director, Creator, Keeper, the Holder of the heavens and the earth."

Question 9: "Is Allah not on the heaven, not on other than it?"

Answer 9: "Allah is in the heavens and in earth. *And it is He Who in heaven is Allah and in earth is Allah*. *It is He Who shapes you in the wombs as He likes*. He is with you wherever you are. *It is He Who*

directed Himself to the heaven, and it was a vapor. It is He Who directed Himself to the heaven, so He made them seven complete heavens. It is He Who sat Himself upon the throne (of authority). He was while there was no creation. He was just as He was when there was no creation. He does not move with those who move."

Question 10: "Why do you raise your hands toward the heaven when you pray?"

Answer 10: "Surely, Allah has enslaved His creatures with kinds of acts of worship. There are places of flight to Allah, so they flee to Him and are enslaved. He has enslaved His servants through words, knowledge, action, guidance, and the like. He has enslaved them through directing the prayer toward the Ka'ba. He has also directed toward it the *hajj* and the *Omra*. He has enslaved His creatures during the supplication and request. As for imploring through stretching out the hands and raising them toward the heaven, it (shows) the state of submission (to Allah) and the mark of exclusive devotion and servility to Him."

Question 11: "Who are nearer to Allah the angels or the inhabitants of the earth?"

Answer 11: "If you mean the span of the hand and the arm, then all things are the same (for Him) and are His action. He does not busy Himself with some of them (and leaves the rest). He directs the highest of the creatures and the lowest of them. He directs the first of them and the last of them without any trouble, toilsomeness, burden, consultation, and fatigue. If you mean that which of them is nearer to Him due to means, then the most obedient to Him. You know that the servant is close to Allah when he prostates himself in prayer. You know that four angels met. One of them was from the highest creatures, one of them was from the lowest creatures, one of them was from the east of the creatures, and one of them was from the west of the creatures. They asked each other. All of them said: '(We have come) from Allah. He has sent me with so-and-so. This is evidence for that (nearness to Allah) is in position without comparison and resemblance."

Question 12: "Do you admit that Allah is (in the state of) being carried?"

Answer 12: "Everything carried is (passive) i.e., acted upon by someone else, and is indeed (of others). The word 'carried' in itself connotes deficiency and need. On the other hand the carrier is (active) i.e., the one who acts. The word 'carrier' signifies analogy within itself, just as the word above, below, the very high and very low are generally used by speakers. Allah has also said: 'And to Allah (alone) belongs (all) the most beautiful names, so call him by them.'[27] And He has never said in His Book that He has been carried. Rather He has said that He carries on land and at sea. And it is He Who holds the heavens and earth lest they remove. And everything which is carried is always apart from Allah. It has never been heard that anyone who believes in Allah and His Majesty called Him (Allah): 'O the carried!'"

Question 13: "Do you deny the tradition narrated (to us) which says: 'Verily when Allah becomes angry His wrath is known through (the increased) weight (which the angels feel) on their shoulders while carrying the Throne. (At that moment) the angels prostrate themselves (in prayer). When (Allah's) wrath

subsides, the weight of the Throne lightens, and the angels return to their former positions?"

Answer 13: "Tell me, whether Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has or has not become wrathful ever since He cursed Iblis (Satan), and (tell me) when he became pleased with Iblis, his friends and followers."

Abu' Qurra confirmed the Imam's statement, saying: "Yes, He is wrathful with him."

The Imam opposed him, saying: "Woe unto you! How do you dare to associate with Allah the attribute of changing from state to state? And how do you dare to apply to Him (the Creator) what is applicable to the created while Allah is glorified and far above this? Allah does not perish along with the things which perish; nor does he alter along with things which alter."

Abu' Qurrah was astonished, was unable to answer, and escaped from the session while he was defeated. He was angry with the Imam and harbored malice against him.

His debate with the Catholic

Al-Ma'mu'n took other measures to examine the Imam, that he might be successful through defeating him (in one session). He ordered his minister al-Fadl b. SAhl to summon the prominent theologians from among the rhetoricians and the religions such as the Catholic Archbishop, the High Rabbi, the Hindu High Priest, followers of Zoroaster28, Nestus the Roman medical scientist, and the rest of the theologians. Al-Fadl gathered them in al-Ma'mu'n's palace, and then he made them come in to him. Al-Ma'mu'n received them with hospitality and honor. Then he presented before them what he intended, saying: "I have gathered you for (something) good and wanted you to debate with my Medinan cousin, who will come to me. Come to me tomorrow, morning. None of you should be absent."

"We listen and obey you," they answered him.

Al-Ma'mu'n ordered Ya'sir, the retainer, to summon the Imam to debate with the scholars of the religions. Ya'sir hurried to the Imam and informed him of al-Ma'mu'n's statement. As for the Imam, he responded to that, then he turned to al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Nawfali and said to him: "Nawfali, you are an Iraqi, and the heart of an Iraqi is not severe; so, what can you gain from causing your cousin to require us to meet with the polytheists and rhetoricians?"

Al-Nawfali understood al-Ma'mu'n's intention, so he said to the Imam: "May I be your ransom, he wants to put you to test, and he loves to know how much knowledge you have. He has, indeed, built his assumption on a shaky foundation, and evil, by Allah, is what he has built."

"And what has he built?" asked the Imam.

Al-Nawfali explained to the Imam what he was wary of and feared for him from them, saying: "The theologians and the heretics are the opponents of the scholars. That is because a scholar does not deny

the undeniable, whereas rhetoricians, theologians, and polytheists are people who deny and try to prove what is not true. If you argue with them and tell them that Allah is One, they would say: 'Prove His Oneness,' and if you say that Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is the Messenger of Allah, they would say: 'Confirm his Message,' then they would press their lies on a person while he tries to disprove their lies, and they would continue to prove that he is mistaken till he abandons his argument; so, beware of them, may I be your ransom."

Al-Nawfali expressed his fears of those with whom the Imam would debate, for they would not intend to reach the reality and to know the truth; they would depend on fallacies in order to achieve their cheap objectives.

The Imam removed al-Nawfali's fears, saying: "Nawfali, do you fear that they will disprove my argument?"

"No, by Allah," replied al-Nawfali, "I have never worried about you, and I hope that Allah will enable to have victory over them, Allah willing!"

"Would you like to know when al-Ma'mu'n will feel remorseful?" asked the Imam.

"Yes," al-Nawfali replied.

The Imam explained: "When he (al-Ma'mu'n) hears me argue with the people of the Torah quoting their own Torah, with the people of the Gospel quoting their own Gospel, with the people of the Psalms quoting their own Psalms, with the Zoroastrians arguing in their Persian language, with the Romans in their own Latin, and with the rhetoricians using their very rhetoric. So, if I closed the avenues of argument in the face of each arguing party and disproved his claim, making him renounce his statement from its onset and referring to my own statement, then al-Ma'mu'n will realize that he will not achieve what he aspires. It is then that he will feel regretful. And there is no strength save in Allah, the Most High, the Almighty."

Through these words the Imam, peace be on him, announced that he had boundless scientific abilities and that he was able to argue with all the people of the religions and beliefs, to refute their imaginations, and to show them the way to the truth. He decided to make al-Ma'mu'n feel remorseful over those measures he took against him.

On the following day, al-Fadl b. SAhl went in a hurry to the Imam, peace be on him, and said to him: "May I be your ransom, your cousin (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) is waiting for you. The people has gathered. What is your view of going to him?"

The Imam answered him that he was ready to attend (the session) and that he was going to al-Ma'mu'n. He went out (walking) with solemnity toward which faces were humble. He remembered Allah and came in to al-Ma'mu'n. The session was attended by the Ta'libiyyin, the Ha'shimites, the military commanders,

Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. When the Imam came, al-Ma'mu'n and all those who were in the session stood up for him, received him with honor and magnification. The Imam sat while the people were still standing in order to show respect for him. A-Ma'mu'n ordered them to sit and they sat down. All the people in the session kept silent as a sign of respect for the Imam, and then al-Ma'mu'n turned to the Catholic Archbishop and said to him: "Catholic, this is my cousin 'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far. He is on of the children of F'a'tima, daughter of our Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and of 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him. I would like you to debate with him on theology, argue with him, and show justice toward him.

"Commander of the faithful, how can I argue with a man who argue with me through a Book which we have denied and a Prophet whom I do not believe?" asked the Catholic.

The Catholic thought that the Imam, peace be on him, would produce evidence in support of his beliefs through some verses of the Holy Qur'an or through some words of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. As he had no faith in the Qur'anic verses and the Prophetic traditions, he asked the Imam to give proof of his beliefs from their own Books, and the Imam answered him saying: "Christian, if I give proof from your Gospel, will you admit it?"

"Yes," retorted the Catholic, "By Allah, I will admit it. Can I repel what the Bible speaks about?"

"Question (me) whatever you desire and hear (my) answers," declared the Imam.

Question 1: "What is your view of the Prophethood of 'Isa' (Jesus Christ) and his Book? Do you deny anything of them?"

Answer 1: "I admit the Prophethood of 'Isa' (Jesus Christ) and his Book, of what he brought good news to his community, and the disciples admitted it. He who does not admit the Prophethood of Muhammad and His Book and does not bring good news of them to his community denies the Prophethood of 'Isa'."

"Aren't precepts proved through two just witnesses?" asked the Catholic.

"Yes," replied the Imam.

"Therefore, name two witnesses from other than the people of your religion and from among those whom the Christians do not deny, that they might (confirm) the Prophethood of Muhammad. And ask us for the like of that from among other than the people of our religion," demanded the Catholic.

The Imam believed his statement, for he brought justice, saying: "Now, you have brought justice. Do you not accept from me the just one who was given preference (over the others) by al-Masih b. Maryam (Jesus, son of Mary)?"

"Who is the just one? Name him for me," asked the Catholic.

“What is your view of Yohanna’ al-Daylami?” asked the Imam.

“Bravo! Bravo!” retorted the Catholic, “You have mentioned the most lovable of the people to al-Masih.”

Imam al-Ridha’, the Prophet’s grandson, asked him: “I challenge you to swear (by Allah), does the Bible say that Yohanna’ says: Verily al-Masih has told me of the religion of Muhammad, the Arab, given me good news of him, he will be (a prophet) after him, so I (Yohanna al-Daylami) gave good news of him to the disciples and they believed him.”

The Catholic was unable to deny the Imam’s statement, but he said: “Yohanna’ did not name him for us, that we may recognize him.”

The Imam asked him: “If we bring you someone who recites the Bible and recites to you Muhammad’s name, his Household, and his community, then will you believe him?”

“A sound suggestion,” the Catholic answered.

The Imam turned to Nestus, the Roman, and asked Him: “Have you memorized the third Book of the Bible?”

“I have thoroughly memorized it,” was the answer.

The Imam, peace be on him, addressed the Catholic, saying: “Don’t you recite the Bible?”

“Yes,” he said.

The Imam said: “Therefore (I will) recite to you (some verses from) the third Book. If Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, his Household, and his community has been mentioned in it, then bear witness to me? If they have not been mentioned wherein, then do not bear witness to me.”

The Imam recited to him some verses from the third Book. When he reached the reference to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, he turned to the Catholic and asked him: “I challenge you to swear by al-Masih and his mother, did you know that I had knowledge of the Bible?”

“Yes,” came the answer.

The Imam recited to him some verses from the third Book concerning the reference to the Prophet, his Household, and his community. Then he asked him: “What is your view? This is the statement of ‘Isa’ b. Maryam. If you deny what the Bible says, then you will deny Musa’ and ‘Isa’. If you deny them, then it is obligatory (on people) to kill you, for you have denied your Lord, your Prophet, and your Book.”

The Catholic said: “I do not deny the clear things in the Bible; rather I admit them.”

The Imam turned to those who were present and asked them to remind the Catholic of his own words,

and then he said to the Catholic: “Catholic, question me whatever you desire.”

Question 2: “Tell me about the disciples of ‘Isa’ b. Maryam: How many were they? (Tell me) about the scholars of the Bible: How many were they?” the Catholic asked.

Answer 2: “You have found the expert! As for (the number of) the disciples, they were twelve men. The best and the most learned of them was loqa’. As for (the number of) the scholars of the Christians, it was three men: Yohnna’, the greatest–Ya’hi–, Yohanna’ (Baqriqisiya), and Yohanna’ al–Daylami (Bazikha’r), who had the reference to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and his Household; it is he who gave good news to the community of ‘Isa’ and the children of Isra”il of him (the Prophet).”

The Imam added, saying: “By Allah, we believe in ‘Isa’ who believed in Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. We have nothing against ‘Isa’ except his weakness and the paucity of his fasting and prayer.”

When the Catholic heard the last words of the Imam’s statement, he shouted: “By Allah, you have corrupted your knowledge! Your affair has become weak! I thought that you were the most learned of the Muslims!”

The Imam faced him calmly, asking: “Why?”

The Catholic lost his mind, so he began saying: “Because of your statement (which is) that ‘Isa’ was weak with little fasting and praying, (while) ‘Isa’ never broke fasting by day and never slept by night. He always fasted by day and prayed by night.”

The Imam got ready to disprove the Christian belief which said that al–Masih was a god other than Allah and was served! He asked the Catholic: “For whom did he (al–Masih) fast and pray?”

The Catholic did not answer, not knowing what to say. So the Imam turned to him, saying : “I want to ask you a question.”

“Ask,” said the Catholic, “I will answer you if I have knowledge of it.”

“Did you not deny that ‘Isa’ gave life to the dead with Allah’s permission?” asked the Imam.

“I had denied that before,” the Catholic answered, “he who gives life to the dead, heals the blind and the leprous is a lord worthy of being served.”

The Imam disproved his statement, saying: “Indeed al–Yasa‘ did just as ‘Isa’, peace be on him, did: he walked on the water, gave life to the dead, healed the blind and the leprous. Why did his community not adopt him as a lord? Why did not anyone serve him (as a god) other than Allah? He gave life to thirty–five men sixty years after their death. Catholic, you find in the Torah that these (men) were among the youths of the children of Isra”il whom Bukht Nasr (Nebuchadnezzar) chose from among the children of

Isra"il when he invaded Jerusalem, that he took them and headed for Babylon, and that Allah, the Great and Almighty, dispatched al-Yasa' for them and he gave life to them. This (statement) is in the Torah. None denies it except an unbeliever."

The Catholic admired the Imam's knowledge of their Books, and then he said: "We have heard of it and recognized it."

The Imam turned to a Jew who was in the session and asked him to recite some verses of the Torah and he recited them, and there was in them a reference to some prophets. Then the Imam turned to the Catholic and asked him: "Were these (prophets) before 'Isa or was he before them?"

"Rather they were before him," was the answer.

The Imam began reciting to them some miracles of his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, the last of the prophets, saying: "Quraysh gathered around Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and asked him to give life to their dead. He sent with them 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib and said to him: 'Go to the cemetery and call out at the top of you voice to the people about whom they have asked: So-and-so, so-and-so, Muhammad Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, say to you: Rise with the permission of Allah, the Great and Almighty! They rose and dusted off their heads. Quraysh walked toward them and asked them about their affairs, and then they told them that Muhammad was appointed as a prophet. They (the people who rose from the dead) said: 'We would that we knew him and believed in him!' He (the Prophet) healed the blind, the leprous, and the mad. The beasts, the birds, the jinn, and Satan spoke to him, but we did not adopt him as a lord other than Allah. We do not deny the favor of any of these (prophets). If you have adopted 'Isa' as a lord, then it is permissible for you to adopt al-Yasa' and Hizqal as two lords, for they did just as 'Isa' b. Maryam did such as giving life to the dead. Then a group of the children of Isra"il left their own homeland in thousands out of fear of death of plague. Allah made them die within one hour. The people of the village fenced them, and they remained wherein until their bones became decayed. One of the prophets of the children of Isra"il passed by them; he was amazed when he saw their many decayed bones. Allah revealed to him: 'Would you like (Me) to bring them to life and you warn them?'

" 'Yes,' was the answer.

"Allah revealed to him that he should call them out, and he said: 'Decayed bones, rise with Allah's permission.' All of them rose and dusted off their heads. Then Ibra'him, Allah's bosom friend, took the birds, cut them into pieces, and put each piece on a mountain. He called them out and they came toward him walking. Then Musa' b. 'Umra'n and his seventy companions whom he chose. They went with him to the mountain and said to him: 'You have seen Allah, then make us see Him.'

'I have not seen Him,' he said to them.

They said: '*We will not believe in you until we see Allah manifestly*. The thunderbolt overtook them, and

all of them burnt. Only Musa' remained (alive).'

He (Musa') said: 'My Lord! I chose seventy men from among the children of Isra"il and brought them (to the mountain). Shall I return by myself? How shall my people believe what I will tell them about? If only You willed and perished them along with me before! Shall you perish us due to what the foolish did?

"So Allah, the Great and Almighty, gave life to them after their death. You cannot deny all these things which I have mentioned to you, for the Torah, the Bible, the Zabu'r (David's Psalms) the Furqa'n (Qur'an) have mentioned them. If all those who gave life to the dead, healed the blind, the leprous, and the mad were adopted as lords other than Allah, than you adopt them as lords. What is your view, Christian?"

The Imam criticized the Christians for their adopting al-Sayyid al-Masih as a lord other than Allah, for he gave life to the dead, healed the blind and the leprous, while such miracles happened through the master of the prophets, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and through some great prophets, but they were not adopted and served as lords other than Allah, the Most High.

After the Catholic Archbishop had heard these brilliant words of the Imam, he addressed him, saying: "My view agrees with yours, and there is no god but Allah."

The Imam turned to the High Rabbi and said to him: "Turn to me; I want to ask you about the ten verses which were sent down to Musa' b. 'Umra'n. Have you found written in the Torah the news of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, and his community, (which says): When the last community and the followers of the Rider of the Camel (who) glorify the Lord very, very (much), (with) a new glorification in the new churches (he meant the mosques), then let the children of Isra"il flee toward them and their dominion, that their hearts may be tranquil, for there will in there hands swords with which they will take vengeance on the unbelieving communities in the regions of the earth. In this manner it has been written in the Torah?"

The Rabbi was amazed and began saying: "Yes, we have found that (written) in this manner."

The Imam, peace be on him, turned to the Catholic and asked him: "What about your knowledge of the Book of Sha'ya'?"

"I know it letter for letter," was the answer.

The Imam addressed the Catholic and the Rabbi and said to them: "Do you know that this (statement) is of his speech: O People, I have seen the picture of the Rider of the Donkey. He was wearing the gowns of light. And I have seen that the light of the Rider of the camel is like that of the moon."

They began saying: "Sha'ya' did say that!"

The Imam turned to the Catholic and asked him: "Did you know that 'Isa' said: 'I am going to my Lord

and your Lord, and the *Paraclete* is coming who shall testify to my truth just as I testified for him, and he shall explain everything to you, and he shall be the one to expose all the sins of nations, and he shall be the one to smash the pillar of unbelief.'?"

The Catholic became amazed and said: "We admit all what you have just quoted of the Bible."

Then the Imam made him confess that through the Bible, saying: "Have you found that established in the Bible?"

"Yes," came the answer.

"O Catholic, could you tell me about the first Bible, how you lost then found it, and who put your existing Bible together?" asked the Imam.

The Catholic said at random: "We did not lose the Bible except for one single day then we found it fresh; Yohanna' (John) and Matti (Matthew) brought it back to us."

The Imam answered him, saying: "How little your knowledge of the Bible and its scholars is! If such is your claim, then why do you dispute with each other about the Bible? Rather, controversy has always revolved around the Bible which is in your hands today. Had it been the same as the first one, you would not have thus dispute (with one another) about it, but I shall inform you of such controversy myself: Be informed that when the first Bible was lost, the Christians gathered around their scholars and said to them: ''Isa' b. Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) has been killed, and we do not know where the Bible is. You are the scholars; so, what do you have with you?'

"Aluqa' (Luke), Marqa'nu's (Mark), and Yohanna' (John) said to them: 'We have learned the Bible by heart; so, do not grieve in its regard, and do not forsake the churches, for we shall recite to you one Gospel after another on each Sunday till we put it all together.'"

The Imam added, saying: "Aluqa' (Luke), Marqa'nu's (Mark), Yohanna' (John), and Matti (Matthew) put this Bible of yours after you had lost the first (original) one. These four men were students of the early (disciples); are you aware of that?"

The Catholic admired the Imam and confessed to him that he had no knowledge of that, saying: "This I did not know and now I have learned from you things with which I was familiar and to which my heart testifies to be the truth. I have, therefore, gained a better understanding."

The Imam, peace be on him, turned to al-Ma'mu'n and those who were present from among his family and others than them. He said to them: "Bear witness to what he has just said."

"We testify," they said.

The Imam addressed the Catholic, saying: "I challenge you to swear by the son and his mother whether

you know if Matti (Matthew) had said concerning the lineage of ‘Isa’ : ‘The Messiah is Da’wud (David) son of Ibra’him (Abraham) son of Isha’q (Isaac) son of Ya‘qu’b (Jacob) son of Yahu’d (Yehuda) son of Khadrun, and that Marqa’nus (Mark) said about the lineage of ‘Isa’ that he was the word of Allah which he placed in the human body, so it became human, and that Alu’qa’ (Luke) said that ‘Isa’ b. Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) and his mother were humans of flesh and blood, so the Holy Spirit entered into them.’ Then you testify that ‘Isa’ had himself said the following about his creation: ‘I will tell you the truth: None ascends the heavens except him who descends therefrom except the Rider of the Camel, the seal of the prophets, for he shall ascend to the heavens then shall he descend.’ What do you say about that?”

The Catholic admitted what they said about the Messiah and what the Messiah said concerning his creation. He said: “This is the speech of ‘Isa’, and we do not deny it.”

The Imam said to him: “If so, what do you say about the testimony of Alu’qa’ (Luke), Marqa’nu’s (Mark), and Matti (Matthew) with regard to ‘Isa’ and what they had attributed to him?”

“They lied about him,” was the answer.

The Imam turned to the leaders and the scholars who were present in his session and said to them: “People, has he not (a moment ago) testified to their truthfulness and said that they were the scholars of the Bible and what they said is the truth?”

Defeat appeared on the Catholic’s face, and he asked the Imam not to question him, saying: “Scholar of the Muslims, I would like you to excuse me from discussing these men.”

The Imam excused him, and then he said to him: “Question me whatever you desire.”

The Catholic admired the Imam’s knowledge, which was a natural extension to that of his grandfather, the master of all creatures, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. Then he said to the Imam with submission and admiration: “Let someone other than me ask you. By Allah, I did not think that there was a scholar like you among the Muslims.”

The Catholic bowed his head, and the session shook with saying: “There is no god but Allah! Allah is greater!” Al-Ma’mu’n and the others came to know that Allah had given the Imam to this community as a gift just as He had given his grandfathers to it and supplied them with abundant knowledge.

The Imam debates with the High Rabbi

The High Rabbi represented the Jewish sect in the session which al-Ma’mu’n prepared for testing the Imam.

The Imam asked him: “Shall you question me or shall I question you?”

“Rather I shall question you,” replied the Rabbi, “ and I shall not accept any proof from you except from the Torah, the Bible, Da’wud’s Zabu’r (David’s Psalms), the scriptures of Ibra’him and Musa’.”

The Imam agreed to this condition, saying: “Do not accept any proof from me except what the Torah says by the tongue of Musa’, the Bible by the tongue of ‘Isa’ b. Maryam, and the Zabu’r by the tongue of Da’wud, peace be on them.”

Question 1: “How can you prove the Prophethood of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family?”

Answer 1: “He bore witness to the Prophethood of Musa’ b. ‘Umra’n, ‘Isa’ b. Maryam, and Da’wud, the vicegerent of Allah on earth.”

The Rabbi asked the Imam to prove that, saying: “Provide evidence of the speech of Musa’ b. ‘Umra’n.”

The Imam said: “Did you, Jew, know that Musa’ said to the children of Isra’’il: ‘A prophet will come to you concerning him. Believe in him and hear from him?’ Did you know that the prophet Isra’’il had brothers other than the sons of Isma’‘il? Did you know the kinship between Isra’’il and Isma’‘il and the lineage between them through Ibra’him?”

The Rabbi admitted that, saying: “This is the speech of Musa’, and we do not deny it.”

“Did one of the brothers of the children of Isra’’il other than Muhammad come to you?”

“No,” was the answer.

“Is this not correct in your view?”

“Yes,” replied the Rabbi, “but I want you to make it correct from the Torah.”

The Imam recited to him a verse from the Torah, saying: “Do you deny that the Torah says to you: ‘The light came from Mount Sina’’, shone for the people from Mount Sa‘ir, and became public for us from Mount Fa’ra’n.”

The Rabbi admitted these words (of the Imam), but he asked him to explain them to him, and he, peace be on him, said: “I will tell you bout them. As for his statement: ‘The light came from Mount Sina’’, it is the revelation of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, which He sent down to Musa’ on Mount Sina’’. As for his statement: ‘Shone for the people from Mount Sa‘ir,’ it is the mountain where Allah, the Great and Almighty, revealed to ‘Isa’ b. Maryam. As for his statement: ,Became public for us from Mount Fa’ra’n,’ it is one of the mountains of Mecca, between which and us is a day or two-day-(journey).

“Sha‘ya’, the Prophet, said in the Torah concerning what you and your companions say: ‘I have seen two riders to whom (He) illuminated earth. One of them was on (the back of) a donkey and the other was on (the back of) a camel.’ Who is the Rider of the Donkey, and who is the Rider of the Camel?”

The Rabbi did not know that though it was in the Torah, so he asked the Imam to explain it to him, and he, peace be on him, said: “As for the Rider of the Donkey, he is ‘Isa’; and as for the Rider of the Camel, he is Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. Do you deny that this (statement) is not in the Torah?”

“No, I do not deny it,” came the answer.

“Did you know Habqu’q, the Prophet?” asked the Imam.

“Yes, I know him,” was the answer.

The Imam, peace be on him, recited to him what was narrated on his authority, saying: “He said, and your Book says it: ‘Allah, the Most High, brought the Baya’n from Mount Fa’ra’n; the earth was full of the glorification of Ahmed and his community. He will carry his horses in the sea just as he will carry (them) on the land. He will brought us a new Book (i.e. the Qur’an) after the destruction of Jerusalem. Did you know this (statement) and believe in it?”

The Rabbi admitted that. Then the Imam turned to him and gave to him another proof of the good news which had been mentioned in the Zabu’r about the greatest Messenger, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, saying: “Da’wud said in his Zabu’r, and you read it: ‘O Allah, send him who will establish the Sunna (practice) after the cessation (of the prophets).’ Did you know that a prophet other than Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, established the Sunna after the cessation (of the prophets)?”

The High Rabbi dodged and denied the truth, saying: “This is the speech of Da’wud. We know it and do not deny it. However, he meant ‘Isa’ by that, and the cessation was before him!”

The Imam asked him: “Did you not know that ‘Isa’ endorsed the Sunna (practices) of the Torah until Allah lift him up to Himself. And in the Bible it has been written that Ibn al-Ba’rra (the son of the pious woman, i.e. ‘Isa’) will go, and the *Paraclete* will come after him. It is he who will preserve the bonds, explain everything to you, and testify to my truth just as I testified for him. I have brought you the examples, and he will bring you the interpretations. Do you believe that this (statement) is in the Bible?”

“Yes,” replied the Rabbi, “I do not deny it.”

“I want to question you about your prophet Musa’,” demanded the Imam.

“Question,” was the answer.

“What is the evidence for the Prophethood of Musa’?” asked the Imam.

The Rabbi began producing evidence in support of the Prophethood of Musa’, saying: “He brought what the prophets before him had not brought.”

“Could you give me an example of what he brought?” asked the Imam.

The Rabbi replied: “He split the sea, turned the cane into a snake running, cleaved the stones so that springs gushed forth from them, took out his hand shinning white for the onlookers, and other signs the like of which the creature are unable to bring.”

The Imam confirmed his statement, saying: “You are right; they are proof of his Prophethood. He brought the like of which the creatures were unable to bring. Is it obligatory on you to believe him who claims Prophethood and performs something which all creatures are unable to perform?”

The Jew denied the Imam’s statement, saying: “No, because there is none like Musa’, because of his position with his Lord and his nearness to Him. It is not incumbent on us to profess the Prophethood of him who claims it unless he brings us knowledge similar to that brought by Musa’.”

The Imam disproved the Jew’s statement, saying: “Then how come you admit the prophet of the other prophets who preceded Musa’ who did not split the sea; nor did they cleave the stone so that twelve springs would gush forth from them; nor did they take their hands out shining white as Musa’ did; nor did they turn the rod into a snake running.”

The Jew replied: “I told you that if they performed signs as evidence for their Prophethood all other creation were unable to perform, if they brought something the like of which Musa’ had brought or they followed what Musa’ had brought, then it is incumbent on us to believe them.”

The Imam, peace be on him, disproved his argument, saying: “High Rabbi, what has prevented you from professing (the Prophethood of) ‘Isa’ b. Maryam who brought the dead to life, healed the blind and the leprous, determined out of dust like the form of a bird, then he breathed into it and it became bird with Allah’s permission?”

The Jew dodged and said: “It is said that he did that, but we did not see it.”

The Imam answered him with a conclusive argument, saying: “Did you see the signs which Musa’ performed? Weren’t Musa’’s trustworthy companions who gave an account of that?”

“Yes,” came the answer.

The Imam forced him (to admit that) through a decisive argument, and then he said: “In this manner the successive accounts about what ‘Isa’ b. Maryam had done also came to you. So why do you believe in Musa’ and do not believe in ‘Isa’?”

The High Rabbi kept silent, and feebleness appeared on his face, for the Imam had closed before him all avenues of argument and established a decisive proof against him. The Imam, peace be on him, added: “Such is the matter of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, what he brought, and every prophet whom Allah sent. Among his (Muhammad’s) signs are: He was a poor orphan and wage

shepherd. He did not learn (reading and writing); nor did he studied under a teacher. Then he brought the Qur'an in which are the stories of the prophets, peace be on them, and their accounts letter for letter, and which reports about the bygone (communities) and those who will remain until the Day of Resurrection. Then it gives accounts of their secrets and what they did in their houses; therein are many verses (in this connection)."

The Rabbi interrupted the Imam's speech, saying: "Neither the account about 'Isa' nor the one about Muhammad is correct with us, and it is not permissible to admit (their Prophethood) through what is not correct (with us)."

The Imam, peace be on him, confuted the Jew's speech, saying: "Is the witness who testified 'Isa' and Muhammad false?"

The High Rabbi kept silent and looked for a vague error in order to back his groundless viewpoints.

The Imam debates with the Hindu High Priest

The heads of the creeds failed to render the Imam incapable, and feebleness appeared on their faces. There was none except the Zoroastrian high priest, so the Imam turned to him and asked him: "Tell me about Zoroaster, whom you claim that he is a prophet; what is your evidence for his Prophethood?"

The Hindu high priest said: "We did not see him, but the tales of our ancestors informed us that he had legalized for us what no other person before had made legal."

The Imam asked him: "You believed in the tales which came to you about him, so you followed him, didn't you?"

"Yes," he answered.

The Imam established against him undeniable argument, saying: "This is the case with all other nations. Tales had come to them about what the prophets had accomplished, what Musa', 'Isa', and Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, had all brought them, so why did you not believe in any of these prophets, having believed in Zoroaster through the tales that came to you about him informing that he brought forth what others did not?"

Perplexity and astonishment dominated the Zoroastrian high priest; he was perplexed and had nothing to say. Accordingly, the Prophet's grandson (i.e. al-Ridha') turned to the chief representatives of those creeds and said to them: "People, if there is among you someone who opposes Islam and wants to question (me), let him put forth any question (to me) without any shame![29]"

These debates silenced the anti-Islam forces and clearly established the great scientific abilities with which Allah endowed the Imam, and which demonstrated the correctness of the creed of the Shi'ites,

who maintained that Allah endowed the Imams of the *Ahal al-Bayt*, peace be on them, with scientific abilities, and that the Imams were the most learned of that community, not only in the legislative fields but also in all scientific ones.

The associations in Khurasa'n took great care of these debates through which Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, overcame the chief representatives of the creeds. Meanwhile the debates moved al-Ma'mu'n's feelings and sentiments, and he harbored malice and enmity against the Imam, peace be on him. That is because he intended to render the Imam incapable of answering during the debates in order to use his incapability as means for defaming him and removing him from the office of regency. As a result, al-Ma'mu'n spared no effort to get rid of Imam al-Ridha'. He thought that he had no means to get rid of him except assassinating him by putting poison in food. We will explain the matter of assassinating the Imam by giving more details in the chapters that follow.

The Imam debates with an Atheist

An atheist, experienced in atheism and unbelief, hurried to attend Imam al-Ridha"s session in which was a group of people. The Imam turned to the atheist and asked him: "Do you see that if the correct view is your view and it is not your view then are we not equal? All that we have prayed, fasted, given the alms and declared of our convictions will not harm us?"

The atheist kept silence because of this undeniable argument, for if the matter was as the atheists said that there was no god, then prayer and fasting would not harm the monotheists.

After that the Imam added, saying: "If the correct view is our view and it is our view then have you not perished and we gained salvation?"

The Imam wanted to say that if the atheists came to know that there was Almighty Creator, they would be perished, bring disgrace on themselves, and face a painful punishment. As for the believers and the pious, they would be successful.

The atheist asked the Imam, peace be on him, the following questions:

Question 1: "May Allah have mercy on, let me know how is He (Allah) and where is He?"

Answer 1: "Surely the opinion you have adopted is mistaken. He (Allah) determined the 'where' and he was when there was nowhere; He fashioned the 'how' and He was when there was no 'how'. So He is not known through 'howness' or 'whereness' or through any form of sense perception; nor can He be gauged by anything."

Indeed Allah is the Light of the heavens and earth, for it is impossible for Him to be distinguished by the 'where', 'how' and the rest qualities of the possible being who will perish sooner or later. As for Allah, the Glorified, He is not perceived by the senses; nor is He gauged by anything.

Question 2: “So then He is nothing if He cannot be perceived by any of the senses?”

Answer 2: “Woe unto you! When your senses fail to perceive Him, you deny His lordship. But when our senses fail to perceive Him, we know for certain that He is our Lord and that He is something different from other things.”

The perception of the senses is limited in quantity and quality as well as the senses do not perceive many possible beings. For example, they do not perceive the reality of soul, then how do they perceive the Necessary Being, the Exalted, the Holy?

Question 3: “Tell me, when He was?”

Answer 3: “Tell me when He was not, and then I will tell you when He was.”

The Imam, peace be on him, criticized the atheist for his question, for Allah, the Exalted is a brilliant reality which every one comprehends through His signs, His great creation, and His marvelous creatures. He is in every stage of existence, and it is impossible to say: “When He was?”

Question 4: “Then what is the proof of Him?”

Answer 4: “Surely when I contemplate my body and it is impossible for me to increase or decrease its breadth and height, or to keep unpleasant things away from it or draw benefits to it, then I know that this structure has a maker and I acknowledge Him even though that which I had seen of the rotation of the celestial sphere through His power, the producing of clouds; the turning about of the winds; the procession of the sun, the moon and the stars; and others of his wondrous and perfectly created signs, had already made me know that (all) this has a Determiner and Producer.”

Surely, every atom of this world is a proof of the existence of the great Creator, who has made them.

If man carefully considers his own body and the wonderful systems and cells wherein, he will certainly believe in Allah, the Most High, just as it has been mentioned in the tradition: “He who knows his own body knows his Lord.” Allah, the Exalted, created man in the best manner. It is impossible that there is increase or decrease in his organs. It is well know that this surprisingly accurate creation of man is evidence for the existence of Allah, for effect is proof of cause as logicians say.

Among the signs of Allah are the rotation of the celestial sphere, the producing of clouds; the turning about of the winds; the procession of the sun and the moon. He, the Exalted, says: “*Neither it is allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere*.” Glory belongs to Allah! Many signs are evidence for His existence.

Question 5: “Then why does the sense of sight not perceive Him?”

Answer 5: “Because of the difference between Him and His creatures, who are perceived by the vision

of the eyes, whether their own or others. Then He is greater than that sight should perceive Him, imagination encompass Him, or the power of reason delineate Him."

The sense of sight and rest of man's senses are limited, then how can they, perceive, see, and encompass the Almighty Creator? Rather they perceive and comprehend some possible beings.

Question 6: "Then define His limits for me."

Answer 6: "He has no limits."

Limitation belongs to possible beings. As for the Necessary Being, it is impossible for Him to be limited.

Question 7: "Why?"

Answer 7: "Because every limited thing ends at a limit. If limitation is possible, then increase is possible. If increase is possible, then decrease is possible. So He is unlimited. He neither increases nor decreases. Nor is He capable of being divided or imagined."

The Imam, peace be on him, provided evidence of that it was impossible for man to define the limits of the Almighty Necessary Being. That is because limitation, as we have mentioned, is one of the qualities of the possible beings.

Question 8: "Then tell me about your saying that He is Subtle, Hearing, Seeing, Knowing, and Wise. Can He be the Hearing without ears, the Seeing without eyes, the Subtle without working with the hands and the Wise without workmanship (*san'a*)?"

Answer 8: "Surely a person among us is subtle in accordance with (his) skill in workmanship. Have you not seen the man who undertakes a task and is subtle in his handling of it, so that it is said: 'How subtle is so and so!' Then how should it not be said of the Majestic Creator that He is subtle, when He creates a subtle and majestic creation, places in its living creatures their souls, creates every kind different in form from its own kind, and none resembles another? Each possesses in the composition of its form a subtlety from the Subtle and Aware Creator.

"Then we look upon the trees and their bearing of delicate things, whether edible or inedible, and we said at that: 'Surely our Creator is Subtle, (but) not like the subtlety of His creatures in their workmanship.' And we said: 'Surely He is Hearing, for not hidden from Him are the sounds of His creatures between the Throne and the earth, from a mote to what is larger than it, and in the land and the sea. And their words are not confused by Him.' At that we said: 'Surely He is Hearing, but not through ears.'

"Then we said: 'Surely He is Seeing, but not through eyes, for He sees the trace of a black speck on a dark night on a black stone. He sees the tracks of an ant on a pitch-black night. He sees what is harmful for it and what beneficial, and the result of its cohabitation, and its young and descendants.' And at that

we said: ‘Surely He is Seeing, but not like the sight of His creatures.’[30]”

The Imam debates with ‘Ali Bin al-Jahm

Among the Imam’s debates with the rhetoricians and men of religions is that which took place between him and ‘Ali b. al-Jahm, who asked the Imam, peace be on him, saying: “Do you believe in the infallibility of the prophets?”

“Yes,” replied the Imam.

He opposed the Imam with these verses, saying:

“What do you say about these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: ***And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil*** (***to him***)[31], these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And*** (***remember***) ***Dha’ al-Nu’n when he departed in wrath; he imagined that We had no power over him***[32], His words, the Great and Almighty, concerning Yu’suf: ***And*** (***with passionate lust***) ***did she desire him, and he would have desired her***[33], His words, the Great and Almighty, concerning Da’wud: ***And Da’wud was sure that We had tried him*** [34], and His words, the Exalted, concerning His Prophet, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family: ***And you concealed in your soul what Allah would bring to light?*** [35] ”

The Imam criticized ‘Ali b. al-Jahm for interpreting the verses according to his viewpoints without knowledge of their explanation and interpretation. He recited to him their interpretation, saying: “Woe unto you, ‘Ali! Fear Allah. Do not ascribe transgressions to the prophets, and do not interpret Allah’s Book according to your opinion, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: ***And none knows its interpretation except Allah and those deeply grounded in knowledge***.’[36]”

The Imam began interpreting these verses, saying: “As for these words of Him, the Great and Almighty, concerning Adam: ***And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil*** (***to him***)**,** surely Allah, the Great and Almighty, created Adam as argument on His earth and vicegerent in His land. He did not create him for the Garden. Adam’s transgression took place in the Garden, not on earth, and his infallibility in question should be on earth, that the ordinations of Allah’s command may be complete. When he was descended to earth and was appointed as an argument and vicegerent, he was protected from transgression with these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***Allah did indeed choose Adam and Nu’h, the family of Ibra’him, and the family of ‘Umra’n above all people***.[37]

“As regarding His words, the Great and Almighty: ***And*** (***remember***) ***Dha’ al-Nu’n when he departed in wrath; he imagined that We had no power over him****;* the meaning of ***he imagined that We had no power over him*** is that he realized that Allah was not going to sustain him. Have you not heard these words of Him, the Exalted: ***But when He tries him*** (***differently***)***, then straitens to him his means of subsistence?*** [38] Had he thought that Allah was unable to overpower him, then he would have committed apostasy (*kufr*).

“As for His words, the Great and Almighty, concerning Yu’suf: ***And*** (***with passionate lust***) ***did she desire him, and he would have desired her*****,** they are that she wanted to commit a sin while he desired to kill her if she forced him; therefore, Allah saved him from the deed of killing her and its terrible consequences, and this is His words, the Great and Almighty: ***Thus*** (***it was***) ***that We might turn away from him evil and indecency*****,** meaning killing and fornication.”

The Imam turned to ‘Ali b. al-Jahm and asked him: “What did those before you say about him?”

‘Ali b. al-Jahm started reciting to the Imam what had been handed down from them on interpreting the verse, saying: [They said:] “Surely Da’wud, peace be on him, was praying in his *mihrab*. Iblis appeared in front of him in the form of the most beautiful bird. Da’wud cut his prayer and went to take the bird. The bird went out to the house, and then it went out to the top (of the house). Da’wud descended looking for it. The bird alighted in the house of Uryah b. Hana’n. Da’wud followed the tacks of the bird, and suddenly there was Uryah’s wife washing. When he looked at her, he fell in love with her. As for Uryah, he had been on a raid. Da’wud wrote to his companion: ‘Place Uryah in front of the coffin,’ and he was placed in front of it. Uryah defeated the polytheists. Da’wud find that difficult, so he wrote to him again in order to place Uryah in front of the coffin. Uryah was placed in front of it and he was killed, so Da’wud married his wife.”

In this narration fornication and the forbidden have been attributed to one of the prophets of Allah, the Most High. Besides the narration contains a fable which is that Da’wud followed the bird. As for the Imam, peace be on him, he was displeased with this narration when he heard it and said: “We belong to Allah and to Him is our return! You have ascribed one of Allah’s prophets to neglecting his prayers and (accused him of) going out and looking for the tracks of the bird, fornication and killing!”

‘Ali b. al-Jahm asked the Imam to explain the matter to him, saying: “Son of Allah’s Apostle, what was Da’wud’s sin?”

The Imam told him about the true story of Da’wud, saying: “Da’wud thought that he was more learned than the rest of Allah’s creatures, hence Allah, the Great and Almighty, sent him some angels and they climbed the *mihrab* and said to him: ***When they entered in upon Da’wud and he was frightened at them, they said: Fear not; two litigants, of whom one has acted wrongfully towards the other; therefore, decide between us with justice, and do not act unjustly, and guide us to the right way: Surely this is my brother; he has ninety-nine ewes and I have a single one; but he said, make it over to me, and he has prevailed against me in discourse.*** Da’wud hurried to decide the case for the plaintiff when he said: ***Surely he has been unjust to you in demanding your ewe*** (**to add**) ***to his own ewes.*** He did not asked the plaintiff for the evidence for that; nor did he turn to the defendant and asked him: ‘What do you say?’ It was an error only within the framework of the case and was not as you thought. Have you not heard that Allah, the Great and Almighty, say: ***Da’wud, surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow desire***.”

Ibn al-Jahm asked the Imam to tell him about the story of Da'wud with Uryah, saying: "Then, son of Allah's Apostle, what is Da'wud's story with Uryah."

The Imam, peace be on him, started explaining to him Da'wud's story, saying: "In the days of Da'wud, a widow never get married after the death of her husband. Da'wud, peace be on him, was the first man whom Allah permitted to marry the widow whose husband had been killed. Accordingly, he married Uryah's wife after he had been killed, and her waiting period had been over. This made the people accused Da'wud of killing Uryah."

As for Muhammad, peace be on him, and these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And you concealed in your soul what Allah would bring out to light, and you feared men, and Allah had a greater right that you should fear Him*** 39, surely Allah made His prophet know the names of his wives in this world and the next, and that they were the mothers of the believers. One of them whom Allah made him know was Zaynab daughter of Jahsh, who was then the wife of Zayd b. Ha'ritha. He (the Prophet) concealed her name in his soul and did not declare it, lest a hypocrite would say: 'He (the Prophet) says that one of his wives, who are the mothers of the believers, is in a man's house (i.e. she is still the man's wife). He feared the words of the hypocrites, hence Allah, the Great and Almighty, said to him: *and you feared men, and Allah had a greater right that you should fear Him*, namely in your own soul. Allah, the Great and Almighty, never undertook marrying any of His creatures except marrying Hawua" (Eve) to Adam, and Zaynab (daughter of Jahsh) to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, by the virtue of His words: ***But when Zayd had accomplished his want of her, We gave her to you as a wife*****,** and Fa'tima to 'Ali, peace be on him."

When 'Ali b. al-Jahm heard that, he wept and said: "Son of Allah's Apostle, I am going to return to Allah, the Great and Almighty, in repentance and will never say after this day of mine anything about the prophets of Allah except what you have mentioned.40"

These are some of the Imam's debates with the leading philosophers and scholars of various religions. The debates have established his supremacy over them, and they admitted his excellence and admitted their feebleness before him, for he, the peace of Allah be on him, had abundant scientific abilities.

Al-Ma'mu'n questions Imam al-Ridha'

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, some questions. More likely, he wanted to test him. The Imam answered these questions which are as follows:

Question1: "Son of Allah's Apostle, do you not say that the prophets are infallible?"

"Yes," replied the Imam.

"What is the meaning of these words of Him, the Exalted: ***And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil*** **(*to him*)?**" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

Answer 1: “Surely Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, said to Adam: *O **Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Garden and eat from it a plenteous** (**food**) **wherever you wish and do not approach this tree***. And He pointed to the tree of wheat ***for then you will be of the unjust***. He did not say to them: ‘Do not eat from this tree or from its kind.’ They did not approach the tree; nor did they eat from it; they ate from other than it. When Satan whispered (evil) to them and said: ‘Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree; rather He has forbidden you from approaching other than it. He has not forbidden you from eating from it except that you may not both become two angels or that you may (not) become of the immortal.’ And he swore to them both: ‘Most surely I am a sincere adviser to you.’ Adam and Hawua” (Eve) did not see before that anyone who swore by Allah in a false manner. Then he caused them to fall by his deceit and they ate from the tree because they trusted his swearing by Allah, and that was before Adam was considered as a Prophet, and that was not a big sin through which he deserved entering the Fire; rather it was one of the sins which could be forgiven and could be committed by Prophets before the revelation (*wahy*) came down to them. When Allah chose him and made him a prophet, he became infallible, and was not permitted to commit a sin, minor or major. Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: *Thus did Adam disobey his Lord and allow himself to be seduced. But his Lord chose (for His grace); He turned to him, and gave him guidance*.[41] And He, the Great and Almighty, said: *Allah did indeed choose Adam and Nu’h, the family of Ibra’him, and the family of ‘Umra’n above the people*.[42]”

Question 2: “What is the meaning of these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *But when He gives them a good one, they set up with Him associates in what He has given them?* [43]”

Answer 2: “Hawua” born Adam five hundred males and females, so Adam and Hawua” promised Allah, the Great and Almighty, prayed to Him, and said: *If You give us a good one, we shall certainly be of the grateful ones.*

“When He gave them a good one of progeny, sound creature free from illness and defect He gave them two types: a type of males and of females the two types attributed partners to Allah, may His name be Exalted, in what He had given to them, and they did not thank Him as their parents thanked Him, the Great and Almighty. Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, said: ***But high is Allah above what they associate** (**with Him**)*.[44]”

Question 3: “I witness that you are the son of Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, tell me about the words of Him, the Great and Almighty, concerning Ibra’him: ***When the night covered him, he saw a star. He said: This is my Lord***.[45]”

Answer 3: “Surely Ibra’him lived in a society where three types of worship dominated: the worship of Venus, the worship of the moon, and the worship of the sun. That was when he came out of the cave where he was concealed. ***When the night covered him***, he saw Venus and said: ***This is my Lord***. He wanted to deny (such a type of worship) and to ask (his fellows about it). When it (the star) set, he said: ***I do not love those that set***. That this because setting is an attribute of the created not of the Eternal (Being). ***When he saw the moon rising in splendor, he said: This is my Lord***. He wanted to deny

(such a type of worship) and to ask (his fellows about it). ***But when it*** **(*the moon*)** ***set, he said: Unless my Lord guides me, I shall surely be among those who go astray.*** He said: 'Unless my Lord had guided me, I would have been among those who went astray.' When he entered upon morning and saw the sun rising in splendor, he said: ***This is my Lord; this is the greatest*** of Venus and the moon. He wanted to deny (such a type of worship) and to ask (his fellows about it), not to tell them about it and not to admit it (as a lord). When it (the sun) set, he said to the three types of men who worshipped Venus, the moon, and the sun: ***O my people! I am indeed free from your*** **(*guilt*)** ***of ascribing partners to Allah. For me, I have set my face firmly and truly towards Him, Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I attribute partners*** **(*to Allah*)**. By the virtue of what he said, Ibra'him simply wanted to indicate to them the invalidity of their religion and to establish to them that worship did not belong to those things like Venus, the moon, and the sun; rather it belonged to their Creator and the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The argument which he used against his people was among what Allah had inspired him and gave to him, just as Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***And this was Our argument which We gave to Ibra'him against his people*****."**

Question 4: "How good you are, son of Allah's Apostle! Tell me about these words of Ibra'him: ***And when Ibra'him said: My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead, He said: What! and do you not believe. He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at ease***.[46]"

Answer 4: "Surely Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, had revealed to Ibra'him that He would take one of His creatures for a bosom friend. If he asked Him to give life to the dead, He would respond to him. Ibra'him thought that he would be the bosom friend, and hence he said: ***My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead, He said: What! and do you not believe. He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at ease***. **He (Allah) said:** ***Then take four of the birds, then train them to follow you, then place on every mountain a part of them, then call them, they will come to you flying; and know that Allah is Mighty, Wise***. As a result Ibra'him took an eagle, a peacock, a duck and a rooster. He cut the birds into pieces and mixed them. They were ten pieces. Then he placed each piece of them on the mountains around him, and put the beaks between his fingers. He put seeds and water beside him. Then he called them by their names, so those pieces flew to each other until they became sound bodies. Then each body came and joined its neck and head. Then Ibra'him, peace be on him, released their beaks. The birds flew and then they alighted. They drank from that water, ate from those seeds, and said: 'Allah's Prophet, you have given life to us, may Allah give life to you!' Ibra'him said: 'Rather it is Allah who gives life to (creatures) and make (them) die, and He is powerful over all things!'"

Question 5: "Allah bless you, Abu' al-Hasan! Tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***So Musa' struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: This is on account of Satan's doing***.[47]"

Answer 4: "Musa' entered one of Fir'awn's (Pharaoh's) cities when its inhabitants were heedless of him. That was between the sunset and the evening. ***So he found therein two men fighting, one being of his party and the other of his foes, and he who was of his party cried out to him for help against***

him who was of his enemies. Therefore Musa' killed the enemy. Allah, the Exalted, mentioned: ***So Musa' struck him with his fist*** and he died. ***He said: This is on account of Satan's doing***. This means that the fighting which took place between the two men (was *on account of Satan's doing*), not the killing which Musa' had committed. (The world) 'he' means ***Satan*** (***who***) ***is an enemy, openly leading astray***."

Question 6: "What is the meaning of these words of Musa': ***My Lord, surely I have done harm to myself, so do You protect me***."

Answer 6: "This means that he put himself in other than its place when he entered this city. ***So do You protect me,*** meaning conceal me from Your enemies lest they should find me and kill me, ***so He protected him; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful***. Musa' said: ***My Lord, because You have bestowed a favor on me,*** through the strength so that I killed a man with striking him with my fist; ***I shall never be a backer of the guilty****;* rather I shall fight on Your path with this strength until You are content (with me). As a result Musa' was in the city ***fearing, awaiting, when lo! he who had asked his assistance the day before was crying out to him for aid*** against another person, so ***Musa' said to him: You are most surely one erring manifestly***. You killed a man the day before and this day you want to kill (another man), hence I shall hurt you. He wanted to strike him. ***So when he desired to seize him who was an enemy to them both, he said: O Musa', do you want to kill me as you killed a person yesterday? You desire nothing but that you should be a tyrant in the land, and you do not desire to be of those who act aright***."

Question 7: "Abu' al–Hasan, May Allah reward you well on behalf of His prophets! What this the meaning of these words of Musa' to Fir'awn (Pharaoh): ***I did it then while I was of those unable to see the right course***?[48]"

Answer 7: "Fir'awn said to Musa' when he came to him: ***And you did*** (***that***) ***deed of yours which you did, and you are one of the ungrateful*** for me. Musa' said: ***I did it then while I was of those unable to see the right course*** through my entering one of your cities. ***So I fled from you when I feared you, then my Lord granted me wisdom and made me one of the apostles***.

"Allah, the Great and Almighty, said to His Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family: ***Did He not find you an orphan and gave you shelter?*** [49] He (Allah) says: '**Did He not find you lonely and He made the people seek shelter in you?**' ***And find you unable to see and show the way*** to your people? *So He guided*, namely He guided them to knowing you. ***And find you in want and make you be free from want*****?** He (Allah) says: 'He has made you free from want when He has made your supplication accepted."

Question 8: "Allah bless you, son of Allah's Apostle! What is the meaning of these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: ***And when Musa' came to our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said: My Lord, show me*** (***Yourself***)***, so that I may look upon You. He said: You cannot*** (***bear to***)

see me. How is it permissible that Musa' b. 'Umra'n, the Interlocutor of Allah, peace be on him, did not know that Allah, may His name be Blessed and Exalted, could not be perceived? Why did he make such a request?"

Answer 8: "Musa' b. 'Umra'n, the Interlocutor of Allah, knew that Allah, the Exalted, far above to be perceived by eyes, but when Allah, the Great and Almighty, spoke to him ***and made him draw nigh holding communion*** (with Him), he returned to his people and told them that Allah, the Great and Almighty, spoke to him, ***made him draw nigh***, and whispered to him, but they said: '***We will not believe in you*** until we hear His words as you heard them.' They were seven hundred thousand men, so he chose seventy men from them to the appointed time of their Lord. He took them and went to Mount Sina". He made them stay at the foot of the mountain. As for Musa', he climbed the mountain, asked Him to speak to him and make them hear His words. As a result Allah, may His name be Exalted, spoke to him, and they heard His words from top, bottom, left, right, behind, and before (them). That is because Allah, the Great and Almighty, created His words in the Tree and made them come out of it to the extent that they heard them from all directions; yet they said: '***We do not believe*** **that what we have heard is (His) words** ***until we see Allah manifestly***.' When they said this dangerous statement, became arrogant and tyrant, Allah sent down upon them thunderbolt, and it overtook them because of their transgression. They died, so Musa' said: 'My Lord, what shall I say to the children of Israel when I return to them and they say: 'You took them and killed them, for you were not truthful when you claimed that Allah, the Great and Almighty, would speak to you?' According, Allah gave life to them and sent them with him. They said: 'If you ask Allah to make you look upon him, He will respond to you; you will tell us how He is, then we will be fully aware of Him.' Musa' said: 'People, the eyes cannot perceive Him, and He has no howness; rather He is recognized through His signs and is known through arguments.' Yet they said to him: '*We will not believe in you* until you ask Him.' Musa' said: 'My Lord, You have indeed heard the statement of the children of Israel and You know better how to put them right.' So Allah, the Great and Almighty, revealed to Musa': 'Request from Me what they requested from you, for I will not punish you because of their ignorance.' Then Musa' said: ***My Lord, show me*** (***Yourself***) ***so that I may look upon You. He said: You cannot*** (***bear to***) ***see Me, but look at the mountain, if it remains firm in its place*** –while falling down– ***then will you see me; but when his Lord manifested*** (***His glory***) ***to the mountain, He made it crumble and Musa' fell down in a swoon; then when he recovered, he said: Glory be to You, I turn to You***. He said: 'I have returned to my knowledge of You and (left) the ignorance of my people of You. ***I am the first of the believers*** **in that none can see You.'"**

Al-Ma'mu'n admired the Imam's talents and abundant knowledge, saying: "How good you are, Abu' al-Hasan!"

Question 9: "Tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And certainly she made for him, and he would have made for her, were it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord***.[50]"

Answer 9: “She made for him, were it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord, he would have made for her just as she made for him, but he was infallible, and the infallible did not think of sin; nor did he commit it. Indeed my father related to me on the authority of his father al-Sa’diq, who said: ‘She intended to do, and he intended not to do.’”

Question 10: “How good you are, Abu’ al-Hasan! Tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And Dha’ al-Nu’n when he departed in wrath; he imagined that We had no power over him***.[51]”

Answer 10: “That was Yu’nus b. Matti. He departed in wrath to his people. ***He imagined***, meaning that he was sure ***that We would not straighten him***, namely We will not going to sustain him, and of it is these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***But when He tries him*** (***differently***)***, then straightens to him his means of subsistence***.[52] Or straightened and ordained. *So* ***he called out among the shadows***, namely the shadows of the sea and of the stomach of the whale. ***There is no god but You! Glory belongs to You; I was indeed wrong*** through my leaving this worship to which You have given me free time in the stomach of the whale, so Allah answered him, and He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***But had it not that he was of those who glorify*** (***Us***)***, he would certainly have tarried in its stomach to the day when they are raised***.[53]”

Question 11: “How good you are, Abu’ al-Hasan! Tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***Till the apostles gave up hope and thought that they were surely accused of lying, Our help then came to them***.[54]”

Answer 11: “Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***Till the apostles gave up hope*** (***of their people***) ***and*** (***their people came to***) ***think that they proved them to be liars, Our help then came to them***.”

Question 12: “How good you are, Abu’ al-Hasan! Tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***That Allah may forgive your community their past faults and those to follow***.[55]”

Answer 12: “The Meccan polytheists thought that there was none greater in sin than Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. That is because they worshipped three hundred and sixty idols other than Allah. When he (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, came to them and summoned them to the Oneness of Allah, they regarded that as big and great, and then they said: ***What! makes he the gods a single God? A strange thing is this, to be sure! And the chief persons of them break forth, saying: Go and steadily adhere to your gods; this is most surely a thing sought after. We never heard of this in the former faith; this is nothing but a forgery***.[56]

“When Allah, the Great and Almighty, enabled His Prophet to conquer Mecca, He said to him: Muhammad, ***surely We have given to you a clear victory, that Allah may forgive your community their past faults and those to follow***, (the faults) of the Meccan polytheists through your summoning (them) to the Oneness of Allah, their past faults and those to follow. That is because some Meccan polytheists became Muslims; some of them went out of Mecca; as for those of them who remained were

not able to deny the Oneness of Allah against him (the Prophet) when he summoned the people to it, so their faults were forgiven because of his mastery over them."

Question 13: "How good you are, Abu' al-Hasan! Tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***Allah pardon you! Why did you give them leave?*** 57"

Answer. 13: "This is part of that which was revealed by the virtue of: I mean you and listen, O neighbor! Allah, the Great and Almighty, addressed His Prophet with that, but He meant by that his community. Similar to this (verse) is these words of Him, the Exalted: ***Surely if you associate*** (***with Allah***)***, your work would certainly come to naught and you would certainly be of the losers*** 58, and these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And had it not been that We had already established you, you would certainly have been near to incline to them a little***.59"

Question 14: "Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, went to the house of Zayd b. Ha'ritha b. Shara'hil al-Kalbi for a thing he wanted. He saw his wife washing and said to her: Glory belongs to Him who has created you!"

Answer 14: "By that he meant to free the Creator, the Great and Almighty, from the statement of those who said: 'The angels are the daughters of Allah.' So Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***What! has then your Lord preferred to give you sons, and*** (***for Himself***) ***taken daughters from among the angels? Most surely you utter a grievous saying***.60 When Zayd returned to his house, his wife told him about the coming of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and his saying to her: 'Glory belongs to Allah!' Zayd did not understand what the Prophet meant by that. He thought that the Prophet said that because he admired her beauty. So he came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and said to him: 'My wife is in her creation, and I want to divorce her.' 'Keep your wife to yourself,' said the Prophet to him, 'fear Allah.' Allah had made the Prophet know the number of his wives. As for this woman, she was one of them, but he concealed that in his own soul and did not show it to Zayd. He feared that the people would say that Muhammad said to his retainer: 'Your wife will be my wife,' and that they would criticized him for that. As a result Allah, the Great and Almighty, revealed: ***And when you said to him to whom Allah had shown favor and to whom you had shown favor: Keep your wife to yourself and be careful of*** (***your duty to***) ***Allah; and you concealed in yourself*** (***what***) ***Allah would bring to light, and you feared men, and Allah had a greater right that you should fear Him.***

"Then Zayd b. Ha'ritha divorced her, and she had completed her waiting period, so Allah, the Great and Almighty, married her to His Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, and with this regard He revealed (a verse in) the Qur'an, and He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***But when Zayd had accomplished his want of her, We gave her to you as a wife, so that there should be no difficulty for the believers in respect of the wives of their adopted sons, when they have accomplished their want of them; and Allah's command shall be performed***.

“Then Allah, the Great and Almighty, knew that the hypocrites would criticize the Prophet for being married to her, so He, the Exalted revealed: ***There is no harm in the Prophet doing that which Allah has ordained for him***.61”

With this (answer) the Imam concluded this debate, which is evidence for his great scientific abilities and his comprehensive knowledge of the Great Book of Allah. The Imam freed the magnified prophets of Allah from committing transgression and established their infallibility through this explanation backed by undeniable proof and evidence.

Al-Ma’mu’n lauds the Imam’s Talents

Al-Ma’mu’n lauded Imam al-Ridha”s talents and said: “You have quenched my thirst, son of Allah’s Apostle, and explained what was hidden from me, may Allah reward you well on behalf of His prophets and of Islam.”

Then al-Ma’mu’n left the session. He took Muhammad b. Ja‘far, the Imam’s uncle, by the hand and asked him: “How did you see your nephew?”

Showing his admiration toward the Imam, Muhammad said: “He (Imam al-Ridha’) is a scholar; we have never seen him frequent any of the men of knowledge.”

Al-Ma’mu’n agreed with him on this reality and said: “Surely, your nephew is from among the Household concerning whom the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘Verily, the pious of my family and the good ones of my offspring are the most forbearing of the people when they are young and the most knowledgeable of the people when they are old; therefore, do not teach them, for they are most learned than you. They do not bring you out of guidance; nor do they make you enter a door to error.”

Then ‘Ali b. al-Jahm related to the Imam al-Ma’mu’n’s laudation and praise and what Muhammad b. Ja‘far said concerning him. So the Imam smiled and said: “Do not be deceived by what you heard from him (al-Ma’mu’n), for he will assassinate me; and Allah, the Exalted, will take vengeance on him out of his (evil) deed toward me.62”

The matter was just as the Imam, peace be on him, had predicted. That is because al-Ma’mu’n’s harbored malice against him and was jealous of excellence and abundant knowledge given by Allah to him. Accordingly, al-Ma’mu’n committed the most horrible crime in the history of Islam when he put poison into food and gave it to the Imam to eat. In this manner he was able to assassinate the Imam, who was the Prophet’s grandson, source of knowledge and wisdom on earth.

Ibn al-Sikit’s Questions

Abu’ Yu’suf Ya‘qu’b b. Isha’q al-Dawraqi, better known as Ibn al-Sikit, was a great scholar in the time of the Imam. He came to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and asked him the following questions:

“Why did Allah send Musa’ with a white hand, ‘Isa’ with miraculous medicine, and Muhammad with miraculous speech and oratory?”

The Imam answered him about the reason for these things, saying: “Allah sent Musa’ (with the white hand) because sorcery dominated the (minds) of the people of his time, so he brought them from Allah something which they never had, nor could they bring about anything like it, thus rendering their sorcery void and proving his argument against them.

“Allah sent ‘Isa’ with medicine during a period of time when chronic diseases became widespread, and the people were in dire need of cure, so he (‘Isa’) brought them from Allah something which they never had, bring the dead back to life, healing the blind and the leprous with Allah’s permission, proving his argument against them.

“Allah sent Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, with speech and oratory during the time when speech and oratory dominated (the minds of) the people.63 So he (Muhammad) brought them from Allah warnings and precepts through which he could disprove their statements and proved his argument against them.”

Ibn al-Sikit admired the Imam’s knowledge and said: “By Allah, I have never seen anyone like you! What is the argument against people these days, then?”

The Imam answered him: “Reason. Through it can you come to know who tells the truth about Allah, so you believe in him, and who tells lies about Allah, so you disbelieve in him.”

“This, by Allah, is the (right) answer,” declared Ibn al-Sikit.64

Allah created reason and made it argument over man. Reason brings about mercy to man when he obeys it, and it brings about unhappiness to him when he disobeys it. Through reason we can distinguish the truthful from the untruthful, the true from the untrue.

The Imam debates a Man

A man, whose name the historians have not mentioned, came in to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. When the man sat down, he turned to the Imam and asked him: “Son of Allah’s Apostle, what is the evidence for the creation of the world?”

The Imam answered him with definite evidence: “You were not, then you have been. You know that you had not created yourself; nor had the like of you created you.65”

The Imam’s Debate Concerning the Prophet’s Family

Yet this is another debate in which the Imam has provided evidence of that Allah chose the pure family

(of the Prophet). The debate took place in the presence of al-Ma'mu'n and a group of scholars from Iraq and Khurasa'n. Al-Ma'mu'n asked the scholars about the meaning of this verse: "Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants.66"

"Surely those whom Allah chose were all Muslims," retorted the scholars.

Al-Ma'mu'n turned to the Imam and asked him: "What do you say, Abu' al-Hasan?"

"I do not say as they said," replied the Imam, "but I say that Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, meant the pure family (of the Prophet), peace be on them."

The Imam's words moved al-Ma'mu'n, and he asked: "How did Allah mean the Prophet's family apart from the community?"

"If Allah meant the community," replied the Imam, "then all of it would enter the Garden, while He, the Exalted, says: ***But of them is he who makes his soul to suffer a loss, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness by Allah's permission; this is the great excellence***.67"

The Imam added, saying: "As a result the inheritance belongs to the Prophet's pure family, not to other than them. It is they whom Allah has described in His Book and said: ***Verily Allah intends to keep off from you every kind of uncleanness. And to purify you, people of the House, with a thorough purification***. It is they concerning whom Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'I leave behind me among you two things, if you cling to them, you will never go astray that is the book of Allah and my offspring from my family (*Ahl al-Bayt*). They will never scatter (from you) until they lead you to me at the (scared) waters (of Heaven). Take care how you will follow me with regard to them. People, do not try to teach them, for they are more knowledgeable than you.'68"

The scholars hurried to say at one time: "Abu' al-Hasan, tell us about the offspring (*'itra*): are they the family (*a'l*) or other than the family?"

"They are the family (*a'l*)," answered the Imam.

They opposed the Imam, saying: "It has been narrated on the authority of Allah's Apostle, who said: 'My community is my family(*a'l*).' And these are his companions who say with a diffused tradition which cannot be denied: 'The family(*a'l*) of Muhammad is his community.'"

The Imam indicated that the tradition was fabricated and incorrect, saying: "Tell me, is it forbidden for Muhammad's family to take alms or not?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Is it forbidden for the community to take alms or not?" asked the Imam.

“No,” came the answer.

Having proved argument against them, the Imam retorted: “This is the difference between the family (*a’l*) and the community (*umma*). Woe unto you! Which creed do you follow? ***What! shall We then turn away the reminder from you altogether because you are an extravagant people?*** Did you not know that the tradition apparently concerned those who were chosen and rightly guided apart from the rest of the people?”

“From where did you say, Abu’ al-Hasan?” asked the scholars.

The Imam began reciting to them the excellence of the pure offspring, saying: “From these words of Allah: ***And certainly We sent Nu’h and Ibra’him and We gave to their offspring the*** (***gift of***) ***prophecy and the Book; so there are among them those who go aright, and most of them are transgressors***.[69] So the legacy of prophecy and the Book was confined to those who went aright apart from the transgressors. Did you not know that Nu’h ask his Lord, saying: ***My Lord, surely my son is of my family, and Your promise is surely true***?[70] That is because Allah had promised him to save him and his family, so Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, said: ***Surely he is not of your family; surely he is*** (***the doer of***) ***other than good deeds; therefore, ask not of Me that of which you have no knowledge; surely I admonish you lest you may be of the ignorant***.[71]”

Al-Ma’mu’n burst with anger and rage, saying: “Did Allah prefer the offspring to the rest of the people?”

The Imam retorted: “Allah, the Great and Almighty, preferred the offspring to the reset of the people in the firm text of His Book.”

“Where is that in the Book of Allah?” asked al-Ma’mu’n.

The Imam recited to him a group of the verses which lauded the excellence of the Household, peace be on them, saying: “***Surely Allah chose Adam and Nu’h and the descendants of Ibra’him and the descendants of ‘Umra’n above the nations, offspring, one of the other; and Allah is Hearing, Knowing***.[72] And Allah said in another place: ***Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace? But indeed We have given to Ibra’him’s family the Book and the wisdom, and We have given them a grand kingdom***.[73] Then after this Allah addressed the rest of the Muslims, saying: ***O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you***.[74] He meant those whom He made inherit the Book and wisdom, and they were envied for them, according to these words of Him: ***Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace? But indeed We have given to Ibra’him’s family the Book and the wisdom, and We have given them a grand kingdom***. He meant obedience to those chosen and pure, and ‘kingdom’ here means obedience to them.”

“Did Allah, the Most High, interpret ‘choice’ in the Book?” asked the scholars.

The Imam answered them: “He interpreted ‘choice’ in outward apart from the inward in twelve places:

“The first of that is the words of Allah: ***And warn your nearest relations*** 75, and your loyal family in this manner it is in the recitation of Ubay b. Ka‘b, and it has been established in the copy of the Qur’an of ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘u’d. However, when ‘Uthma’n ordered Zayd b. Tha’bit to collect the Qur’an, he omitted this verse. And this is an exalted position, great excellence, and lofty honor when Allah, the Great and Almighty, meant the family (*a’l*) by that. This is one (verse).

“As for the second verse concerning choice, it is these words of Allah: ***Verily Allah intends to keep off from you every kind of uncleanness and to purify you, people of the House, with a thorough purification***. None can deny this excellence except him who is obstinate, for this excellence is clear.

“The third verse: When Allah distinguished the pure from among His creatures, He ordered His Prophet in the Verse of Contest of Prayer (*Ibtiha’l*) and said: *Say:* ***Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our souls and your souls, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars***.76 So the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, brought out ‘Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, and Fa’tima, peace be on them, thus he associated their souls with his own soul.”

Then the Imam turned to the scholars and asked them: “Did you know the meaning of His words: ***and our souls and your souls*****?”**

“By that he (the Prophet) meant his own soul,” they answered.

“You are mistaken,” replied the Imam, “by that he meant ‘Ali.77 The proof of that is the statement of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, when he said to ‘Ali: ‘Let the Banu’ of Wulay‘a78 refrain from (polytheism); otherwise, I will send to them a man who is like my own soul, namely ‘Ali, peace be on him.79 This is a quality which none had before him, a merit over which no man differ, and honor to which no creature preceded him, for he (the Prophet) regarded ‘Ali’s soul as his own soul. This is the third (verse).

“As for the fourth (proof), it is that he (the Prophet) brought the people out of his mosque except the offspring. When the people spoke about that, al-‘Abba’s spoke and said: ‘Allah’s Apostle, you have left ‘Ali and brought us (out of the mosque).’ ‘It was not I who left him and brought you out,’ replied Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, ‘but it was Allah who left him and brought you out.’ This explains his statement to ‘Ali, peace be on him: ‘Your position to me is as Ha’ru’n had with Musa’.’”

“Where is this in the Qur’an?” asked the scholars.

“That is in the Qur’an,” replied the Imam.

“Recite it to us,” they demanded.

So the Imam recited to them these words of Allah, the Exalted: "***And We revealed to Musa' and his brother, saying: Take for your people houses to abide in Egypt and make your houses places of worship***.[80] This verse demonstrates the position of Ha'ru'n with Musa' as well as it demonstrates the position of 'Ali, peace be on him, with Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. Besides there is a clear indication in this statement of Allah's Apostle: 'It is not lawful for those who are in a state of major ritual impurity and the menstruating to enter this mosque except Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.'"

The scholars denied the knowledge of that and said to the Imam: "This explanation and this interpretation does not exist. Do you, members of the House of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, have (such an explanation and interpretation)?"

The Imam answered them: "Who denies that while Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, says: 'I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate. Then, one who wishes (to enter) the city of knowledge, then he should enter from its gate.' We clarified and explained ('Ali's) merit, honor, precedence (in Islam), choice, and purity. Accordingly, none denies (these outstanding qualities) except him who is obstinate. To Allah, the Great and Almighty, belongs praise for that! This is the fourth (proof).

"As for the fifth (proof), it is these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: ***And give to the near of kin his due***.[81] (This is) a quality for which Allah, the Great and Almighty, singled them out, and preferred them over the community. When this verse was revealed to Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, he said: 'Summon Fa'tima to me.' They summoned her to him, and he said: 'Fa'tima!' 'Here I am, Allah's Apostle!' she answered. 'None passes (through) Fadak with horses or stirrups; it especially belongs to me apart from the Muslims; and I have granted it to you according to Allah's command, so take it for you and your sons. This is the fifth (proof).

"As for the sixth (proof), it is these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: *Say: I demand not, of you any reward for it* (*the toils of preaching*) *except the love of my relations*.[82] This is a special characteristic of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, apart from the prophets, and a special characteristic of the Family apart from other than them. That is because Allah gave an account of the prophets when He mentioned Nu'h, peace be on him: *And, O my people! I ask you not for wealth in return for it; my reward is only with Allah and I am not going to drive away those who believe; surely they shall meet their Lord, but I consider you a people who are ignorant*.[83] He gave an account of Hu'd, saying: *O my people! I ask you not for wealth in return for it; my reward is only with Him Who created me; do you then understand?* [84] And He said to His Prophet: *Say: I demand not, of you any reward for it* (*the toils of preaching*) *except the love of my relations*. Allah has imposed showing love for them on people because He had known that they would never turn away from their own creed and never return to error. Another (proof): A man may love a man, but he may hate some of his own household, so he is his enemy and his heart is not sound. Allah loved that there would be nothing in the heart of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, toward the believers, for He imposed on them the love of his relations. Accordingly, he who

loves Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and his Household, peace be on them, then Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, cannot hate him. He who hates Allah's Apostle and his household, then it is incumbent on Allah's Apostle to hate him, for he has abandoned one of the obligations imposed by Allah. Which excellence or honor is better than this (love toward Allah's Apostle and his household)?

"When Allah sent down to His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, (this verse): *Say: I demand not, of you any reward for it* (*the toils of preaching*) *except the love of my relations*, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, rose among his companions. He praised Allah and lauded Him, and then he said: 'People, Allah has imposed an obligation on you, then will you perform it?' None answered him. On the following day he rose among them and said the like of that, but none answered him. One the following day he rose among them and said: 'People, Allah has imposed an obligation on you, then will you perform it?' Yet none answered him. So he said: 'People, the obligation is neither gold nor silver nor food nor drink.' 'Say it,' they demanded. He recited this verse to them. 'As for this (love), we accept it,' they answered. However, most of them did not perform it."

The Imam added, saying: [My father related to me on the authority of my grandfather on the authority of his grandfathers on the authority of al-Husayn b. 'Ali, peace be on them, who said:] "The Muha'jiru'n and the Ansa'r gathered around Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and said to him: 'Allah's Messenger, you have the right to spend on yourself and the delegations who come to you, then these are our properties along with our blood, so make decisions concerning them, may Allah be kind to you and reward you. Give whatever you desire and withhold whatever you desire without any objection.' So Allah sent down the Trusted Sprit (Gabriel) to him, and he said: 'Muhammad, *Say: I demand not, of you any reward for it* (*the toils of preaching*) *except the love of my relations*. Do not hurt my relations after me. They went out and a group of them said: Allah's Apostle left what we presented before him because he wanted to urge us to show love toward his relations after him; and this is something which he fabricated at his session, so Allah revealed this verse: *Nay! they say: He has forged it. Say: If I have forged it, you do not control anything for me from Allah; He knows best what you utter concerning it; He is enough as a witness between me and you, and He is the Forgiving, the Merciful*.[85] As a result, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, sent for them and asked: 'Has anything happened?' 'Yes, by Allah, Allah's Apostle,' they replied, 'some of us say dreadful words and we hated them.' Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, recited this verse to them. They wept and their weeping became intense, hence Allah, the Most High, revealed this verse: *And He it is Who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons the evil deeds and He knows what you do*.[86]

"As for the seventh (proof), it is that Allah says: *Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! call for* (*Divine*) *blessings on him and salute him with a* (*becoming*) *salutation*.[87] When this verse was revealed, the obstinate from among them asked: 'Allah's Messenger, we have come to know how to salute you, then how shall we bless you?' He (the Prophet) said: 'You say: O Allah, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad just as You had blessed Ibra'him and the family of Ibra'him,

surely You are Praiseworthy, Glorious.'"

The Imam turned to the scholars and asked them: "Is there any opposition to these (proofs)?"

All of them said in one voice: "No!"

However, al-Ma'mu'n said: "There is no opposition to them, and there is an unanimous agreement on them. Have you anything clearer than them about the family in the Qur'an?"

The Imam began giving more definite indications concerning the excellence of the Household (of the Prophet), peace be on them, saying: "Tell me about these words of Allah: *Ya'sin, and I swear by the Qur'an full of wisdom; most surely you are of the apostles, on a right way*.88 Whom did Allah mean by His words '*Ya'sin*'?"

The scholars said: "By that He meant Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, there is no doubt about that."

The Imam turned to those who were present and said to them: "Allah gave Muhammad and the family of Muhammad excellence whose essence and quality none has reached. That is because Allah never saluted anyone except the prophets, the blessings of Allah be upon them. He, the Blessed and Exalted, said: ***Peace and salutations to Nu'h among the nations***.89 And He said: ***Peace be on Ibra'him***.90 And He said: ***Peace be on Musa' and Ha'ru'n***.91 He did not say: Peace be on the family of Nu'h; nor did He say: Peace be on the family of Ibra'him; nor did He say: Peace be on the family of Musa' and Ha'ru'n. And He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***Peace be on Aal Ya'sin*** (the family of Ya'sin)92; He meant the family of Muhammad."

Al-Ma'mu'n turned to Imam al-Ridha' and said to him: "I have come to know that this explanation and clarification is concerning the source of the Prophethood."

(Then the Imam continued giving proofs, saying:) "As for the eighth (proof), it is these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: ***And know that whatever thing you acquire in war, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Apostle and for the near of kin***.93 Allah associated His own portion with that of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and of those near of kin. This is a difference between the family and the community, for Allah put them in one place and put all people in another place, accepted for them what He accepted for Himself, and singled them out for it. He started with Himself, then His Apostle, then the near of kin in every place of booty, and others which He, the Great and Almighty, accepted for Himself and accepted for them. He said, and His words are the truth: ***And know that whatever thing you acquire in war, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Apostle and for the near of kin***. As a result this is a certain verification and permanent matter for them to the Day of Resurrection in Allah's Book, which speaks (of the truth), before and behind which falsehood does not come, which is a revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy. As for these words of Him: ***and the orphans and the needy***, surely the orphans are not included in booty when their orphan hood terminates; they have no share in booty,

and it is not lawful for them to take it. As for the share of the near of kin, it subsists to the Day of Resurrection; it is for the rich and the poor, for there is none richer than Allah and His Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. He appointed a share of the booty for Himself and a share for His Apostle, so He accepted for them what He accepted for Himself and His Apostle, similar to this (booty) is the war booty gained without fighting (*fayya'*). He accepted for the near of kin what He accepted for Himself and His Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. He also made it permissible for them (to take a share) of booty. He started with Himself, then His Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and then them. He associated their own share with His own share and the share of His Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. He also (associated) obedience (to them with obedience to Him and His Apostle), so He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you***.[94] He started with Himself, then with His Apostle, then with his Household, similar to this (verse is the verse regarding) authority (*wila'ya*): ***Only Allah is you authority*** (***Vali***) ***and His Apostle and those who believe***.[95] Accordingly, He made their authority associated with obedience to Him and the Apostle and, in addition, He made their share (of booty) associated with that of Him and of His Apostle. When the story of alms came, He, may His name be Exalted, deemed Himself far above it as well as He deemed His Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family and his household, far above it. Thus He said: ***Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials*** (***appointed***) ***over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline*** (***to truth***) ***and the*** (***ransoming of***) ***captives and those in debts and in the way of Allah and the wayfarer; an ordinance from Allah***.[96] Do you find that He has appointed a share in any of these (verses) for Himself or for His Apostle or the near of kin. That is because when He deemed Himself far above alms, He deemed His Apostle and his Household far above it; rather He made it unlawful (to take alms), for it is unlawful for Muhammad and his Household (to take) alms which are the dirt of men. It is unlawful (for them) to take alms, for they were pure from every uncleanness and dirt. When Allah purified them and chose them, He accepted for them what He accepted for Himself, and He hated for them what He hated for Himself.

"As for the ninth (proof), it is that we are the followers of the Reminder, for Allah has said in the firm text of His Book: ***So ask the followers of the Reminder***.[97]"

The scholars objected this statement, saying: "By that Allah meant the Jews and the Christians."

The Imam disproved their viewpoints, saying: "Is it permissible for them to summon us (to follow) their own religion and to say that their religion is better than Islam?"

Al-Ma'mu'n turned to Imam al-Ridha' and asked him for more explanation of what he said, saying: "Have you any explanation of that which opposes their statement?"

"Yes," replied the Imam, "the Reminder is Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and we are the men of it, and that is clear in the Verse of Divorce: ***Therefore be careful of*** (***your duty to***) ***Allah, O men of understanding who believe! Allah has indeed revealed to you a reminder, an Apostle who recites to you clear communications***.[98] As a result, the Reminder is Allah's Apostle and

we, his Household. This is the ninth (proof).

“As for the tenth (proof), it is that Allah has said in the Verse of Prohibition: ***Forbidden to you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters***.[99]”

The Imam addressed the scholars, saying: “Tell me: If Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, was alive, was it permissible for him to marry my daughter or the daughter of my son or the offspring of my loins?”

“No,” the scholars answered.

The Imam asked them again: “Tell me: Was it permissible for him to marry one of your daughters?”

“Yes,” they replied.

“Accordingly, I am one of his family, while you do not belong to his family,” said the Imam, “if you belonged to his family, then it would be forbidden for him to marry one of your daughters just as it is forbidden for him to marry one of my daughters. That is because we belong to his family while you belong to his community. This is another difference between the family (*a’l*) and the community, for the family belongs to him whereas the community if it is not the family does not belong to him. This is the tenth (proof).

“As for the eleventh (proof), it is that His words in Su’rat al-Mu’min giving an account of the words of a man: ***And a believing man of Fir‘oun’s people who hid his faith said: What! will you slay a man because who says: My Lord is Allah, and indeed he has brought to you clear arguments from your Lord?***[100] The man was the son of Fir‘oun’s uncle. He (Allah) ascribed the man to Fir‘oun because of his lineage and He did not add him to him because of his faith. He (Allah) has also singled us out because we belong to the family of Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and our lineage belongs to him, while He generalized His religion, so this is another deference between the family (*a’l*) and the community. This is the eleventh (proof).

“As for the twelfth (proof), it is these words of Him: ***And enjoin prayer on your family, and steadily adhere to it***.[101] So He (Allah) has singled us out for this special characteristic, for He ordered us through His ordering him (the Prophet), then He has singled us out apart from the community. Accordingly, after the revelation of this verse, Allah’s Messenger would come to the door of ‘Ali and Fa’tima, peace be on them, five times a day at the timing of the prayers and said: ‘(Perform) the prayer, may Allah have mercy upon you!’ Allah did not honor any of the progeny of the prophets with this noble quality with which He has honored us and singled us out along with all the members of his Household, so this is another difference between the family (*a’l*) and the community. Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and Allah bless His Prophet Muhammad.[102]”

With this proof we will end our talk about some of Imam al-Ridha”s debates, which represent a side of

his scientific life and his struggle for defending Islam.

1. In a copy: “Before His creating the creatures.”
2. Qur’an, 17, 72.
3. Tuhaf al-‘Uqu’l, p. 527.
4. ‘Uyyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, pp. 168-178. Reports similar to his have been mentioned by al-Tabrasi in (his book) al-Ihtija’jj, al-Majjlisi in al-Biha’r, and al-Hasan b. Shu‘ba’ in Tuhaf al-‘Uqu’l.
5. Qur’an, 4, 56.
6. Ibid., 11, 108.
7. Ibid., 56, 33.
8. Ibid., 50, 35.
9. Ibid., 11, 108.
10. Ibid., 15, 48.
11. Ibid., 98, 8.
12. Dira’r is one of the Shaykhs of the Mu‘tazilites in theology and belongs to the Aba’diya.
13. Qur’an, 17, 16.
14. Ibid., 17, 86.
15. Ibid., 40, 60.
16. Ibid., 35, 1.
17. Ibid., 13, 39.
18. Ibid., 40, p. 51.
19. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, pp. 182-191.
20. Qur’an, 20, 113.
21. Ibid., 21, 2.
22. Ibid., 53, 13.
23. Ibid., 20, 11.
24. Ibid., 17, 1.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., 45, 6.
27. Al-Ihtija’jj, vol. 2, pp. 185-189.
28. He was one of the disciples of a prophet. It was said that he was sent to the children of Israel by a prophet.
29. Al-Ihtija’jj, vol. 2, pp. 199-212. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 154-168.
30. There is an addition to this narration mentioned in al-Ihtija’jj. Without doubt that this narration is forged, for the expression is not accurate, and al-Shaykh al-Sadu’q has turned aside from it.
31. Qur’an, 20, 121.
32. Ibid., 21, 87.
33. Ibid., 12, 24.
34. Ibid., 38, 24.
35. Ibid., 33, 37.
36. Ibid., 3, 7.
37. Ibid., 3, 3.
38. Ibid., 89, 16.
39. Ibid., 33, 37.
40. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, pp. 192-195.
41. Qur’an, 20, 121-122.
42. Ibid., 3, 34.
43. Ibid., 7, 190.
44. Ibid., 7, 190.

45. Ibid., 6, 76.
46. Ibid., 2, 26.
47. Ibid., 28, 15.
48. Ibid., 26, 20.
49. Ibid., 93, 6.
50. Ibid., 12, 24.
51. Ibid., 21, 87.
52. Ibid., 89, 16.
53. Ibid., 37, 143–144.
54. Ibid., 12, 110.
55. Ibid., 48, 2.
56. Ibid., 38, 5–7.
57. Ibid., 9, 43.
58. Ibid., 39, 65.
59. Ibid., 17, 74.
60. Ibid., 17, 40.
61. Ibid., 33, 38.
62. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al–Ridha', vol. 1, pp. 195–204.
63. The narrator of this account said: "I think that poetry prevailed them."
64. Al–Ihtija'jj, vol. 2, pp. 224–225.
65. Ibid., 170–171.
66. Qur'an, 35, 32.
67. Ibid., 35, 32.
68. Hadith al–Thaqalayn, definite, repeatedly stated tradition narrated in al–Siha'h and al–Sunan.
69. Ibid., 57, 26.
70. Ibid., 11, 40.
71. Ibid., 11, 46.
72. Ibid., 3, 32.
73. Ibid., 4, 54.
74. Ibid., 4, 59.
75. Ibid., 26, 214.
76. Ibid., 3, 72.
77. In addition to the proof which the Imam mentioned, it is senseless that man calls his own soul, so there is no escape that he meant by that 'Ali, peace be on him.
78. The Banu' of Wulay'a, a district of Kinda.
79. In al–'Uyu'n, by our souls he meant 'Ali, by our sons he meant al–Hasan and al–Husayn, and by our women he meant Fa'tima, peace be on them. All the interpreters of the Qur'an have agreed on that.
80. Qur'an, 10, 87.
81. Ibid., 17, 26.
82. Ibid., 42, 22.
83. Ibid., 11, 29.
84. Ibid., 11, 51.
85. Ibid., 46, 8.
86. Ibid., 42, 24.
87. Ibid., 33, 56.
88. Ibid., 36, 1.
89. Ibid., 37, 79.
90. Ibid., 37, 109.

91. Ibid., 37, 120.
92. Ibid., 37, 130.
93. Ibid., 8, 42.
94. Ibid., 4, 59.
95. Ibid., 5, 55.
96. Ibid., 9, 60.
97. Ibid., 16, 43.
98. Ibid., 65, 10–11.
99. Ibid., 4, 23.
100. Ibid., 40, 28.
101. Ibid., 20, 132.
102. Tuhaf al-'Uqu'l, pp. 425–436. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha'. Al-Maja'lis.

Chapter 6: His Works

The historians and the narrators have reported that Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, compiled a group of books some of which were (compiled) according to al-Ma'mu'n's request, in some of which he (the Imam) discussed and explained the precepts of Islamic law as well as he recorded in some of which the traditions transmitted from his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and this work was called the *Musnad of Imam al-Ridha'*, peace be on him. Yet another example of his scientific books is what is known as *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya fi al-Tibb* (the golden medical dissertation), in which the Imam mentioned what put right man's body and soul, and which is among the main, briefed books on medicine. In the following topics we will present some of his works:

1. His Dissertation on Islamic Law

Al-Ma'mu'n ordered his minister al-Fadl b. SAhl to have the honor of meeting Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and to say to him: "I (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) would like you to gather for me the lawful, the unlawful, the religious duties, and the *sunna* (the Prophet's practices), for you are the proof of Allah over His creatures and source of knowledge." The Imam responded to al-Ma'mu'n's request. He ordered an inkwell and a sheet of paper to be brought to him, and then he ordered al-Fadl to write. He dictated to him:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. It is sufficient for us to witness that there is no god but Allah, Who is Unique, Everlasting Refuge, has not taken a consort nor a son, Self-subsistent, All-hearing, All-seeing, Strong, All-steadfast, Eternal, Light, Knower never be ignorant, Powerful never

be incapable, Rich never be needy, and Just never be unjust. He created all things. ***There is nothing like Him***. There is no like with Him, nor an opposite nor a rival nor an equal. Surely Muhammad is His servant and apostle, entrusted by Him, chosen by Him from among His creatures, the master of the apostles, the last of the prophets, and the best of creatures. There will be no prophet after him. His ideals will be neither altered nor changed. And surely all what Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, brought was the clear truth. We have believed in him and all Allah's apostles, His prophets, and His proofs. And we have believed in His truthful Book ***falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it; a revelation from the Wise, the Praised one*****,** that it is His Book which has dominated all the Books, and that it is true from beginning to end.

We have believed in its clearly defined and its ambiguous, its specific and its general, its promise and its threat, its abrogating (verses) and its abrogated, and its giving information. No creature is able to bring the like of it. After it the proof and argument is the Commander of the faithful, who undertakes the affairs of the Muslims, speaks on behalf of the Qur'an, and knows its precepts, who is his (the Prophet's) brother, his successor, his testamentary trustee, whose position to him was as Ha'ru'n had with Musa', 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, the Commander of the faithful, the Imam of the Allah-fearing, the leader of the luminous famous ones, the master of the faithful, the best of the testamentary trustees after the prophets; after him were al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be on them, one by one up to this day of ours, who are the family of the Messenger; the most learned of them (men) in the Book and the Sunna (the Prophet's practices), the most just of them in the case, the most appropriate of them for the Imamate in every age and time; they are the firmest handle, the Imams of guidance, the proof over the inhabitants of the world until Allah inherits the earth and that which on it, and He is the best of the inheritors; all those who have opposed them are straying and misleading and leaving the truth and guidance; it is they who express the Qur'an and speaks on behalf of the Messenger with eloquence.

He who dies and does not know their names and their fathers' names dies as those who died before Islam. Surely of their religion are piety, chastity, truthfulness, righteousness, diligence, returning the things deposited (with them to) to the pious and the sinners, prostrating themselves in prayers for a long time, refraining from the unlawful, waiting for relief by the virtue of steadfastness, good friendship, good neighborhood, offering the good, praying by night, turning away from harm, cheerfulness, advice, and having mercy on the believers."

This letter gives an account of praising and glorifying Allah, the Exalted, and mentioning some of His attributes as well as it is full of praising the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who was the first to inspire man with good and virtue, whom Allah, the Most High, chose for His message and saving His servants from ignorance, whom Allah endowed with the immortal miracle, which is the Holy Qur'an ***falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it*****,** which is the constitution for putting man right and solving all his matters and problems.

Moreover, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, presented the pioneer of the truth and justice in Islam, the

testamentary trustee of the Apostle, and his successor after him, Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, the Imam of the Allah–fearing, the best of the testamentary trustees, and he, peace be on him, praised the pure Imams, who guided this community to the ways to the Garden, spoke on behalf of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, expressed the Qur’an, delivered the message of Allah, and explained its precepts.

After this presentation, Imam al–Ridha’, peace be on him, began explaining the rules of comprehensive, Islamic law, saying: “As for *wudu”* (the minor ablution), as Allah has ordered in His Book, it is washing the face and hands, rubbing the head and feet. One is a religious duty and two are recommended. He who increases (*wudu”*) is sinful and is not rewarded. Nothing invalidates *wudu”* except flatus, urine, feces, sleep, and *jana’ba* (sexual intercourse or just discharge of semen).

“He who rubs over the shoes opposes Allah, His Apostle, and His Book, and his *wudu”* is invalid. That is because ‘Ali, peace be on him, opposed rubbing over shoes and ‘Umar said to him: ‘I saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, rub (over shoes).’ ‘Before or after the revelation of Su’rat al–Ma”ida?’ asked ‘Ali. ‘I do not know,’ replied ‘Umar. ‘But I know,’ explained ‘Ali, ‘that Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, had not rubbed (over shoes) since the revelation of Su’rat al–Ma”ida.’”

The first act of Islamic law which Imam al–Ridha’, peace be on him, presented was *wudu”*, which is light and purity for man, and which is the most brilliant of the prerequisites of prayer through which man is exalted and have the honor of communicating with his Almighty Creator. In his presentation of *wudu”*, the Imam dealt with the following:

The acts of wudu”

As for the acts of *wudu”*, they are as follows:

A. Washing the face from the point where the hair of the head normally grows down to the chin in length. Breadth–wise, the span is that the area which is covered by the thumb and the middle finger when they are spread out.

B. Washing the hands from the elbow down to the finger tips.

C. Rubbing the head (with a wet hand) from the front of the top of the head; rubbing should be over the skin (of the head) or the hair grows on the front (of the head) on the condition that it should not exceed its limit by the virtue of extension.

D. Rubbing the upper part of the feet from the tip of the toes to the ankle; rubbing should be over the skin; it is not permitted to rub over an obstacle such as shoes and socks, and he who rubs over them oppose the Book of Allah and the Sunna (practices) of His Messenger, and his *wudu”* is invalid, as it has been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him, and the successive texts (traditions) transmitted from the Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al–Bayt*), peace be on them.

Things that Invalidate wudu”

The Imam has mentioned the things that invalidate *wudu”* as follows:

A. discharge of flatus through the anus,

B. urine,

C. feces,

D. sleep which overcomes reason,

E. *jana’ba* (sexual intercourse or just the discharge of semen).

These things invalidate *wudu”*. He, peace be on him, said: “*Ghusl* (the major ablution) is (performed) because of *jana’ba* (sexual intercourse or just the discharge of semen), wet dreams, *hayd* (regular menstrual bleeding), and touching the corpse of the dead. (These *ghusls* are) obligatory.

“*Ghusl* (is also performed) on Friday, the two ‘Ids, entering Mecca and Medina, visiting (the holy shrines), entering into state of ritual consecration (*ihra’m*), the day of ‘Arafa, the first night of the month of Ramada’n, the 19th night of it, the 21st of it, and 23rd of it. (These *ghusls* are) recommended.”

Among marvelous, Islamic legislation, rules, and practices is *ghusl* which protects bodies from diseases, and in the meantime it brings about the cleanness of body and removing dirt from it, and it is of two types: obligatory, and recommended. The Imam , peace be on him, has presented both types as follows:

The Obligatory Ghusls

Ghusl is obligatory in the following states:

A. Ghusl of jana’ba

There are two reasons for *jana’ba*, the first is the discharge of semen accompanied by libido, ejaculation, and flagging, so he who has a wet dream and this material (semen) discharges from him is in a state of major ritual impurity (*junub*), and *ghusl* is obligatory on him; the second is sexual intercourse (*juma”*) even if there is no discharge of (semen), and it is real by the virtue of entering the gland into the vagina or the anus without any difference between man and woman.

B. Ghusl of hayd

Hayd is blood which women experience and which Allah creates in the womb for certain interests. It is mostly black or red with slight straining and burning. If it happens to her and she finishes it, then *ghusl* is obligatory on her, and it is forbidden for her during (the period) of *hayd* to touch the name of Allah, the

Exalted, the names of the prophets, of the pure Imams, the writing of the Qur'an, to stay in mosques and to enter them apart from passing them, and others.

C. Ghusl for touching a corpse

Ghusl is obligatory when one touches a corpse after it has become cold and before washing it. As for the animals other than man, *ghusl* is not obligatory on him when he touches them after their death.

These are some obligatory *ghusls* which the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned. The rest of them are g*husl* of *istiha'da* (obligatory for women after certain kinds of irregular bleeding), and *ghusl al-maiyit* (obligatory ceremonial washing of the corpse of a Muslim). The jurists have mentioned them in details.

The Recommended Ghusls

As for the recommended *ghusls*, they of three types: time, local, and actual. As for the time (*ghusls*), they are as follows:

A. *Ghusl* for Friday:

It is the most important of them, and its timing is from the rise of the second dawn of Friday to the declination (of the sun).

B. *Ghusl* for the two 'Ids:

'Id al-Addha', and 'Id al-Fitr. *Ghusl* is also recommended on the Day of al-Ghadir, which is the eighteenth day of Dhi al-Hijja, which is the immortal day when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, appointed as successor after him the master of his family, the gate of the city of his knowledge, Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.

C. *Ghusl* for the Day of 'Arafa

D. *Ghusl* for the first night of the blessed month of Ramada'n

E. *Ghusl* for the nineteenth night of Ramada'n, the twenty-first night of it, and the twenty-third night of it, which is the blessed night when it is thought that the Night of the Divine Decree occurred.

As for the local *ghusls*, they are:

A. *Ghusl* for entering Holy Mecca.

B. *Ghusl* for entering Medina.

C. *Ghusl* for visiting the Holy Shrines.

As for the actual *Ghusls*, they are: g*husl* for *ihra'm* (the ceremonies of 'umra and hajj) or *tawa'f* (the procession round the Ka'ba), and others, as the jurists have mentioned.

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has said: "The obligatory (daily) prayers are: (*sala't*) *al-zuhr* or the noon prayer is four *rak'as*; (*sala't*) *al-'asr* or the afternoon prayer is four *rak'as;* (*sala't*) *al-maghrib* or the evening prayer is three *rak'as;* (*sala't*) *al-'asha"* or the night prayer is four *rak'as;* (*sala't*) *al-fajr* or the dawn prayer is two *rak'as*. So that is seventeen *rak'as.*

"And the recommended (prayers) are thirty-four *rak'as*: eight *rak'as* before noon (prayer), eight *rak'as* after it, four *rak'as* after the evening (prayer), two *rak'as* in sitting position after the night (prayer), which numbered as one (prayer), eight *rak'as* in the early morning (*sahr*); the odd prayer (*al-witr*) 1 is three *rak'as*, and two *rak'as* after the odd prayer2."

This paragraph gives an account of some obligatory prayers of which are the daily prayers which are five religious duties: the morning prayer is two *rak'as*; the noon prayer is four *rak'as*; the afternoon prayer is four *rak'as*; the evening prayer is three *rak'as*; the night prayer is four *rak'as*, so they are seventeen *rak'as*. It also gives an account of the daily recommended supererogatory prayers, which are: eight *rak'as* is the noon supererogatory prayers before the noon prayer and eight *rak'as* after it before the afternoon prayer (for the afternoon); four *rak'as* is the night supererogatory prayer (for the night); eight *rak'as* is the late-night supererogatory prayers (*sala't al-layl*); two *rak'as* is the even prayer after it; one *rak'a* is the odd prayer after it; two *rak'as* is the dawn prayer before the morning prayer, so they are thirty-four *rak'as.*

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has said: "And prayer should be (performed) at the beginning of the timings. The excellence of the congregational prayer over the individual prayer is one thousand *rak'as* for one *rak'a*. Do not pray behind the sinner, and do not imitate anyone except men of authority (*wila'ya*)."

These words contain the following:

Firstly, the Imam ordered prayer to be performed at the beginning of its time, and concerning that repeatedly stated traditions have been transmitted from the Imams of guidance, peace be on them.

Secondly, the Imam , peace be on him, presented the excellence of the congregational prayer, and indicated that one *rak'a* of it equaled one thousand *rak'as* of the individual prayer.

Thirdly, the Imam, peace be on him, prevented (Muslims) from praying behind the prayer-leader (Imam) who was sinner or among unjust rulers.

He (the Imam), peace be on him, has said: "And do not pray (while wearing) the skins of the dead (animals) or those of the beasts of prey."

The Imam, peace be on him, presented some conditions of the garment of prayer of which were that

they should not be of the skins of the dead animals; nor should they be of their parts in which life occupied, whether they were of an animal whose meat was lawful or unlawful, that they should not be of the skins of the beasts of prey, that they should permissible, for it was not permissible to pray in usurped garments, that they should be pure, for it was not permissible to pray in impure garments, that they should not be of pure silk (this concern men), and other conditions which jurists have mentioned.

He, peace be on him, has said: "(Prayer) is shortened after (covering) four *firsikhs*[3] back and forth, twelve miles; and when you shorten (your prayers), then you should break the fast."

In these words the Imam, peace be on him, has discussed the traveler's prayer in which the four–*rak'a* prayer is shortened, that is through omitting the last two *rak'as* of them; the person must begin the journey with the intention of covering the distance; the intended journey must consist of a single trip of at least 44 kilometers/28 miles or a round trip with a maximum extent of at least 22 kilometers/14 miles. The intention of covering the distance is not the only condition; rather the jurists have mentioned other conditions of which are: the journey should be lawful, for example, if he/she travels for killing a respected soul or for stealing or other unlawful things, then he/she should perform prayer completely; of them is that intention should continue, if he/she changes his intention before covering the 22 kilometers/14 miles, he/she should perform his/her prayer completely; of them is that he/she should not take journey as his/her work such as him who hires animals (*al–imka'ri*), the trader who circles for his trade, the pilot, and the like.

Yet the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned a further condition of shortening prayer, and it is that man should break his fasting, for it has been mentioned in the tradition: "It is not an act of piety to fast during journey."

He (Imam al–Ridha'), peace be on him, has said: "And *qunu't* is in five prayers: the dawn prayer, the noon prayer, the evening prayer, the night prayer, and the Friday prayer. Every *qunu't* is before *ruku'* and after the recitation."

As for *qunu't*, it is among the recommended acts of prayer, especially as it concerns prayers which should be performed loudly in the first two *rak'as* such as the dawn prayer, the evening prayer, Friday prayer, noon prayer, and afternoon prayer. It is performed one time in each prayer after the recitation and before *ruku'* in the second *rak'a* except Friday prayer, which consists of two *qunu'ts*: one before *ruku'* in the first *rak'a* and the other is after *ruku'* in the second *rak'a*. As for 'Id prayer, it consists of five *qunu'ts* in the first *rak'a* and four *qunu'ts* in the second *rak'a*.

He, peace be on him, has said: "As for the prayer for the dead, it consists of five *takbirs* (i.e. five times Allah Akbar), but it has no *taslim*, for it has neither *ruku'* nor *suju'd*."

The prayer for the deceased Muslims, male or female, is a general obligation (*wa'jib kifa''i*). It is performed as follows: At the first place, the worshipper should say the first *takbir* (*Alla'hu Akbar*), then recite the *Shaha'datayn*, then say the second *takbir* (*Alla'hu akbar*) and call down blessing upon the

Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, then say the third *takbir* (*Alla'hu akbar*) and pray for the faithful, then say the fourth *takbir* (*Alla'hu akbar*) and supplicate for the deceased, then say the fifth *takbir* (*Alla'hu akbar*) and depart. In this prayer it is not necessary for the persons who perform it to have done purity from ritual impurity (*al-hadath*) or filth (*al-khabath*), to have worn lawful clothes and covered the pudendum, as it is necessary for them to do that in the rest of the prayers. Some jurists think that such a prayer is a mere supplication, not a real prayer.

He, peace be on him, has said: "*Bismllahar rahma'nr rahim* is the Fa'tihat al-Kita'b (i. e. the Opening Chapter of the Book or Surat al-Fa'tiha) should be recited in a loud voice."

Among the recommended acts to which the worshipper should conform is reciting the *bismallah* in a loud voice, and that is certain in noon and afternoon prayers in the Surat al-Hamad and the Sura (which is recited after it).4

He, peace be on him, has said: "As for the obligatory *zaka't*, it is five dirhams per two hundred dirhams, and it is not obligatory on that which is less than that. As for increase, it is a dirham per forty dirhams, and it is not obligatory on that which is less than forty (dirhams) and it is not obligatory until one year has passed. It is not given (to anyone) except to men of authority (*wila'ya*) and knowledge. Half a dinar per twenty dinars."

Zaka't is among the creative regulations in economic, Islamic regime, for Islam has appointed it in order to put an end to poverty and to spread welfare among people and in addition to that it gathers men in the field of love and unify their ranks, for men are disposed by nature for love those who do good for them. *Zaka't* is the clearest aspect of charity.

This part of the speech of the Imam, peace be on him, shows the following:

Firstly, the Imam, peace be on him, explains the precepts regarding *Zaka't* due on the two coins (i. e. gold and silver): *Nisa'b* (the minimum amount of property liable to payment of *Zaka't*) is necessary. As for the *nisa'b* of silver, it is two hundred dirhams and five dirhams is obligatory on them, and then there is one dirham payable on them when they increase forty by forty whatever they reach. There is no *zaka't* on the dirhams less than two hundreds nor on those less than forty dirhams.

As for the *nisa'b* of gold, it is twenty dinars, and there is half a dinar due on them. When four dinars is an addition to them, then two Qirats, which equals one-tenth dinar, is obligatory on them. It (*zaka't*) is due on the addition to the four (dinars), and it is not obligatory on the dinars less than four. One full year is necessary for paying the *zaka't* of the two coins (i.e. gold and silver). If one year has not passed, then there is no *zaka't* obligatory on them.

Secondly, *zaka't* may be spent on eight types of men of whom is the poor and the needy, provided that they should not oppose the True Religion, for it is not permissible to give *zaka't* to them.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And the one–fifth tax (*khums*) is one time (taken) from the whole wealth.”

As for *khums*, it is one of the financial taxes which Islam has imposed and which the Shi‘ites of the members of the House (*Ahl al–Bayt*), peace be on them, have adopted; none of the Islamic sects has adopted it except them. Allah, the Exalted, has imposed *khums* for the greatest Prophet and his progeny, may Allah increase them in honor, in place of *zaka’t;* and it is obligatory on seven items of which are: the profits of earnings, the one year’s surplus of the responsible (*mukallaf*) and his own family from among the interest of handicrafts, agriculture, trades, wages, and the rest of the various kinds of earnings on which *khums* is obligatory.

Man spends some of his money on his hajj and visitations, his alms, tightening the bonds of kin, his gifts, his vows, his religious expiation, marrying his children, and other than these of which he is indeed and which he spends on lawful items. Accordingly, *khums* is divided into two equal shares: The first share is to be paid to the Imam , the blessings of Allah be on him, in the time of his appearance, but in the time of his occultation it (*khums*) is given to his deputy, the qualified just jurist, in order that he may spend it on spreading Islam, the precepts of religion, helping the men of knowledge, and other affairs through which he gains the pleasure of the Imam, peace be on him.

As for the second share of *khums*, it is given to the orphans of the Ha’shimites, their needy, and their tramps. In their scientific treatises, the Muslim jurists have mentioned many researches on *khums.*

He, peace be on him, has said: “And *al–‘ushr* (one–tenth tax) is obligatory on wheat, barley, dates, raisins, and all the seeds which come forth from earth, if they are five *wasaqs* (camel–loads). *Al–‘ushr* is due on them when they are irrigated by flowing water. The half of *al–‘ushr* is obligatory on them when they are irrigated by Persian wheels; this concerns the impoverished and the wealthy. A handful or two handfuls are taken out of the seeds. That is because ***Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its capacity****;* nor does He impose upon servant anything more than his ability. *Wasaq* (a camel load) is sixty *Sa”s* (a measure of capacity); *Sa”* is six *Ratls* (a weight); *Ratl* is four *Mudds* (measure); *Mudd* is two and a quarter Iraqi *Ratl*. Imam al–Sa’diq, peace be on him, said: ‘*Mudd* is nine Iraqi *Ratls* or six Medina’n *Ratls*.”

In this paragraph the Imam, peace be on him, has presented the *zaka’t* imposed on these four crops, which are wheat, barley, dates, and raisins. *Zaka’t* is obligatory on these corps. As for the *zaka’t* on the rest of the crops, it is recommended, so this statement of him, peace be on him: ‘and all the seeds which come forth from earth’ is joined to the four corps and apparently (*zaka’t*) is obligatory on them, but there is a group of authentic traditions which indicate that *zaka’t* is not obligatory (on the seeds except the four corps); there for, (the Imam’s statement) is regarded as recommended, and this is one of the sources of bringing traditions together, as the jurists say.

Zaka’t is due on the four crops when they reach the minimum amount (*nisa’b*) which is five *wasaqs*,

which is in this time estimated at eight hundred and forty-eight kilograms.[5] The amount which should be taken out of the *zaka't* of the crops is *al-'ushr* or one-tenth. That is when the crops are irrigated by flowing water and rain. Half of *al-'ushr* is obligatory on them when they are irrigated by Persian wheels, water pumps, water wheels, and the like. *Zaka't* is obligatory on him who has such an amount of crop whether he is a farmer, a land owner, rich, or poor.

He, peace be on him, has said: "As for *zaka't al-fitr*, it is a religious duty (*farida*) on the young and the old, free or slave. It is half a *sa'"* of wheat; *a sa'"* of dates and raisins. It should not be given to anyone except men of authority (*Ahl al-wila'ya*), for it is a religious duty."

As for *zaka't al-fitra*, it is the first financial obligation in Islam, and it is called the alms of bodies (*zaka't al-Abda'n*). It is obligatory on him who has gathered the conditions such as *bulu'gh* (ritual puberty, 15 years in the case of boys and 9 years in the case of girls), sanity, non-fainting, and non-poverty. When these conditions are available in the evening of the night of 'Id al-Fitr, then *zaka't* is obligatory on every Muslims and their breadwinners, whether they are young or old.

A *sa'"* on behalf of each person should be taken out, and the amount of *sa'"* is about three kilograms. The Imami jurists think that *zaka't al-fitra* should be one of foodstuffs famous in that country such as wheat, barely, dates, raisins, rice, durra, cheese. *Sa'"* is due on all these items. They also stipulate that this *zaka't* should be given to the believing follower of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and it is not permissible to give it to other than him.

He, peace be on him, has said: "The period of *hayd* (regular menstrual bleeding) may not be less than three days or more than ten days. A woman who has *istiha'da* (irregular bleeding) should perform the *ghusl* and pray. A menstruating woman should leave prayer and not perform these prayers later on as *qada"*; she should leave fasting and compensate for it (by fasting later on)."

This paragraph gives an account as follows:

1. The period of *hayd* (regular menstrual bleeding) may not be less than three days or more than ten days. As for bleeding which the woman sees more than ten days or less than three days, it is not regular menstrual bleeding or *hayd*; rather it is irregular bleeding or *istiha'da*.

2. *Istiha'da* is of three kinds: light bleeding, medium bleeding, and heavy bleeding. As for the precept of light bleeding, it is that *wudu"* is due for each obligatory prayer. As for the precept of medium bleeding, it is that *wudu"* is due for each prayer and the *ghusl* before the dawn prayer. As for the precept of heavy bleeding, it is that *wudu"* is due for each prayer and the *ghusl* for the dawn prayer. In these three kinds of *istiha'*da, the woman has to change the cotton which prevents blood from flowing.

3. As for the precepts regarding the acts of worship of a menstruating woman, it is obligatory on her to leave prayer and it is not obligatory on her to compensate for that prayer. As for fasting, it is not permissible for her to fast, and she should compensate for that fasting.

He, peace be on him, has said: “Fasting is observed in the month of Ramada’n when (the moon) is sighted and ends when the moon (of Shaw’wal) is sighted.”

The first and end of the blessed month of Ramada’n are established if the moon is sighted. That is according to these words of him, peace be on him: “Observe fasting when you sight the moon and end (it) when you sight it. (the moon of Shaw’wal)”

The first of the month of Ramada’n is not established through the words of astrologers and the like; rather it is established when thirty days of the month of Sha‘ba’n has passed. Likewise, the month of Shawwa’l is established when thirty days of the month of Ramada’n has passed.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And it is not permissible to perform the *tara’wih* (the long prayers in the nights of Ramada’n) in congregation.”

As for the *tara’wih*, they were not legislated in the time of the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. It was ‘Umar (b. al-Khatta’b) who originated them. They are twenty *rak‘as* apart from the odd prayer (*al-witr*). Their time is after the night prayer. It is recommended to him who performs the *tara’wih* to sit without praying for rest, for this reason they have been called the *tara’wih*. In them, congregation is recommended according to the viewpoints of the four Islamic schools.[6] The Imam did not permit congregation in them.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And it is recommended to fast three days in each month; (a day) in each ten days: Thursday in the first ten (days), Wednesday in the middle ten (days), and Thursday in the last ten (days).

“Fasting (in the month of) Sha‘ba’n is good and recommended. Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘Sha‘ba’n is my month, and the month of Ramada’n is the month of Allah.’ And if you compensate for the past month of Ramada’n in a separated (manner), it will be sufficient for you.”

The Imam, peace be on him, presented some recommended fasts of which is fasting for three days in each month. The best method in performing these fasts as the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned is the first Thursday of every month, the first Wednesday of the ten middle days, and the last Thursday of the last ten days.

It is recommended to fast the whole month of Sha‘ba’n. The Imam mentioned that if someone missed fasting the month of Ramada’n, he/she had to choose between continuing the compensatory days and separating them, for each of these two ways is sufficient for him/her.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And pilgrimage to the House (is incumbent on) him who is able to undertake the journey to it. And the way (*sabil*) is journey provisions and a she-camel. It is not permissible for him/her to make the pilgrimage except the greater pilgrimage (*mtamati‘an*). (*Hajj*) *al-ifra’d* (which consists of only the major pilgrimage without the *‘umra* (lesser) pilgrimage) and (*hajj al-Qura’n*)

which the non-Shi'ites (*'a'mma*) make are not permissible. And (*hajj*) *al-ihra'm* apart from *miqa't* (point and time) is not permissible. Allah said: *And accomplish the pilgrimage and the 'umra for Allah*.[7]The castrated sacrifice is not permitted, for it is defective. As for *al-mouju"* (the sacrifice whose testicles have been bruised), it is permissible."

The hajj is one of the five pillars on which Islam has been built. It is a political and spiritual act of worship which results in economic, health, and spiritual profits and interests. It is a political conference which brings the Muslims together in the Holiest Place, that they may know each other, discuss the economic and political problems of their countries and nations, and the like. The holy verse refers to that. He, the Exalted, said: ***And proclaim among men the pilgrimage: they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every remote path, that they may witness advantages for them and mention the name of Allah during stated days***.[8]

The Muslims have unanimously agreed on that it is obligatory on each Muslim to make the pilgrimage at least one time in his span of life. In this paragraph the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned a group of precepts regarding the *hajj*. They are as follows:

Firstly, it is incumbent on a Muslim to make the pilgrimage when he is able to secure its prerequisites such as journey provisions and a she-camel. These are the clearest two conditions of ability. Among its condition that he/she is able to walk with healthy body, and free in respect of action.

Secondly, the kinds of the *hajj* are three, and they are as follows:

A. *Hajj al-tamattu'*:

It is the religious duty of those who live within forty-eight miles of Mecca in all directions. The characteristics of this hajj are: *Ihra'm* (the ceremonies of 'umra and hajj) starts from inside Mecca, sacrifice is obligatory on it, 'umra therein precedes hajj, 'umra connects with it to the extent that they are as one act.

a) *Hajj al-Qira'n*[9]

As for *Hajj al-Qira'n*, it is the religious duty of those who live in Mecca and around it on the condition that it should not exceed the limit which has been mentioned for *hajj al-tamattu'*. *Al-Qa'rin* enters the state of pilgrimage from the house of his family. Driving a sacrifice in this hajj is a must and the hump of the sacrifice should be split in the right side and stained with its blood if it is a camel (*budna*); and a sandal, in which he had performed prayers, should be hung around the neck of the sacrifice if it is other than a camel (*budna*).

b) *Hajj al-ifra'd*,

It this the religious duty of those who live near Mecca just as *Hajj al-Qara'n*. The pilgrim enters the state of pilgrimage from the house of his family if it is nearer to Mecca than al-Miqa't (point and

time);otherwise he/she should enters the states of pilgrimage from al-Miqa't. Among the characteristics of *Hajj al-Qara'n* and *Hajj al-ifra'd* is that *al-'umra* therein is after the *hajj*, and he/she must have the intention of performing them separately.

Thirdly, entering into the state of ritual consecration (*ihra'm*) should start from *al-Miqa't*. It is not correct for him/her to start it before *al-Miqa't*, and it is not permissible for the responsible (*al-mukallaf*) to exceed al-Miqa't without *ihra'm* apart from the frequent and those who do not intend to enter Mecca during their passing by *al-Miqa't*.

Fourth, as for the sacrifice (*al-hadi*), it should be perfect in creation, so the one-eyed, the one with an ear of which something is cut, the castrated whose testicles have been pulled out are not permissible. As for the bruise of the testicles which is called *al-mouju"*, it is not a defect and is permissible.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And as for jihad (going to fight in the cause of Islam) is (performed) along with a just Imam, and he who fights and is killed for his property and his luggage is a martyr."

As for *jihad*, it is one of the doors to the Garden; Allah has open it for His special friends, as Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, says. It is of various kinds, which are as follows:

a) Jihad against the polytheists in order to summon them to Islam.

b) Jihad against the unbelievers who attack the Muslims.

c) Jihad against him who intends to kill a respected soul or taking money or capturing (his) wives. Perhaps this kind is called defense not jihad.

Jihad is obligatory in the presence of the Imam or his deputy who is appointed by him for performing jihad. He who is killed in the field of jihad is a martyr; the precepts regarding martyr is applied to him, hence he/she buried in his/her own clothes.

As for him who fights for his property, his baggage, his soul and is killed, then he has the reward of a martyr; he is washed and shrouded.

He, peace be on him, has said: "It is not lawful to kill any of the infidels in the city of precautionary dissimulation (*da'r al-taqiya*) except him who is a killer or a rebel. That is when you are not cautious of yourself or of taking the properties of men from among the opponents and the like."

As for the infidels who enter the protection (*dhimma*) of Islam, their blood is unlawful, and their conditions are safeguarded just as Muslims. The infidel loses this protection when he kills a respected soul or rebels against the religious authority in the country.

Likewise, it is forbidden to take the properties of the opponents and the like, for Islam has safeguarded the properties of men just as it has safeguarded their blood and honor.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And precautionary dissimulation (*taqiya*) in the city of the precautionary dissimulation (*da’r al-taqiya*) is obligatory. There is no sin upon him who takes an oath as precautionary dissimulation through which he repels wrongdoing from his own soul.”

As for precautionary dissimulation (*taqiya*), it was legislated in the time when the ruling authorities employed all their organs against the Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and their Shi‘ites. For example, in the time of the wicked pagan, Mu‘a’wiya b. Abu’ Sufya’n, person preferred being called infidel to being called a follower of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. Most Umayyad and ‘Abba’sid kings followed this infidel plan which was drawn by the son of Hind (Mu‘a’wiya). Had it not been for the wisdom of the pure Imams and their forcing their Shi‘ites to cling to precautionary dissimulation (*taqiya*), their would have been no name of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. As for Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, he gave a religious opinion that precautionary dissimulation (*taqiya*) was obligatory, and that there was no sin upon him who took an oath as precautionary dissimulation (*taqiya*).

He, peace be on him, has said: “And divorce in the *Sunna* (the Prophet’s sayings and practices) is according to what Allah, the Great and Almighty, has mentioned, and the *Sunna* of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. There is no divorce without *Sunna*; every divorce which opposes the Book is not divorce; every marriage which opposes the *Sunna* is not marriage.

“Do not marry more than four women. If you divorce woman three times according to the *Sunna*, it is not lawful for you to marry her unless she marries a husband other than you. The Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, said: ‘Beware of the women who are divorced three times, for they shall marry husbands.”

Divorce means breaking the relationship of marriage and it is among the things which Allah, the Exalted, detests. That is because it leads to the collapse of social cells, spread hatred and enmity among men. This paragraph contains some precepts regarding divorce and marriage, of which are the following:

Firstly, divorce is regarded as correct when the following conditions are available:

A. The husband must be sane and adult, and should not be forced by anyone to divorce his wife, for the divorce of the boy, the insane, and the drunken who has no intention is invalid.

B. The marriage should be permanent, for the there is no divorce in the fixed-term marriage (*Muta’a*).

C. The wife should be free from *hayd* (regular menstrual bleeding) and *nifa’s* (childbirth bleeding) if the husband had already married her.

D. The formula of divorce, it is that the husband should say: You are divorced or she is divorced.

E. Two just witnesses should hear the formula of divorce.

These are some conditions which should be available in correct divorce. As for divorce other than this such as the divorce of the joker, the inattentive, and the heedless is invalid according to the viewpoints of the Imami Shi'ites, whilst some Muslim schools regard it as correct.[10] Divorce is also invalid unless it occurs by the virtue of these words: You are divorced or she is divorced. Some Muslim schools regard divorce as permissible when it occurs by the virtue of these words such as *al-fira'q* (separation) *al-Sara'h* (dismissal), and the like.

Secondly, the marriage which opposes the *Sunna* is invalid such as the marriage of the woman who is forced or she who is during the *'idda* (period of waiting after the dissolution of a marriage) or she was among the unlawful because of kinship or relationship by marriage; marrying such women is invalid.

Thirdly, the man has no right to marry more than four women by the virtue of permanent contract.

Fourth, when the wife is divorced three times, it is not lawful for her husband to remarry her until she marries a husband other than him.

He (Imam al-Ridha'), peace be on him, has said: "And calling down blessing upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, is in all situations such as the winds, sneezing, and the like.

"Showing love for the friends of Allah and for their friends, hating His enemies, renouncing them and their leaders (Imams) (are part of piety)."

It is recommended to call blessing down upon the greatest Messenger, the Savor of mankind and its guide to happiness and good in this world and the next. How great his achievements toward mankind are! So it is his own right against mankind to call down blessing upon him in all situations.

One of Islamic manners is to show love toward the friends of Allah and their friends, to hate the enemies of Allah and to renounce them and their leaders (Imams), for that is one of the elements of reverential fear and Islamic message.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And honoring the parents. If they are polytheists, then do not obey them[11] and keep company with them in this world kindly, for Allah says: *Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming. And if they contend with you that you should associate with me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them*.[12] The Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, said: 'They (parents) do not fast for them (children); nor do they pray (for them), but they order them to disobey Allah, so they obey them.'"

Then he has said: "I (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') heard Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, say: 'He who obeys creature in other than obeying Allah disbelieves and adopts a god other than Allah.'"

Among marvelous Islamic legislation is honoring the parents and showing kindness toward them, making them occupy the second rank after the Almighty Creator in showing obedience and submission to their orders. That is as reward for their arduous efforts during bringing up their children, especially as it

concerns mother. Were it not for her care, her affection, her mercy, her child would not live. It is she who feeds him and takes care of bringing him up. Therefore, how great her right is!

Showing obedience to the parents in other than disobeying Allah is obligatory. As for disobeying (Him) by the virtue of showing obedience to them is not obligatory.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And the conditional slaughter of the embryo is similar to that of its mother.”

The Imam, peace be on him, has presented a precept regarding the embryo from among the animals whose flesh can be eaten. When its mother is slaughtered and it dies in its uterus, its flesh is lawful. When it comes out alive and is slaughtered, its flesh is lawful; otherwise, it is unlawful.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And the sins of the prophets are small and are forgiven for them by the virtue of Prophethood.”

More likely, this sentence is forged and has been put in the speech of the Imam, peace be on him, for the prophets were infallible and no disobedience had issued from them. Moreover, the Imam himself has established many proofs of that in some of his debates.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And the religious duties are according to Allah’s command; there is no reduction in them; and none inherits along with the parents and the child except the husband and the wife; the possessor of the share is more entitled than him who has no share; and *al-‘asaba* (males who belong to the deceased) do not belong to the religion of Allah.”

In this paragraph the Imam, peace be on him, has presented some precepts regarding inheritances, and they are as follows:

Firstly, there is no reduction in the religious duties and inheritances which Allah has imposed (on men). This can be explained as follows: If the inheritors are numerous and their shares are more than the religious share for example, if the deceased lefts behind him a wife, two parents, and two daughters then the shares in this religious duty is one-fourth, two one-sixths, and two one-thirds. Accordingly, the Sunnis believe in *al-‘awl* (reduction); which means that reduction must include each of the possessors of the shares according to the ratio of his share. As for the Shi‘ites, they say that reduction includes some inheritors, not all of them, and they have given proofs of that in the researches on inheritance.

Secondly, the first degree in inheritances is of two types: one of them is the parents apart from the grandfathers and grandmothers; the other is the children, even if they descend, males and females. The wife inherits along with these two types, for she inherits one-fourth when there is no child, and the one-eighth when there is a child. As for the husband, he inherits the one-fourth when there is a child, and the half when there is no child.

Thirdly, there is no *'asaba* in inheritances according to the viewpoints of the Shi'ites; other than them from among the followers of the Islamic sects also adopt this view, and example of that, when the deceased leaves behind him one daughter, then she will have the half of what he has left behind him according to the religious duty, and she will inherit the second half by the virtue of distribution. The view of those other than the Shi'ites is that the second half of property is given to *al-'asaba* or the males who belong to the deceased without means or the means of the male, and perhaps the uncles of the female, according to their details.[13]

He, peace be on him, has said: "And *al-'aqiqa* on behalf of the child, male and female, is on the seventh day; its (the baby's) hair is shaved on the seventh day; it is given a name on the seventh day; gold or silver equals to the weight of its hair is given as alms on the seventh day."

The Imam, peace be on him, has presented some religious recommended acts which must be performed on behalf of the new-born baby, and they are as follows:

A. *Al-'qiqa* (sacrifice):

It is recommended that a ram should be sacrificed on the seventh day if the child is a male, and that a ewe should be sacrificed if the child is female. This was legislated by the greatest Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, when his grandson, his sweet basil, the master of the youths of the Garden, Imam al-Hasan, peace be on him, was born. Likewise, this was done by him when his second grandson the master of the youth of the Garden, Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him, was born.

B. Shaving the hair of the child:

It is recommended that the hair of the child to be shaved on the seventh day of its birth, and that gold or silver equals to its weight to be given as alms to the needy. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family performed that on behalf of his two grandsons and his two sweet basil, peace be on them.

C. Giving a name to the child:

It is strongly recommended that a name should be given to the child on the seventh day, and that the name should be blessed like those of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and of his testamentary trustees, the great Imams.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And the acts of the creatures were created as the creation of an ordainment, not the creation of structure."

The Imam, peace be on him, has referred to the acts of the creatures, for Allah, the Exalted, had knowledge of them, and He did not create them as the creation of structure; otherwise they will be ascribed to Him.

He, peace be on him, has said: "Do not believe in compulsion and authorization." These words give an

account of the beliefs of the Shi'ites who have disproved compulsion and authorization and clung to the intermediate position. They have refuted compulsion and authorization. Their Islamic books are full of proofs of that. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has said: "Allah, the Great and Almighty, does not punish the innocent because of the crime of the criminal, and He does not torment the children because of the sins of the parents, for He said: ***And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another***.[14]***And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for***.[15] ***And Allah forgives and does not wrong***."

Divine Justice requires that every person is responsible for his own sins, and none other than him is responsible for them, hence Allah does not punish the innocent out of the sins of the sinner. However, the enemies of Allah decided the opposite of that, for example, Ziya'd b. Abih, the sinful criminal, has said: "I punish the innocent due to the guilty, and I punish because of doubt and accusation." Islam renounces this reckless policy because it belongs to its enemies and opponents.

Another example of Allah's justice is that He does not torture the children because of their parents' sins, for He says: "And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another. And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for." This is the utmost justice.

He (Imam al-Ridha'), peace be on him, has said: "Allah does not impose upon the creatures the obedience to him whom He knows that he will wrong (the creatures) and lead them astray; nor does He chooses (such a person) for (delivering) His message; nor does He choose from among His creatures him whom He knows that he will disbelieve (in Him) and serve Satan apart from Him."

Surely Allah, the Most High, seeks pure justice for His creatures and summons them to rebel against wrongdoers and dictatorial rulers. Besides He, the Exalted, chooses for delivering His message and putting right His creatures those who have perfection and excellence of which is that they do not disbelieve in Allah; nor do they worship the stoned Satan.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And Islam is (something) other than faith; every believer is a Muslim, but not every Muslim is a believer. The believer does not steal; nor does he drink wine; nor does he kill the soul which Allah has forbidden without any right. As for *asha'b al-Hudu'd*[16], they are neither believers nor unbelievers.[17] Allah will not make a believer enter the Fire, for He had promised him the Garden and immortality therein. He for whom the Fire is obligatory because of hypocrisy, transgression, or a big sin will not resurrected with the believers; nor will he be one of them, and the Hell-Fire will encompass none except the unbelievers. He who enters the Fire because of clinging to sin, associating something with (Allah), disbelieving in Him, showing hypocrisy, and committing a big sin is a sinner. And intercession is permissible for those who seek it."

Islam is wider in circle and more comprehensive in subject than belief. He who professes the two testimonies (i.e. I witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger) is a Muslim, his blood is spared; his property and his honor are safeguarded; whether he is a believer or a

sinner. As for belief, it is a talent which prevents man from committing sins and crimes, and prevents him from opposing Allah, the Most High. Allah, the Exalted, has prepared for believers provisions and honorable position in the Abode of Immortality. He will make them dwell wherever He desires of the Garden. As for the position of him who commits great sins, it will be in the Hellfire, which is an evil fate.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And *Al-amr bi al-ma'ru'f* (directing others towards good) and *nay 'an al-munkar* (directing others away from evil) is obligatory by the virtue of the tongue."

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned *al-amr bi al-ma'ru'f* and *al-nay 'an al-munkar* which are two pillars of Islam, and lead to establishing noble society dominated by human customs. It is incumbent upon every Muslim to carry out his duty toward his religion and his country, so he/she should order others to do good and forbid them from doing evil. In their treatises the jurists have mentioned the pre-conditions of this religious duty.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And belief is performing the religious duties and refraining from the unlawful; and belief is knowledge with the heart, profession by the means of the tongue, and action through the limbs."

The Imam, peace be on him, has defined belief as performing the religious duties imposed by Allah and refraining from the things made unlawful by Him. He has also said that belief penetrates the depths of the heart and inner selves.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And *al-takkbir* (i.e. exclaiming 'Allah is Great!') in ('Id) al-Addha' is after ten prayers starting from the noon prayer on the Day of Immolation (*al-Nahr*), and in ('Id) al-Fitr there are five prayers after the evening prayers on the night of ('Id) al-Fitr."

It is strongly recommended that one should exclaim *'Allahuakbar'* in ('Id) al-Addha' after ten prayers, also it is recommended that one should exclaim *'Allahuakbar'* on the night of ('Id) al-Fitr after the evening prayer and after four prayers. It is also recommended that one should recite the supplications transmitted from the Imams of guidance, peace be on them.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And the woman in childbed (*nifsa"*) sits (i.e. refrain from praying) for twenty days, not more than it. If she becomes pure before that, she performs the prayers; otherwise, to twenty days, and then she performs *ghusl*, say the prayers, and performs the acts of the woman in the state of *istiha'da*."

More likely, this paragraph is forged; it is not part of the speech of the Imam, peace be on him, for the Imami jurists, who give religious opinions according to the traditions transmitted from the Imams of the A*hl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, have unanimously agreed that there is no limit to *nifa's* light bleeding and the limit to *nifa's* heavy bleeding is ten days from the time of childbirth. And if she sees blood after the ten days, she should not regard it as *nifa's* bleeding, rather as *istiha'da* bleeding. The precepts for the woman in the state of *nifa's* is like those for woman in the state of *hayd*; it is forbidden for her what is

forbidden for the menstruating woman. In this connection there are important researches mentioned by the jurists.

He, peace be on him, has said: “He/she should believe in the chastisement in grave, Munkar, Nakir, Resurrection after death, reckoning, the Balance, and the Straight Path.”

It is incumbent on the Muslim to believe in the chastisement in grave if he has committed sins and crimes. It is also obligatory on him/her to believe that Munkar and Nakir will question him, that he will be resurrected after death, that he will be reckoned because of his deeds, and that his deeds will be placed in the Balance. So he whose good deeds are heavier than his evil deeds enters the Garden; otherwise he enters the Fire and punished according to his deeds, *and your Lord wrongs none*. Moreover he/she should believe that they will pass through the Straight Path. If their deeds are good, they will simply pass through it; otherwise, they will fall into the Fire.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And (he/she should) renounce the Imams of error and their followers; they should support Allah’s friends.”

Surely renouncing the Imams of error and their followers, and supporting Allah’s friends are of the important elements in Islamic religion, which condemns oppression, resists tyranny, and spreads justice among men.

He, peace be on him, has said: “Little and plentiful wine is forbidden. Every intoxicant is wine. Everything whose increased amount brings about intoxication, its littleness is unlawful. The compelled should not drink wine, for it kills him.”

Wine is one of the blights which destroy health, for it leads to dangerous diseases as well as it corrupts ethics and demolishes noble ideals of which man boasts. Forbidding wine is among the most important Islamic legislation aiming at raising the level of man. As for the Imam, peace be on him, he has warned mankind against drinking wine whether little or plentiful, and that is because of the dangerous harms which result from it.

He, peace be on him, has said: “Beasts and birds with claws are forbidden; the spleen is forbidden, for it is blood; sheatfish, floating (dead) fish, eel, pipefish, scale-less fish, and gizzard-less birds are forbidden.”

Islam has forbidden meat of some animals, and that is because such meat has some corrupt things which bring about harms to general health. The Imam has mentioned some of these animals as follows:

1. Beasts of prey: It is forbidden to eat the flesh of beasts of prey, whether they are wild such as lions, wolves, and tigers or birds such as falcons, Egyptian vultures, and the like.

2. The spleen: It is forbidden to eat the spleen, for it is blood, as the Imam, peace be on him, says. Likewise, it is forbidden to eat the bladder of sacrifice, the placenta, the spinal cord, the glands, the

vertebra of brain, and the like which the jurists have mentioned, for they bring about heavy harms.

3. Sheatfish: It is forbidden to eat sheatfish, which are water animals and which dogs do not eat. Likewise, it is forbidden to eat fish floating (dead) on water, eel, pipefish, and all scale-less fish.

4. Gizzard-less birds: It is forbidden to eat the birds which have neither gizzard nor craw nor spurs on their feet. It is lawful to eat the birds whose flapping is more than their gliding.

He, peace be on him, has said: "It permissible to eat the eggs whose tips are different; it is forbidden to eat the eggs whose tips are the same."

As for eggs, they are forbidden and lawful according to the birds which lay them. The Imam, peace be on him, has given a general rule for recognizing lawful and unlawful eggs: If the two tips of the egg are equal, then it is forbidden to eat it; if they are different, then it is permissible to eat it.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And (he/she should) refrain from great sins which are: killing the soul which Allah has forbidden, drinking wine, disobedience to parents, escaping from marching for war, swallowing the property of the orphans unjustly, eating what dies of itself and blood and flesh of swine and that over which any other (name) than (that of) Allah has been invoked without any necessity for it, swallowing down usury, ill-gotten property after evidence, game of hazard, diminishing measure and weight, despairing of Allah's mercy, feeling secure from Allah's plan, losing hope of Allah's mercy, helping the oppressive and relying on them, binding oath, withholding the rights without any pinch of poverty, vainglory, unbelief, extravagance, wastefulness, treason, concealing testimony, amusing things which turn (men) away from remembering Allah such as singing and playing on the strings, and persistence on minor sins. These are the fundamental doctrines of religion. Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; may Allah bless His Prophet and his family and greet them with a greeting.[18]"

With this (paragraph) we will end this excellent letter, which contains some theological researches and basic, juristic matters.

1. His statement 'the odd prayer (al-witr) is three rak'as' means that the first two rak'as are by the virtue of the intention of the even prayer (al-shaf') and the other by the virtue of the intention of the odd prayer.
2. His statement 'and two rak'as after the odd prayer' means the morning supererogatory prayer.
3. A farsakh (league) is about three miles.
4. Al-'Urwat al-Withqa'.
5. Minha'jj al-Sa'lihin, vol. 1, p. 266.
6. Al-Fiqh 'ala' al-Madha'hib al-Arba'a, vol. 1, 340-343.
7. Qur'an, 2, 196.
8. Ibid., 22, 27-28.
9. Hajj al-Qira'n is pilgrimage in common, to perform two affairs at the same time.
10. Fiqh al-Sunna.
11. In al-'Uyu'n it has been mentioned: "And honoring the parents is obligatory. If they are polytheists, then there is no obedience to them nor to other than them in disobeying the Creator, for there is no obedience to creature in disobeying Allah."

12. Qur'an, 31, 14–15.
13. Minha'jj al–Sa'lihin, vol. 2, p. 279.
14. Qur'an, 6, 165.
15. Ibid., 53, 40.
16. Asha'b al–Hudu'd are those who are punished for committing a certain crime.
17. This means that they are Muslims, but they are neither believers nor unbelievers, in this manner it has been mentioned the book al–'Uyu'n.
18. Tuhaf al–'Uqu'l, pp. 415–423.

2. His Golden Medical Dissertation

The sciences of Imam al–Ridha', peace be on him, were not confined to the precepts of Islamic law; rather they included all kinds of science of which was medicine. The Imam was unique in medicine, and the clear proof of that is this dissertation which al–Ma'mu'n called *al–Risa'la al–Dhahabiya fi al–Tibb* (the golden medical dissertation). As al–Ma'mu'n admired the dissertation, he gave the Medal of Doctor to the Imam, peace be on him. The dissertation contains general programs necessary for putting right man's body and protecting it from diseases, so it is regarded as the main base of preventive medicine in these times and as a great means of improving health.

Anyhow, it is necessary for us to give a brief outline of this dissertation before presenting it. That is as follows:

The Reason for Writing it

Al–Ma'mu'n's palace was distinguished by that it was most times one of the seminars of knowledge and literature, especially as it concerns the time of Imam al–Ridha', peace be on him, the great figure of this community and pioneer of its intellectual, and scientific renaissance, for the 'Abba'sid palace was changed into a theater for philosophical and scientific researches, as we mentioned in the previous chapters.

One of the scientific researches which were presented in that seminar was on man's body, which contains marvelous cells, organs and systems which show the wisdom and wonderful power of the Almighty Creator. The people discussed those things which put right and corrupted man's body. The seminar included the greatest scholars and leaders of whom are the following:

1. Imam al–Ridha'.

2. Al–Ma'mu'n.

3. Yohnna' b. Ma'sawayh.

4. Gabriel b. Bakhtishu'‘

5. Sa'lih b. BAhla al-Hindi.

These people discussed medicine, but Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, remained silent, so al-Ma'mu'n asked him with admiration: "Abu' al-Hasan, what do you say about this matter which we are discussing today, and which is necessary for recognizing these things, useful and harmful foodstuffs, and directing the body?"

Al-Ma'mu'n asked the Imam to open for him horizons to the science of systems of man's body, to guide him to useful and harmful foodstuffs, and those things which put right and harmed man's body.

The Imam answered him, saying: "I have of it knowledge of what I have personally tested and came to know about its accuracy by experience and by the passage of time in addition to what I was told by my ancestors of what nobody afford to be ignorant of, nor excused for leaving it. I shall compile it with an equal portion of what everyone should know."

Surely the Imam, peace be on him, was among the keepers of wisdom and inheritors of the prophets, for he had the knowledge of what the people needed from among the affairs of their religion and their world. As a result the Imam responded to al-Ma'mu'n's request and supplied him with *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya fi al-Tibb*.

The Explanation and Translation of the Dissertation

As this dissertation was of great importance, it was explained and translated by some scholars who have been mentioned in the introduction to it by His Eminence al-Muhaqqiq al-Hujjah al-Sayyid Mahdi al-Khurasa'ni. That is as follows:

1. *Tarjamat al-'Alawi lil Tibb al-Radawi* by Sayyid Diya'' al-Din Abu' al-Ridha' Fadl Allah b. 'Ali al-Ra'wandi (died 548 A. H.).

2. *Tarjamat al-Dhahabiya bi al-Fa'risiya* by Fayd Allah 'Usa'ra al-Tassturi, a contemporary of Fath 'Ali Kha'n.

3. *Tarjamat al-Dhahabiya bi al-Fa'risiya* by Muhammad Ba'qir al-Majjlisi (died 1111 A. H.)

4. Ibn Muhammad Ha'shim al-Tabib explained it in Persian.

5. Muhammad Sharif b. Muhammad Sa'diq al-Khawa'tu'n explained it and mentioned the explanation in his book *Ha'fiz al-Abbda'n*.

6. It was explained by Sayyid 'Abd Allah Shubbar (died 242 A. H.).

7. Mirza Muhammad Ha'di b. Mirza Muhammad Sa'lih al-Shira'zi explained it and named it *'Afiyat al-Bariya fi Sharh al-Dhahabiya*. He was a contemporary of Sulta'n Husayn al-Safawi.

8. Al-Mawla' Muhammad b. al-Ha'jj Muhammad Hasan al-Mashhadi al-Mudarris.

9. Al-Sayyid Shams al-Din Muhammad Badi' al-Radawi al-Mashhadi explained *al-Dhahabiya* and ended it in 1125 A. H.

10. Muhammad b. Yahya' explained *al-Dhahabiya* in Persian.

11. Nawru'z 'Ali al-Basta'mi explained *al-Dhahabiya* and mentioned the explanation in his book *Firdous al-Tawa'rikh*.

12. Al-Hajj Mirza Ka'zim al-Mu'sawi al-Zanja'ni (died 1292) explained it and entitled the explanation as *al-Mahmu'diya*.

13. Al-Sayyid Nasr Allah al-Mu'sawi al-Aru'mi explained it in Persian and named the explanation as *al-Tibb al-Radawi*.

14. Maqbu'l Ahmed explained it in Urdu' and named the explanation as *al-Dhahabiya fi Assra'r al-'Ulu'm al-Tabi'iya*, printed in Hayderaba'd.

15. Al-Sayyid Mahmu'd wrote *Mafa'tih al-Sihha* in which he gathered the medicine of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, the medicine of the Imams, and *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya* along with little explanation in Persian, printed in al-Najaf al-Asraf in 379 A. H.

16. Al-Sayyid Mirza 'Ali explained *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya* in Persian.

17. Al-Sayyid Husayn b. Nasr Allah al-Aru'mi al-Mu'sawi wrote *Tarjamat al-Mu'sawi fi al-Tibb al-Radawi*.

18. Abu' al-Qa'sim Saha'b explained it in Persian and named the explanation as *Bihda'sht Radawi*, and it was printed at the end of volume one of his book *Razandagani Hazrat Imam Ridha'*, peace be on him, pp. 301-350.

19. Dr. al-Sayyid Sa'hib Zayni explained *al-Risa'lah* (the dissertation) in the light of modern medicine, and the explanation was printed in the *Multaqa' al-'Asrayn* periodical series, in Baghdad.

20. 'Abd al-Wa'si' translated *al-Risa'la* into Persian.[1]

As this dissertation is of great importance, it has been written in ancient calligraphy. An ancient copy, handwritten by 'Abd al-Rahma'n b. 'Abd Allah al-Karkhi in 715 A. H., is available at the Imam al-Hakim Library, serial 237.

Al-Ma'mu'n praises the Golden Medical Dissertation

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, sent his *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya* (golden medical dissertation) to al-Ma'mu'n, and he admired it and ordered it to be written in gold, to be copied many times, to be given to his sons, the members of his family, and the machinery of his government. He also ordered copies of it to be deposited at his depository of wisdom (*Buyu't al-Hikma*). Without doubt *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya* was shown to the great physicians of his time, and they read it. Accordingly, al-Ma'mu'n praised it through the following letter: "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise belongs to Allah, Qualified for praise and its Guardian, the end and beginning of it belongs to him, the Possessor of blessings, favors, and kindness. I praise Him for His uninterrupted blessings and favors, and I praise Him for His gifts and grants with a praise which gives rise to His increase and brings (me) near to Him. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah with the witness of one who is loyal to Him through belief, not of the one who denies His Lordship and Oneness; rather the witness which confirms His ascription to Himself; and that He is just as He, the Great and Almighty, says: *Say: He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him*. Such is our Lord, the Great and Almighty; and may Allah bless the master of the first and the last, Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah, the last of the prophets.

"Now then, I have reviewed the dissertation of my 'Aladwide learned cousin, loved and virtuous one, the logical physician, which deals with the betterment of the body, the conduct of bathing, the balance of nutrition, and I found it very well organized and one of the best blessings. I carefully studied it, reviewed and contemplated upon it, till its wisdom manifested itself to me, its benefits became obvious, and it found its place my heart, so I learned it by heart and I understood it by mind, I found it to be a most precious item to post, a great treasure, and a most useful thing, so I ordered it to be written in gold due to its being precious, good, abundantly blessed, and I called it *al-Mudahhaba* (the golden one) and deposited it at the depository of wisdom after I had it copied down by the descendants of Ha'shim, the youths of the nation. Bodies become healthy by balanced diets, and life becomes possible by overcoming disease and through life wisdom is achieved, through wisdom the Garden is won. It is worthy of being safeguarded and treasured; it a place of qualification and consideration, a reliable arbitrator an authority adviser and a source of knowledge, to which commander and forbidder yield. It is so because it came out of the houses of those who derive their knowledge from the knowledge of the chosen Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, the missive of the prophets, the proofs of the testamentary trustees, the manners of scholars, the cure to the hearts and the sick from among men of ignorance and blindness, Allah's pleasure and blessings be upon them, the first of them and the last, the young and the old.

"I showed it to the elite from among my closest train who are known for their wisdom and knowledge of medicine, and who are authors of books, those who are counted among men of knowledge and described with wisdom. Each one of them lauded it and thought highly of it, elevated it with esteem and evaluated it in order to be fair to its author, submitting to him, and believing in the wisdom he included

therein, so if those after us from among our children, the children of our state, our subjects, the rest of the people from various classes come across this *Risa'la* (medical dissertation), they should recognize its importance, his talent, and his perfect favor; they should take it with gratitude, for it is more precious than agates, more important than pearls and corals; they should learn it by heart and think of it day and night, for it brings them benefit and safety from all diseases, Allah willing, Allah bless His Messenger Muhammad and all his good, pure children. Allah is sufficient for us and is the Best Agent. Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds."

Al-Ma'mu'n has praised the Imam for his medical dissertation and his praise gives an account of the following:

A. Its Medical Contents

As for the contents of the Imam's medical dissertation, they are as follows:

Firstly, the betterment of the body, protecting it from diseases, and making it enjoy perfect health, for the medical dissertation includes general programs for it.

Secondly, the conduct of bathing which is one of the basic elements of health as well as it takes care of the cleanness of the body; like wise, it takes care of creating activity therein.

Lastly, the balance of nutrition on which man's health and protection from diseases depend on.

B. His Studying it

Al-Ma'mu'n carefully studied the Imam's medical dissertation. He viewed reading it, and it manifested its wonders and great wisdom to him. He found it as one of the treasured books and among the mines of wealth, for it contained the fundamentals of general health and rules of medicine in the time when medicine was in the first stage. This medical dissertation is regarded as a development in this science, for it has opened brilliant ways to it.

C. His Showing it to the Physicians

Al-Ma'mu'n showed the Imam's medical dissertation to the great physicians of his time, so each one of them lauded it, adopted it, thought highly of it, elevated it with esteem, and evaluated it. All those great physicians who read it admitted the excellence and experience of the Imam, peace be on him, in this science. These are some of the contents in this praise.

The Text of the Golden Medical Dissertation

As for the text of this medical excellent dissertation, we have quoted it from the book entitled *Tibb al-Imam al-Ridha'*, which is one of the publications of the al-Haydariya Press. It was printed in the year

1385 A. H., and it reads as follows: “In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Know, Commander of the faithful, when Allah tries a servant with a disease, he appoints for him a medicine in order to cure himself with it, and for every kind of disease there is a kind of medicine, conduct, and prescription.”

This paragraph gives an account of Allah’s firm wisdom in creating man, who contains wonderful systems which are subject to various kinds of diseases. Allah, the Exalted, creates a disease and creates a medicine for destroying and putting an end to such a disease. Nowadays, medicine has reached zenith: antibiotics such as penicillin and oromycin have been discovered, the science of surgery has been developed, so a group of diseases such as tuberculosis, enteritis, and typhoid has been folded and thrown into the sea. Accordingly, modern medicine has confirmed the wise words of the grandson of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who says that Allah appoints a medicine for each disease. As a result, those diseases which have no cure will be omitted from the file of medicine.

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, has said: “Man’s body is just like a kingdom: The heart is the king of the body; the (blood) vessels, the limbs, and the brain are workers. The house of the king is his heart; his land is the body; the helpers are his hands, his legs, his eyes, his lips, his tongues, and his ears; his storekeepers are his stomach and his abdomen; and his chamberlain is his chest. Therefore, the hands are two helpers which bring (things) near, take (them) away, and work as the king reveals to them. The legs carry the kings wherever he likes. The eyes lead him to that which disappears from him, for the king is behind a curtain and does not reach it except through them. They are also his two lamps; they are fort and well-fortified place of the body. The ears introduce nothing to the king except that which agrees with him, for they are unable to bring in anything unless the king inspires to them. When the king inspires to them, he keeps silent and listen to them. Then he answers whatever he likes; and the tongue explains on his behalf with many tools of which are the wind of the heart, the steam of the stomach, and the help of the two lips; and the two lips have no strength except by the means of man, and they are in need of each other.”

The wise Imam has shown man’s body; this wonderful body through which Allah’s mighty power, His marvelous creation, and His firm regulation have manifested themselves. In this connection Allah, the **Exalted, says: *O man, what has beguiled you from your Lord, the Gracious One, Who created you, then made you complete, then made you symmetrical, into whatever form He pleased He constituted you***. Concerning this body containing systems and cells which none can describe, the pioneer of wisdom and eloquence in Islam, Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, says: “Do you think that you are a small body, while the greatest world has folded itself in you.”

Yes, man is not a limited skeleton; nor is he a small body; rather he contains the whole world, so he is a group of universes and worlds.

The Prophet’s grandson, source of knowledge and wisdom (i.e. Imam al-Ridha’) has likened man’s body to the government whose machinery consists of a president, soldiers, helpers, and a land over which it

rules. The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the following main organs and systems of the body:

A. The Heart

The heart, it is one of Allah's marvelous signs in man's body, for it pumps the blood to all parts of the body, and the blood conveys food and oxygen in order to distribute them among all places of the body, and then it conveys the waste products in order to rid the body of them.2

The heart pumps the blood to the lungs in order that they may take adequate supply of oxygen from the air which man breathes. In the lungs, the blood gets rid of some waste products which it gathers from the parts of the blood and which take form of a gas called carbon dioxide. The heart also pumps the blood to the kidneys.3 As for the regulation of the beats of the heart, it is one of the secrets of creation and origination; the average of the beats of the heart is seventy times per minute. So their average amounts to one hundred thousand times a day, forty million times a year, and over two thousand millions in middle age. Therefore, we must think of this great glorification which never ceases nor flags by night and day. We must think of this marvelous sign in the body, which is the organization of heat. There is something like thermometer in the body. When sensory news comes from the skin and tells about the external surroundings and degree of their heat, this area which is in the brain stem and what is on it hurries to the circulatory system and urges it to protect the external boundaries and orders it to play the role of the sincere worker during this crisis, and the flexible circulatory system responds to it, and quickly the contraction of the blood vessels occur, and the heart pumps adequate supply of blood to the skin. If the skin is cold, the flow of blood which conveys heat increases in order to remove the coldness and vice versa.4

Surely, the heart is the source of man's and animal's life; therefore, it is the king of the body, and all man's organs are its soldiers and helpers.

B. The Nerves

The nerves, they are the sinew of life; and it is they which control the body; and they play an important role during anger, fear, the rest of the emotions, match, sexual work, and the like. Some nerves are called voluntary, and they control a group of muscles in the body which are called the striated muscles. In this connection some important physiological researches have been mentioned; therefore, the nerves are proof of the Wise Creator's mightiness.

C. The Brain

As for the brain, it is the greatest of all Allah's creatures; it dominates the whole body, controls all movements of it; and drives it to wherever it desires; and by it man is distinguished from the rest of animals. Allah has singled out the brain for man, and through it He has ennobled man over all His creatures.

Surely, the brain is a world of wonders. No creature can match it in greatness, for it contains stores which never are full and it preserves whatever knowledge is deposited in it. If we want to mention the wonders of the brain, then we have to write a full book about them. Glory belongs to Him who has originated and created the brain!

D. The Hands and the Legs

Among the amazing organs in man's body is the hand, which helps man accomplish his own needs such as preparing food and drink, and which help him perform wonderful works such as writing, goldsmithing, building, and others. The hand carries out all these works according to signals and guidance it receives from the brain, for it is as a worker in the factory of the brain; likewise, the leg helps man walk and accomplish his own needs. Were it not for the hand and the leg, man would do nothing. So glory belongs to Allah, the Wise!

E. The Ear

One of the marvelous organs in man's body is the ear, which contains the following:

A. The Outer Ear: It is the lobe of the outer ear along with the cannel which leads to the eardrum.

B. The Middle Ear: It has three bones just as the tools of a blacksmith: the hammer and the anvil, the stirrup, and the two muscles of the hammer and the stirrup; there is a lobe which connects the middle ear to the pharynx.

C. The Inner Ear: It contains something like snail and three semicircular canals, and these parts are connected with each other and interlocked. Membranous canals like bags are in the semicircular canals, and Korti organ is in the cochlea, which circles two times and a half.

It is the inner ear which receives sounds. As for the middle and the outer ears, they convey sounds.

Sound results from the vibration of the molecules of a matter, so it does not travel unless there is a material means such as liquid air, gases, solid bodies, and the like. Medical books have mentioned important researches regarding sound, which reveals the Wise Creator's mightiness and marvelous creation.[5]

F. The Eye

As for the eye, it is among Allah's greatest signs, for through it man receives light, knows external surroundings, realizes forms and colors. It is the most marvelous room of art photography; for it is a dark room and closed by three walls which are from outward to inward: the sclera which gives the white color to the eye; the choroid which irrigates the eye through its veins; the retina which conveys the sensitive elements; cones and rods which receive light. In the front there is a thin crystal called the cornea which

let the light coming to the eye enter.

Then the light, after the cornea, passes through the transparent liquid which refracts light; it is the aqueous humor which lies between the cornea and the iris; and it is the iris which gives the familiar color to the eyes, in the middle of it there is a special opening receiving light and is like the lens of a photographer; it is called the pupil. When light enters the pupil, it faces a crystal of a new kind; it is the crystal body (the lens); it is the most marvelous crystal in existence, for it expands and contracts to the extent that the forms of its convexity are very different; therefore, the eye harmonizes with the views before it. If the visible distance is near, it expands and changes in order to fit the condition, and vice-versa; therefore, it is the sane, motive crystal. After the crystal body, light enters a new, transparent humor refracting light; it is the vitreous humor. When light ends passing through it, it reaches the retina where the rods and the cones receive and move it as a nervous stream to the occipital lobe.6

The eye is marvelous in creation and protection, for Allah, the Most High, has placed it in a low, facial area surrounded by three high hills, which are: the eye-brow, nasal pyramid, and the bony prominence of the forehead as well as it is covered by lids which opens and shuts very quickly. Besides Allah has surrounded it by tears in order to purify and moisten it. So glory belongs to the Creator, the Originator, the Almighty!

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has mentioned some organs of man's body. He has shown their characteristics and their functions (anatomy). Now, let us move to another part of this dissertation. He, peace be on him, has said: "And speech is not good unless it is repeated through the nose, for the nose adorn speech as blowing adorns the flute; likewise, the nostrils are the two openings of the nose and they bring good air to the king. If they bring bad, displeasing air to the king, he reveals to the hands to be as a curtain between him and that bad air. There will be a reward and punishment for the king because of this, so his punishment is severer than that of the outward, powerful kings in the world, and his reward is better than theirs. As for his punishment, it is sadness; and as for his reward, it is happiness. The origin of sadness is in the spleen, and the origin of happiness is in the kidneys and the ribs7, and from them they reach the face, so from there happiness and sadness arise, so their signs are seen on the face, and all these blood vessels are ways of workers to the king, and from the king to the workers, and the proof of that is that when you take a medicine, the blood vessels convey it to the place of illness, with their help."

The Prophet's grandson (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') has displayed the operation of utterance and mode of expression, which is a wonder in itself, for speech comes out harmoniously and equally balanced, and it aims at a certain (thing); and it is among the unique, wonderful phenomena which are proof of the Almighty Creator's mightiness. He, the Most High, says: *The Beneficent* (*Allah*) *taught the Qur'an; He created man; He taught him the mode of expression.* So what man wants to perform before uttering it arises in the brain, which inspires the tongue to perform it, and that occurs through a wonderful operation which the concerned in this research are mentioned.

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned that the reward and punishment which the heart and the brain bring about to man's body. Both reward and punishment appear on the expressions of the face; happiness covers the face when there is a reward; and sadness covers it when there is a punishment. The Imam has shown that the origin of sadness is the spleen, and the origin of happiness is the kidneys and the ribs. These phenomena result from these organs in man's body.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And know, Commander of the faithful, that the body is like a good land which is maintained by plowing and watering; water should not be increased lest it should drown it; nor it should be decreased lest it should make it thirsty, so that its reformation lasts; its revenue increases; and its plants grow. If the land is neglected, it becomes spoiled and no plant grows therein; therefore, the body is like such a land; it becomes good and well–being flourishes through organizing foods and drinks.

"O Commander of the faithful, reflect on the food which fits you and your stomach, strengthens your own body and gives it to enjoy it, so estimate and carefully consider your own food.

"And know, O Commander of the faithful, that each one of these natures likes that which suits it; therefore, eat that which suits your own body; he who takes an increase of food does not make use of it; and he who takes an amount of food without an increase or a decrease makes use of it; and raise your hand from food while you still incline to it; for it puts right your own body and stomach, pure your reason, and lightens your body."

The wise Imam has specified the general program of general health, which depends on balance and immoderation in eating and drinking. The Qur'an has mentioned this rule regarding keeping man's body and protecting it from diseases; saying: *Eat and drink but do not be extravagant*.

Surely the digestive system is the most important one of man's systems; it is the most vital and sensitive of them, for it is affected by the extravagance of food which results in fatness, which is one of the blights which destroy man's body.

Certainly taking care of nutrition, especially in the prim of life, has a great effect on the health condition in the years that follow as well as it lengthens the period of youth; and it is one of the most modern means in preventive medicine; therefore, the different diseases which affect man are a direct result of extravagance in food and drink, unbalanced sexual life, and other life affairs.

The wise Imam has likened man's body to a fertile land; and this is a very wonderful comparison, for if man takes care of his land and reforms it, then it will produce and give the most agreeable crops; and if he turns away from it and neglects it, it will be damaged, die, and not give any crop; likewise, if man takes care of his body, puts it right, and does not spoil it through extravagance in food and drink, it becomes good and he enjoys health, which is the most expensive thing in man's life.

The Imam, peace be on him, has emphasized the necessity of avoiding extravagance in food, and that man should raise his hand from food while he is still desirous of it, for that is the most useful way for

keeping his health and protecting him from diseases. Definitely, eating too much food leads to fatness, which gives rise to the following:

A. Heart failure

B. High blood pressure

Now, let us move to another part of this dissertation. He, peace be on him, has said: “O Commander of the faithful, eat cold (foods) in summer, hot (foods) in winter, and moderate (foods) in the two seasons according to your strength and appetite; and start with the lightest food on which your body feed according to your material, your ability, your activity, and your time in which you must have food every eight hours or three meals every two days; you must have food early at the beginning of day, and then you have supper; when eight hours of the following day passes, you must eat one lunch; and you are in no need of supper; likewise, my grandfather, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, ordered ‘Ali, peace be on him, to have one meal on every day and two meals on the following day; that should be according to an amount which should be neither increase nor decrease; raise your hand from food while you feel appetite for it; and let your drink be immediately after your food.”

This part of the dissertation gives an account of organizing the food on which general health stands as follows:

A. One must have light foods during the days of summer, for having heavy foods causes heavy damages to his own body. As for winter, it is on the contrary, namely, one must have heavy food which containing fat and sugar, for his body is in need of them.

B. One must have food according to his own ability; he must not overexert himself in having food.

C. One must have the lightest and the easiest food for the digestive system; in the meantime, he must take into consideration his own age, for when man grows old, he must have light food with little salt and fat, for they bring about arteriosclerosis, especially when he is over fifty years of age.

D. One must decrease the meals of food; he must confine himself to three meals of food, according to what the Imam, peace be on him, has detailed; without doubt this way makes body sound and safe from diseases.

E. The Imam has underlined that it is necessary for one not to eat any food except when he feels appetite for it and must not fill his own stomach with it. These are some valuable health pieces of advice.

Now, let us read another part of this dissertation. He, peace be on him, has said: “Now we must mention what must be mentioned regarding the direction of the seasons of the year and its Roman months which occur therein; each season (must be mentioned) separately; the foods and drinks which must be used (therein); what must be avoided; and how one must maintain (his) health, according to the view points of the old.”

This part of the dissertation is a preparatory preface concerning what man must have and avoid during the seasons of the year. He, peace be on him, has said: “As for the season of spring, it is of the rest of time, and its beginning is March (Adha’r); and the number of its days is thirty days; and therein day and night are good; the earth becomes soft; and the power of phlegm terminates; the blood becomes exited; and one must use light food and meat; and he must refrain from eating onions and garlic and sour (things); and he must use laxative therein; and he must use therein bloodletting and cupping.”

The Imam has mentioned the season of spring, which is the most beautiful one of the seasons of the year, and the most useful of them to living beings. How wonderful these words of the Imam: “It is of the soul of the time.” That is because, therein, night and day become good; the earth becomes soft; the blood becomes exited. The Imam has warned men against eating onions and garlic and sour things, for they bring about diseases which modern medicine will discover, as well as he has regarded it as recommended to have laxative and to take some blood through bloodletting and cupping.

He, peace be on him, has said: “April (Nisa’n) is thirty days; day lengthens therein; the temper of the season becomes strong; the blood moves; the east wind blows; roasted foods are used therein, what is prepared with vinegar; the meat of (birds and animals which are) hunted; and you must treat yourself with having a sexual intercourse, and then massaging yourself with an ointment in the bathroom; drink water before breakfast; smell flowers and scent.”

The Imam has mentioned the month of April (Nisa’n) and mentioned its characteristics, which are as follows:

1. Day lengthens while night shortens.

2. Temper becomes strong.

3. The blood moves.

4. The east wind blows.

The Imam has regarded it as recommended to have roasted foods and what is cooked in vinegar along with the meat of the birds and animals which are hunted, for such a food benefits man’s body. He has also made it recommended to enter the bathroom, to massage the body with an ointment, and to drink some water before breakfast, for it has a great effect on cleaning the urinary tracts and removing cystic calcali from them.

He, peace be on him, has said: “May (Ayya’r) is thirty-one days; the winds become clear there in; it is at the end of the season of spring; one must refrain from salty foods, thick meat such as heads and beef, and yogurt; entering the bathroom at the beginning of day is useful therein; and sport before lunch is reprehensible therein.”

As for May (Ayya’r), it is at the beginning of summer, so the digestive system cannot bear heavy foods,

especially when one reaches old age, for having thick meat leads to dreadful damages such as high blood pressure, and the like.

He, peace be on him, has said: "June (Huzayra'n) is thirty days; the power of phlegm terminates therein; the time of the yellow bile comes; one must refrain from tiredness and eating abundant meat; one must smell musk and ambergris; it is useful to eat cold vegetables such as endive and purslane, to eat greens such as cucumber, purgative manna, ripe fruit, to use soured things; of the meat is goat and young goat; of the birds is chickens, dull-yellow partridge (*tahiyujj*), francolins; yogurt and fresh fish."

As for June (Huzayra'n), it is the first of the months of summer; bodies become weak therein, for they face intense and bitter heat. The Imam, peace be on him, has emphasized that one must:

1. avoid tiredness.

2. avoid having abundant meat.

3. eat vegetables and fruit, for they are light, and not heavy.

He, peace be on him, has said: "July (Tammu'z) is thirty-one days; heat becomes intense therein; water goes down; one must drink cold water before breakfast, eat cold, fresh things, and digestible foods (like those mentioned in June); one must smell cold, wet flowers with agreeable scent."

As for July (Tammu'z), it is the heaviest of all the months of the year and the most harmful of them toward man. That is because of the intense heat which occurs when water goes down. The Imam has stressed that one must use cold things and eat light foods lest the digestive system should be affected by them. He has also focused on that one must smell cold flowers with pleasant scent, for they have a good effect on the digestive system.

He, peace be on him, has said: "August (Ab) is thirty-one years; the simoom (hot wind) becomes intense therein; cold becomes exited at night; the north wind blows; temper becomes good through patting and moistening; it is useful to drink yogurt; one must refrain from having sexual intercourse and laxative, decrease sport, and smell cold flowers."

Like July (Tammu'z), August (Ab) is hot; cold becomes intense out of the weakness of bodies because of the intense heat, hence the Imam has made it recommended to use cold thins which decrease the intensity of heat.

He, peace be on him, has said: "September (Aylu'l) is thirty days; the air becomes good therein; the power of the black bile becomes strong; having laxative is good; it is useful to eat sweets and moderate various kinds of meat such as that of young goats and mutton; one must refrain from beef, eat abundant roasted meat, enter the bathroom, use therein perfume with moderate temper, and refrain from eating melon and cucumber."

The intensity of heat decreases in September (Aylu'l), especially at the end of it, for the air is agreeable therein, so it is useful for one to have all kinds of sweets provided that he should not be afflicted by diabetes or fatness, or having candy harms him very much; likewise, it is useful for him to have all kinds of meat except beef, for it harms him. The Imam has warned men against eating melon and cucumber, for they are harmful in this month.

He, peace be on him, has said: "October (Tishrin al-Awwal) is thirty-one days; various winds blow in it; one must breathe the east wind, avoid bloodletting and taking medicine; sexual intercourse is praiseworthy therein; it is useful to have meat in spices; one must decrease drinking water; and sport is praiseworthy in it."

As for October (Tishrin al-Awwal), it is one of the excellent months of the year, for heat terminates in it; the east wind blows therein. The Imam has warned men against bloodletting, for it causes damages to the body. Similarly, he has ordered them to decrease drinking water as well as he has ordered them to practice sport, for it is useful for the vitality and activity of the body.

He, peace be on him, has said: "November ((Tishrin al-Tha'ni) is thirty days; seasonal rain comes down in it; one must not drink water at night, decrease entering the bathroom and having sexual intercourse, take a mouthful of warm water in the early morning every day, avoid eating vegetables such as celery, mint, and watercress."

As for November ((Tishrin al-Tha'ni), it is one of the most agreeable months of the year, for men receive winter through it; seasonal rain, which is the source of good and mercy to men, falls in it; hence land becomes green and gives crops. Everyone must drink a mouthful of warm water in the early morning in order to get rid of cold. The Imam has warned men against eating celery and other vegetables, for they strongly harm them.

He, peace be on him, has said: "December (Ka'nu'n al-Awwal) is thirty-one days; storms become strong and cold becomes intense in it; it is useful to have all that which has been mentioned in November (Tishrin al-Tha'ni); one must be cautious of having cold foods and guard against cupping and bloodletting; and he must use therein foods which are actually and potentially hot."

As for December (Ka'nu'n al-Awwal), it is the first month in winter; men face severe cold therein; storms become strong in it. The Imam has warned people against having cold foods, for they have bad effects on their health and cause some diseases to them. Similarly, he has summoned them to have hot foods, for they have some health advantages.

He, peace be on him, has said: "January (Ka'nu'n al-Tha'ni) is thirty-one days; the power of phlegm is strong in it; one must have a mouthful of warm water before breakfast; sexual intercourse is praiseworthy therein; one must have in it hot vegetables such as celery, watercress, and leek; entering the bathroom and massaging (the body) with al-Khayri ointment is useful in it; one must be careful of sweet things, eating fresh fish, and having yogurt."

Men face the severity and intensity of cold in January (Ka'nu'n al-Tha'ni), so the Imam has made it recommended for them to have warm water in the early morning in order to get rid of the consequences of cold. Similarly, he has summoned them to have hot vegetables in order to warm their bodies and protect them from cold. He has made it recommended to enter the bathroom, for the blood-circle becomes active through it; and he has warned them against having fresh fish, yogurt, and candy, for they harm their bodies.

He, peace be on him, has said: "February (Shiba't) is twenty-eight days; the winds become different in it; rain increases; grass appears; water flows in the hollow; it is useful to eat garlic, the meat of bird and animals which are hunted and fruit; one must decreases eating sweet; abundant sport and movement is praiseworthy therein."

When February (Shiba't) enters, the severity and intensity of cold terminate, rain increases, and grass appears. The Imam has made it recommended to eat garlic, which is very useful to man's body, for it protects it from many diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and others. With this month the Imam ends his speech about the seasons of the year, what man must use and avoid in them.

He, peace be on him, has said: "Know, O Commander of the faithful, that the strength of the soul follows the tempers of bodies, and that the tempers depend on the air and change according to it in places."

Certainly the strength and soundness of reason depend on the health of body. If one is ill or afflicted by diseases, then his reason is weak just as they say: "Sound reason is in sound body." It is certain that good, fresh, and unpolluted air is one of the basic elements which play an important role in general health.

Describing the way of preparing a lawful drink, he, peace be on him, has said: "(As for) the description of a lawful drink and its usage after food, as we mentioned its benefit when we started talking about the seasons of the year and what one had to have therein to preserve his health, is that one must take ten rotls[8] of clean raisins; he must wash them and soak them in abundant, clear water to an increase of four fingers over it and leaves it in its container; that is for three (days) in winter, a day and a night in summer; and then he must put them into a clean container; the water must be that of the heaven (i.e. rain) if he is able (to get) it; otherwise, it must be of fresh water whose fountain is in the east direction; shining water as well as it is light, which becomes hot and cold quickly; and this is a proof of clear water. He must cook the raisins until they become swollen and ripe; and then he must squeeze them, clarify their water, and leaves it to be cold. Then he must return it to the container again, measure it with a stick, and leave it to boil on a calm fire until two-thirds of it has steamed. Then he must take one rotl of purified bee honey and pour it into it, and it replaces the amount of the water which was in the cooking-pot; and then he must leave it to boil until the amount of honey has evaporated, and it comes down to its limit. Then he must take a thin piece of cloth and put on it a dirham[9] of ginger, half a dirham of carnation, half a dirham of cinnamon, a dirham of saffron, half a dirham of spikenard, half a dirham of endive, and half a dirham of mastic. He must grind each one of them separately and put them on the

piece of cloth and tie it well with a thread. Then he must put it into (the liquid). The piece of cloth must be macerated in the drink to the extent that the strength of the drugs wherein comes down (into the drink). He must go on stirring the drink gently on a calm fire until the amount of honey has steamed. Then he must lift the cooking-pot, leave it to be cold, and leave it for three months, that its tastes may overlap with each other; and then he can use it. He can drink of it one or two okes of pure water. So if you, O Commander of the faithful, eat the amount of food which I have described to you, then drink of this drink an amount of three glasses after your food. If you do that, you will be safe throughout your day and night from cold, chronic aches such as gout, wind, and others from among the aches of nerves, brain, stomach, and some aches of liver, spleen, intestines, and bowels. If you, after that, feel appetite for water, then you must drink of it the half of what you had drunk, for it puts right, regulates, and keeps the body of the Commander of the faithful.

"Surely the betterment and straightness of body and its corruption come through foods and drinks. So if you put them right, then your body is good; and if you corrupt them, then your body is corrupt."

The Imam, peace be on him, has regarded this drink as a lawful one which brings about the most important health advantages to the body and protects it from many diseases. He has mentioned its ingredients and how it is prepared. This drink contains important elements necessary for strengthening man's body; among them is raisins which include a large amount of vitamins; yet another example of them is honey which is rich in vitamins as well as the other elements which must be added to this drink.

It is worth mentioning that the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned that the water must be of that of the heaven (i.e. of rain) or of fresh water, lest it should be polluted, and hence it gives rise to some diseases and invalidates this drink.

Dr. Sa'hib Zayni has said: "This lawful drink has a large food value, for it contains useful elements which are regarded as the most important sources and producers of calories which the body always needs, especially in the cold seasons. As for the easiness of digesting it and assimilating its elements, it is well-known, for grape sugar (glucose) is the easiest of all materials in digestion, and of the materials which if one takes, is in no need of most other food stuffs, for it is simply changes into glycogen which is stored in the liver as food reserve and which the body can use at any time.

"Raisins contain a large amount of iron; they are useful for generating blood red cells and treating the disease of anemia; and they are the best of all drugs in treating many disease states such as indigestion, gastritis, gasses in stomach and intestines, some of liver diseases, dullness of intestines, and constipation.[10]"

The following is of what the Imam, peace be on him, has said: "And know, O Commander of the faithful, that sleep is the power of brain, the straightness and strength of the body. If you want to sleep, then first lie on your right side, and then turn over your left side; likewise get out of your bed and sleep on your right side just as you had done at the beginning of your sleep. Habituate yourself to get up at night; enter

the toilet for relieving nature and stay wherein as long as you relieve you nature; do not stay wherein for a long time; for that gives rise to elephantiasis."

Sleep is one of the elements necessary for man's life and the health of his body. Indeed Allah has created in man's body some organs which give rise to sleep; in the meantime they supply the body with vitality and activity, remove from it the tiredness and overexertion of the day. The Imam, peace be on him, has shown the health performance of sleep, which is as follows: One must sleep on his right side, for this gives rest to the heart and soundness to the body. Similarly, he, peace be on him, has displayed the way of entering the toilet; it is an act of wisdom that man should not stay for a long time wherein lest he should be afflicted by elephantiasis.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And know, O Commander of the faithful, that the best thing which is used to clean the teeth is the branch of Zingiber officinale, for it removes dirt, makes pleasant the flavor, strengthens the gum; and it is useful for (treating) tooth decay when it is used moderately, but when it is immoderately used, it thins out, shakes the teeth and weakens their roots.

"So he who likes to keep his teeth, then let him take a burnt horn of an ibex, tamarisk, sedge, roses, spikenard (one part), Andara'ni salt (a quarter of a part), and then let him powder them and clean his teeth with it, for it strengthens the teeth, protect their roots from accidental maladies. He who likes his teeth to be white, then let him take part of Andara'ni salt and sea foam equal to it, and then let him powder them and clean his teeth with it."

The Imam has presented the treatment of teeth and mentioned two prescriptions to put them right. The first is that one must clean his teeth with the stick of a Zingiber officinale, and this is one of the best prescriptions in putting teeth right, for this stick had been analyzed and found as one of the most wonderful drugs in purifying teeth and protecting them from diseases, and that it was the best of modern tooth-pastes.[11]

The second prescription concerns tooth-paste; the Imam has mentioned its ingredients which treat tooth-decay.

He has said: "And know, O Commander of the faithful, that man's sates on which Allah, the Exalted, has built him and made him move about in them are four: The first state is fifteen years; his youth, his beauty, his radiance, and the power of the blood in his body are during it. Then the second state is from fifteen years to thirty-five years; the power of the yellow bile and the strength of its victory over a person are during it; he is still so until he terminates the mentioned period, which is thirty-five years; and then he enters the third stage until the period of his life span, which is sixty years, has terminated; hence he is in the power of the black bile, which is the age of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, regulated affairs, correct results, true opinions, and steadfastness in behavior. Then he enters the fourth stage which is the power of phlegm, and it is the stage in which he, if remains alive, moves to old age, trouble, withering, the decrease of strength, the collapse of his structure, condemning all things which he had

come to know of his own soul, to the extent that he sleeps while standing, passes sleep awake, remembers the past things, forgets what occurs in the times, his body withers, his habitual condition changes, the water of his beauty and radiance dries, the growth of his hair and finger-nails decrease, his body continues retreating and turning away throughout the rest of his life; that is because he is in the power of phlegm; he is dull and inactive; dullness and inactivity bring about the extinction of everybody over which the phlegm power dominates after all."

This part of the dissertation gives an account of the stages of man's life span. They are four stages: The first stage begins from his birthday and ends when he reaches fifteen years of age; it is the stage and beginning of youth, which is the most marvelous and best of all stages in activity.

The second stage begins from fifteen years and terminates in the fifty-three years of age; it is one of the most wonderful stages of lifetime, for therein man's strength, activity, and radiance are perfect.

The third stage begins from thirty-five and ends in sixty years; and in this stage man's knowledge is perfect; his affairs are regulated; that is through his experiences in affairs and his knowledge in events, for in this age his intellectual activity is perfect, but his bodily forces become weak.

The fourth stage begins from sixty years until he dies; in this stage all his organs, his cells, and his forces are weak; and he is dependent on others, especially when he becomes eighty years of age, for his complaints and moans are many. In this connection the poet says:

Surely the eighty (*years*) *which I have reached*

has made my ears in need of an interpreter!

And just as they say: "Old age is a cloud which showers diseases!" Definitely, the body in this stage is just as the Imam says: "His body withers and the water of his beauty dries, and it is the stage of his extinction!"

He, peace be on him, has said: "I have mentioned to the Commander of the faithful all that which he needs in the indulgence of the temper, the conditions of his body and its treatment; and I have mentioned the foods and drugs and what he must do in his times.

"So if you like cupping, then let that be between twelve and fifteen nights of the crescent, for it is better for your body. When the month decreases, do not use cupping except when you are forced to do that. That is because the blood decreases according to the decrease of the crescent, and it increases according to its increase; and cupping must be equal to the years which pass: one who is twenty years of age must apply cupping every twenty days; one who is thirty years old, must use cupping every thirty days; one who is forty years of age must use cupping every forty days, and so on.

"And know, O Commander of the faithful, that the blood of cupping is taken from the small veins spreading in the flesh; and the proof of that is what I have mentioned that it does not weaken strength as

bloodletting does; and the cupping of *al-nuqura*[12] is useful for the heaviness of the head; and the cupping of *al-akhda'ayn*[13] gives rest to the head, the face, and the eyes, and it is useful to tooth-ache; and perhaps bloodletting replaces all of that; and one may use cupping under the chin in order to treat *al-qalda'*[14] in the mouth, the corruption of the gum, and other mouth aches. Similarly, the cupping between the two shoulders is useful to the beating which results from fullness and heat, and that which placed on the two legs may decrease the fullness with a clear decrease, and it is useful to chronic aches in the kidneys, bladders, and wombs, and it makes menstruation flow abundantly, but it exhausts the body, and a severe haze may stems from it, but it is necessary for those who have blisters and abscesses.

"Gentle sucking decreases the pain of cupping when one places the cupping glasses; and then he graduates the sucking a little more; the sucking in the second (cupping) must be more than the first, and so must be the third, and so on. He must stop slashing until the place has become red through repeating the cupping glasses across it. He must softens the lancets across soft skins; and he must massage the place with some ointment before he slashes it; so must he do during bloodletting, for such an act decreases pain. He must also soften the lancet during cupping; and when he has finished it, he must soften the place with some ointment and drips onto the veins some of it lest they should disappear and harm the phlebotomized. The phelbotomist should bleed the veins in the places where flesh is little, for the little flesh on the veins decreases pain; and the most painful vein when bled is *habl al-dhira"* [15] and *al-qifa'l* [16], for they are connected with the upper arm and this skin is solid. As for *al-ba'saliq* [17] (basilic vein) and *al-akkhal*, they are less painful when bled if there is no flesh on them. It is obligatory to apply hot water to the place of bloodletting that the blood may appear, especially in winter, for it softens the skin and decreases pain and makes easy bloodletting. During all what we have mentioned regarding bringing forth blood, it is obligatory to refrain from women twelve hours before that.

"One must use cupping on a clear day on which there is neither clouds nor strong winds; and he must bring forth blood equals to its change which he sees. Do not enter the bathroom immediately, for it gives rise to illness; and pour warm water on your head and body, but do not do that soon.

"Be weary of taking a bath when you apply cupping, for chronic fever stems from it. If you wash yourself off (the blood) of cupping, take a downy piece of cloth or a soft, silk garment or the like and put it on the places of your cupping; and take an amount equal to a chick-pea of *al-tirya'q al-akbar* [18] and drink it when winter; and if it is summer, then drink honey oxymel and mix it with the gladdening, moderate drink, and have it, or with fruit juice. If that is difficult, then drink citron (juice). If you do not find anything, then have it (citron) after you have chewed under the teeth and drink after it a mouthful of lukewarm water; and if that is in the time of winter and cold, then drink after it some honey oxymel, for if you do that, you will be safe from facial paralysis, vitiligo, and leprosy with the permission of Allah, the Exalted; and suck pomegranate, for it strengthens soul and renews the blood; and do not eat salty food after that for three hours, for that may bring about mange; and if you like, then eat (the meat) of dull-yellow partridges (*al-taha'iyijj*), that is when you have used cupping; and drink after it some of the purified drink

which I have mentioned at outset; and massage (your body) with al-Khayri ointment or with some of musk and rose water; and pour on your head some of it as soon as you have finished cupping.

"As for summer, when you apply cupping, then eat *al-sakkbajj* 19, *al-hala'm* 20 *al-masu's* 21, and the sour; and pour on your head violet oil mixed with rose water and some camphor; and drink after your food some of that drinks which I have prescribed to you; and be careful of abundant movement, anger, and having an intercourse with women on the same day."

In this part of the dissertation, the Imam, peace be on him, has presented cupping which causes great advantages to the body, returns activity to it, and drives away from it illnesses and diseases; it is the greatest of all prescriptions and most successful of them in treating those who have high blood pressure, for the blood during it comes out of the small veins spreading in flesh, as the Imam says, and this does not cause weakness to the body. The Imam has mentioned some diseases which are treated with cupping. They are as follows:

A. Tooth and gum congestion.

B. The chronic diseases of the kidney, the bladder, and the womb.

C. The paucity of menstruation.

D. Blisters and abscesses.

The Imam has described the operation of cupping in full detail and explained what one should use after it, the foods and drinks from which one should refrain from. Similarly the Imam has presented bloodletting and mentioned the veins which should be bled such as *habl al-dhira'* and *al-qifa'l* 22; he has also mentioned some refreshing drinks which should be drunk after it and warned against some foods which bring about dangers.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And be cautious, O Commander of the faithful, of bringing together eggs and fish in the stomach at the same time, for if they come together in man's stomach, they give rise to gout, colic, piles, and tooth-ache.

"When yogurt and wine (which some people drink) gather, they cause gout and leprosy; eating onions23 constantly results in freckles; eating salty meat and fish after cupping and bloodletting gives rise to vitiligo and mange; eating sheep's kidneys and bowels disorders the bladder.

"Entering the bathroom during fullness gives rise to colic; washing with cold water after eating fish brings about hemiplegia; eating citron at night results in cross-eye; and having a sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman causes leprosy to the baby.

"Having a sexual intercourse without discharging semen after it gives rise to stone; a sexual intercourse after a sexual intercourse without an interval between them causes madness to the baby; eating eggs24

very much and constantly brings about spleen (disease) and winds in the head of the stomach; fullness of boiled eggs gives rise to asthma and dyspnea; eating raw meat brings about worms in the stomach; and eating figs decreases (the weight of) the body when one addicts himself to it.

“Drinking cool water after a warm thing and candy destroys teeth; eating abundant meat of wild animals and beef results in changing reason, perplexing understanding, making dull the mind, and plentiful forgetfulness.”

In this part of the dissertation, the Imam, peace be on him, has warned against bringing together various kinds of foods during eating, for it gives rise to many diseases; among the foods against which he has warned is eating fish and eggs at the same time, for it leads to the following diseases:

1. Gout.

2. Colic.

3. Piles.

4. Tooth–ache.

He has also warned against having salty foods, for it brings about arteriosclerosis and high blood pressure.

Among the things against which the Imam has warned is drinking cold water after warm things or after eating candy, for it destroys teeth, as it has been emphasized by dentists, who has mentioned that this is one of the acts which destroy teeth.

This part of the dissertation contains health advantages of great importance; if men put them into practice, medicine will be preventive, and they will be in no need of the clinic of physicians.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And if you like to enter the bathroom and you feel no ache in your head, then start, during entering the bathroom, with five handfuls of warm water and pour them on your head, for you will be, Allah willing, safe from headache and migraine.

“And know, O Commander of the faithful, that bathroom has a construction just as that of the body; it has four places just as the natures of the body: the first place is for taking off clothes; it is cool and dry. The second (places) is cool and wet; the third is warm and wet; and the fourth is warm and dry. Taking a bath is very useful, for it leads to moderation, removing dirt, softening nerves and veins, strengthening the big organs, melting (the bodily) excrement, and driving away bad smell.

“So if you do not want any pimple or the like to appear in your body, so start, when entering the bathroom, with massaging your own body with violet ointment; and if you want to use depilatory (paste) without any wound nor any cut nor any evil, then wash (your body) with cool water; and if one wants to

enter the bathroom for using depilatory (paste), then he must avoid taking a sexual intercourse for twelve hours before that, and it is a full day, and he must mix with the depilatory (paste) some aloe, some acacia, some rock at the foot of a mountain, or he gathers that and takes little of it if it is together or separate, and he must put nothing into the depilatory (paste) until it is mixed with hot water in which chamomile, marjoram or dry violet rose has been boiled or all of that little parts together or separate in an amount whose smell the water takes; and (the amount of) arsenic must be equal to the one-sixth of the depilatory (paste); after he has used it and in order to remove its smell, he must rub his own body with something like the leafs of plum, the marc of safflower, henna, roses, and spikenard together or separate.

"And he who wants to be safe from the burn of depilatory (paste), then he must decrease turning it; and when he uses it, he must hasten to wash it and rub his body with some rose oil; if it burns his body, Allah forbids, he must take peeled lentils, crush it, mix it with rose water and vinegar, and rub with it the area which has been burnt by the depilatory (paste), for he recovers with the permission of Allah, the Exalted; and if he wants to avoid the (bad) effects of the depilatory (paste) on his body, he must rub his body very well with al-Thaqif grape vinegar and rose oil."

It is necessary for man to take a bath in order to clean his own boy from dirt which gives rise to skin diseases. The Prophet's grandson, source of knowledge and wisdom (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') has talked about all sides of bathing, of which are the moderation of the body, cleanness from dirt, and removing bad smell.

Surely the Imam, peace be on him, has talked in detail about bating, for it is one of health means and among the sources of purity and cleanness which removes outward bodily dirt and secretions. He, peace be on him, has also talked inclusively about depilatory (paste) which cleans and refreshes the body when it removes thick hair from it.

He, peace be on him, has said: "He who does not want to complain of his bladder must not withhold his urine even if he is on the back of his own mount.

"And he who does not want his stomach to hurt him must not drink water until he has finished having his food; and he who does that, his body becomes wet, his stomach becomes weak, and his veins do not make use of food, for if water is suddenly poured on the food, a pass will occur in the stomach.

"And he who does not want to find stone and the retention of urine must not withhold semen when libido comes down and must not stay for a long time with women.

"And he who wants to be safe from the ache of the lowest part and of piles must eat seven Barni dates mixed with cows' fat and rub (the area) between his buttocks with pure lily oil."

"And he who wants to increase his memory must eat seven weights of raisins before breakfast; and he who wants to decrease his forgetfulness and to be a memorizer must eat every day three pieces of

ginger mixed with honey jam, and must nourish (his own body) with mustard along with his food every day; and he who wants to increase his reason must have every three pieces of *hilija* along with *Ibloj* sugar25; and he who does not want his finger–nail to split a part or to become yellow or black must not clip it except on Thursday; and he who does not want his ear to ache must put a piece of cotton wherein when sleeping.

“And he who wants to get rid of cold throughout the days of winter must eat every day three mouthfuls of honey.”

In this part of the dissertation, the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned some health recommendations of great importance, for he has given health prescriptions necessary for safety and protection from diseases; the following are some of them:

1. The soundness of the urinary system.

2. The soundness of the stomach.

3. Protection from stone.

4. Protection from piles.

He has also mentioned other health recommendations which are necessary for protecting the body from diseases.

He, peace be on him, has said: “And know, O Commander of the faithful, that there are signs through which useful and harmful honey is known: some of it makes one sneeze when he smells it; some of it makes one drunk; some of it makes one feel severe burning when he tastes it. So these kinds of honey are deadly.

“One should not delay smelling narcissus, for it prevents cold throughout the days of winter and such is the black cumin; and if one fears cold in the days of summer must eat every day a cucumber and be careful of sitting in the sun.

“And he who fears migraine and colic must not delay eating fresh fish in summer or winter; and he who wants to be good with light body and flesh must decrease his supper by night; and he who does not want to complain of his navel must anoint it when he anoints his hair; and he who does not want his lips to split apart nor do pimples appear in them must anoint them when he anoints his hair; and he who does not want his tonsils and epiglottis to inflame must not eat candy unless he gargles with vinegar after it; and he who does not want to be infected by yellows must not enter a house at once in summer and must not goes out of it at once in the early morning in winter; and he who does not want his body to be infected by winds must eat garlic once every seven days; and he who does not want his teeth to be decayed must not eat sweets except after a small piece of bread; and he who wants to enjoy his food must lean on his right side after he has finished eating, and then he must turn on his left side until he

sleeps; and he who wants phlegm to leave his own body or to decrease it must eat in the early morning every day some of hot ground (spices), take a bath and have a sexual intercourse with women several times, sit in the sun, and avoid all cold foods, for these things drive away phlegm and burn it; and he who wants to extinguish the flame of the yellow bile must eat every day something cold and wet, refresh his own body, decrease movement, and look for a long time at him whom he loves; and he who wants to burn the black bile must vomit several times, bleed the veins, and use depilatory (paste) constantly; and he who wants to take away cold winds must cling to liquid enemas and ointments softening the body, treating with hot water in basin; and he who wants to remove phlegm from his own body must have a weight of the small *ittrifil* every day."

In this part of the dissertation, the Imam, peace be on him, has presented the health of man's organs; he has specified health prescriptions to their safety and protection from diseases; he has mentioned necessary rules for protection from cold, which is the beginning of diseases; he has given winter and summer prescriptions to get rid of cold.

The Imam, peace be on him, has displayed his health recommendations necessary for the soundness of the systems of man's body, and specified to them the successful prescriptions which put an end to illness.

He, peace be on him, has said: "And know, O Commander of the faithful, it is obligatory on the traveler to be careful of heat. When he travels, he must be neither full nor hungry; rather he must be on a moderate level. He must have cold foods such as fresh meat, jelly, vinegar, oil, sour grapes juice, and others.

"And know, O Commander of the faithful, that hard walking in intense heat harms exhausted bodies when they are empty of food, but it is useful to strong bodies; as for water good to the traveler and removing harm from him is that he must not drink from every station at which he arrives except after he has mixed it with the water of the station before it or with one drink which is not different; he must mix it with different kinds of water; it is obligatory on the traveler to supply himself with some mud of his homeland on which he has lived; whenever he reaches at a station, he must throw into his own container, out of which he drinks, some of the mud with which he has supplied himself from his homeland; and he must mix the water with the mud in the container through stirring it; and he must leave it until it becomes very clear; the best kind of water in drinking for those travelers or residents is that whose spring is in the east direction, of quick and white; and the best kind of water is that whose vent is in the summer rising of the sun; and the best of them is that which is in this description from which it gushes out and whose bed is in the mud mountains (i.e. hills), for it is cool in winter and relaxes the bowels in summer, and it is useful to those who have fevers.

"As for salty water and heavy water, they constipate the bowels; and as for the water of snow and ice, it is bad to all bodies and is of great harm.

“As for the water of clouds, it is clear, fresh, light and useful to bodies if it is not stored in the ground for a long time. As for the water of the well, it is fresh and useful if its flow lasts and it is not stored in the ground for a long time. As for (the water) of level lands and marshes, it is warm and thick in summer, for it is stagnant and the sun always rises over it, and drinking it constantly may give rise to the yellow bile; and their bellies become big through it.”

The Imam, peace be on him, has established vital programs for the safety of the traveler and protecting him from diseases; he has advised him not travel when he is full or hungry or very hot, for he is liable to dangers.

Similarly, the Imam, peace be on him, has presented the kinds of water which the traveler must drink and must not drink, for the latter harms his general health. He has accurately described water to the extent that none before or after him has described it in this manner.

He, peace be on him, has said: “In the previous part of this dissertation of mine, I have described to you, O Commander of the faithful, something sufficient for him who puts it into practice. Now, I will mention the matter of sexual intercourse: Do not have a sexual intercourse with your own wife at the beginning of night in summer or winter, for your own stomach and veins are full; and it is not praiseworthy; and it gives rise to colic, hemiplegia, facial paralysis, gout, stone, diuresis, hernia, and weakness of sight; if you want that, then let it be at the last part of the night, for it is more appropriate for your own body, more hoped for a boy-baby, and purer for the baby which Allah has decreed between them (husband and wife).

“Do not have a sexual intercourse with your wife unless you play with her very much and touch her breasts, for if do that, you will overcome her lust, her water comes together, for her water comes out of her breasts; and the lust appears on her face and eyes; and she desires you just as you desire her; and do not have a sexual intercourse with her unless she is pure; so if you want to do that, then do not do it in standing or sitting position; rather lie on your right side; and then get up soon to urinate when you have finished, for you will be safe from stone with the permission of Allah, the Most High. Then wash your own body and drink at once something of (bees) wax (*al-mummya”i*) mixed with honey drink or honey without foam, for it generates water (semen) equals to that which has come out of you.

“And know, O Commander of the faithful, that it is better for you to have a sexual intercourse with them (your wives) when the moon is in Ram or Aquarius; and it is better than that when it is in Taurus which is the high rank of the moon.[26]

“And he who puts into effect what I have described in this dissertation of mine and directs his own body through it is safe, with Allah’s permission, from all diseases; and his own body is good with Allah’s help and power, for He gives well-being to whomever He wishes and grants it to him; and praise belongs to Allah, the First and Last, the Outward and Inward.”

In this part of the dissertation, the Imam, peace be on him, has discussed sexual life and mentioned

many of its important sides of which men are ignorant. He has warned husband against having a sexual intercourse with his own wife at the beginning of night, for it gives rise to many diseases, of which are the following:

A. Colic.

B. Hemiplegia

C. Facial paralysis.

D. Gout.

E. Stone

F. Hernia

G. Weakness of sight.

Moreover he has summoned husband to have a sexual intercourse with his own wife at the last part of night. With this matter we will end our talk about *al-Risa'la al-Dhahabiya fi al-Tibb* (the golden medical dissertation), which is regarded as one of the stored medical books.

1. The translation in the script of the author is available at the Imam Amir al-Mu'minin Library, serial 237.
2. Robert Foblbith, Your Body the Marvelous, the Odd, p. 13.
3. Ibid.
4. Al-Tibb Mihra'b al-Ima'n, pp. 141-142.
5. Ibid., pp. 191-202.
6. Ibid., pp. 204-206.
7. In some versions, the origin of happiness is in the kidneys.
8. A rotl is about 340 grams.
9. A dirham is 5.5 grams.
10. Tibb al-Ridha', pp. 58-59.
11. This was announced by BBC.
12. Al-nuqra is a hole in the back four fingers above the neck vertebras.
13. Al-akhda'ayn are two veins in the back of the neck to the right and left of it.
14. Al-qalda' is an ulcer in the skin of the mouth and tongue.
15. Habl al-dhira'' is the vein which extends from the forearm upwards.
16. Al-qifa'l is the vein which appears at the elbow.
17. Al-ba'saliq is the outward vein from the elbow to the forearm.
18. Al-tirya'q al-akbar is one of the ancient drugs.
19. Al-sakkbajj is soup along with vinegar.
20. Al-hala'm is al-sakkbajj which is purified from fat or it is the meat of cows and calves and goats which is boiled in salty water; and then the boiled meat is taken out and mixed with the boiled vegetables along with vinegar.
21. Al-masu's is meat which is cooked and placed into vinegar or it is the meat of birds.
22. See the previous footnotes.
23. In a version eating eggs.
24. In a version eating onions.

25. Ibloj sugar is a kind of plant.

26. Al-Majjlisi said: "Perhaps he (Imam al-Ridha') has mentioned these matters, if they belong to him, for some interests in agreement with that al-Ma'mu'n and his companions were famous for adopting the viewpoints of the wise men."

3. The Sahifa of al-Ridha'

Among the works of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, is this excellent dissertation called *Sahifat al-Ridha';* a group of narrators has called it *Musnad al-Imam al-Ridha'*, and this name is closer to the composition of the dissertation, for it contains the traditions which Imam al-Ridha' has narrated on the authority of his grandfather, may Allah bless him and his family, and on the authority of his pure fathers, peace be on them. A group of researchers has stated that this dissertation is one of the works of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.1

Any how, this dissertation is among the treasures of Prophet and of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and of the Imams; it has reached the top of honor and glory in the chain of authorities, as Dr. Husayn 'Ali Mahfu'z said.2

As for us, we have quoted this dissertation from a version printed in Cairo by al-Ma'a'hid Press, near al-Azhar, in the year 1340 A. H., and then it was printed by al-'Alla'ma 'Abd al-Wa'si', who classified it into ten chapters, which are as follows:

Chapter 1: On Invocation Of Allah

Having mentioned a preface concerning the necessity of mentioning the chain of the authorities, Shaykh 'Abd al-Wa'si' said: "I have narrated this Sahifa through the authentic chain of authorities connected with Imam al-Qa'sim b. Muhammad, peace be on him, on the authority of his Shaykh al-Sayyid Amir al-Din b. 'Abd Allah, on the authority of al-Sayyid Ahmed b. 'Abd Allah al-Wazir, on the authority of Imam al-Mutahhar b. Muhammad b. Sulayma'n, on the authority of Imam al-Mahdi Ahmed b. Yahya', on the authority of Sulayma'n b. Ibra'him b. 'Umar al-'Alawi, on the authority of his father Ibra'him, on the authority of Ridha' al-Din Ibra'him b. Muhammad al-Tabari, on the authority of Imam Najm al-Din al-Tabrizi, on the authority of al-Ha'fiz Ibn 'Asa'kir, on the authority of Za'hir al-Sinja'ni, on the authority of al-Ha'fiz al-Bayhaqi:

1. On the authority of Abu' al-Qa'sim al-Mufassir, on the authority of Ibra'him b. Ju'da, on the authority of Abu' al-Qa'sim 'Abd Allah b. Ahmed b. 'Amir al-Ta"i (in Basrah), who said: ['Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, related to me in the year 194 A. H. He said: My father Musa' b. Ja'far related to me. He said: My father Ja'far b. Muhammad related to me. He said: My father Muhammad b. 'Ali related to me. He said: My father 'Ali b. al-Husayn related to me. He said: My father al-Husayn b. 'Ali related to

me. He said: My father ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, the peace of Allah be on them all, amen to the Day of Resurrection, related to me. He said: Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: Allah, the Most High, said:] “*There is no god but Allah* is My fort, so he who enters My fort is safe from My chastisement.3”

Surely these brilliant words are the secret of existence, lamp of the Allah-fearing, and guide of the knowledgeable. He who says them out of knowledge and belief enters the fort of Allah, which whoever enters wins the good pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, and is safe from His chastisement.

2. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “He upon whom Allah bestows a favor should praise Allah for it; he who finds slow daily bread should ask Allah’s forgiveness; and he whom a certain matter saddens should say: There is neither might nor strength save in Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty.”

Surely the invocation of Allah and devotion to Him deserve more of His blessings and favors; he who says these words during these situations, Allah’s mercy includes him, and he attains general good.

3. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Belief is profession with the tongue, knowledge through the heart, and action by the limbs.”

Belief is a flame of light which lightens the heart, flows as life does in the souls of the Allah-fearing and the knowledgeable, dominates their sentiments and feelings.

4. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: Allah says:] “If a creature takes refuge in a creature other than Me, I will cut him off from the means of the heavens and the earth, so if he asks Me, I will not give him; and if he supplicates Me, I will not answer him; and if a creature seeks refuge in Me other than My creatures, I will guarantee the heaven and the earth in respect of his daily bread; so if he asks Me, I will give him; and if he supplicates Me, I will respond to him; and if he asks Me for forgiveness, I will forgive him.”

Failing and unsuccessful is he who hopes for those other than Allah, the Exalted, at whose hand is the course of events. A poet said:

May the hand which asks those other than You become poor; may the land which sees promising signs in other than the clouds of Your munificence become barren!

So glory is forbidden except from You; money is forbidden except from You!

If the servant devotes himself to Allah and seeks refuge in Him, he will win good and gain bless in this world and the next.

5. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, related to me that a

Jew asked ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, saying:] “Tell me about that which does not belong to Allah, that which is not with Allah, and that which Allah does not know?”

‘Ali, peace be on him, replied: “As for that which Allah does not know, it is your, people of Jews, statement that ‘Uzayr is the son of Allah, and Allah does not know that He has a son; as for that which is not with Allah, it is that Allah has no oppression toward the servants; as for that which does not belong to Allah, it is that Allah has no partner.”

The Jew said: “I witness that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.”

Surely, Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, is the gate of the city of knowledge of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. He is the leading figure of this community, the pioneer of its intellectual and scientific renaissance. It is certain that if the cushion had been folded for him and he had undertaken the leadership of the reign after the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, the Jews, the Christians, and the Magians would have adopted Islam.

6. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “The best deeds with Allah are: belief without doubt, invasion without stealing from war booty before it is distributed (*ghulu’l*), and proper *hajj*. The first to enter the Garden will be a martyr; a slave who worships his Lord well and is sincere to his master; and a chaste man who abstains from what is forbidden, has a family, and strives to secure the daily bread of his own family. The first to enter the Fire will be a domineering Imam (leader) who does not treat (his subjects) with justice; a possessor of wealth of property who does not pay the right against it; and a boastful, poor (person).”

This tradition includes the best actions in reward and repayment with Allah, the Most High; the actions are: belief in Allah without any doubt, invasion without stealing from war booty before it is distributed (*ghulu’l*); for it is spent on spreading Allah’s words on earth; and making a pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah.

This tradition also gives an account of the best men in the view of Allah, the Exalted, and the most honorable before Him, and they are: the martyrs in the path of Allah, not in the path of booty or worldly pleasures; the slave who believes in his Lord and is sincere to his master; and the chaste man who strives to secure the daily bread of his family.

Moreover the tradition gives an account of the most hateful person in the view of Allah and who deserves the Hellfire. The first to enter it are: the disobedient criminal ruler who wrongs the servants of Allah and does not treat them with fairness and justice; the possessor of a plentiful wealth who is miserly toward the rights of Allah (against him) and does not help the poor; the boastful, poor (person) who boasts of his own person and his family, shows arrogance and vainglory toward the creatures of Allah.

7. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family,

said:] “He who makes my community learn by heart forty traditions and it makes use of them, Allah will raise him from the dead a jurist and scholar on the Day of the Resurrection.”

Surely, the Prophetic traditions are a flame of light which guides the perplexed and the errant and brighten the road (to them), for they are some springs of wisdom. So he who circulates them among the Muslims surely takes part in building Islamic thought; and Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, had promised him that Allah would raise him from the dead a jurist and scholar on the Day of Resurrection.

8. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “He who gives a religious opinion to men without knowledge, the heavens and the earth curse him.”

The ugliest and most sinful crime is giving a religious opinion to men without knowledge, for such a religious opinion misleads men, spreads lying among them, and ascribes falsehood to Allah.

9. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Reliance (on Allah) and monotheism are the half of religion; make livelihood come down from Allah through alms.”

Surely, reliance on Allah and professing His Oneness are part of core of religion and are basic elements of its entity. The Imam has urged (the Muslims) to give alms, for it aids the poor and the deprived. Allah has promised that He will bestow upon those who give alms.

10. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Verily Musa’ b. ‘Umra’n asked his Lord, saying: ‘O Lord, are You far, so I will call out to You? Or are You near, so I will whisper to You?’ So Allah revealed to him: *O Musa’, I am the friend of him who invoke Me!”*

11. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “The supplication of the children of my community is accepted unless they commit sins.”

Certainly, the supplication of the children of the faithful is accepted, for Allah does not refuse a supplication of theirs on the condition that they should not commit crimes and sins.

12. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “He who passes by cemeteries and recites (the sura) *Qul Huwa Allah Ahad* eleven times and then he gives his reward to the dead, a reward equal to the number of the dead will be given to him.”

Surely, Allah doubles the reward of him who recites Surat al-Tawhid for the dead Muslims, and He abundantly rewards him.

13. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Supplication is the weapon of a believer, pillar of religion, and light of the heavens and the earth. So cling to supplication and be sincere in intention."

This tradition gives an account of the importance of supplication, for it is the weapon of a believer, pillar of religion, and light of the heavens and earth. So supplication has occupied the highest position with Allah, the Exalted.

14. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "If one of you wants a need, then let him seek it early in the morning on Thursday, and let him recites when he goes out of his house the last (verse) of *Al 'Umra'n, Ayat al-Kursi, Inna' Anzalna'hu' fi Laylat al-Qadr,* and *Umm al-Kita'b* (Surat al-Fa'tiha), for in them is the accomplishment of the needs of this world and the next."

This tradition contains the program of accomplishing needs, for he (the Prophet) has appointed the time when the Suras of Allah's dear Book should be recited.

15. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Six (things) are of manhood: Three of them (is performed) in cities and towns and three of them (is performed) on journey. As for those (performed) in cities and towns are: reciting the Qur'an, building mosques, and making friends in Allah; and as for those (performed) on journey are: giving food generously, good manners, and joking (in things) other than acts of disobedience to Allah."

These six qualities give an account of man's honor, manhood, and good inner self.

16. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said three times:] "O Allah, have mercy on my successors!"

He was asked: "Who are your successors, Allah's Apostle?"

He replied: "Those who will come after me, narrate my traditions and my Sunna (sayings and practices), and teach them to men after me."

Surely, the successors of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and the closest of men to him are those who narrate his traditions, circulate them among men, teach men the principle features of religion and the precepts of Islam.

17. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, this knowledge is the treasures of Allah and its keys are question, so question, may Allah have mercy on you, for four (persons) are rewarded because of it: the questioner, the teacher, the listener, and the answerer."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, urges the ignorant to question about the affairs of their

religious and worldly affairs which they do not know, for, in this manner, knowledge is spread and circulated.

18. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who recites *Idha' Zulzult al-Ardu'* four times is like him who has recited the whole Qur'an."

Surely, reciting this Holy Verse four times leads to this great result, which is reciting the whole Qur'an.

19. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [My father Muhammad b. 'Ali, peace be on them, related to me. He said: He, peace be on him, said:] "If you enter five (things), you will not able to (perform) the like of them: The servant should fear (nothing) except his sins, hope for (none) except his Lord. The ignorant, when asked about something he does not know, should not be ashamed of saying that Allah and His Messenger know. He who does not know should not be ashamed of learning. Steadfastness is of the same rank with faith as (that of) the head with the body. He who has no patience has no faith."

Wisdom has been embodied in these matters through which man, if he follows them, is exalted and a model of excellence and politeness.

20. Through his chain of authorities, he said:[Al-Husayn b. 'Ali, peace be on them, related to me. He said:] "A tablet was found under a wall of one of the cities (*al-Mada"in*), and therein was written: 'I am Allah; there is no god save Me and Muhammad is My Prophet. I wonder at him who is sure of death, how is he happy? I wonder at him who is certain of (Allah's) determination, how is he sad? I wonder at him who has tried the world, how does he feel secure wherein? And I wonder at him who is sure of reckoning, how does he commit sins?'"

This tablet contains a great warning. If man carefully considers the warning, he will turn away from every sin and do all that which brings him near to Allah.

21. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "An angel came to me and said: 'O Muhammad, verily your Lord recite (His) greetings to you and says to you: 'If you want, I will make the valley of Mecca gold.'" He said: "So he (the Prophet) looked toward the sky and said: 'O Lord, make me satisfied on one day, so I will praise you; make me hungry on another, so I will ask you!'"

Indeed, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, renounced the world, turned away from its pleasures, and devoted himself to Allah, the most High. This is one of his special qualities which distinguished him from the rest of the prophets.

Chapter 2: On The Adhan

22. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [The Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, said:]

“When Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, began learning the *adha’n* (call to prayer), Gabriel brought him the Bura’q, but it was difficult for him (to ride it). Then he brought him a riding animal called Bura’qa and it was difficult for him (to ride it), so Gabriel said to it: ‘Be calm, for none more honorable than him in Allah’s view has ever ridden you!’ It became calm, and Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘I rode it until I reached the veil which was before the Merciful (Allah), and then an angel came out from behind the veil and said: ‘*Allahu akbar! Allahu Akbar!* (Allah is greater.)’ He (Allah’s Messenger) said: ‘So I asked: O Gabriel, who is that angel?’ He replied: ‘By Allah who has honored you with the Prophethood, I have never seen that angel before this hour of mine.’ He said: ‘*Allahu akbar! Allahu Akbar!* (Allah is greater.)’ So he was called out from behind the veil: ‘My servant is truthful; I am greater; I am greater!’ Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘The angel said: ‘*Ashhadu anna La’ ila’ha illa’ lla’h*, *Ashhadu anna La’ ila’ha illa’ lla’h* (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah.)’ So he was called out from behind the veil: ‘My servant is truthful. I am Allah; there is no god but I.’ Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said (that), so the angel said: ‘*Ashhadu anna Muhammadar rasu’l ‘allah*, *Ashhadu anna Muhammadar rasu’l ‘allah* (I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.)’ So he was called out from behind the veil: ‘My servant is truthful; I have sent Muhammad as a Messenger.’ Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘The angel said: ‘*Hayya ‘alla’s-sala’h*, *Hayya ‘alla’s-sala’h* (Make haste to the prayer.)’ So he was called out from behind the veil: ‘My servant is truthful and summons (men) to worship Me.’ Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘The angel said: ‘*Hayya ‘alla’l fala’h*, *hayya ‘alla’l fala’h* (Make haste to salvation).’ So he was called out from behind the veil: ‘My servant is truthful and summons (men) to worship Me. And surely successful is he who perseveres in it.[4]’ Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘Allah has completed for me the honor over the first and the last.’”

The Shi‘ites have unanimously agreed that it was the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who legislated the *adha’n* in this manner which have been mentioned in this tradition or something similar to it; whilst the Sunnis have mentioned that when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, came to Medina, it was difficult for the people to know the timings of his prayers. So they discussed specifying a certain signal in order to know the timing of the payer of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, lest they should miss the congregational prayers. Hence some suggested a bell, but the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: “The bell belongs to the Christians.” Others suggested a trumpet, but he said: “It belongs to the Jews.” Others suggested a tambourine, but he said: “It belongs to the Romans.” Others suggested burning fire, but he said: “It belongs to the Magus.” Others suggested setting up a banner, but that did not appeal to him, may Allah bless him and his family. So, he may Allah bless him and his family, stood up concerned; hence ‘Abd Allah b. Zayd spent the night concerned because of the concern of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and he saw in his sleep an angel who taught him the *adha’n* and the *iqa’ma* (the declaration of standing for prayer), so he told the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, about that. The dream coincided with the revelation. So the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, ordered it (*adha’n*) to be performed.[5]

This is very impossible, for the *adha'n* and the *iqa'ma* are of the pre-conditions of prayer; they are like the rest of the pre-conditions such as *taha'ra* (purity), *istiqba'l al-qibla* (facing the *qibla*), and *iba'hat al-maka'n* (the place should be permissible). The Revelation came down (to the Prophet) carrying all these pre-conditions and explanations of prayer. Then why did 'Abd Allah b. Zayd see the angle and the rest of Companions (of the Prophet), who were greater than him in importance, did not see him?

Chapter 3: On Urging To Performing The Five Prayers And The Quality Of The Prayer For The Dead

23. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Satan is still afraid of Adam's son as long as he keeps his prayers. However, if he neglects them, he (Satan) dares against him and throws him into great sins."

Allah, the Most High, honored and dignified man through praying and standing before Him during the five prayers. However, the stoned Satan plays with man and does his best to deprive him of this excellence and honorable rank.

24. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who performs a religious duty (*farida*), Allah responds to his supplication."

Surely, he who performs a religious duty, whether prayer or fasting or hajj or others, Allah rewards him and accepts his supplication.

25. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "My community is still in good as long as they love each other, return things deposited (with them), refrain from the unlawful, entertain the guest, perform the prayer, and pay *zaka't* (alms). However, if they do not do that, they will be afflicted by drought."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family has summoned his community to keep these noble qualities, and he promised that they would be in good as long as they performed them, but if they neglected them, Allah would afflict them with a dreadful tribulation.

26. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "If man is not able to perform prayer in standing position, he can pray in sitting position. If he cannot pray in sitting position, he can pray laying down on his back and his feet facing the *qibla*, and he makes a sign."

The prayer is the most important of religious duties, and the responsible is not exempted from it in all circumstances. If he is able, he prays in standing position; if he is unable, he prays in sitting position; and so on.

27. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him

and his family, said:] “Keep the five prayers, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, will summon the servant on the Day of Resurrection; prayer will be the first thing about which He will ask him. If he brings it perfect; otherwise, he will be pushed into the Fire.”

Prayer will be the first thing about which the responsible will be asked during his mustering and his raising from the dead. If he performs prayer perfectly, he will be safe from the chastisement of Allah; if he performs it imperfectly or neglects one of its pre-conditions, he will be thrown into the Fire.

28. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Do not lose your prayers, for he who loses his prayer will be mustered along with Qa’ru’n and Fir‘oun and Ha’ma’n; and it is incumbent upon Allah to make him enter the Fire along with the hypocrites; and woe unto him who does not keep his prayers and does not perform the Sunna of his Prophet.”

Islam takes great care of prayer and distinguishes it from the rest of acts of worship. So he who performs it is a Muslim; and he who denies it dies the death of those pagans before Islam and will be mustered along with the oppressive and the unbelievers.

29. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [‘Ali, the blessings of Allah be on him, said:] “Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, led us in the traveler’s shortened prayer and recited in the first (*rak‘a*) *al-hamd* and *qul ya’ ayuha’ al-kafiru’n*, and in the other (*rak‘a*) he recited *al-hamd* and *qul huwa Allahu ahad*. Then he said: ‘I recited to you the one-third and one-fourth of the Qur’an.’”

A four-*rak‘a* prayer is shortened during travel, and surely the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, recited *qul ya’ ayuha’ al-kafiru’n* in the first *rak‘a* after *al-fa’tiha*, and in the second *rak‘a* he recited *surat al-Tawhid* after *al-fa’tiha*; and he, may Allah bless him and his family, made clear the reward of that when he said that he recited the one-third of the Qur’an in the first *rak’a* and the one-fourth of the Qur’an in the second *rak’a*.

30. Through his chain of authorities, he said: “Muhammad b. ‘Ali, peace be on him, was asked about the prayer, and he claimed that his father would shorten the prayer during travel.”

As for shortening prayer during travel, it is among the necessities of the creed of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them; the Book and the Sunna are two proofs of that.

31. Through his chain of authorities, he said: “I saw the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, exclaim ‘Allah is Great!’ over his uncle Hamza, peace be on him, five times, and after him he exclaimed ‘Allah is Great!’ over the martyrs, so seventy times of exclaiming ‘Allah is Great!’ was the share of Hamza.”

As for the prayer for the dead, it is one of the general obligations. In other words, it is not obligatory on all Muslims to perform it; rather it obligatory on some of them. As for its performance, it is as follows:

Five *takbirs* should be made; *al-Shaha'datayn* (the two testimonies: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) should be recited after the first *takbir*, calling down blessing upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, should be after the second *takbir*; a supplication for the believers, male and female, should be recited after the third *takbir*; a supplication for the deceased should be recited after the fourth *takbir*; the fifth *takbir* should be recited, and then departure.[6] In this connection many traditions have been reported from the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them.[7] As for the Sunnis, they believe that the *takbirs* are four, and the worshipper departs after the fourth (*takbir*).[8]

32. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, when you pray over a deceased person, say: O Allah, verily this is Your slave and son of Your bondmaid has passed away according to Your decree, and he is not a mentioned thing. He has visited You and You are the best One whom is visited. O Allah, dictate to him Your argument, join him to Your Prophet, brighten his grave for him, be generous toward him during his entering, make him firm through the firm statement, for he is in need of You and You are in no need of him. He bore witness that there was no god but You, so forgive him. O Allah, do not deprive us of the reward through him and do not try us after him.

"O 'Ali, when you pray over a woman, say: O Allah, You created her, and You gave life to her, and You made her die, and You are more knowledgeable of her secret and openness. We have come to You as intercessors for her, so forgive her. O Allah, do not deprive us of the reward through her.

"O 'Ali, when you pray over a child, say: O Allah, make him an ancestor and provisions for his parents, make him an intercessor (for them), make him for them as light and guidance, and make his parents follow (him to) the Garden. Verily, You are powerful over all things!"

As for the performance of the prayer for the dead, we have already mentioned it. As for this supplication, it should be recited after the fourth *takbir*. As for the prayer over the child, it is as follows: If he/she dies at the age of six years, then the prayer for the dead should be performed over him. If he/she has not reached this age, then prayer over them is recommended.

Chapter 4: On The Excellence Of Ahl Al-Bayt

It is in three parts:

Part 1: On the Excellence of 'Ali Bin Abu' Ta'lib (a.s)

33. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, I am the master of the messengers, and you are the commander of the faithful, Imam of the Allah-fearing, and leader of the excellent, famous ones."

Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, is the pioneer of thought and wisdom in

Islam. He is the soul of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, gate of the city of his knowledge, and his testamentary trustee after him. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, lauded his exalted rank and great position. No tradition has been transmitted from him, may Allah bless him and his family, concerning his praising any of his companions like his praising Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. His purpose of that is to provide evidence of his succession after him.

34. Through his chain of authorities, he [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family], peace be on him, said: “When I was ascended to the heaven, Gabriel took me by the hand and sat me on a *darnu’k*[9] of the Garden. Then he gave me a quince from it (the Garden), and it (the quince) and what was therein was prepared for Imam ‘Ali, peace be on him.”

Certainly, Allah has prepared for ‘Ali, peace be on him, all favors of the hereafter and made him dwell Paradise and live wherever he likes.

35. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “O ‘Ali, I asked my Lord to give me five qualities regarding you, and He gave (them) to me. As for the first of them, it is that I asked my Lord to split open the ground and to dust my head and you were with me, so He (Allah) gave it to me. As for the second, it is that I asked my Lord to let me stop by the Scale of the Balance and you were with me, so He gave it to me. As for the third, it is that I asked him to make you the carrier of the standard, which was the Standard of *Allahu Akbar* under which were those who gained the Garden, and He gave it to me. As for the fourth, it is that I asked my Lord (to let) you water my community from my pond (*hawd*), and He gave it to me. As for the fifth, it is that I asked my Lord to make you the leader of my community to the Garden, so my Lord gave it to me. Praise belongs to Allah who has bestowed that upon me!”

Surely, Allah singled Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, with all noble qualities and endowed him with all virtues. He accepted the supplication of His Prophet when he asked Him to give these qualities and virtues to ‘Ali.

36. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “When the Day of Resurrection occurs, I will take hold of the *hijjza* of Allah; you will hold my *hijjza*; your sons will grasp your *hijjza*; and the Shi‘ites of your sons will take hold of their *hijjza*.[10]”

Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, has a noble rank with Allah, the Exalted. Through this rank he has gained exaltedness over the righteous and the Allah–fearing, and through it he, his sons, and his Shi‘ites will be distinguished from the rest of the people on the Day of Judgment.

37. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “O ‘Ali, you will be the Divider of the Garden and of the Fire; you will knock at the gate of the Garden and enter it without any reckoning.”

This tradition has been narrated by a group of religious scholars from among the Shi'ites and the Sunnis. It gives an account of the outstanding merit of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and his great importance with Allah, which none of the people has ever reached except the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

38. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, you and your sons will be on the (backs of) piebald horses and crowned with pearls and corundum. Allah will ordered you (to be taken) to the Garden and the people look (at you)."

How great the rank of the Imam and his pure sons with Allah is! For He has singled them out with all noble qualities and distinguished them from the rest of his creatures.

39. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, I will be called out from inside the Throne: The best father is your father Ibra'him; the best brother is your brother 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib!"

Allah singled His great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, with all kinds of excellence of which is that he was among the progeny of Ibra'him, Allah's bosom friend, and that his brother was Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, who defended the word of monotheism, the values and principles of Islam.

40. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, Allah ordered me to love four (persons): 'Ali, Salma'n, Abu' Dharr, and al-Muqda'd b. al-Aswad."

Surely, these four (leading figures) took part in building Islam and carried the torch of monotheism; accordingly, Allah ordered his Prophet to love them, for they were among the elements of piety and righteousness.

41. He, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, surely, Allah has already forgiven you, your progeny, your Shi'ites, those who love your Shi'ites, those who love the lover of your Shi'ites; therefore be cheerful, for you are free from polytheism and full of knowledge."

Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, had great communication with Allah, the Exalted, so Allah endowed him with this excellence of forgiving him, his children, his Shi'ites, and their followers.

42. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Whomsoever I am his Master, then 'Ali is his master. O Allah, be friend of one who is his friend and be the enemy of one who is his enemy; and desert one who deserts him and help one who helps him."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, declared these brilliant words, which were the most expensive medals he gave to the Imam, on the Day of Ghadir Khum, which is the most important ‘Id in Islamic world, for he appointed the Imam as a successor after him and ordered the Muslims to pledge allegiance to him. They pledged allegiance to him, so did the wives of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. On that immortal day, the greatest favor toward the Muslims was completed, and on it this holy verse was revealed: ***This day I have completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion***.

43. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “O ‘Ali, had it not been for you, the believers would not have been recognized after me.”

Surely, Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, is the measure through whom the believer is distinguished from the sinner; so, he who loves him is a believer and he who shows enmity toward him is a sinner. ‘Aisha says:

When gold is touched by a touchstone, its cheat appears without doubt.

Cheat is in us, and ‘Ali, the purified gold, is like a touchstone among us.[11]

44. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, related to me. He said:] “I have inherited two books from Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family: the Book of Allah, the Exalted, and a book concerning the sheath of my sword.”

He was asked: “O Commander of the faithful, what is the book concerning the sheath of your sword?”

“He who kills other than his killer and hits other than his hitter, then the curse of Allah be upon him.”

Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, inherited all qualities of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, of which are what he, peace be on him, has mentioned above.

45. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said:[Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “O ‘Ali, you have been given three (things) the like of which I have not been given.”

I (i.e. ‘Ali) asked: “May my father and mother be your ransom, what have I been given?”

He, may Allah bless him and his family, replied: “You have been given a father-in-law like me; you have been give a wife like Fa’tima, peace be on her; and you have been given the like of your two sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn.”

Allah, the Most High, singled Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, with these three traits with which He had never endowed anyone.

46. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him

and his family, said:] “On the Day of Resurrection there will be no rider other than us, and we will be four.”

A man from the Ansa’r stood up and asked him: “O Allah’s Apostle, who are they?”

He (the Apostle) replied: “I will be on (the back of) al-Bara’q riding animal; and my brother (Prophet) Sa’lih on Allah’s she-camel which was slaughtered; my uncle Hamza on my she-camel al-‘Adba”; and my brother ‘Ali b. Abu’, peace be on him, on one of the she-camels of the Garden and the Standard of Praise will be in his hand; and he will say: There is no god but Allah; Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is the Messenger of Allah! So the human beings will say: That is an angel brought nigh or a prophet sent out or the bearer of the Throne. So an angel from the inside of the Throne will answer them: O group of human beings, that is not angel brought nigh nor a prophet sent out nor a bearer of the Throne; that is ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib!”

Certainly, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah, the Most High, will manifest the position of His friend Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and his exalted rank with Him, to the extent that He will make the prophets brought nigh, the messengers sent out, His friends, and the rest of the creatures know the importance of the Imam with Him.

47. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [‘Ali, peace be on him, said:] “He who loves me finds me at his death in such a manner which he loves; and he who hates me finds me at his death in such a manner which he hates.”

Many traditions indicate that Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, attends at the death of everyone, believer and unbeliever. He asks the Angel of Death to treat the person gently if he/she is a believer; and he asks him to treat the person roughly if he/she is unbeliever.

Part 2: On The Excellence Of Fatima (a.s.)

48. He said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “She has been named Fa’tima because Allah, the Exalted, has separated her and those who love her from the Fire.”

This part contains the traditions which have been transmitted from the Prophet, peace be on him, concerning the piece of him, the Leader of the women of the world, Fa’tima, the chaste, the peace of Allah be upon her. This is one of the traditions in which he has declared that Allah has separated the Leader of the women of the world from the Fire; likewise, He has separated from the Fire her Shi‘ites and those who love her.

49. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Verily, Allah becomes angry because of her anger, and He becomes pleased on account of her pleasure.”

There is an unanimous agreement on this tradition, which is a proof of the exalted rank of the Messenger's piece and sweet basil (i. e. Fa'tima) with Allah, the Most High. It is worth mentioning that none of believing women has ever reached this distinguished position with Him.

50. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "On the Day of Resurrection, my daughter Fa'tima will be mustered along with clothes stained with al-Husayn's blood. She will cling to a leg of the Throne and say: 'O Lord, judge between me and the murderer of my son!'"

Allah's Messenger said: "By the Lord of the Ka'ba, He will judge for my daughter!"

Surely the whole world shook for the tragedy of (Imam al-Husayn) the master of the youths of heaven and sweet basil of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. Fa'tima, the Leader of the world's women and the Messenger's piece is so bereaved of his tragedy that she will raise his shirt stained with his pure blood before Allah, the Exalted, and complain to Him of the tragedies her son faced.

The poet says:

Definitely, Fa'tima will come on the Day of Resurrection,

and her shirt will be stained with al-Husayn's blood!

Abu' al-'Ala' says:

Surely, she will come to the Mustering wearing his shirt,

seeking the help of the Merciful!

51. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "My daughter Fa'tima will be mustered and there will be on her the garment of dignity which was already kneaded in the water of life; the creatures will look at her in amazement. Then she will also be clothed in two of the garments of the Garden; on each garment it will be written in green script: Let Muhammad's daughter enter the Garden; it will be written in the best manner, dignity, and view. So she will be carried to the Garden in procession as the bride is carried; and seventy thousand slave-girls will be entrusted with her."

Without doubt, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah, the Exalted, will manifest the excellence of the Leader of women, who struggled bravely in the path of Islam, and who established the creed of the Shi'ites through her immortal orations and her heroic attitudes.

52. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, a caller from inside the Throne will call out: 'O group of creatures, lower your eyes, that Fa'tima, the daughter of Muhammad, may pass!'"

This is one of the places of honoring and magnifying the Leader of women, the peace of Allah be upon her, on the day when men will be mustered before the Lord of the worlds.

53. Through his chain of authorities, ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, said: “We were with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. While we were digging the trench Fa’tima, peace be on her, came and there was along with her a small piece of bread. She gave it to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and he, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘What is this small piece?’ She replied: ‘I baked one loaf of barely bread for al-Hasan and al-Husayn, and I have brought you this small piece of it.’ So he, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘O Fa’tima, this is the first food to enter your father’s mouth for three days.’”

This traditions shows that the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, helped each other, preferred others to themselves, and renounced worldly pleasures.

54. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “An angel came to me and said: ‘O Muhammad, surely Allah, the Great and Almighty, recites to you (His) greetings and says: ‘I have married Fa’tima to ‘Ali, so marry her to him. I have ordered the Tree of Tuba’ to bear pearls, corals, and corundum. The inhabitants of the heaven have rejoiced at that. She will bear him two sons, the two masters of the Garden, and by the virtue of them the Garden will be adorned. Be happy, O Muhammad! For you are the best of the first and the last.’”

Many traditions indicate that the Leader of women and the piece of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, (i.e. Fa’tima) was married to ‘Ali according to the command of Allah, who gave through that a model of marriage in Islam and indicated that it was based on dignity and virtue, and that in all circumstances it had no relationship with perishing material considerations. The Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, married the Leader of women to Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, in the time when he was the poorest of all the people, and he had nothing of the enjoyments of life except his breastplate and his sword. So he sold his breastplate and appointed the money as a dower for the Leader of the women; and he bought for it the cheapest trousseau in that time, but it was the most precious and expensive trousseau in Islam, for is was based on virtue, honor, and exalted character. So, peace be on the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), who represented the essence of Islam in all their affairs and conditions.

55. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father ‘Ali b. al-Husayn related to me. He said: Asma’’, daughter of ‘Umays, related to me. She said:] “I was with your grandmother Fa’tima, peace be on her, when Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, entered; and there was a lace of gold around her neck, which ‘Ali had bought for her from his war booty. So the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said to her: ‘Do not be deceived by that the people say that you are the daughter of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, and that the clothes of the tyrants are on you.’ Hence she cut the necklace and sold it. Then she bought a slave and released him, so the

Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was pleased with that."

The Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, wanted the Leader of women to be a model of virtue and self-negation; and he wanted her to share the Muslim miserable women their poverty, so there would be no distinction between her and them.

Part 3: On the Excellence of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, their Birth, and Ahl al-Bayt (a.s) in General

56. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the two masters of the youths of Heaven; and their father is better than them."

Surely, the two grandsons of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, are the two masters of the youths of the Garden and are two lamps for them, so the peace of Allah be upon them and upon their father, the Lord of the pure family.

57. He, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "A boy is a sweet basil, and my two sweet basil are al-Hasan and al-Husayn."

The two pure Imams were the two sweet basil of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and his trust with his community; hence the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was very loyal to them.

58. He, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me:] "Al-Hasan and al-Husayn were playing by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, until most of the night passed, then the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'Go to your mother.' It flashed, and the flash shone for them until they went in to Fa'tima. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, looked at the flash and said: 'Praise belongs to Allah who has honored us, *Ahl al-Bayt*.'"

Allah, the Most High, singled the two grandsons of the Prophet, peace be on them, with every noble quality, endowed them with his favors, and chose them from among the rest of his creatures.

59. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The stars are security for the inhabitants of the heaven; my household and my children are security for my community."

Certainly, the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, are security for the inhabitants of the earth; tribulation is driven away through them; mercy comes down and good spreads through them.

60. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The Garden is forbidden for him who wrongs my Household, him who kills them, him who helps against them, and him who curses them. *Surely they shall have no portion in the*

hereafter, and Allah will not speak to them; nor will He look upon them on the Day of Resurrection; nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful chastisement."

Woe unto him who denies the authority (*wila'ya*) of the Imams from *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on him! Woe unto him who wrongs and oppose them! For such a person brings the wrath of Allah and of His Messenger against himself; therefore, he will be deprived of the Garden.

61. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "I will intercede for four (persons) on the Day of Resurrection: He who honors my progeny; he who accomplishes their needs; the one who strives for them concerning their affairs when they are forced to them; and the one who loves (them) through his heart and his tongue."

He who loves the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, honors and magnifies them will gain general good and obtains the intercession of their grandfather, master of the prophets.

62. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "It is not lawful for us, *Ahl al-Bayt*, to take alms; and we have been ordered to perform the ritual ablution properly, and not to ride on the shoulder of an ass."

It is forbidden for the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, to take obligatory alms such as *zaka't;* so is it forbidden for the 'Alawides, may Allah increase their honor, who belong to them.

63. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: "He who curses a prophet is killed; and he who curses the companion of a prophet is flogged."

64. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The likeness of my house among you is like Noah's Ark. He who embarked it was safe; and he who missed it was pushed into the Fire."

Definitely, the *Ahl al-Bayt* , peace be on him, are lifeboats and security for mankind. He who follows them is safe; and he disobeys them perishes. In this tradition on whose correctness there is an unanimous agreement, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has likened them to the Ark of Noah, peace be on him, which saved his companions from drowning when the waves surrounded those who deviated from the truth, and they drowned therein. The believers who were on Noah's Ark were safe; likewise, those who follow the authority of the Household of the Prophet, the peace of Allah be upon them, will gain the Garden; he who denies and wrongs them will fall into the bottom of the Fire.

65. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Woe unto those who wrong my household! They will be chastised along with the hypocrite in the bottom of the Fire!"

Woe unto him who wrongs the Household of the Prophet and shows enmity toward them, for they are the source of awareness and thought, not only for this community but also for men in general. Surely,

the fate of those who wrong them will be the permanent chastisement in the next world.

66. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "I have been summoned and it is nearly the moment for me to answer. I am going to leave among you the *thaqalayn*. If you cleave to them, you will never go astray after me; one of them is greater than the other that is the Book of Allah which is a cord stretching from the sky to the earth and my offspring from my family. They will never scatter (from each other) until they come to me at the Pool (*hawd*). Hence, think! How will you treat them after me?"

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has associated his pure family with the Book of Allah. If it had not been for that his Household were infallible, the comparison between the Holy Qur'an, *falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it* and the pure Family would be incorrect. Clinging to the Book is the means of salvation, and so is clinging to the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them.

66. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The anger of Allah and of His Apostle is intense with him who sheds the blood of my progeny or hurts me (through hurting) my family."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, predicted that his family would face persecutions at the hands of the opponents and enemies of Islam who shed their blood and poured upon them oppression and tyranny which none has ever witnessed throughout the stages of history.

67. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Ja'far b. Muhammad, peace be on them, said:] "Saturday is for us; Sunday is for our Shi'ites; Monday is for the Umayyads; Tuesday is for their followers; Wednesday for the 'Abba'sids; Thursday is for their followers; and Friday is for Allah. There is no travel on it (Friday), for Allah, the Exalted, says: ***And when the prayer is finished, so spread in the land and seeks from Allah's favor***.

The Imam, peace be on him, divided the days of the week into these parts, and he singled Friday with more excellence and appointed it for Allah, the Most High. Among the special characteristics of Friday is that it is hateful for someone to travel on it before the declination of the sun, that the responsible may perform the Friday prayer.

68. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father Musa' b. Ja'far (i.e. Imam al-Sa'diq), peace be on him, related to me. He said:] "It was (engraved) in the ring of Muhammad b. 'Ali: "My opinion is good in Allah, the trusted Prophet, the testamentary trustee, possessor of favors, and the two good ones: al-Hasan and al-Husayn."

The aspects of worship and obedience to Allah, the Most High, appear in every aspect of the lives of the pure Imams, the peace of Allah be upon them. Among them is that they engraved the words of monotheism in their own rings.

69. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, said:] “The munificent are the masters of men in this world; and the Allah-fearing are the masters of men in the next.”

70. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, said:] “Well-being is a hidden property.”

Well-being is one of Allah’s greatest favors toward man. It is the greatest favor toward man. All the favors which man enjoys are worthless without well-being

71. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, said: Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “He who does a favor for one of the children of ‘Abd al-Muttalib, and he (the child of ‘Abd al-Muttalib) does not reward him for it, I (i.e. Allah’s Apostle) will reward him for it tomorrow when I meet him on the Day of Resurrection.”

72. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn said:] “Surely, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, performed the *adha’n* (call to prayer) in the ear of al-Hasan and of al-Husayn on the day when they were born.”

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, performed the religious rites for his two grandsons, of which that he performed the *adha’n* in their right ears and the *iqa’ma* in their left ears, and hence this has become a religious rite performed for every Muslim baby.

73. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, related to me. He said: Asma’’, daughter of ‘Umays related to me. She said:] “I assisted your grandmother Fa’tima in giving birth to al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be on them. When al-Hasan was born, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, came and said: ‘O Asma’’, bring me my son.’ I brought him wrapped in a yellow piece of cloth. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, threw the piece away and said: ‘O Asma’’, did I not order you not to wrap the baby in a yellow piece of cloth?’ So I wrapped him in a white piece of cloth and gave him to him. He performed the *adha’n* in his right ear and the *iqa’ma* in his left ear. Then he asked: ‘Which name have you given to this son of mine, ‘Ali?’ He (i.e. ‘Ali), peace be on him, replied: ‘I do not want to precede you in giving name to him, Allah’s Messenger. I want to call him Harb.’ ‘I do not want to precede my Lord in giving name to him,’ answered the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. Then Gabriel, peace be on him, came down and said: ‘The Exalted, the Most High (Allah) recites to you (His) greetings and says to you: ‘‘Ali has the same rank with you as Ha’ru’n had with Musa’ except that there will be no prophet after you, so call this son of yours with the name of Ha’ru’n’s son.’ So he (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, asked: ‘Gabriel, what was the name of Ha’ru’n’s son?’ ‘Shubbar,’ replied Gabriel. ‘My mother tongue is Arabic,’ explained the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. ‘Name him al-Hasan,’ answered Gabriel.”

Asma’’ added: “He (the Prophet) named him al-Hasan. On the seventh day, he, may Allah bless him and his family, sacrificed two gray rams on his behalf. He gave a leg of the ram to the midwife; he

shaved his hair and gave gold as alms equal to the weight of his hair and perfumed his hair with *al-khulu'q*[12]. Then he said: 'Asma'', the blood is the action of those who lived before Islam.[13]'"

Asma'' said: "A year after the birth of al-Hasan, peace be on him, al-Husayn, peace be on him, was born, so the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, came and said: 'Asma'', give me my son. I wrapped him in a white piece of cloth and gave him to him. He said the *adha'n* in his right ear and the *iqa'ma* in his left ear. He put him on his lap and wept."

Asma'' asked: "My father and mother be you ransom, what has made you weep?"

"I weep for this son of mine," he, may Allah bless him and his family, said.

I (i.e. Asma'') said: "He was born at this hour."

"The oppressive group will kill him,' he, may Allah bless him and his family, commented, "may Allah not let them obtain my intercession."

Then he said: "Do not tell Fa'tima (about these words of mine), for she has just given birth to him."

Then he, may Allah bless him and his family, asked 'Ali, peace be on him: "Which name have you given to this son of mine?"

"I do not want to precede you in giving name to him, Allah's Apostle. I would like to call him Harb," answered 'Ali, peace be on him.

"I do not want to precede my Lord in giving name to him," answered the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

Then Gabriel, peace be on him, came down and said: "The Almighty (Allah) recites to you (His) greetings and says to you: Call him with the name of Ha'ru'n's son."

"What was the name of Ha'ru'n's son?" he (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, asked.

"Shabir," replied Gabriel.

"My mother tongue is Arabic," explained the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

"Call him al-Husayn," answered Gabriel.

He (the Prophet) named him al-Husayn. On the seventh day, he, may Allah bless him and his family, sacrificed two gray rams on his behalf. He shaved his hair and gave gold as alms equal to the weight of his hair and perfumed his hair with *al-khulu'q*.

He said: "Asma'', the blood is the action of those who lived before Islam" Then he gave a leg of the ram to the midwife.

I (i.e. the author) think that a sentence of this tradition has been fabricated, which is the wish of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, in naming his two sons Harb. This name is not beautiful and it is the name of the grandfather of the Umayyad family, who fought against Islam and spared no effort to extinguish the light of Allah. Moreover Islam is the religion of peace and is the greetings of the Muslims among themselves. The books of the Imami jurisprudence have mentioned that it is hateful for Muslims to call their babies Harb.

74. Through his chain of authorities, he said: “My father ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on them, related to me that he was called al-Hasan on the seventh day, and al-Husayn was derived from the name al-Hasan, and he mentioned that there was (no period) between them except the pregnancy.”

Most rites of religious birth are performed on behalf of the newborn baby on the seventh day, of which is giving name to the baby.

75. Through his chain of authorities, he said: “My father ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on them, related to me that Fa’tima, peace be on him, sacrificed (rams) on behalf of al-Hasan and al-Husayn; she gave a leg of the ram and a dinar to the midwife.”

Through his chain of authorities, he said: [‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib said:] “It was as if that I saw palaces were built around the grave of al-Husayn, and that I saw markets surround his grave. The days and nights will not pass until (people) from the regions walk to him. That will happen when the children of Marwa’n perish.”

The matter happened just as Imam ‘Ali, peace be on him, had predicted, for palaces and markets were built in Karbala’’, the city of honor and refusal; the grave of the great, martyred Imam has became a holy shrine and destination for all Muslims and people who believe in humanity, for it is the holiest shrine in all regions of the world.

76. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [Ja‘far b. Muhammad was asked about the visitation to the grave of al-Husayn, peace be on him, and he said: My father told me. He said:] “He who visits the grave of al-Husayn and is aware of his right, Allah will write him among those who are in the highest places in Paradise.” Then he said: “Surely, there are seventy thousand shaggy, dusty angels who weep over him until the Day of Resurrection.”

Many traditions have been narrated on the authority of the Imams of guidance, peace be on them, concerning the visitation of the grave of the master of martyrs and maker of human dignity Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him, for in visiting him there is a link with the greatest Prophet and honor for this Imam, who raised high the torch of monotheism. Had it not been for his sacrifice, the Umayyads would have destroyed Islam and effaced all its teachings.

77. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Surely, the murderer of al-Husayn is in a coffin of fire; half chastisement of the people of the Fire (will

be practiced) against him; his hands and legs will be tied with chains of fire; he will be turned over until he falls into the bottom of the Hellfire. He will have a bad smell because of which the inhabitants of the Fire will seek protection in their Lord. He will be in the Hellfire forever and taste the painful chastisement. Whenever his skin is ripen, Allah will change it, that he may taste the painful chastisement which will not be flagged from him for an hour, and he will be watered from the boiling water of the Hellfire. So woe unto him because of the chastisement of Allah, the Great and Almighty!"

Woe unto every sinful criminal who fought against the master of the youths of Heaven who revolted for the rights of the oppressive and the deprived and for saving them from the Umayyad terrorist regime, which disdained the souls and dignity of men. Definitely, Allah has prepared a painful chastisement and severe punishment, with which He shall not punish the criminals, for those who took part in fighting against the sweet basil of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and master of the youths of the Garden (i.e. Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him).

78. Through his chain of authorities, he said: [Abu' al-Qa'sim al-Ta"i related to me. He said: 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, related to me. He said: My father Musa' b. Ja'far related to me. He said: My father Ja'far b. Muhammad related to me. He said: My father Muhammad b. 'Ali related to me. He said: My father 'Ali b. al-Husayn related to me. He said: My father al-Husayn b. 'Ali related to me. He said: My father 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me. He said: Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, Musa' b. 'Umra'n raised his hands and said: 'O my Lord, surely my brother Ha'ru'n has died, so forgive him.' Hence Allah, the Exalted, revealed to him: 'O Musa', if you ask me (to forgive) the first and the last, I will respond to you except those who killed al-Husayn, for I will not forgive them; rather I will take vengeance upon them.'"

Chapter 5: On The Excellence Of The Believer, Good Manners, And The Excellence Of Him Whose Name Is Muhammad Or Ahmed

79. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The likeness of the believer with Allah is like an angel brought nigh; and the believer with Allah is better than an angel brought nigh; and there is nothing more lovable to Allah than a repentant believing man or a repentant believing woman."

80. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, the believer is recognized in the heaven as a man is recognized by his own family and children; and he is nobler with Him (Allah) than an angel brought nigh."

81. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Gabriel came to me from his Lord and said: 'My Lord, the Great and Almighty, recites to you (His) greetings and says: 'O Muhammad, give good news to the believers who do good

deeds, believe in you, and love your household of the Garden, for they have with Me good reward, and they will enter the Garden.'"

The believers who have such qualities will have the noblest rank in the Garden and live therein wherever they like.

82. . Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who treats men and does not wrong them; tells them (about something) and does not tell them lies; promises them and does not break (his promise toward) them is a believer whose manhood is perfect, whose justice is manifest, love for him is obligatory (on men), and it is forbidden (on them) to backbite him."

If man has such qualities, he is perfect in faith, manhood, justice; and it is obligatory on people to be loyal to him and to refrain from backbiting him.

83. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who slanders a believing man or a believing woman or says about them what they do not have, Allah will make him stand on a hill of fire until he abandons what he has said concerning them."

Definitely, the believer has sacredness with Allah, for He, the Exalted, has made it incumbent on men to respect him, so none has the right to disparage him or to defame his character.

84. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "An example of the believer's dignity with Allah is that Allah does not appoint a term for his span of life. However, if he concerns about an offense, Allah makes him die due to (His) mercy (toward him)."

The meaning of this tradition is that Allah prolongs the believer's life, but if he commits a sin, Allah decreases his life. Imam al-Ridha' said: "Refrain from offenses and Allah will prolong your span of life."

85. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Cling to good manners, for the well-mannered are certainly in the Garden."

One of the most important Islamic principles is good manners, and it is one of the most beautiful and perfect qualities of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, by which he was distinguished from the rest of the prophets. Islam has emphasized on the necessity of having such a noble quality. During their Bedouin life, nations were distinguished from each other by their bodily strength. When they progressed, they were distinguished from each other by their knowledge. And when they advanced, they were distinguished from one another by good manners.

86. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "If the servant knows what he will have due to good manners, then he will come to

know that he is in no need (of anything) except good manners."

In this tradition there is a summons to clinging to good manners and Allah, the Most High, has prepared abundant reward for him who has this noble quality.

87. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, Allah will manifest Himself to His servant and shows him his sins one by one, and then He will forgive him. Allah will not inform about the servant's sins neither an angel brought nigh nor a messenger sent out. He will cover them from everyone, and then he will say to them: 'Be good deeds!'"

This traditions gives an account of Allah's plentiful mercy and his inclusive pardon toward His sinful servants. We ask Him, the Most High, to include us in His mercy.

90. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who abases and degrades a believing man or a believing woman because of their poverty, Allah will disgrace him on the Day of Resurrection."

Among the sins for which Allah punishes men is abasing and insulting the believer, for Allah has raised his importance and exalted his rank; therefore he who disdains the believer disdains Allah, the Exalted.

91. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, through good manners the servant gains the rank of one who performs prayer and fasting."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has underlined the necessity of having this noble quality, through which the Muslim is exalted and by which he is distinguished from the rest of men.

92. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Nothing heavier in the Balance than good manners."

93. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Bad manners spoil action just as vinegar spoils honey."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, warned men against bad manners which throw man into dreadful evil as well as they spoil the good deeds which he does.

94. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me:] "Among the treasures of good is concealing deed and steadfastness toward misfortune."

This noble quality is one of the most distinguished qualities of man. It is among the treasures of good and is proof of high character.

95. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him,

related to me. He said:] “Good manners are the best friend; the most perfect of you in belief is the best of you in manners.”

Surely, good manners are the best friend and guard, for they protect man from many problems and difficulties. In the meantime they are proof of the perfect faith of a person.

96. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “The title of the Muslim’s page is good manners.”

Good manners are the most prominent quality in the Muslim’s character, as the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said to his community.

97. Through his chain of authorities on the authority of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, who said: [Allah’s Apostle was asked:] “Who enter the Garden more?” “(Those who have) reverential fear and good manners,” he replied. Then he was asked: “Who enter the Fire more?” “(Those who follow) the two hollow (organs): the stomach and the genital parts,” he answered.

Fear of Allah, refraining from disobeying Him, and having good manners are the firmest ways through which man gains Allah’s good pleasure and enters the Garden. Likewise, paying no attention to the forbidden things and having an unlawful sexual intercourse bring about entering the Fire.

98. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “The nearest of you to me in sitting on the Day of Resurrection are those who are the best of you in good manners, and the best of you is he who is the best of you (in good manners) toward his family.”

He who beautifies himself with good manners is the closest of all people to the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, on the Day of Resurrection. Likewise, the closest of people to Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, is he who shows good, mercy, and kindness toward his family and undertakes their affairs.

99. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “The best of the people in faith are the best of them in good manners and the gentlest of them toward their families, and I am the gentlest of you toward my family.”

This tradition emphasizes good manners and kindness to family, and this is among the qualities of the holy Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

100. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “When you name the boy Muhammad, then honor him, make room for him when sitting, and do not show an ugly face toward him.”

Islam has made it recommended for Muslims to name their boy babies with the name of the Prophet

Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. He who is given this name is worthy of honoring, magnifying, making room during sitting, and receiving with cheerfulness.

101. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "If some people have a consultation and someone whose name is Muhammad or Ahmed is present with them and they let him take part in the consultation, they will (face nothing) except good for them."

This tradition summons Muslims to name their boys with the name of the great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and it urges them to honor and magnify those boys who have given this blessed name.

102. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "If food is placed and someone whose name is Muhammad or Ahmed sits at it, Allah will sanctify that house twice a day."

Chapter 6: On Mentioning Foods, Fruit, And Ointments

103. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Meat is the master of the food of this world and the next. Water is the master of the drink of this world and the next. And I am the master of the children of Adam. I am not proud (of anything), but poverty is my pride."

Meat is the master of foods, for it has some vitamins which are necessary for maintaining the body; likewise pure water is the master of drinks.

In this tradition the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has shown that he is the master of the children of Adam, that poverty is his pride, for he, may Allah bless him and his family, died and left behind him nothing of worldly provisions.

104. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Meat and rice are the master of the food of this world and the next."

This tradition gives an account of the excellence of meat and rice, and that they are the best masters of foods, for they have advantages which make the body grow.

105. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When you cook food, increase gourd, for it strengthens the heart of the sad."

106. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me:] "Cling to (eating) gourd, for it strengthens the brain."

This tradition and that before it urge men to eat gourd, for it contains food advantages such as vitamin

(A), iron, calcium, and in addition eating its seeds drives armed tapeworm away from the stomach.

107. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When you eat porridge, eat from its sides, for blessing is in the top."

This tradition summon Muslims to conform to the manners of eating, for example, one who eats porridge should eat from the sides of the container not from its top.

108. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me: He said: Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who wants to subsist, and there is no subsistence, should eat food early, wear the shoe well, wear light clothes, and decrease sleeping with women."

This tradition gives an account of some health pieces of advice:

A. Having food early.

B. Wearing shoe regularly.

C. Wearing light clothes.

D. Reducing sexual intercourse.

109. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [When Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, had food, he would say:] "O Allah, make it blessed for us, and bestow upon us something better than it." When he drank yogurt, he would say: "O Allah, make it blessed for us, and bestow upon us something better than it."

This tradition shows the supplication of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, when he had food and yogurt. Thus a supplication is among the religious manners which always connect man to his Almighty Creator.

110. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [When Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, had milk, he would rinse out his mouth and say:] "It has cream."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, hated anything to stay in his holy mouth even the remainder of milk, for it harms health.

111. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, said: A food was brought for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and he entered his finger into the food which was hot, so he, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Leave it until it becomes cold, for it is greater in blessing, and for Allah does not feed us the hot."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, hated to have hot food, for it severely harms health,

especially the mouth and the teeth, and other parts of the digestive system.

112. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Cling to (eating) meat, for it makes flesh grow. He who leaves meat for forty days, his (physical) constitution is bad."

As for meat, it is the most useful food to the body, for it contains albuminous materials, mineral salts, calcium, protein, and other materials which are necessary for building and soundness of the body, especially when it is used along with vegetables, for it achieves perfect nutrition for man.

113. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Cling to lentils, for they are blessed and sacred; they soften the heart and increase tear; they were regarded as blessed by seventy prophets, the last of them was 'Isa' b. Maryam, peace be on him."

As for lentils, they are among rich foods; they contain food materials such as calcium, iron, phosphorous, vitamin (B), and protein; so they are blessed.[14] Lentils are equal to meat and their protein ratio surpasses that of the rest of vegetables. One of their advantages is that they soften the heart and increase tear.

114. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: "He who starts (his food) with salt, Allah takes away from him seventy diseases, the first of which is leprosy."

The need for salt differs from man to another according to the regions of their living, for example, the inhabitants of the tropics are in need of a lot of salt because they ooze abundant sweat which contains food salt. Perhaps the tradition concerns such a kind of people. As for the inhabitants of the frigid zones like Sepirya, they are in no need of salt; rather they spit it out.

115. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "There is nothing more hateful to Allah than a full stomach."

Fullness or eating much food brings about heavy harms to the body, of which are high blood pressure, arteriosclerosis, diabetes, and others. For this reason the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, prevented men from eating much food.

116. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me. He said: Abu' Juhayfa said:] "I went to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and I was belching, so he said to me: 'O Abu' Juhayfa, stop your belching! Verily, the fullest of the people in this world will be the most hungry of them on the Day of Resurrection.'" He said: "So Abu' Juhayfa did not fill his stomach with food until he met Allah, the Exalted."

In this tradition there is a warning against fullness, which is a destructive blight.

117. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Do not ask a foolish or blear-eyed woman to nurse (your babies), for milk conveys disease."

Certainly, milk has bad or good effects on the natures of a baby. So the baby which feeds on the milk of a foolish or blear-eyed woman is infected by foolishness or bleariness in his future life, and this has been emphasized by modern medical studies. I (i.e. the author) have mentioned this matter in detail in my book *Niza'm al-Usra fi al-Isla'm* (the Organization of the Family in Islam).

118. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The baby has no milk better than that of its mother."

Certainly, the baby which feeds on its mother's milk is safe from diseases and enjoys good health, for its mother's milk is supplied with all necessary food materials. As for the milk other than that of its mother, it is liable to various kinds of diseases because it is either not pasteurized or is not suitable for its body.

119. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who spends (his own money) well will have a good deed."

In this tradition there is a creative summons to an Islamic economy, of which is that there must be a balance between spending and miserliness, and which protects man from choking economic crises.

120. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Vinegar is the best food; the house which has vinegar does not become poor."

Vinegar has many advantages, of which is that it helps the stomach in digesting food. It is the best of drinks, and in the past times it was the famous drink among the people.

121. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Eat dates before breakfast, for they kill the worms in the stomach."

Dates are rich in vitamins, for example, they have a high ratio of vitamin (A). It is worth mentioning that this vitamin helps children grow, that it keeps the moisture and brilliance of the eye, the protrusion of the eyeball, and that it plays an important role in forming the retinal purple, so doctors call it 'Factor of Growth'.

Moreover dates strengthen the auditory nerves, and they have other benefits mentioned by doctors. Islam has emphasized eating dates, for they have great advantages.

122. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, said:] "Gabriel, peace be on him, came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and said: 'Cling to al-Barni dates, for it is the best kind of your dates; it brings (men) nigh to Allah and send (them) away from the Fire.'"

Perhaps the reason for urging (men) to eat dates is that it makes mind grow and purifies the soul. It is normal that when the soul is free from imaginations, it heads for its Almighty Creator and does all that which brings it nigh to Him. Hence the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, urged (men) to eat al–Barni dates, which is the best kind of all dates.

123. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father al–Husayn b. ‘Ali, peace be on them, said:] “(Imam ‘Ali) the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, ordered us to rinse out mouth three times after we had eaten (food).”

This traditions gives an account of the summons to cleaning teeth after having food, for it has an important effect on health.

124. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib said:] “Eat pomegranate along with its flesh, for it is tanning for the stomach.”

As for pomegranate, it is among the fruit rich in vitamins, for example, it contains lemon, sugar, vitamin (C). Among the characteristics of its flesh is that it puts right the digestive system.

125. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Eat grapes one by one, for it is more wholesome and easier.”

As for grapes, they are among the richest fruit, for they contain vitamins A, B, C, and play an important role in building the body and strengthening its tissues. They are a delicious food and they are quickly digested. They are necessary for the states of indigestion, renal and urinary calculus, poisoning, anemia, and reduction of calcium. Dr. Carlia said: “It is necessary to give grapes to those who suffer from anemia and on whom surgical operations are performed.” Medical books have mentioned other benefits of grapes.

126. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Cling to raisins, for they remove bitterness, take away phlegm, strengthen nerves, improve nature, make soul good, and remove worries.”

As for raisins, dried grapes, they have most characteristics of fresh grapes, of which are vitamins. We previously talked about the benefits and characteristics of grapes, of which are those mentioned in this tradition.

127. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “If there is a cure in something, then it is in the slash made by a cupper or in a drink of honey.”

In the previous researches, we mentioned the great benefits of cupping and honey.

128. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless

him and his family, said:] “Do not reject him who brings you a drink of honey.”

129. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Perfume is ease; honey is ease; looking at greens is ease; and riding is ease.”

These things create cheerfulness and happiness.

130. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Rub with violet, for it is cold in summer and hot in winter.”

Violet is one of the beautiful, sweet-smelling plants. The tradition contains some characteristics of its ointment, which is cold in summer and hot in winter.

Chapter 7: On Obeying The Parents And Tightening The Bonds Of Kin

131. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Abu’ Ja‘far, peace be on him, related to me. He said:] “The minimum disobedience (to parents) is the (word) *uf* (ugh). And if Allah knew that there was something easier than *uf*, He would forbid it.”

He, the Exalted, said: ***And do not say to them uf!*** If there was a word less than the word *uf*, Allah would forbid it, just as the Imam said.

132. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Abu’ Ja‘far, peace be on him, related to me. He said: Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, said:] “Tightening the bonds of kin and good manners increase faith.”

Definitely, good manners and tightening the bonds of kin are two proofs of man’s faith in Allah and his relationship with Him.

133. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “He who guarantees one (thing) to me, I will guarantee four (things) to him: He should tighten the bonds of kin, so his family loves him; he is given generously; his fixed term is increased; and Allah will make him enter the Garden which He has promised.”

Surely, tightening the bonds of kin is the best deed in Islam, for it brings about correlation, unity, and solidarity of society.

134. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Muhammad b. ‘Ali, peace be on him, related to me. He said:] “Tightening the bonds of kin and good neighborhood increase properties.”

Among the good deeds which Islam has adopted is kindness to blood relations and neighbors. For such a deed unifies the Muslims, spreads love and affection among them.

135. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib said: I heard Allah’s Messenger say:] “Verily, I fear for you that you will disdain the religion, sell your government, cut the bonds of kin, use the Qur’an as pipes, and that you give precedence to one of you, while he is not the most meritorious of you in religion.”

These matters against which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, warned the Muslims bring about the destruction of society and make it deviate from the ideals which Islam has adopted.

Chapter 8: On Warning Against Cheating, Backbiting, And Tattling

136. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “He who cheats a Muslim or harms him or tries to deceive him does not belong to us.”

Cheating a Muslim or harming him or trying to deceive him is never an Islamic act, for such an action spreads hatred and mistrust among the Muslims.

137. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Beware of oppression, for it destroys your hearts.”

Islam has fought against oppression. Authentic traditions have been transmitted from the Imams of guidance, peace be on him, concerning warning against oppression, and that Allah, the Most High, is in the watch-tower against the oppressive; He will destroy their houses and severely punish them.

138. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father al-Husayn b. ‘Ali, peace be on him, related to me. He said: the Commander of the faithful, the blessings of Allah be on him, addressed us. He said:] “A severe time will come upon the people; therein the rich will seize their possessions with their own teeth (by way of miserliness) although they have not been commanded to do so. Allah, the Most High, says: *Do not forget generosity among yourselves*. During this time the wicked will rise up while the virtuous will remain low; purchases will be made from the helpless although Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has prohibited purchasing from the helpless.”

139. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, said:] “He who refrains from (defaming) the honor of men, Allah will release him from his stumble on the Day of Resurrection.”

One of the precepts of Islam is that one should refrain from (defaming) the honor of men and not to mention it with evil, that he may keep the unity of the Muslims.

140. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, said:] “Beware of backbiting, for it is the food of the inhabitants of the Fire.”

‘Ali b. al-Husayn, the master of the Allah-fearing, peace be on him, has presented the prohibition of backbiting, which is the most atrocious of all forbidden things, for it leads to spreading offenses and obscene words among the Muslims.

141. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “Surely, Allah detests him who does not receive the person who comes in to him.”

Among the Islamic good manners is that you should honor those who visit you in your house, not turn away from them, and accomplish their needs, especially the needs of those who are poor and needy.

Chapter 9: The Excellence Of Invasion And Jihad

142. Through his chain of authority, he, peace be on him, said: [‘Ali b. al-Husayn, the blessings of Allah be on him, said: While the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was addressing the people, a young man stood up before him and said:] “O Commander of the faithful, tell me about the excellence of the invasion in the path of Allah.” He, peace be on him, answered: “I was riding behind Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, on his she-camel al-‘Adba’’ when we came back from the Campaign of Dha’t al-Sala’sil. I asked him about what you have asked me about, and he answered: “Surely, if the invaders intend to make an invasion, Allah writes for them freedom from the Fire, and if they prepare themselves, Allah vies (in glory) with the angels through them, etc.’”

The tradition is long; the greatest Messengers, may Allah bless him and his family, has presented therein the excellence of invasion and jiha’d in the path of Allah, which is one of the gates to the Garden, and which Allah has opened for his special friends, as it was said by the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.

Chapter 10: Miscellaneous Traditions

143. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] Allah, the Most High, says: “O son of Adam, do you not treat Me with justice? I show love toward you through favors and you show hatred toward Me through the acts of disobedience. My good descends to you, and your evil ascends to Me. A noble angel always brings Me an ugly deed from you on every day and night.

“O son of Adam, if you hear your description from other than you, and you do not know who the describer is, you will quickly detest him.”

This Holy Tradition summons men to do good deeds and warns them against evil deeds.

144. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said: Allah, the Great and Almighty, says:] “O son of Adam, do not let the sins of men

divert you from your own sin, nor (let) the favors of men divert you from those of Allah toward you. Do not drive men to despair of Allah's favor, while you hope them for your own soul."

This tradition orders man not to let the sins of men turn him away from his own sins, for every person is responsible for his own sins before Allah, the Exalted. In addition, it orders him not to let the favors which Allah bestow upon his servants divert him from His favors toward him.

145. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "I fear for my community from three (things): error after knowledge, misleading discords, the lust of stomach and genital parts."

Certainly these three temptations turns man away from Allah, the Exalted, and throws him into dreadful evil.

146. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said concerning the interpretation of these words of Him, the Most High: (*Remember*) *the day when We will call every people with their Imam*:] "He (Allah) will call every people with the Imam of their time, the Book of their Lord, and the Sunna (practices and sayings) of their Prophet."

This tradition gives an account of mustering men on the Day of Resurrection. It indicates that every people will be mustered along with their Imam (leader), the Book of their Lord, and the Sunna of their Lord. If they obeyed them and put them into practice, they would be successful and be safe from the severe punishment of Allah, and if they opposed them, they would be unsuccessful.

147. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Allah will reckon every creature except him who associates a partner with Him, for He will not reckon him and order him (to be taken) to the Fire."

148. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Circumcise your boys on the seventh day, for it is the purest and quickest (act) in making flesh grow."

An example of wonderful Islamic legislation is that it summons the Muslims to circumcise male babies on the seventh day of their birth, for the circumcision in this age recovers quickly and the male baby does not suffer severe pain. If the baby exceeds this age, especially when its age exceeds three or four years, it faces difficulty and severe pain in circumcising.

149. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The wronged are neither praiseworthy nor rewarded."

As for the wronged, if they are ignorant, they do not deserve praise and reward, for they neglect their dealings; and if they are knowledgeable and adopt riches, then they are worthy of blame and dispraise.

150. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Do favor for those who are worthy of it and those who are not worthy of it. If you find those who are worthy of it, then they deserve it; and if you do not find those who are worthy of it, then you are among those who are entitled to it."

In this tradition there is a creative summons to doing favor and kindness to all men. This is one of good Islamic teachings standing on favor and kindness.

151. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "The head of reason after religion is showing love toward men and doing favor for both the righteous and the sinful."

Surely, showing love for men and making favor for them is a proof of ripe mind, sound reason, and insight.

152. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, your mouths are ways to your Lord, so clean them."

This tradition summons the Muslims to clean their mouths through refraining from obscene and abominable words, saying the truth, polite words, and others.

153. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "He who fasts on Friday with endurance and fore-thought is given the reward of ten honorable, brilliant days which the days of the world do not resemble."

This tradition awakens one's desire for fasting on Friday, which is the most honorable of the days of the week, for there is abundant repayment and great reward in fasting on it.

154. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Prefer the Garden to the Fire and do not invalidate your deeds, so you will be thrown into the Fire, bowing (your heads) and immortal therein."

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, summons (people) to gain Paradise through sincere deeds and not to invalidate their deeds through hypocrisy, and others. In addition, he, may Allah bless him and his family, warns them against the Fire, may Allah protect us from it.

155. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "There is no retiring into mosque for devotion (*i'tika'f*) except along with fasting."

As for prayer in seclusion (*i'tika'f*), it stands on fasting, and it should be in one of the mosques of Allah. As for fasting for *i'tika'f*, it should be for three days; and the one who performs *i'tika'f* has no right to leave the mosque except after the three days.

156. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "If the servant sees the moment of his death and its speed, he will hate hope and seeking the world."

If man reflects on his fate and carefully considers his condition in the grave and his quick departure from this world, then he will detest hope and hate the world.

157. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib related to me, saying:] "He who subjects himself to accusation and entering what brings about losing his dignity, certainly empowers mistrust over himself, and it is he who brings about that against himself."

158. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: ['Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib said:] "He who obeys a creature and disobeys the Creator has no religion."

Surely, he who obeys a creature through disobeying the Creator has no religion and no relationship with Allah, the Most High.

159. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Al-Husayn b. 'Ali, peace be on him, related to me, saying:] "Verily, the deeds of this community are brought before Allah, the Great and Almighty, every morning."

Definitely, the deeds of the Muslims are brought before Allah, the Exalted, every day, whether they are good or evil. So blessed is he who does good deeds and fears his Lord!

160. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib related to me concerning these words of Him, the Exalted: ***And certainly she made for him, and he would have made for her, were it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord***, saying:] "The wife of al-'Aziz (the Chief of Egypt) went to an idol and covered the idol, and then she said: 'It can see us!' So Yousif asked her: 'What is this?' 'I feel shame of the idol when it sees us!' she replied. So he asked her: 'Do you feel shame of the idol which cannot hear; nor can it see; nor can it benefit; nor can it harm? Why do you not feel shame of Him who has created things and has knowledge of them?' So that is His words, the Exalted: ***the manifest evidence of his Lord***."

161. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [When 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, saw a sick person who got well, he said:] "Purity from sins congratulates you!"

Many traditions have been reported from the Imams of guidance, peace be on them; the traditions indicate that illness purifies sick person from the sins which he had committed, and that it increases his good deeds.

162. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [My father 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, related to me, saying:] "We have taken three (things) from three (persons): Steadfastness from Ayyu'b (Job), gratitude from Nu'h (Noah), and envy from the children of Ya'qu'b (Jacob)."

163. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on them, was asked:] “Why was the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, orphaned?” He, peace be on him, replied: “Lest no creature should have a right against him.”

Many traditions have justified the orphanage of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. Yet there is another justification as follows: This Orphan (i.e. the Prophet) could change the course of the world’s history, save man from the fables and customs of those pagans who loved before Islam, established on earth a state which raised the torch of monotheism, brightened the regions of the world through the truth and justice.

With this matter we will end our talk about the Musnad and Sahifa of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. It is worth mentioning that I (i.e. the author) have dropped some traditions mentioned in these two books of the Imam, for I think that they are fabricated and do not belong to the traditions of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. Perhaps, for this reason some religious scholars have not ascribed this book (Sahifa) to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and not regarded it as evidence for some religious precepts.

1. Kashf al-Zinu’n, vol. 2, p. 1076. Hida’yat al-‘Arifin, vol. 1, p. 668. Mu‘jam al-Mu’allifin, vol. 7, p. 250. Al-Dhari‘a, vol. 15, pp. 17-18. Kashf al-Hujub wa al-Asta’r, pp. 366-367. Al-Biha’r, vol. 1, p. 11. Mustaddrak al-Wasa”il, vol. 3, p. 344. Al-Naja’shi, p. 159. Al-Ama’li, al-Tawhid, al-‘Uyu’n, and others.
2. Sahifat al-Ridha’, p. 2.
3. In the narration of al-Tabrisi: “In its condition and its conditions, and I am among its conditions.” We will talk about this holy tradition within this book.
4. The tradition has been mentioned in the book Ta’rikh al-Khamis in this formula along with and addition Hayya ‘ala khayri’l-‘amal (Make haste to the best of actions). The Shi‘ite references of hadith and jurisprudence have also mentioned it.
5. Al-Fiqh ‘ala’ al-Madha’hib al-Arba‘a, vol. 1, p. 311.
6. Al-‘Urwat al-Withqa’, vol. 1, p. 170.
7. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, Chapter on the Prayer for the Dead.
8. Al-Fiqh ‘ala’ al-Madha’hib al-Arba‘a, vol. 1, p. 519.
9. Darnu’k is one of the carpets of the Garden.
10. Abu’ al-Qa’sim al-Ta”i said: “I asked Abu’ al-‘Abba’s al-Ta”i about hijjza, and he replied: ‘It is means.’ Then I asked Ibn Naftawayh, the grammarian, about it, and he answered: ‘It is means.’”
11. Al-Shiblanji, Nu’r al-Abbsa’r.
12. A kind of perfume.
13. One of the customs of those who lived before Islam was that they painted the hair of their babies with blood. As for Islam, it forbade this custom and replaced it by perfume.
14. Al-Ghidha” la’ al-Dawa”, p. 561.

4. Al-Fiqh al-Radawi

The book *al-Fiqh al-Radawi* (al-Ridha''s Jurisprudence) has also been attributed to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and it was not known by the early Imami scholars; rather it appeared afterwards, and especially in the time of al-Majjlisi, the virtuous, who said: "I was told about the book *Fiqh al-Ridha'*, peace be on him, by al-Sayyid, the virtuous traditionalist, the ruler-judge Husayn, may Allah be Gracious to his soil, after returning to Asfaha'n. He said to me: 'It happened that during the time when I was neighboring the Sacred House of Allah, a group of the residents of Qum visited me while performing their *hajj* and they had with them an old book the date of its writing agreed with the date during which al-Ridha', the blessings of Allah be upon him, was alive.'"

Al-Majjlisi continues to say: "I heard my father, may Allah have mercy on him, saying that it was written in the handwriting of al-Ridha', the blessings of Allah be upon him, and a large group of the dignitaries testified to the same.' Al-Sayyid (Husayn) said: 'From these contexts, I have come to know that the book was written by the Imam, peace be on him; so I took the book, wrote it and corrected it.' Hence my father, may Allah hallow his soul, took this book from al-Sayyid, copied it and corrected it. Most its sentences agree with what al-Sadu'q, may Allah have mercy on him, has mentioned in his book *Man la' Yahdarahu al-Faqih* without any chain of authorities, and what his father has mentioned in his letter to him. Our companions have mentioned many precepts in the book without mentioning their chain of authorities."

A group of the eminent figures of the Imami jurisprudence like al-Fa'dil al-Ka'sha'ni, the Author of al-Riya'd, al-Muhaddith al-Bahra'ni, and others testified the book and depended on it.

Yet another group of the great religious scholars has discussed the book and denied it. He who carefully considers the book concludes the following criticisms:

Firstly, if this book belonged to Imam al-Ridha', it would not be unknown for numerous centuries; the early Imami scholars and traditionalists would come to know of it, for they took great care of all traditions transmitted from the Imams of guidance, peace be on them; yet, none of them said even a word concerning it.

Secondly, Shaykh al-Sadu'q, who has recorded all traditions reported from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has not mentioned the book in his book *'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha';* nor has he mentioned it in his other books.

Lastly, the book contains some traditions which contradict the Shi'ite beliefs such as extremism which the pure Imams disproved and regarded as infidels those who believe in it. For example, it has been mentioned in the book, Chapter on Istiqba'l al-Qibla fi al-Sala't: "And place one of the Imams before your eyes." This is grievous extremism, for it is incumbent upon every worshipper to direct his

sentiments and feelings towards Allah, the Creator of the universe and Giver of life.

These are some criticisms of the book, and they indicate that it does not belong to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. It is worth mentioning that the book was published by the World Conference on Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, in the Holy City of Meshhad, that it was checked by the Al al-Bayt Foundation for Renewing Legacy in Qum, may Allah increase it in honor, and that its introduction was written by the great researcher Shaykh Jawa'd al-Sharista'ni, who mentioned the proofs of those who testified the book and of those who denied it.

Chapter 7: Doctrinal Researches

In his researches and lectures, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, discussed many ideological matters and disproved the vague errors and imaginations which the spiteful and the ignorant raised against Islam and its precepts. We have mentioned large part of his debates with the scholars of the sects and religions. We have indicated that the debates amazed them and made them believe in his many scientific abilities, and that they dominated the political and scientific clubs. Now, we will mention another part of these researches, which are not in the frame of the debates, as follows:

The Unity of Allah

Many questions were raised about the Unity of Allah, and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, answered them and refuted the doubts and imaginations in respect of them. The following are some of them:

Full Knowledge of Allah's Essence is Impossible

It is impossible to describe Allah, the Exalted, with an attribute which encompasses His Holy Essence. Among those who asked the Imam about this matter was Abu' Hisha'm al-Ja'fari, who was one of the greatest figures of his time in virtue, knowledge, and Allah-fearingness. He asked the Imam the following question:

"Can Allah be described (i.e., specified in words)?"

Through this question, Abu' Ha'shim al-Ja'fari wanted to find and to encompass the knowledge of Allah, the Most High, so Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, asked him:

"Do you not read the Qur'an?"

"Yes," he replied.

The Imam answered through the Book of Allah, the Most High, saying:

“Do you not read these words of Him, the Exalted: ***The eyes attain him not, but He attains the eyes*****?”**

“Yes,” was the answer.

“Do you know (the meaning of) the eyes?” asked the Imam.

“Yes,” came the answer.

“What is it?” asked the Imam.

“It is the seeing with the eyes,” replied Abu’ Ha’shim.

The Imam, peace be on him, disproved this answer, saying: “Verily, the conceptualization of the heart is far greater (embracing in knowledge) than the vision of the eye. Still the conceptualization of the heart cannot attain Him, whereas all conceptualization is in His grasp.[1]”

Certainly, the conceptualization of reason is far greater and more inclusive than the vision of the eye. Reason is also limited in conceptualization and imaginations, hence it cannot encompass the Essence of Allah, the Most High.

Seeing Allah is Impossible

It is impossible for men to see Allah, the Most High; it was spread among the people of that time that Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, had seen his Lord, hence Ibra’him b. Muhammad al-Khazza’z and Muhammad b. al-Husayn hurried to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, to ask him about that: “Did Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, see his Lord in the form of a perfect youth with His hair hanging down on the lobs of His ears and of a man in the age of thirty?”

They ascribed this statement to a group of the Shi‘ite great figures, and that they said: “The body of Allah right up to the navel was quite empty and the rest of Him was full.” Without doubt this statement was fabricated and attributed to such a group of Shi‘ite eminent men, for they had no relationship with such forbidden things. As for the Imam, he disordered when he heard this false statement. He prostrated himself in prayer and began addressing Allah, the Exalted, humbly: “Glory belongs to You! They do not know you; nor do they know You as a Unity. For this reason they have described You (with fabricated attributes). Glory belongs to You! Had they known You, they would had ascribed to You only the attributes You have ascribed to Your Own Self. Glory belongs to You! How did they allow themselves to listen to anything about You other than Your Self.

“O Allah, I do not describe You but through what You have described Your Own Self; nor do I liken You to Your creatures. You are the Possessor of all good. So do not place me among the unjust people.”

Then he, peace be on him, turned to them and said to them: “After whatever you imagine, imagine that Allah is other than that.”

Namely, whatever man imagines concerning the Essence of Allah, the Most High, he should imagine that Allah is other than what he has imagined.

Then the Imam turned to Muhammad b. al-Husayn and said to him: “We, the family of Muhammad, represent the moderate path. Our path is lost to those who exceed the limit, and those who lag behind cannot come unto our (path). O Muhammad (b. al-Husayn), verily, when Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, looked at the Majesty of his Lord, he was in the form of a youth in full bloom and of a man in the age of thirty with his hair hanging down on the lobes of his ears. O Muhammad, Allah is far above having the attributes of His creatures.”

“Who was he whose feet were on the green yard?” asked Muhammad b. al-Husayn.

“He was Muhammad,” replied the Imam, “When he looked at his Lord through his heart, He established him in His Light which was like the Light of the (Divine) veil, until what was behind the (Divine) veil was made manifest to him. Verily, the effulgence of Allah’s Light is green, red, white, and the like. O Muhammad, we (the Imams) only say what the Book (of Allah) and the *Sunna* bear witness to.2”

Negation of the Like from Allah

The Imam, peace be on him, disproved all kinds of likes and images from Allah, the Most High, and that was through a talk took place between him and al-Fath b. Yazid al-Jurja’ni on his way to Khurasa’n. The Imam, peace be on him, said to him:

“O Fath, he who pleases the Creator pays no attention to the creature; and he who displeases the Creator, surely He empowers the displeasure of the creatures over him; and the Creator is not described except by that with which He has described Himself; and how should one describe that Creator whom senses cannot perceive, imaginations cannot attain, thoughts (*khatara’t*) cannot delimit and sight cannot encompass? Greater is He than what the depicters describe! He is distant in His nearness and near in His distance. He fashions (*kayyafa*) ‘howness’ (*kayfiyyah*), so it is not said of Him, ‘How?’ (*kayf*); He determines (*ayyana*) the ‘where?’ (*ayn*). He sunders ‘howness’ (*kayfu’fiyyah*) and whereness (*aynu’niyyah*).

“O Fath, everybody is fed with a food except the Creator, the Provider (Allah), for He embodies bodies. He is without body and form. He can neither be analyzed nor limited. He grows not, nor decays. He is far above the parts of things. He is the Subtle, All-aware, All-hearing, All-seeing, the One, the Unique, the Un-needing. He begets not, nor is He begotten and there is none equal to Him. He is the Originator of all things. He embodies all bodies and forms all forms. If He was such as those who admit similitude (*al-mushabbihah*), then the Creator cannot be distinguished from the created, nor the Provider from the provided, nor the Originator from the originated. However, He is the Originator and there must be a

distinction between Him and the things to which He gave body and shape and which He originated, since nothing resembles Him nor does He resemble anything."

"Allah is One and man is one. Do they not; therefore, resemble each other?" asked al-Fath.

The Imam disproved this vague error, saying: "Impossible! May Allah keep you steadfast; the resemblance is in the meanings. As for the names, every object is one, and the names signify the objects that (severally) bear those names.3 Likewise, when we call man one, we are predicating that man is one body, not two. Man, in himself, is not one, since he is composed of different limbs and colors. And what is composed of different colors (components) can never be regarded as one. He consists of separate parts, that are diverse and divisible. His blood is different from his flesh and his flesh is different from his blood. His nerves are different from his veins and his hair is different from his skin. His black is different from his white. And the same is the case with all other creatures. Thus, man is one in name, not in essence.

"Allah, Exalted be His Majesty, is One. There is none other than Him; nor is there any incongruity and diversity in Him; nor is there any excess and deficiency. However, man is a creation made and composed of different parts, diverse essences, and primary elements; in this state of composition he is regarded as one."

Surely, calling Allah, the Exalted, One is different from calling man one, for man is composed of different organs such as the heart, the lungs, the eyes, the kidneys, the cells, and others; and by the virtue of their gathering he is called one. As for the Almighty Creator, He is called One not because of the composition of numerous limbs and organs.

"Explain to me (the meaning of) the Subtle, for I know that His Subtlety is different from that of other than Him, for there is a difference (between the Creator and creation," demanded al-Fath.

The Imam, peace be on him, answered: "O Fath, our statement that Allah is Subtle means that He has created subtle things and has full awareness of subtle things. May Allah give you wisdom and keep you steadfast. Do you not see the signs of His creation in the grass, which is subtle (green and soft) and not subtle (dry and rough), and also in the most subtle (delicate and tender) creation and in the tiny birds, insects, and misquotes and in the tiny flies, and also the things still tinier to the extent that you cannot distinguish the male from the female and the young from the old. We see the infinite smallness of these in their subtlety, and how they are guided in coming near to the female of the species and escaping from what is deadly, and in the gathering of what is suited to their survival. We see (creatures) dwelling in the depth of the seas, under the bark of the trees, and in the valleys and the barren deserts. We see them communicating messages to one another and with their offspring, and also their bringing food for them. We also see their matching of colors, the red with the yellow and the white with the red. Further, we see, that on account of their smallness they are not visible to the eye. Our eyes do not see them; our hands do not touch them. Having seen all this, we have come to know that the Creator of such subtle

creatures, must have used a very subtle art in the creation of what we have mentioned. Moreover, we have also come to know that all those who make things, do so out of other things. However, it is Allah the Creator, the Subtle, the Great Who created and made things out of nothing."

This paragraph gives an account of the marvelous signs of Allah's wonderful creatures, and that is in His creating the bodies of the tiny animals such as insects and misquotes, and even tinier than them, of which the male cannot be distinguished from the female. Allah has given them understanding and they are guided to come near to the female of the species to continue their offspring on earth. Likewise Allah has given them understanding in order to escape from dangers, so glory belongs to the Subtle Creator. Moreover they have attractive colors, and they live in the bark of trees and deserts, and other favors of Allah toward them. So glory belongs to the Almighty Creator. How great his favors toward all living beings!

"Is there a creator other than the Great Creator?" asked al-Fath.

The Imam, peace be on him, answered: "Surely, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says: ***Blessed is Allah the best of the creators***.[4] He told that there were creators among his creatures, of whom was 'Isa' b. Maryam, who determined out of dust like the form of a bird with Allah's permission, and it became bird with Allah's permission. And al-Sa'miri created for them a calf, a mere body, which had a mooning sound."

Al-Fath opposed the Imam, saying: "Surely, Isa' created a bird out of dust as a proof of his Prophethood, and al-Sa'miri created a calf, a mere body, to abolish the Prophethood of Musa', and Allah willed that to be so. Certainly, this is the wonder!"

The Imam answered him with strong argument, saying: "Verily, Allah's intention is two-fold; His will is (also) two-fold: the intention which is irrevocable, and the intention which is only a resolution. (Sometimes) Allah forbids what He wills and (sometimes) He orders what He does not will. Do you not see that Allah forbade Adam and his wife from eating of the tree, yet willed that they should eat of it? If He had not willed so, their will would not have prevailed over the will of Allah; He ordered Ibra'him (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Isma'il, but did not will that Isma'il should be slain. If He had willed so, the will of Ibra'him would not have prevailed over the will of Allah, the Great and Almighty."

The Imam, peace be on him, disproved al-Fath's vague errors through dividing the will of Allah, the Exalted, into two parts as follows: the first part is the intention which is only a resolution or the legislative will, as the theologians say, or Allah's orders and prohibitions to His servants in order to balance their behavior and put right their life in this world. The disobedience of the willed to the will is not impossible according this kind of will. In other words the servant may obey and may disobey.

And the second part is the intention which is irrevocable or genetic will as the theologians say. It is impossible for the willed to disobey this kind of will, for Allah, according to this will, says to a thing: "Be," and the thing is. As for the stories of Adam and Ibra'him, they belong to the first part of will.

Al-Fath was amazed at the Imam's statement and said: "You have comforted me; may Allah comfort you! However, you have said: 'The All-hearing, the All-seeing: Does He hear with the ear and see with the eye?"

The Imam answered him: "He (Allah) hears through what He sees and sees through what He hears. He sees but not through an eye like the eye of the creatures; and He hears but not through an ear like the ear of the creatures, but for not hidden from Him is the trace of a black speck on a dark night on a black stone under the soil and the seas; we say that He sees not through the like of the eye of the creatures; we say that He hears not through the like of the hearing of the hearers, for the various kinds of words are not confused by Him and no hearing diverts Him from hearing."

The Imam, peace be on him, removed the vague errors from al-Fath and explained to him that the seeing and hearing of Allah, the Most High, were not like those of man.

"Yet, I have another question," declared al-Fath.

"Give it to me," demanded the Imam.

"You said that the Eternal (Allah) known the things before He had created them."

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Do you not hear that Allah says: *If there had been in them* (*the heavens and the earth*) *any gods except Allah, they would both have certainly been in a state of disorder*[5], that He says: *And some of them would certainly have overpowered others*[6], that He says, relating the statement of the inhabitants of the Fire: *O our Lord, take us out, we will do good deeds other than those which we used to do*[7], and that He says: *And if they were sent back, they would certainly go back to that from which they were forbidden*[8]*?"*

Al-Fath admired the knowledge of the Imam, peace be on him, and his understanding difficult, theological matters. He tried to kiss the Imam's hand and foot, but the Imam did not allow him to do that. So he kissed the Imam's holy head and went out with happiness, for the Imam removed all doubts and imaginations which sounded in his mind.[9]

During his debate with al-Fath, the Imam, peace be on him, discussed and explained many ambiguous matters on the Unity of Allah.

The Essence of Allah's Oneness

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, stated traditions about the core of Allah's Oneness. The following are some of them:

1. Muhammad b. Yazid asked the Imam about Allah's Unity, and he dictated to him the following: "Praise belongs to Allah, Who originally creates all things and designs them with a design through His Power and Wisdom. He does not create them from things so that His power of creation could be negated; nor

does He design them for any ulterior reason or through any means so that His designing could be questioned. He creates whatever He likes and whosoever He likes all by Himself, that He may manifest His wisdom and the truth of His Providence. Reason cannot grasp Him; imagination cannot reach Him; and eyes cannot attain Him. He is beyond any calculation. The power of expression is helpless to (interpret Him). All the powers of sight are blurred (from seeing Him); and the power of describing and defining goes astray in describing and defining Him. He is veiled without any veil and is concealed without any covering. He is known without being seen, described without any form, and depicted without any body. There is no god but Allah, the Great, the Most High.[10]"

This tradition gives an account of the power of the Almighty Creator, Who creates all things from nothing nor from a previous example. So glory belongs to Him! How great He is! The eyes cannot attain Him; imaginations cannot encompass Him; and words cannot embrace the core of His mightiness!

2. Muhammad b. 'Isa' b. 'Ubayd had the honor of meeting the Imam, peace be on him, and he asked him the following:

"What do you say when someone asks you to tell him about Allah, the Great and Almighty, whether He is a thing or not?"

Muhammad skillfully answered, saying: "Certainly, Allah, the Great and Almighty, has established Himself as a thing when He said: *Say: What thing is weightiest in testimony? Say: Allah is witness between you and me*.[11] So I say that He is a thing not like other things. For if we negate His Being as a thing, we will abolish and negate Him."

The Imam approved this answer of Muhammad and said to him: "You said the truth and were right." He added: "The people have three creeds concerning Allah's Oneness: negation, comparison, and establishment without any comparison. The creed of negation is not permissible; the creed of comparison is not permissible, for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, is not likened to anything; and the way is the third creed: establishment without any comparison.[12]"

The Power of Allah

Muhammad b. 'Arafa asked the Imam, peace be on him, the following questions: "Did Allah create things with the power or without the power?[13]"

The Imam answered him: "It is not permissible (to say that) He created things with the power, for if you said: 'He created things with the power,' it would be as if that you regarded the power as a thing other than Him, and you regarded it as His tool through which He created things, and this is polytheism; and if you said that He created things with the power, you would only describe that He created them through His might and power over them, but He is neither weak nor feeble nor is He in need of other than Him."

The meaning of the speech of the Imam, peace be on him, is that Allah, the Most High, is powerful, that

this attribute is the same as Himself, and that He does not create things through a power outside Himself, for all His Noble Attributes are the same as Himself, as it has been established in theology.

Moreover, the Imam himself emphasized that in his speech when he said: “Glory belongs to Him who created the creatures through His power, mastered what He created through His wisdom, and placed everything in its place through His knowledge. Glory belongs to Him who ***knows the stealthy looks and that which the breasts conceal*****;** there is nothing like Him; and He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing.”

The Great Creator and His Attributes are Eternal

Among the important researches which the Imam, peace be on him, stated was that the Great Creator and His attributes were eternal. He, peace be on him, said to a companion of his:

“May Allah give you the knowledge of the good. Know that Allah, the Hallowed, the Exalted, is eternal and this attribute of His being eternal indicates to the wise that neither was there anything before Him, nor is there anything associated with Him. After the general admission (by the men of wisdom) regarding this unique and exclusive attribute of Allah’s being eternal, it is quite evident to us that there existed nothing before Him, and that there is nothing associated with Him in His being everlasting. Hence the claim of those who think that there was anything before Allah, or there is anything associated with Him is totally repudiated. The reason is that if there was anything sharing with Him in His eternity, it would not be proper to regard Allah as the Creator of that thing, for it had been with Allah all the time. How could Allah be the Creator of what had been with Him all along? If there was anything before Allah, then that thing would be the first, (not Allah), and that first (thing conjectured to exist before Allah) has got the preferential right to be regarded as the Creator of this first (Allah, the Eternal).

“Then Allah, the Hallowed, the Exalted, invested Himself with names, and when He created (His creatures) and enjoined upon them His worship, and put on them trial and tribulation, He summoned them to call Him by those names. So, He named Himself the All-hearing, the All-seeing, the All-powerful, the Self-subsistent, the Articulated, the Revealed (or the Manifest), the Concealed, the Gracious, the Omniscient, the All-strong, the All-mighty, the All-wise, the All-knowing and other names like these. When the evil-minded repudiators saw this and heard us stating that nothing is like Allah, and nothing in creations is in His modality, they raised an objection: ‘Tell us when you assert that nothing is like Allah, nor resembles Him, then how have you associated yourself with Him in His most beautiful names, for you have given all these names to yourself?

“‘Verily, in this there is a clear proof that you are like Allah in all aspects or at least in some aspects and modalities; since you have gathered for yourself all these good names.’ Let them be told, ‘Verily, Allah, the All-mighty, the Exalted, has applied some of His names to some of His servants (creatures) but with a different meaning. One and the same name bears different meanings. The justification for it is the practice of the people themselves, valid according to them and widely prevalent among them. Allah addresses His creatures in the same practice of speech (prevalent among people). He speaks to them in

a way which they understand so that they themselves will stand responsible for any loss they suffer (due to not caring to understand). Just as people generally call a man a dog, a donkey, a cow, sweet, bitter, or a lion, and this is antagonistic to man's nature and condition, these names are not applied in the (literal) sense that has been given to them, since they have quite a different context here for the man is neither a lion, nor a dog. So understand this point, may Allah have mercy on you!

"Allah has named (Himself) with (the attribute of) Knowledge, but (eternal) not contingent knowledge through which conception of things may be possible or knowledge which may assist Him in guarding what He is going to ordain in future or in planning what He is going to create in His creation (in the present) or in disposing of what He has annihilated from His creation (in the past) or knowledge which, if it is not available to Him and has become hidden from Him, then he will be rendered ignorant and helpless. As we see the learned among the creatures, we call them men of knowledge, because of the contingent which appears in them and of which they were ignorant. And it also often happens that the knowledge of things departs from them and then they relapse into ignorance. However, Allah is called All-knowing in the sense that He is not ignorant of anything at any time (past, present, or future). Thus, the name 'one who knows' is common to both the Creator and the created, but the connotation is quite different (in both the cases), as you saw.

"Our Lord has been given the name 'All-hearing' not that He has the channel of the ear through which He hears sounds but with which He cannot see, as we have the orifice of the ear through which we hear but with which we cannot see. However, Allah Himself tells us that nothing in the world of sound is hidden from Him. Nor is there any limitation in the range of sound as in the case of our hearing. Thus, the name of 'Hearing' is common (between Allah and the mankind) but their connotation is quite different.

"Likewise, His seeing not through the channel of the eyes. On the other hand in our case, we see with the instrument of our eyes and they are of no use to us for any other purpose. Allah is seeing in the sense that He is in no doubt about anything that can be seen. Nothing visible is out of His sight. Here too, the name is common but the connotation is quite different.

"Allah is the Self-subsistent (*Qa"im*), not in the sense that He supports Himself by standing erect and holding His knees together as others do. However, 'Self-subsistent' connotes that He is the Protector, the Watcher, just as people say: 'the supporter of our affairs is so-and-so.' *Allah is He Who stands* (*Qa"im*) *over every soul for what it has earned*.[14] Generally, *Qa"im* or Self-subsistent also means the Ever-lasting. It has also the connotation of supporting and satisfying just as you may say to a person: 'Stand (*qum*) forth to support and satisfy such and such family,' meaning support them fully, whereas, for us '*Qa"im*' (subsistent) means standing on our feet. Thus, the name '*Qa"im*' or 'subsistent' is common to us (Allah and men) but the sense or the meaning is different.

"(In the same way), Allah is named *al-Latif* (the Subtle, the Delicate) not in sense of being diminutive or slim and slender or small. However, Allah is Subtle and Delicate in the sense that He is effectual through

and through and in the inmost of all things (however minute) and also in the sense that it is impossible to perceive and comprehend Him, just as you may say to a person: 'This matter is too subtle (*latif*) for me or such and such is refined (*latif*) in his conduct and speech.' You, in other words, tell him that intelligence has failed to grasp the matter, and effort has lost the trace of it and it has become so deep and delicate that imagination cannot reach it. Such is the subtlety of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, since He is too subtle to be apprehended by any definition or be limited within any description, whereas subtlety (*lata'fah*), in our context, connotes smallness or diminutiveness. Here again the name is common but the meaning is different.

"As for Allah's being the Omniscient and All-aware (*al-Khabir*), this means that nothing is hidden from Him and nothing escapes Him. His knowledge is not (the result of) experiment, nor (the fruit of) the authority of tradition. Experimentation and authority of tradition are the two (sources of) knowledge. If there is neither making experiment nor following tradition there would be no knowledge, and the man is ignorant. Allah is eternally conversant with what is to be created, while amongst mankind the man of knowledge or the conversant man is one who has become conversant or knowledgeable (passing through the stage) of the ignorance of the learner. Thus, here too the name is common but the connotation is quite different.

"Allah is *al-Za'hir* (the Manifest, one who prevails), not in the sense that He appeared above everything and rode them and settled on them and out-topped them. (So, nothing can hide Him from the right.) However, He is *al-Za'hir* or Manifest and prevails over everything in the sense that He holds all authority, dominion and power over each and everything, just as a person would say: 'I have prevailed over my enemy and Allah has given me power over him.' It signifies victory and domination. Such is *al-Za'hir* of Allah over everything. There is another sense of *al-Za'hir* the Manifest. He is Manifest to everyone who intends to seek him. He is not hidden to His seekers and nothing is hidden from Him. He is the Disposer of each and everything He has created. So, which appearance is more manifest and evident than Allah, the Blessed and Exalted? Since in whichever direction you turn, His wonderful (creation) cannot remain hidden from you. Even within your own self there are sufficient signs to satisfy you, (but) in our case, the manifest means something which comes into view by itself or is known by its limits and location. Thus here too, the name is common, but the connotation is quite different.

"Allah is *al-Ba'tin* (hidden), hidden not in the sense that He is inside things, or that He has descended deep in them, but in the sense that His knowledge, providence and plan permeate the inside of everything, just as a person says: 'I have gone deep into the matter in the sense I have experienced it and have fully known all its hidden secrets.' However, for us 'hidden' means the disappearance of a thing inside some other things. Here again we have the name in common, but the connotation is quite different.

"Allah is *al-Qa'hir* (the Omnipotent) not in the sense of deliberation, and painful endeavor, and exertion, and planning, and diplomacy and intrigue, which His creatures exert themselves in to gain power over

each other, and for the vanquished to become victorious, and for the victorious to become vanquished. However, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, is Omnipotent (*al-Qa'hir*) in the sense that everything He has created is clothed with lowliness and self-abasement before Him, the Creator, and can offer no obstruction to what He wills regarding it. It is not even the twinkling of an eye for Him to utter 'Be' and forthwith 'It is'. And victory among us is as we have already discussed and described (above). Thus, here too, the name is common but the meaning is quite different. Similar is the case in respect of all the names of Allah. Although we have not brought together all His names here; yet whatever we have expounded to them is sufficient for correct inference and understanding. Allah alone is your help and mine too, for our guidance and success.[15]"

This speech of the Imam, peace be on him, contains many proofs of the eternity of the Great Creator, the Originator and Maker of all various things. It includes the attributes of Allah, the Exalted, and shows that they, though given to man, are quite different. Giving these attributes to Allah is other than giving them to man, who is in need of Allah in all affairs and states. It is worth mentioning that al-Kulayni regarded this speech of the Imam as a loose tradition (*hadith mursal*), not a supported tradition (*hadith musnad*).

The Creator Far Above Space

The Almighty Creator is far above space and time which are some necessities of all beings which depend on Allah in their existence. A man from Ma' Wara'' Nahr Balkh (Transoxania) came to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: "I want to ask you a question. If your answer is the same as I have already known, I will believe in your Imamate."

"Ask whatever you like," replied the Imam.

The man asked the Imam, saying: "Tell me about your Lord: Since when and how (in what state) has your Lord been in existence and what does He subsist on?"

"Verily, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, determined the 'where' without 'whereness'; and He fashioned the 'how' without 'howness'; and He subsists on His own power," replied the Imam.

Surely, it is Allah, the Most High, who created space and time; they are of His creatures; therefore, how is He described by them?

The man admired the Imam's answer, and then he hurried to kiss his head and said: "I witness that there is no god but Allah, that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, that 'Ali is the testamentary trustee of Allah's Messenger and the custodian after him for what Allah's Messenger (may Allah bless him and his family) had undertaken, that your are the true Imams, and that you are the successor after them.[16]"

The Imam was among the sources of guidance and light on earth, hence he spread in his time faith in Allah and established argument against the creatures.

Seeing Allah is Impossible

Muhammad b. ‘Ubayd Allah wrote to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him; he asked him about the ocular vision of Allah, the Exalted, and what was traditionally narrated by the common people (*al-‘a’mmah*) and the elite (*al-kha’sa*)*;* and he asked him to explain the matter fully to him.

The Imam wrote him the following letter: “All are agreed and there is no dissension among the people that acknowledge of anything through visual perception is necessary and certain. Now if it is true that seeing Allah with the eye is necessary for knowledge of Allah to occur, then this knowledge must fall into one of two cases. It is either the belief (in Allah which is required by Him) or not that belief. If this knowledge of Allah by way of visual perception is that belief, then the knowledge of Allah through intellectual perception, which is alone available in this world, is not that belief because intellectual perception is contrary to visual perception. Then there will not be a single believer in the world because they have not seen Allah, may His remembrance be Exalted. And if the knowledge of Allah by way of visual perception is not the belief (required by Him) then the knowledge of Allah which has been attained (through intellectual perception which is the required belief) must disappear in the hereafter. This is the argument in support of the truth that Allah, the Great and Almighty, cannot be seen through the eye, for if it is held that He can be seen by eyes, the matter will revert to what we have explained.[17]”

Through this conclusive argument the Imam, peace be on him, disproved seeing the Great Creator through the eye, not through thinking and reason, for if the belief in Allah, the Exalted, is related to seeing through the eye, then the belief which results from the conscientious proofs of Allah’s existence is not belief, and it is invalid; and if the knowledge of Allah, the Most High, which stems from visibility is not belief, then the knowledge which results from the proofs is not the reason for belief, and this is also invalid.

Surely belief in Allah is one of the necessities which none denies except him who has gone astray, for Allah, the Exalted, is the most prominent reality which His creatures indicate in this existence.

Authorization and Compulsion are Invalid

As for authorization, it opposes Islamic religion; likewise, compulsion has no relationship with Islam. Al-Hasan b. ‘Ali al-Washsha’’ asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about these two matters: “Has Allah entrusted to (His) servants all their affairs?”

“Allah is far above this,” retorted the Imam.

“Has Allah compelled them to commit sins?” asked al-Hasan.

“Allah is too just and too wise to do this,” answered the Imam.

Then the Imam added: “Allah says: O son of Adam, I deserve your good deeds more than you yourself

and you deserves your vices than I Myself. You have committed sins through the power and authority I have granted to you.[18]"

Definitely, Allah, the Exalted, has given perfect will to His servants, so it is they who, according to their own pure will, obey or disobey Him; and they are not compelled to do any act of disobedience.

Another example of what has been transmitted from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, concerning refuting compulsion and authorization is that which has been narrated by Sulayma'n b. Ja'far al-Ja'fari, who said: "Compulsion and authorization were mentioned in the presence of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he said: 'Will I give you an origin about this, over which you will not differ, and you will defeat anyone who debates with you on it?"

"Yes," his companions replied.

He, peace be on him, said: "Verily, Allah, the Exalted, has not been obeyed through compulsion; nor has he been disobeyed through overcoming; nor has he neglected the servants in His kingdom. It is He who possesses what He has made them possess, and He who has power over that which He has given power to them. If the servants follow the obedience to Him, He will not repel or prevent them from it; and if they follow the disobedience to Him, and He wills to come between them and that, then He will do (that). And if He does not come (between them and the disobedience) and they do (it), then it is not He who makes them commit it."

After this decisive proof, he, peace be on him, said to his companions: "He who does well the limits of this speech defeats him who opposes him.[19]"

The Imam emphasized this matter during his talk with 'Ali b. Asba't, who asked him about the capacity (of human beings), and he answered him: "Man can be invested with full ability after his acquisition of four characteristics: he should be free in respect of action, soundness of body, proper functioning of the limbs and the means for the performance provided by Allah to him."

"May I be your ransom, kindly explain this (speech) to me," requested 'Ali.

The Imam, peace be on him, explained this matter to him, saying: "A certain man is free in respect of his action, has soundness of body and the proper functioning of the limbs, and intends to commit adultery, but finds no woman and then (seeks and) finds her, then (in spite of this position of the means of action) he restrains himself (from the act of adultery) as was done by Yu'suf (Joseph). If, (on the contrary, he removes the self-restriction) between him and his temptation and indulges (himself) in adultery, then (and only then) will he be called an adulterer. Such a person (is he who possesses ability, and in this case he either acts according to his ability or not, but he) has not obeyed Allah by way of compulsion; nor has he overpowered Allah through his act of disobedience.[20]"

Indeed, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and the rest of the Imams of guidance, peace be on them,

disproved authorization and compulsion, and they decisively proved the intermediate position.

Confuting the Views of the Qadariya

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, confuted the views of the fatalists (*Qadariya*) and disproved their vague errors during a conversation with Yu'nus b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n. He, peace be on him, said: "O Yu'nus, do not utter the worlds of the fatalists(*Qadariya*), since they do not say what the dwellers of the Garden say; nor do they say the words of the people of the Fire; nor do they say the words of Satan. The dwellers of the Garden say: *Praise belongs to Allah who guided us to this; had Allah not guided us, we had surely never been guided*. The people of the Fire say: *Our Lord, our adversity overcame us; we were erring people*. And Iblis (Satan) says: *My Lord, for Your preventing me* (I shall deck all affair to them in the earth)."

Yu'nus denied that he would utter their words, saying: "By Allah, I do not say their words, but I say: 'Nothing happens (in this universe) except through which Allah desires, wills, ordains, and decrees.'"

The Imam answered him, saying: "O Yu'nus, it is not like that. Nothing happens except according to Allah's desire, will, ordination, and decree. O Yu'nus, do you know what Divine will (*mashi'a*) is?"

"No," Yu'nus replied.

The Imam explained to him the reality of Divine desire, saying: "It is the first knowledge (i.e., the prior knowledge of Allah with respect to His action). Do you know what Divine will (*ira'da*) is?"

"No," Yu'nus answered.

The Imam explained to him the essence of Divine will, saying "It is Allah's determination of what He wills. Do you know what fate is?"

"No," Yunus replied.

So the Imam declared: "It is the measuring and estimating of things and the fixing of their limitations regarding their beginning and end. As for (Allah's) decree, it means finalizing things and bringing them into (existence in) sentient world."

Yu'nus bowed in admiration and magnification for the Imam, then he kissed his head and said to him: "You have disclosed to me what I was in ignorance of.[21]"

The Imamate

Among the ideological researches which Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, discussed was the Imamate. He mentioned it on many occasions of which are following:

1. The Importance of the Imamate

The Imamate is the most important office in Islam, for it safeguards and protects the community from any aggression, secures it dignity and freedom, and achieves all its objectives.

The Imam, peace be on him, stated an inclusive talk before ‘Abd al-‘Aziz b. Muslim. During the talk he objectively presented the importance of the Imamate, and indicated that it was the most important objective and principle which Islam adopted. Before his death, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, appointed the leader and authority of the community, who was Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, the pioneer of wisdom in Islam. Now, listen to Imam’s al-Ridha’ speech about the Imamate. He, peace be on him, has said:

“O ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, the people did not know, and have been deceived in their opinions. Verily, Allah to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, did not take away (the life of) His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, until He had perfected the religion for him, and had sent down on him the Qur’an in which there is the clarification of all things. He completely clarified in it what is lawful and what is unlawful, the punishments (*hudu’d*) and the commands, and all that people need. He, the Great and Almighty, said: *We have neglected nothing in the book*.22 And He sent down in the Farewell Pilgrimage, which was at the end of his life, may Allah bless him and his family: *Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed my blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion*.23 And the matter of the Imamate is one of things by which the religion is completed. He (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, did not pass away until he had clarified the guiding principles of their religion to his community and made plain their path for them, and he left them pointing in the direction of the path of the truth. And he appointed ‘Ali as an Imam (leader) for them. He (Allah) has not left for them anything which the community needs without clarifying it. Hence, whoever imagines that Allah, the Great and Almighty, has not perfected His religion has surely rejected the Book of Allah, and whoever has rejected the Book of Allah is an unbeliever in it.”

This paragraph gives an account of the great importance of the Imamate with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, for it was the most important element of his immortal message, and for through it the religion was perfected and the blessing was completed. He (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, chose for this important office his brother, the gate of the city of his knowledge, Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. He appointed him as an Imam (leader) after him and ordered the Muslims to Pledge allegiance to him at Ghadir Khum, and through this appointing he (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, made clear the path for the community. In other words he did not leave the affairs of the community in chaos after him. Now, let us listen to another part of the Imam’s speech concerning the importance of the Imamate:

“Do they know the value of the Imamate and its position in the community that their selection could be allowable in this matter? Verily, the Imamate is too sublime among values, too great among ranks, too high among stations, too impenetrable on all sides, too profound among the depths, for people to reach

it with their intellects, or to grasp it with their opinions, or to appoint an Imam by their choice. Verily, the Imamate is that by which Allah, the Great and Almighty, has distinguished Ibra'him, the bosom Friend (of Allah), after the Prophethood and the Intimacy, as a third degree, and an eminence with which He honored him and by which he raised his renown, and He (Allah) said: *Behold! I make you an Imam* (*leader*) *for the people*.[24] Then the bosom Friend (Ibra'him) out of delight in it (the Imamate) said: *And of my progeny?* Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: *My covenant shall not reach the evil-doers*. Thus, this verse has abolished the Imamate (leadership) of all evil-doers till the Day of Resurrection, and it has been confined to the chosen ones. Then Allah, the Great and Almighty, honored him through confining the Imamate to his children, who were chosen and purified (by Allah). So He, the Great and Almighty, said: *And we gave him Isha'q and Ya'qu'b in superabundance, and everyone made We righteous and appointed them to be Imams guiding by Our commands, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and to perform the prayer, and to pay the zaka't, and us they served*.[25] So it (the Imamate) did not leave his children, who inherited it one by one, and generation after generation till Allah, the Great and Almighty, made the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, inherit it. Hence He, the Great and Almighty, said: *Surely the people standing closest to him* (*Ibra'him*) *are those who followed him, and this Prophet, and those who believe; and Allah is the Master of the believers*.[26] So it (the Imamate) belonged to him (the Prophet) particularly, and hence he, may Allah bless him and his family, invested 'Ali with it by the command of Allah, the Great and Almighty, in the way which Allah had made obligatory. So it became to be in his ('Ali's) chosen children, to whom Allah gave knowledge and faith, as in the words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *But those who have been given knowledge and faith shall say: You have remained in Allah's Book until the Day of Resurrection*.[27] Thus it will be within the sons of 'Ali, especially, till the Day of Resurrection, since there is no prophet after Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. So from where have these ignorant people got (the right) to select?"

In this part of his speech the Imam, peace be on him, presented that it was impossible for the community to elect someone for the office of Imamate. In other words the office of the Imamate is not subject to the will of the masses, who have no knowledge in the reality of the affairs and things; rather the affair of the Imamate is in the hand of Allah, the Most High; it is He who elects, for the leadership of His servants, those who have excellent qualities such as reverential fear, clinging to religion, and knowledge which the community needs in all fields, that He may secure it noble life free from oppression, tyranny, persecutions, and poverty.

The affair of the Imamate is in the hand of Allah, the Exalted, just as the Prophethood is, hence He granted it to the most meritorious of His servants, namely Ibra'him the bosom Friend (of Allah), peace be on him, and then it (the Imamate) was inherited by the best of his children such as Isha'q and Ya'qu'b, and then it was inherited by the master of the prophets, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who entrusted it to the gate of the city of his knowledge, the most meritorious of his community, Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and then it was inherited by the pure Imams from his ('Ali's) children whom Allah, the Most High, chose from among His creatures.

Now, let us move to another part of the speech of the Imam, peace be on him: “Verily, the Imamate is the position of the prophets and heritage of the successors. Indeed, the Imamate is the vicegerency (*khila’fa*) of Allah, the Great and Almighty and of the Messenger, station of the Commander of the faithful, and inheritance of al-Hasan and al-Husayn. Truly, the Imamate is the reins of the religion, state of the orders of the Muslims, rectitude of the world and might of the believers.

“Verily, the Imamate is the growing root and lofty branch of Islam. Through the Imam the prayer, *zaka’t*, fasting, *hajj*, and *jihad* are perfected; the general wealth (of the Muslims *fayya’*) and charity (*sadaqa’t*) are increased; the prescribed punishments and the commands are put into practice; the frontier-posts and borders are protected.

“The Imam allows what Allah allows, prohibits what Allah prohibits, administers the prescribed punishments, defends the religion of Allah, and summons (men) to the way of his Lord with wisdom, good admonition, and strong proof.

“The Imam is like the rising sun which covers the world with its light and which is in the place where no hand or eye can reach. The Imam is the radiant moon, the shining lamp, the brilliant light, and the star that guides (men) in the pitch-black night, in the deserted regions and the high seas. The Imam is sweet water for the thirst, the pointer towards true guidance, and the deliverer from destruction. He who separates himself from him perishes.

“The Imam is the rain-bearing cloud, the rainfall that covers everywhere, the shining sun, the covering that shades, the prairie, the overflowing spring, the pool and the meadow. The Imam is the gentle, close friend, the sympathetic father, the blood-brother, the mother who is tender to her small child, a place of refuge for mankind from perilous disaster.

“The Imam is Allah’s custodian over His creation, His proof for His servants, His vicegerent in His lands, a summoner to Allah and the defender of Allah’s precincts.

“The Imam is the one who is purified from sins, free from all shortcomings, characterized by knowledge, distinguished by forbearance, the state of the order of the religion, the might of the Muslims, the one who enrages the hypocrites, and the doom of unbelievers.

“The Imam is unique of his time, none can approach his rank, no man of knowledge is comparable to him; there is no one who can take his place; nor is there anyone similar to him or the same as him. He is characterized by every (kind of) eminence, without seeking it or acquiring it; rather, it is a characteristic form the Bestower of eminence, the All-giving. So who can arrive at the knowledge of the Imam, or have the ability to select him? How far! How far! Intellects have lost (themselves), imaginations have gone astray, minds have become perplexed, eyes have turned away, the great have been made small, the wise have confounded themselves, those who reflect forever fall short, orators falter, the intelligent have become ignorant, the poets have become expressionless, the prosodists have become incapable, and the eloquent stammer in describing one of his (the Imam’s) aspects, or one of his eminencies. All of

them have confessed their incapacity and inadequacy. How can his totality be described, and how his inner essence be characterized? How can anything concerning him be understood? Who can be found to take his place and to give what he can give? No! How and where? Since he is in the position of the star for the hands of those who grasp, and to the description of those who describe. What is the place of choice in this affair? What is the place of the intellects in this affair? Where can someone like this be found? Do you imagine that this can be found anywhere else but in the progeny of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. By Allah, they have lied to themselves; they have promised to themselves the impossible; they have climbed up to a difficult and dangerous height, (and) their feet will slip and fall to the bottom."

These parts of the Imam's speech indicate that the Imam is very important, that he is the shadow of Allah on earth, that he carries out the interests and objectives of the community, that he administers the prescribed punishments, defends the fortified borderline cities, allows what is lawful, forbids what is unlawful, and applies the law of Allah, the Exalted, on the general life of the Muslims. It is certain that these original objectives and ideals cannot by carried out by anyone on the arena of life except the Imams of guidance, peace be on them, whom the oppressive, tyrannical community removed from the places which Allah had given to them. Accordingly, the community has suffered various kinds of oppression and tyranny.

The Imam continued his speech concerning lauding the Imams from *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, opposing the unjust rulers, and criticizing those who appointed them. He, peace be on him, said: "They want to appoint an Imam with (their) confused, unproductive and defective minds, and (their) misleading opinions. Nothing accrued to them but remoteness from him. ***May Allah fight them; how they are turned away!*** Surely, they are looking for a difficulty. They have uttered an untruth and have gone astray into far error; they have put themselves into confusion, for they have knowingly abandoned the Imam. ***And Satan made their works fairseeming to them, so he kept them back from the path, though they were endowed with intelligence and skill***. They have turned their back on the choice of Allah, the choice of the Messenger of Allah and his house hold, (and turned) to their own choice, whilst the Qur'an has called them out: ***And Your Lord creates and chooses whom He pleases; to choose is not theirs; glory belongs to Allah, and exalted be He above what they associate*** (***with Him***).[28] And Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***And behoves not a believing man and a believing woman that they have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Apostle have decided a matter.***[29] And He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***What has happened to you? How do you judge? Or have you a book wherein you read, that you have surely therein what you choose? Or have you received from Us an agreement confirmed by an oath extending to the day of resurrection that you shall surely have what you demand? Ask them which of them will vouch for that. Or have they associates? Then let them bring their associates if they are truthful***.[30]

"And He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***Do they not reflect the Qur'an? Or is it that there are locks upon their hearts***[31], or has Allah ***set a seal upon their hearts, so they understand not***, **or** ***they said:***

We hear, and they do not obey. Surely the evilest of animals, in Allah's sight, are the deaf, the dumb, who do not understand[32], or ***they said: We have heard and disobeyed***.[33] But ***that is the bounty of Allah; He gives it to whom He wills, and Allah is of bounty abounding***.[34]

"How can they have (the right) to choose an Imam? Since the Imam is a man of knowledge; he is not ignorant (of anything), a shepherd who does not shirk (his duty), a mine of sanctity and purity, of piety and renunciation, of knowledge and worship. He is the one specifically mentioned in the supplication of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and he is of the progeny of (Fa'tima), the purified, the chaste. Aspersion cannot be cast on him in relation to his parentage, none can approach him in ancestry (or nobility: *hasab*). He is in the noble house of Quraysh, at the summit of (Banu') Ha'shim, of the family of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and the one accepted by Allah, the Great and Almighty. He is the noblest of the noble and the true branch of 'Abd Mana'f (the father of Ha'shim and Umayya); the one whose knowledge forever grows and whose patience is perfect, who is completely acquainted with the Imamate, entirely knowledgeable in statesmanship. Obedience to him is obligatory, the one who establishes the affair of Allah, the Great and Almighty. He is the sincere adviser to the servants of Allah, and the protector of the religion of Allah.

"Truly, Allah accommodates the prophets and the Imams, the blessings of Allah be upon them, (to the right path). He gives them of His stored knowledge and wisdom, which He does not give to anyone else. Thus their knowledge is far above the knowledge of the people of their time, as He, the Exalted, says: ***Is He then Who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself does not go aright unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you; how do you judge?*** /, and as He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***And whoever is given the wisdom, he indeed is given a great good***.[35] Also what He says about Ta'lu't (Saul): ***Verily, Allah has chosen him over you, and has increased him broadly in knowledge and body. Allah gives the kingship to whom He wills, and Allah is All-embracing, All-knowing***.[36] And He, the Great and Almighty, said to His Prophet: ***And Allah's bounty to you was great***.[37] And He, the Great and Almighty, said concerning the Imam from among his Household, his family, and his progeny: ***Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given to them of His bounty? Yet We gave the progeny of Ibra'him the Book and the Wisdom, and We gave them a mighty kingdom. So some of them*** (***i.e. , the envious***) ***is he who believes in him, and of them who turns away from him, and hell is sufficient to turn***.[38]

"Verily, when Allah, the Great and Almighty, selects a servant for the affairs of His servants, He expands his breast for them; He entrusts to his heart the fountains of wisdom, and profoundly inspires him with knowledge. So, after this, he does not stammer in answers, and he does not deviate from the truth in them. Thus, he is infallible and supported by Allah; he is accommodated (to the right path, and his steps being) firmly guided; he will be safe from errors, slips and stumbling. Allah distinguishes him by this, because he is His proof over His servants, and His witness over His creatures ***that is the bounty of Allah, He gives it to whom He wills, and Allah is of bounty abounding***. So do they have the power to do the like of this, so that they can choose him? Or can the one whom they choose have this

attribution so that they may prefer him? By the House of Allah, they have transgressed against the truth; they have rejected the Book of Allah behind their backs as though they did not know; and in the Book of Allah there is guidance and cure. So they have rejected it, and they have followed their own desires. Therefore, Allah has found fault with them, detested them and cats them down, as He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***And who is further astray than he who follows his own caprice without guidance from Allah. Surely, Allah does not guide the unjust people***.39 And He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***Ill chance shall befall them; He will send their works astray***.40 And He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***Verily, hateful is that in the sight of Allah and the believers; so Allah sets a seal on every heart proud, arrogant***.41"42

This holy tradition is the firmest and most inclusive proof of the necessity of the Imamate. It shows that the Imamate is the most important office in Islam, and that it is not subject to the choice and election of the community; rather, its affair is in the hand of the Great Creator, for it is He who appoints and elects the best of His creatures for this important office, that such a creature may establish among men pure justice and truth, and that he may rule them through the policy of the greatest Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family.

2. The Marks of the Imam

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, stated a tradition about the marks and qualities of the Imam. He has been mentioned in the tradition: "The Imam has marks: he is the most knowledgeable of the people, the wisest of them, the most pious of them, the most clement of them, the bravest of them, the most munificent of them, and the most worshipful of them.43"

The Imam should have these marks and qualities so that he is appropriate for leading the community and raising its economic and social levels.

3. The Imams are the Vicegerents of Allah

Abu' Mas'u'd al-Ja'fari narrated, saying: [I heard Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, say:] "The Imams are the vicegerents of Allah, the Great and Almighty, on His earth.44"

Without doubt, the Imams of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on him, are the vicegerents of Allah on His earth, His proofs over His servants, and entrusted by Him with His land, hence it is they who lead this community and guide it to the good pleasure of Allah, the Most High, and obedience to Him.

1. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 99.
2. Ibid., pp. 101-102.
3. The similitude which is negated from Allah, the Exalted, is in the essence not in the names and utterances, for they are applied to Him, the Most High, and to other than Him; it is correct to apply the 'one' to Allah, the Exalted, and man.
4. Qur'an, 23, 14.
5. Ibid., 21, 22.
6. Ibid., 23, 91.

7. Ibid., 35, 37.
8. Ibid., 6, 28.
9. Al-Tawhid, pp. 60-65.
10. Ibid., p. 98. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 105.
11. Qur'an, 6, 19.
12. Al-Tawhid, p. 107.
13. Ibid., 130.
14. Qur'an, 13, 33.
15. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, pp. 120-123.
16. Ibid., p. 88.
17. Ibid., p. 96-97.
18. Ibid., 157.
19. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 144.
20. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, pp. 160-161.
21. Ibid., p. 157.
22. Qur'an, 6, 38.
23. Ibid., 5, 3. This Verse was revealed on the day of 'Id al-Ghadir (Feast on 18th Dhu al-Hijja), the immortal day when the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, appointed Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, as a leader for his community after him. And al-Ghadir 'Id is part of the Islamic message.
24. Ibid., 2, 121.
25. Ibid., 21, 72-73.
26. Ibid., 3, 68.
27. Ibid., 30, 56.
28. Ibid., 28, 68.
29. Ibid., 33, 36.
30. Ibid., 68, 36-41.
31. Ibid., 47, 24.
32. Ibid., 8, 21-23.
33. Ibid., 2, 93.
34. Ibid., 57, 21.
35. Ibid., 2, 269.
36. Ibid., 2, 247.
37. Ibid., 4, 113.
38. Ibid., 4, 54-55.
39. Ibid., 28, 50.
40. Ibid., 47, 8.
41. Ibid., 40, 35.
42. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, pp. 216-222. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 199.
43. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 213.
44. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 193.

Chapter 8: On The Holy Qur'an

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was the companion of the Qur'an; he always recited it, carefully

considered its verses, and found in reciting it a unique pleasure in the world. The narrators said: “All his speech was directly affected by the Qur’an, so his answers and examples were derivations from it.[1]” He was so fond of the Qur’an that he completed it (a time) every three days, and he said: “If I wanted to complete it (a time) in less than three days, I would do, but, when I pass by a verse, I reflect on its meaning, concerning which thing and in which time it was revealed. For this reason I complete the Qur’an (a time) every three days.[2]” This means that he most times was busy reciting the Holy Qur’an, absorbed in interpreting it and the causes of the revelation of its verses.

The historians have said: “He (Imam al-Ridha’) recited many (suras of) the Qur’an on his bed at night. When he passed by a verse in which the Garden and the Fire had been mentioned, he wept, asked Allah for the Garden, and sought refuge in Him from the Fire.[3]”

Before we present some examples of his interpretations on some verses, we would like to mention some points relating to the subject:

His Mentioning some Words

When the Imam, peace be on him, recited some verses of the Holy Qur’an, he mentioned some words at the end of them. The following are some of these suras:

1. Surat al-Tawhid: When he had finished reciting Surat al-Tawhid, he mentioned at the end of it these words of him: “*Kadha’lika Allahu rabbana’*.” (Such is Allah, our Lord!) He mentioned these words three times.

2. Surat al-Jahd: After he had finished reciting Surat al-Jahd, he said three times: “*Rabbiya Allah wa diniya al-Islam*.” (My Lord is Allah and my religion is Islam!)

3. Surat al-Tin: When he had finished reciting it, he said: “*Bala’ wa ana’ ‘ala’ dha’lika mina al-sha’hidin*.” (Yes, and I am one of those who bear witness to that!)

4. Surat al-Qiya’ma: After he had recited Surat al-Qiya’ma, he said: “*Subha’naka Alla’huma*.” (I glorify You, O Allah, with a glorification after a glorification!)

5. Surat al-Fa’tiha: Having finished reciting Surat al-Fa’tiha, he said: “*Al-hamudu lil la’hi rAbu’l ‘a’lamin*.” (Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.”

6. Surat Sabbih Isma Rabu’ka: After he had finished reciting this Sura, he said: “*Subha’na Rabbi al-a‘la’*.” (Glory belongs to my Lord, the Most High.)[4]

Al-Bassmala

In a group of his traditions, the Imam, peace be on him, dealt with some affairs of *al-bassmala* (i.e., in

the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful). The following are some of them:

1. The importance of al-bassmala

Al-bassmala has a special importance with the Imams of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them. It was narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' Ja'far, peace be on him, who said: "The first (part) of every Book which was sent down from the heaven is *Bismil la'hir rahma'nir rahim* (in the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful)." It was also narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "It (*al-bassmala*) is nearer to the Greatest Name of Allah than the iris to the eye.[5]"

2. Al-bassmala is part of the Sura

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "*Al-bassmala* is part of the suras of the Holy Qur'an." It was narrated that it was said to Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him: "Tell us about *Bismil la'hir rahma'nir rahim*: Is it part of the Opening Sura of the Book (*Fatihat al-Kita'b*)?" "Yes," he replied, "Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, recited it and regarded it as a verse of it, and he said: '*Fatihat al-Kita'b* is the seven oft-repeated verses (*al-Sab' al-Matha'ni*).'[6]"

3. Reciting al-bassmala in a loud voice in prayer

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, recited *al-bassmala* in a loud voice in all his prayers by day and night[7], and he criticized those who recited it a low voice, saying: "What is the matter with them? May Allah fight them! They resorted to the greatest verse in the Book of Allah, and they claimed that it was a heresy when they recited it in a loud voice.[8]"

Examples of his Interpreting the Qur'an

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, took great care of in interpreting the Holy Qur'an. He devoted his attention to it in his lectures and researches which he gave to the jurists, the religious scholars, and the rest of his students, and which were transmitted by the narrators and the interpreters of the Qur'an. The following are some of them:

1. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes, and there is a great punishment for them.[9]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "*Al-khatm* means setting a seal upon the hearts of the unbelievers as a punishment for their unbelief.[10]"

2. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "Their parable is like the parable of one who kindled a fire, but when it had illumined all around him, Allah took away their light, and left them in utter darkness they do not see.[11]"

In his explanation of these words of Him, the Most High: ***And left them in utter darkness they do not see*****,** the Imam, peace be on him, said: "Verily, Allah cannot be described by 'leaving' as He has described His creatures, but when He comes to know that they do not withdraw from unbelief and error, He deprives them of (His) help and favor, and He leaves them along with their choice.[12]"

3. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: "And do not approach this tree, for then you will be of the unjust.[13]"

'Abd al-Sala'm b. Sa'lih al-Harawi asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him: "O son of Allah's Apostle, tell me about the tree of which Adam and Hauwa'' (Eve) ate: What was it? For the people have differed over it. Some of them narrate that it was wheat; others narrate that it was a grapevine; others narrate that it was the tree of envy."

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "All these narrations are true."

"What are the meanings of these different views?" asked 'Abd al-Sala'm.

"O Ibn al-Salt (i.e. 'Abd al-Sala'm)," replied the Imam, "surely, the tree of the Garden bears kinds (of fruit). It was the wheat tree and there were grapes on it; it was not like the trees of the world.[14]"

Imam al-Sabzwa'ri commented on this narration, saying: "Without doubt the (tree) was in the Garden. If it was in the world, then it would have a characteristic different from the characteristics (of the trees) in all the gardens of the world. The concourse (*taza'hum*) and contradiction (*tana'fi*) were little in that Garden or they were nonexistent, so it is right that one of the trees of the Garden bore kinds (of fruit).[15]"

4. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "And when you said: O Musa', we will not believe in you until we see Allah manifestly, so the punishment overtook you while you look on.[16]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "They (i.e. those who said these words to Musa') were the seventy (persons) whom Musa' chose, and they went with him to the mountain and said to him: 'You have seen Allah, so let us see Him as you have seen Him.' Hence he said to them: 'I have not seen him, so they said to him: ***we will not believe in you until we see Allah manifestly***.'[17]"

5. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: "And when Musa' said to his people: Surely Allah commands you that you should sacrifice a cow; they said: Do you ridicule us? He said: I seek the protection of Allah from being one of the ignorant. They said: Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is. Musa' said: He says: Surely she is a cow neither advanced in age nor too young, of middle age between that (and this); therefore, do what you are commanded. They said: Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what her color is. Musa' said: He says: Surely she is a yellow cow; her color is intensely yellow; giving delight to the beholders. They said: Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is, for surely to us the cows are all alike, and if Allah wills we shall surely be guided aright. He said: He says: surely she is a cow not made submissive that she should

plow the land; nor does she irrigate the tilth, sound, without a blemish in her. They said: Now you have brought the truth; so they sacrificed her, though they had not the mind to do (it).[18]"

The Imam, peace be on him, gave an explanation of them, and Ahmed b. Abu' Nasr al-Bizanti has narrated his explanation of them, saying: [I heard Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha' say:] "Surely, a man from among the children of Isra'"il killed a relative of him, and then he threw him on the path of the best tribe of the children of Isra'"il, and then he came and demanded his blood. So they said to Musa', peace be on him: 'The tribe of the family of so-and-so killed so-and-so, so tell us: Who killed him?' He (Musa') said: 'Bring me a cow.' ***They said: Do you ridicule us? He said: I seek the protection of Allah from being one of the ignorant.*** If they had sacrificed a cow, the cow would have been sufficient for them (i.e. for solving their matter), but they were strict, hence Allah was strict with them. ***Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is. Musa' said: He says: Surely she is a cow neither advanced in age nor too young, of middle age between that*** **(*and this*),** namely she was neither old nor too young, *of middle age between that* (*and this*). If they had resorted to any cow, it would have been sufficient for them, but they were stern, so Allah was stern with them. ***They said: Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what her color is. Musa' said: He says: Surely she is a yellow cow; her color is intensely yellow; giving delight to the beholders***. If they had resorted to any cow (and sacrifice it), it would have been sufficient for them, but they were severe, so Allah was severe with them. ***They said: Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is, for surely to us the cows are all alike, and if Allah please we shall surely be guided aright. He said: He says: surely she is a cow not made submissive that she should plow the land, nor does she irrigate the tilth, sound, without a blemish in her. They said: Now you have brought the truth; so they sacrificed her, though they had not the mind to do*** **(*it*).**

They looked for her and found her with a young man from the children of Isra'"il, who said: 'I will not sell her except for gold equal to its weight.' They came to Musa', peace be on him, and told him about that, and he said: 'Buy her.' They bought her and brought her (to him), and he ordered her to be sacrificed, and then he ordered the dead one to be hit with her tail. When they had done that, the killed one was brought to life, and he said: 'O Allah's Messenger, my cousin had killed me, and not the one who has been accused of murdering me!' Through that they came to know the murderer. Then a companion of Musa', the Messenger of Allah, said: 'This cow has a story.' 'What is the story?' asked Musa'. The companion replied: 'They said: A young man from among the children of Isra'"il was obedient to his father. He bought a thing and came to his father. He found the keys under his head, so he hated to waken him, hence he left that thing. His father woke, and he told him about that. So his father said to him: Well done! (Take) this cow as a compensation for that which had escaped you.' The companion said: So Musa', Allah's Messenger, said to me: 'Reflect on the degree which the men of obedience have reached!'[19]"

6. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "And that was sent down to the two angels at Babel, Haru't and Maru't, yet these two taught no man until they had said: 'Surely we are only a trial; therefore, do not

be a unbeliever.[20]'"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "As for Haru't and Maru't, they were two angels. They taught men magic, that they might protect themselves from the magic of the magicians and disprove their deception. They did not teach anyone anything of that except they said to him: ***Surely we are only a trial; therefore, do not be a unbeliever;*** yet a group of people disbelieved through their using that from which they were ordered to protect themselves, and through it they began separating between husband and his wife. Hence, Allah, the Most High, said: 'And they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allah's permission.[21]'"

7. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "But if you are prevented, (send) whatever offering is easy to obtain[22]," the Imam, peace be on him, said: "It means a sheep, and this has been appointed according to the least of the people in ability, that the poor and the rich can (offer it).[23]"

8. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "And when he turns back, he runs along in the land that he may cause mischief in it and destroy the tilth and the stock.[24]"

They were revealed concerning al-Akhnas b. Shurayk, the ally of the children of Zahra, who went to Medina, met the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, there and said to him: "I have come to believe in Islam, and Allah knows that I am truthful." The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, admired him. However, when al-Akhnas left the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, he passed by plants and donkeys of a Muslim group. As a result he burnt the plants and slaughtered the donkeys.[25]" As for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "*Al-nasl* means offspring and *al-harth* means plants.[26]" (Please, see the Arabic text in the Holy Qur'an.)

9. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "They do not wait aught but that Allah should come to them in the shadows of the clouds along with the angels, and the matter has (already) been decided; and (all) matters are returned to Allah.[27]"

Ibn Fadda'l asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he answered: ***"They do not wait aught but that Allah along with the angels should come to them in the shadows of the clouds***, in this manner the verse was revealed." As regarding these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***"And your Lord comes and (also) the angels in ranks[28]"***, he , peace be on him, said: 'Surely Allah cannot be described by coming and going, Allah is far above movement. Rather, by that He means that the command of your Lord comes and (also) the angels in ranks.[29]" Al-Sayyid al-Sabzwa'ri commented on this explanation of the Imam, saying: "What has been mentioned in the tradition about the holy verse is very good, just as he, peace be on him, explained the ambiguous verses. As for these words of him, peace be on him: In this manner it was revealed means the clarifying and interpretative revelation in the heart of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family.[30]"

10. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "And when Ibra'him said: My Lord, show me how You give live to the dead. He said: What! and do you not believe? He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at

ease.31”

Safwa’n b. Yahya’ asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him: “Was there any doubt in Ibra’him’s heart?” “No,” replied the Imam, “he was certain, but he wanted Allah to increase his certitude.32”

11. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: “Surely Allah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of ‘Umra’n above the nations. Offspring, one of the other.33”

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, mentioned this sacred verse when al-Ma’mu’n asked him: “Did Allah prefer (the Prophet’s) family to the rest of the community?” He, peace be on him, replied: “Surely, Allah, the Great and Almighty, has made clear the excellence of (the Prophet’s) family over the rest of men in the firm text of His Book.” “Where is that in the Book of Allah?” asked al-Ma’mu’n. The Imam, peace be on him, answered: “In these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***Surely Allah chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of ‘Umra’n above the nations. Offspring, one of the other***.” Certainly, the Prophet’s family belongs to Ibra’him’s family, for Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, is one of Ibra’him’s children, and his family belongs to him.34 The speech of the Imam, peace be on him, is not part of interpretation; rather it is part of the conclusion through the surface structure of the verse about what he has mentioned.

12. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: “And when Allah said: O ‘Isa’, I am going to terminate the period of your stay (on earth) and cause you to ascend unto me.35”

The Imam, peace be on him, said: “No matter of the Allah’s prophets and His proofs over men was vague except that of ‘Isa’, for Allah caused him to ascend unto Him alive from the earth. He made him die between the earth and the heaven, and then He caused him ascend unto Him, and then He returned his soul to him. That is according to these words of Him, *and when Allah said:* ***O ‘Isa’, I am going to terminate the period of your stay*** (***on earth***) ***and cause you to ascend unto me and purify you of those who disbelieve***. Allah has given an account of ‘Isa’, who will say on the Day of Resurrection: ***And I was a witness of them as long as I was among them, but when You did cause me to die, You are the watcher over them, and You are witness of all things***.36”

Al-Sayyid al-Sabzwa’ri commented on this tradition, saying: “The tradition indicates that ‘Isa’, peace be on him, had died before Allah caused him ascend unto Him to the heaven, and through this we can bring together all the statements to impose the authenticity of the tradition, which demonstrates that Allah made him die between the heaven and the earth, and then He returned his soul to him, and cause him ascend unto him.37”

13. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: “They are (varying) grades with Allah, and Allah sees what they do.”

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, interpreted the grades and the difference among the Allah-fearing on the Day of Resurrection, saying: “The grade which is between the heaven and the earth.38” Definitely,

the grades between the good and the righteous are very different; therefore, the grade of the prophets is other than that of the Allah-fearing; the grade of the Allah-fearing is other that of the good, and so on.

14. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: "You shall certainly be tried respecting your wealth and your souls.[39]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "*You shall certainly be tried respecting your wealth* trough paying *zaka't* (alms), *and your souls* through adjusting (them) to endurance.[40]"

15. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"O you who believe, be patient and excel in patience*** [41]," the Imam, peace be on him, said: "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, a caller will call out: 'Where are the patient?' A group of people will stand up." So a companion of his asked him: "Who are the patient?" He, peace be on him, replied: "(It is they who are patient) toward performing the religious duties, and who excel in patience toward refraining from the forbidden things.[42]"

16. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four.***[43]"

This sacred verse is a proof of that it is permissible for man to marry four women, apart from allowing the woman to do that. The Imam, peace be on him, talked about the wisdom and interests in this legislation. He, peace be on him, said: "The cause of that (it is lawful) for man to marry four women, and that it is unlawful for woman to marry more than one (man is as follows): If man marries four women, the child will belong to him. If woman has two or more husbands, none will know to whom the child belongs, for they all take part in having intercourse with her, and this corrupts lineage, inheritances, and acquaintances.[44]"

17. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High***: "Allah desires to explain to you and to guide you into the ways of those before you***.[45]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was asked about the will of the servants and the will of Allah, the Exalted, and he replied: "The will of the servants is the pronoun and the action which appears after that. As for the will of Allah, it creates the verb; He only says (to the thing): 'Be, and it is without any tiredness and howness.'[46]"

18. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Men are maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property***.[47]"

The Imam, peace be on him, quoted this verse in his answering Muhammad b. Sina'n when he asked him about the cause of giving woman the half of the inheritance which is given to man. He, peace be on him, replied: "The cause of giving woman the half of the inheritance which is given to man is that when woman marries, she takes and man gives, for this reason He saves men (something).

"Yet there is another cause of giving male the half of that which is given to female. The cause is that the

female is among the family of the male when she needs (something), and it is obligatory on him to maintain her, whilst it is not obligatory on her to maintain him nor to spend on him when he needs (something), for this reason He spares men (something), and that is these words of Him, the Most High: ***Men are maintainers of women because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded***.[48]"

19. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners.***[49]"

Barid al-'Ijjli asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he, peace be on him, answered: "They are the Imams from the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, (who) should make over the trust to those after them, should not singled out other than them with it, and should not withhold it from them.[50]"

This narration is evidence for that the matter of the Imamate is in the hand of Allah, the Most High, and that Imamate is a trust with the Imam. When he dies, he should entrust it to the Imam appointed by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and should not entrust it to any person.

20. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "***And Allah took Ibra'him as a friend***.[51]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "I heard my father narrate on the authority of his father, peace be on him, that he said: 'Allah took Ibra'him as a friend because he (Ibra'him) did not refuse (the request of) anyone and never asked anyone except Allah, the Great and Almighty.[52]"

21. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted***: "And indeed He has revealed to you in the Book that when you hear Allah's communications disbelieved in and mocked at, do not sit with them until they enter into some other discourse***.[53]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "When you hear a person denies the truth, accuses it of lying, and attacks its people, then leave him and do not sit with him.[54]"

22. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"And Allah by no means gives the unbelievers a way against the believers.***[55]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Allah by no means gives the unbelievers an argument against the believers. Allah, the Most High, gave an account of some unbelievers who killed their prophet without any right, and though they killed him, Allah by no means gave them a way against His prophets.[56]"

23. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted***: "Surely the hypocrites strive to deceive Allah, and He shall requite their deceit to them.***[57]"

He, peace be on him, said: "Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, does not deceive (them), but He punishes

them for their deception.[58]"

24. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His apostle and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be banished.***[59]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was asked: "When does a person deserve one of these four punishments?"

He, peace be on him, replied: "When he wages war against Allah and His apostle and strives to make mischief in the land and kills (someone), he should be murdered. If he kills (someone) and takes (his) property, then he should be murdered and crucified. If he takes the property and does not kill (someone), his hand and his feet should be cut off on opposite sides. If he draws the sword, wages war against Allah and His apostle, strives to make mischief in the land, but he does not kill (someone) nor does he take the property, he should be banished."

I (the asker) asked: "How is the person banished, and what is the period of his banishment?"

He, peace be on him, answered: "He is banished from the city in which he does what he does, and it is written to the people of that city that the person is banished, so do not sit with him nor deals with him nor marry him nor eat with him nor drink with him. This is done toward him for a year, but if he comes out that city to other than it, then it is written to them in the same manner until the year terminates."

I (the asker) asked: "If he heads for the land of polytheism in order to enter it?"

"If he heads for the land of polytheism in order to enter it, then a war should be waged against its people," answered the Imam.[60]

25. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"O you who believe, do not put questions about things which if declared to you may trouble you***.[61]"

The Imam, peace be on him, quoted this verse in his answer to the questions of Ahmed b. Muhammad. He, peace be on him, said: "Have you not been prohibited from many questions, but you have refused this prohibition? Beware of that, for those before you perished because of their several questions. Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, said: *O you who believe, do not put questions about things which if declared to you may trouble you*.[62]"

26. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"Say: He is only one Allah, and surely I am clear of that which you set up* (*with him*).**[63]"

He, peace be on him, said: "The people has three creeds concerning Allah's Oneness: negation, comparison, and establishment without any comparison. The creed of negation is not permissible; the

creed of comparison is not permissible, for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, is not likened to anything; and the way is the third creed: establishment without any comparison."

Al-Sayyid al-Tabataba'i made clear these three creeds, saying: "The creed of negation means negating the meanings of the attributes from Him, the Exalted, as the Mu'tazilites say, and in its meaning returning the negative attributes to negating what opposes them, just as we say that the meaning of the powerful is not feeble, the meaning of the knowledgeable is not ignorant; yet one should resort to what he (the Imam), peace be on him, has mentioned about the third creed.

"The creed of comparison means that He, the Most High, is likened to other than Him, and there is nothing like him, namely it must be established for Him the limited meaning of the attribute which is in us and which is different from other attributes, namely His power is like that of us, His knowledge is like that of us, and so on. If His attributes are like those of us, then He is in need (of things) just as we are in need (of them); therefore, He is not Necessary (Being), far is He above that!

"The creed of establishment without any comparison means that it must be established for Him the original meaning of the attribute and negated from Him the characteristic which makes Him be compared to the possible creatures, namely the attribute is established and the limit is negated.[64]"

27. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"We have not neglected anything in the Book.***[65]"

The Imam, peace be on him, quoted this sacred verse in the following speech of him. He, peace be on him, said: "Surely Allah, the Great and Almighty, did not make our Prophet die until He perfected the religion for him and sent down to him the Qur'an, in which there is the explanation of all things: the lawful, the unlawful, the prescribed punishments, the precepts, and all what the people need in perfection. Hence Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: *We have not neglected anything in the Book*.[66]"

28. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "***When the night covered him, he saw a star. He said: This is my Lord***.[67]"

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the infallibility of the prophets, and he answered him that they were infallible, but al-Ma'mu'n opposed him through this verse, saying: "How did he (Ibra'him) say to the star, ***this is my Lord***? This contradicts infallibility." So the Imam, peace be on him, answered him through the following:

"Surely Ibra'him lived in a society where three types of worship dominated: the worship of Venus, the worship of the moon, and the worship of the sun. That was when he came out of the cave where he was concealed. ***When the night covered him***, he saw Venus and said: ***This is my Lord***. He wanted to deny (such a type of worship) and to ask (his fellows about it). When it (the star) set, he said: ***I do not love those that set***. That this because setting is an attribute of the created not of the Eternal (Being). ***When he saw the moon rising in splendor, he said: This is my Lord***. He wanted to deny (such a type of worship) and to ask (his fellows about it). ***But when it*** (***the moon***) ***set, he said: Unless my***

Lord guides me, I shall surely be among those who go astray. He said: 'Unless my Lord had guided me, I would have been among those who went astray.' When he entered upon morning and saw the sun rising in splendor, he said: ***This is my Lord; this is the greatest*** of Venus and the moon. He wanted to deny (such a type of worship) and to ask (his fellows about it), not to tell them about it and not to admit it (as a lord). When it (the sun) set, he said to the three types of men who worshipped Venus, the moon, and the sun: ***O my people! I am indeed free from your*** (***guilt***) ***of ascribing partners to Allah. For me, I have set my face firmly and truly towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I attribute partners*** (***to Allah***).

"By the virtue of what he said, Ibra'him simply wanted to indicate to them the invalidity of their religion and to establish to them that worship did not belong to those things like Vinus, the moon, and the sun; rather it belonged to their Creator and the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The argument which he used against his people was among what Allah had inspired in him and given to him, just as Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***And this was Our argument which We gave to Ibra'him against his people.***"

Al-Ma'mu'n admired this decisive answer of the Imam, hence he said to him: "How good you are, O son of Allah's Messenger![68]"

29. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Therefore*** (***for***) ***whomsoever Allah intends that He would guide him aright, He expands his breast for Islam***.[69]"

Sulayma'n al-Nisha'bu'ri asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he answered him: **"*Therefore*** (***for***) ***whomsoever Allah intends that He would guide him aright*** to faith in Him in the world and to His Garden and the Abode of His Dignity in the hereafter, ***He expands his breast for*** submission to Him, confidence in Him, and trust in the reward which He has promised, that he may rely on Him. ***And*** (***for***) ***whomsoever He intends that He should cause him to err*** from His Garden and the Abode of His Dignity because of his unbelief in Him and his disobedience to Him in the world, *He makes his breast strait and narrow as though he were ascending upwards; thus does Allah lay uncleanness on those who do not believe*.[70]"

30. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions***.[71]"

The Imam, peace be on him, quoted this sacred verse in the following talk of him: Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated; he said: [Imam al-Ridha' said to me:] "What do you say about coarse clothes?"

I (i.e. Ahmed b. Muhammad) replied: "I was told that al-Hasan wore (coarse garments), and that Ja'far b. Muhammad took the new garment and ordered it to be dipped into the water."

So he, peace be on him, said: "Wear and beautify (your self), for 'Ali b. al-Husayn wore silk-like jubbah (long garment) (which he bought) for five hundred dirhams, and silk-like cloak (which he bought) for fifty

dinars, and he spent winter (wearing) it. When winter terminated, he sold it and gave the money as alms. Then he recited this verse: *Say: Who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions*.72"

31. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted*: **"And recite to them the narrative of him to whom We gave our communications, but he withdraws himself from them, so the Shaitan overtakes him, so he is of those who go astray***.73"

He, peace be on him, said: "The Greatest Name was given to Bal'am b. Ba'u'r. He supplicated with it and (his supplication) was accepted. Then he inclined to Fir'oun (Pharaoh). When Fir'oun ordered Musa' and his followers to be arrested, he said to Bal'am: 'Invoke Allah against Musa' and his followers, that He may withhold him from us.' So Bal'am rode his she-ass and began lashing her. Allah, the Great and Almighty, made the she-ass speak, and she said to Bal'am: 'Woe unto you! Why are lashing me? Do you want me to go with you, that you may invoke against Allah's Prophet and the believing people?' He went on lashing her until he killed her, so he (the Greatest Name) withdrew himself from his tongue, and that is these words of Him: ***But he withdraws himself from them, so the Shaitan overtakes him, so he is of those who go astray, and If We had pleased, We would certainly have exalted him thereby; but he clung to the earth and followed his low desire, so his parable is as the parable of the dog; if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue; and if you leave him alone, he lolls out his tongue. And this is a parable which Allah has set forth.***74"

32. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"O you who belive, when you meet those who disbelieve marching for war, then turn not your backs to them***.75"

He, peace be on him, said: "Allah has prohibited escaping from fighting in His path, for it leads to undermining the religion; disdaining the just prophets and Imams; leaving helping them against the enemies who should be punished for their leaving professing the Lord to whom they are summoned, (and who are summoned to) establishing justice, leaving oppression, and deadening corruption. Moreover it encourages the enemies to (attack) the Muslims, and (this attack) results in murdering (them), taking them as prisoners, and abolishing the religion of Allah, the Great and Almighty, and (this attack leads to) other corrupt things.76"

33. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"And wherefore was there not a town which should believe so that their belief should have profited them but the people of Yunus? When they believed, We removed from them the chastisement of disgrace in this world's life and We gave them provision till a time.***77"

The Imam, peace be on him, mentioned the story of the people of Yu'nus when Allah raised the punishment from them. He, peace be on him, said: "Allah ordered Yunus to inform his people of His punishment, and he informed them. So they separated themselves from their children, the livestock and their young, and then they supplicated to Allah and sacrificed, hence Allah held back the punishment

from them.78”

34. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***“And if I intend to give you good advice, my advice will not profit you if Allah intended that He should leave you to go astray***.79”

Nu’h, peace be on him, told his people about the meaning of this sacred verse, and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, commented on that, saying: “The affair belongs to Allah, who guides (men) and leaves (them) to go astray.80”

35. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted***: “He said: O Nuh, surely he is not of your family; surely he is*** (***the doer of***) ***other than good deeds***.81”

Al-Hasan b. ‘Ali al-Washsha’’ narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He said: [I heard him say:] “My father said: Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, said: Surely, Allah, the Great and Almighty, said to Nu’h: ***He is not of your family***. For he (Nu’h’s son) was disobedient, and He (Allah) regarded those who followed him (Nu’h) as part of his family.”

He (i.e. al-Hasan al-Washsha’’) said : “He (Imam al-Ridha’) asked me: ‘How do they read this verse concerning Nu’h’s son?’”

I (i.e. al-Hasan al-Washsha’’) said : “The people read it in two ways: ***innahu ‘amal,*** they have regarded it as infinitive; and ***innahu ‘amila,*** they have regarded it as a past verb.”

So the Imam said: “They have told a lie. He is Nuh’s son, but Allah negated him when he opposed his (Nuh’s) religion.”

Al-Sayyid al-Taba’taba’’i said: “The meant thing by reciting the verse is its interpretation; and the narrator, through mentioning both recitations, refers to the interpretation of him who interpreted the verse that Nu’h’s wife gave birth to the son from other than him, so He added him to his bed (him).82”

36. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High, ***“And*** (***with passionate lust***) ***did she desire him, and would have desired her***.83”

‘Ali b. al-Jahm asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, in the presence of an assembly: “O son of Allah’s Apostle, do you believe in the infallibility of the prophets?”

“Yes,” replied the Imam.

“What do you say about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And*** (***with passionate lust***) ***did she desire him, and would have desired her*?**” asked ‘Ali b. al-Jahm.

The Imam, peace be on him, answered: “She (i.e. Zulaykha) wanted to commit a sin while he desired to kill her if she forced him; therefore, Allah saved him from the deed of killing her and its terrible consequences, and this is His words, the Great and Almighty: *Thus* (*it was*) *that We might turn away*

from him evil and indecency, meaning killing and fornication.[84]"

37. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: **"He said: You shall sow for seven years continuously, then what you reap leave it in its ear except a little of which you eat.**[85]"

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. al-Ya's narrated: [I heard Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, say:] "Yusuf began collecting and storing seeds in the treasures during the seven fertile years. When those years terminated and the arid ones came, Yusuf began selling the seeds. In the first year he sold (the seeds) to them for the dirham and the dinar, to the extent that he possessed all the dirhams and the dinars in Egypt and the neighboring regions.

"In the second year he sold (seeds) to them for the ornaments and jewels, to the extent that he possessed all the ornaments and jewels in Egypt and the neighboring regions. In the third year he sold (seeds) to them for livestock, to the extent that he possessed all the livestock in Egypt and the neighboring regions. In the fourth year he sold (seeds) to them for the male and female slaves, to the extent that he possessed all the male and female slaves in Egypt and the neighboring regions. In the fifth year he sold (seeds) to them for the houses and courtyards, to the extent that he possessed all the house and courtyards in Egypt and the neighboring regions. In the sixth year he sold (seeds) to them for the farms and the rivers, to the extent that he possessed all the farms and the rivers in Egypt and the neighboring regions. And in the seventh year he sold (seeds) to them for themselves, to the extent that he possessed all the slaves and the free in Egypt and the neighboring regions.

"He possessed their free (men) and their slaves and their properties, so the people said: 'We have never heard that Allah gave wisdom, knowledge, and direction to a king as He has given to this king.' Then Yusuf asked the King: 'What is your view concerning the property of Egypt and the neighboring regions which Allah has entrusted to me?'"

"'Advise us through your view,' demanded Yusuf, 'for I have not put them right, that I may corrupt them; nor have I saved them from the tribulation, that it may be a tribulation against them. However, it was Allah who has saved them at my hand.' The King said: 'My view agrees with your view.' Yusuf said: 'Surely I call Allah to witness and call you, O King, to witness that I have released all the people of Egypt, returned to them their properties and their slaves, returned to you your kingdom, your ring, your throne, and your crown, provided that you should follow nothing except my example and decide nothing except through my decision.'

"The king said: 'Surely that is my repentance and pride, that I will follow nothing except your example and decide nothing except your decision. Had it not been for you, I would have not undertaken them; nor would I have found the right way to Him. I witness that there is no god except Allah, the One with whom there is no associate, and that you are His Apostle; therefore, undertake that over which I have appointed*, surely you are in our presence today an honorable, a faithful one*.'[86]"

38. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"He said: Place me* (*in authority*) *over the treasures***

of the land, surely I am a good keeper, knowing well.[87]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, quoted this sacred verse during his talk with a man who asked him: "May Allah set you right, how have you become the heir apparent of al-Ma'mu'n?"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, denied his accepting the regency after al-Ma'mu'n. Then he asked the man: "Who is better the Prophet or the testamentary trustee?"

"No, the Prophet," replied the man.

"Who is better the Muslim or the polytheist?"

"No, rather the Muslim," answered the man.

Then the Imam, peace be on him, stated a decisive argument, saying: "The Chief of Egypt was a polytheist, and Yusuf was a prophet. Al-Ma'mu'n is a Muslim, and I am a testamentary trustee. Yusuf asked the Chief to entrust him with an office, to the extent that he said to him: ***Place me*** (***in authority***) ***over the treasures of the land, surely I am a good keeper, knowing well***. As for al-Ma'mu'n, he has forced me to be his heir apparent."

Then the Imam explained the words of Him, the Most High: "***Surely I am a good keeper, knowing well,***" saying: "He (Yusuf) kept that which was in his hand, and he was *knowing well* at every language.[88]"

39. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"They said: If he steals, a brother of his did indeed steal before; but Yusuf kept it secret in his heart and did not disclose it to them***.[89]"

He, peace be on him, said: "Isha'q (Isaac), the prophet, had a belt which the prophets and the great figures inherited, and the belt was with Yusuf's aunt; and Yusuf was with her, and she loved him. So his father sent for her: 'Send him (Yusuf) to me, and I will return him to you.' She sent for him: 'Leave him with me this night, that I may kiss him and send him to you in the early morning. When she entered upon morning, she took the belt and tied it round his loin, clothed him in a shirt, send him to him, and said: 'He (Yusuf) has stolen the belt, and I have found it with him.' In that time, when someone stole (something), he was given to the owner of the stolen thing. So she took him, and he was with her.[90]"

40. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"And most of them do not believe in Allah without associating others*** (***with Him***).[91]"

He, peace be on him, said: "It is the polytheism through which they do not reach unbelief.[92]" The meaning is that this king of polytheism is in their obeying Satan, and it is not in their acts of worship, so that they are not regarded as unbelievers.

41. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "Till the apostles gave up hope and thought that they were

surely accused of lying, Our help then came to them.[93]"

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he, peace be on him, answered: [Allah says:] "Till the apostles gave up hope (of their people) and (their people came to) think that they proved them to be liars, Our help then came to them.[94]"

42. Regarding the fear and hope in these words of Him, the Most High: ***"He it is Who shows you the lightning causing fear and hope and (Who) brings up the heavy clouds***.[95]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "The fear for the traveler, and hope for the resident.[96]"

43. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition***.[97]"

He, peace be on him, said: "Surely the affair belongs to Allah, the Most High.[98]"

44. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: "***So turn away with kindly forgiveness***.[99]"

He, peace be on him, said: "Kindly forgiveness means forgiveness without any admonition.[100]"

45. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Musa' said to him: Shall I follow you on condition that you should teach me right knowledge of what you have been taught***?[101]"

Muhammad b. 'Ali b. Bila'l narrated on the authority of Yunus in a letter they sent to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, asking him about the scholar to whom Musa' came, who of them was more knowledgeable? Was it permissible for the scholar to be a proof over Musa' in his time? In response to their letter, the Imam, peace be on him, wrote: "Musa' came to the scholar and found him either sitting or resting (on his elbow) in one of the islands of the sea. Musa', peace be on him, greeted him, but he denied the greetings, for there were no greetings in the land."

"Who are you?" asked the scholar.

"I am Musa' b. 'Umra'n," replied Musa'.

"Are Musa' b. 'Umra'n, to whom Allah spoke?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"What is your need?"

"I have come, that you may teach me right knowledge of what you have been taught," came the answer.

"I have been entrusted with a matter which you do not endure, and you have been entrusted with a matter which I do not endure," explained the scholar. "Then the scholar drove both matters to Musa'.[102]"

46. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"And whoever is in the heavens and the earth is His; and those who are with Him are not proud to serve Him; nor do they grow weary***.[103]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, quoted this sacred verse concerning the infallibility of the angels. He, peace be on him, said: "Surely the angels are infallible and are protected from ugly things through the favors of Allah, the Most High. Regarding them Allah says: ***They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and do as they are commanded***. And He, the Great and Almighty, says: ***And whoever is in the heavens and the earth is His; and those who are with Him*** (**i.e. the angles**) ***are not proud to serve Him; nor do they grow weary***. ***They glorify*** (***Him***) ***by night and day; they never flag***.[104]"

47. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: "And We gave him Isha'q and Ya'qu'b, a son's son, and We made (them) all good. And We made them Imams who guided (people) by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of the alms, and Us (alone) did they serve.[105]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, quoted the two sacred verses to prove the purity of the prophets and of their being the choice of Allah's creatures. He, peace be on him, said: "Then Allah, the Great and Almighty, honored him (i.e. Ibra'him) when He placed it (i.e. the Imamate) in his progeny and men of choice and purity. So Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***And We gave him Isha'q and Ya'qu'b, a son's son, and We made*** (***them***) ***all good. And We made them Imams who guided*** (***people***) ***by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of the alms, and Us*** (***alone***) ***did they serve***. And it (the Imamate) was still in his children; they inherited it one by one, a century after a century, until the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, inherited in. So Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***Surely the people standing closest to him*** (***Ibra'him***) ***are those who followed him, and this Prophet, and those who believe; and Allah is the Master of the believers***. So it was special, then he (the Prophet) entrusted it (the Imamate) to 'Ali through Allah's command, according to the description which Allah made obligatory. Hence it was placed in his ('Ali's) children, the chosen ones whom Allah gave knowledge and belief by the virtue of these words of Him, the Exalted: ***And those who are given knowledge and faith will say: Certainly you tarried according to the ordaince of Allah till the day of resurrection***. Therefore, it is (i.e. the Imamate) was especially placed in the children of 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib till the Day of Resurrection, for there will be no prophet after Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family.[106]"

48. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"That they may witness advantages for them and mention the name of Allah during stated days***.[107]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "The reason for the *hajj* is to seek to be the guest of Allah, to request more blessings, to part with past sins, to feel repentant about the past, and to look forward to the future. It is due to spending on the trip seeking nearness to Allah, tiring the body, abstaining from pleasures and desires, seeking nearness to allah by worshipping Him, yielding and submitting to Him,

looking up towards Him in cases of hot weather and chilling cold, during security and fear, incessantly doing so, and due to all the benefits in it of desiring the rewards and fearing the wrath of Allah, the Exalted.

"Of which are leaving hardheartedness, the meanness of the soul, forgetting the invocation of Allah, the cessation of hope and expectation, renewing the rights, preventing the soul from corruption, the interest of those who are in east and west of the earth, and those who travel over land and sea, from among those who make the pilgrimage and those who do not make the pilgrimage, from among the merchants, the importers, the buyers, the sellers, the gainers, and the poor, and accomplishing the needs of the people of the outskirts and the situations, for whom it is possible to hold a meeting wherein; likewise that they may witness advantages for them.[108]"

49. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"Then let them accomplish their needful acts.***[109]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Their needful acts mean trimming finger nails, throwing dirt, and casting off him (i.e. the pilgrim) (the garments) of *ihra'm* after he has made the pilgrimage.[110]"

50. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth.***[111]"

He, peace be on him, said: "Allah guides the inhabitants of the heavens and of the earth.[112]"

51. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: "So Musa' struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: This is on account of Satan's doing.[113]"

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, the following question: "O son of Allah's Apostle, it is not of your statement that the prophets are infallible?"

"Yes," answered the Imam.

"Tell me about these words of Allah: ***So Musa' struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: This is on account of Satan's doing***."

The Imam told him about the interpretation of this verse, saying: "Musa' entered one of Fir'awn's (Pharaoh's) cities when its inhabitants were heedless of him. That was between the sunset and the evening. ***So he found therein two men fighting, one being of his party and the other of his foes, and he who was of his party cried out to him for help against him who was of his enemies.*** Therefore Musa' killed the enemy. Allah, the Exalted, mentioned: ***So Musa' struck him with his fist*** **and he died.** ***He said: This is on account of Satan's doing.*** This means that the fighting which took place between the two men (was *on account of Satan's doing*), not the killing which Musa' had committed. (The world) 'he' means ***Satan*** (***who***) ***is an enemy, openly leading astray***."

"What is the meaning of these words of Musa': ***My Lord, surely I have done harm to myself, so do You protect me?***" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

The Imam told him about the meaning of this sacred verse, saying: "This (verse) means that he put himself in other than its place when he entered this city. ***So do You protect me,*** meaning conceal me from Your enemies lest they should find me and kill me, *so* ***He protected him; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful***. **Musa' said:** ***My Lord, because You have bestowed a favor on me,*** through the strength so that I killed a man with striking him with my fist; ***I shall never be a backer of the guilty;*** rather I shall fight in Your path with this strength until You are content (with me).

"As a result Musa' was in the city ***fearing, awaiting, when lo! he who had asked his assistance the day before was crying out to him for aid*** against another person, so ***Musa' said to him: You are most surely one erring manifestly***. You killed a man the day before and this day you want to kill (another man), hence I shall hurt you. He wanted to strike him. ***So when he desired to seize him who was an enemy to them both, he said: O Musa', do you want to kill me as you killed a person yesterday? You desire nothing but that you should be a tyrant in the land, and you do not desire to be of those who act aright***."

So al-Ma'mu'n said: "May Allah reward you well on behalf of His prophets, O Abu' al-Hasan.[114]"

52. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Every soul must taste of death, then to Us you shall be brought back.***[115]"

He, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When (these words of Him) ***surely you shall die and they*** (***too***) ***shall die*** were revealed, I said: 'O my Lord, shall all creatures die and the prophets remain?' So (He) revealed: ***Every soul must taste of death, then to Us you shall be brought back***.[116]"

53. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"He created the heavens without pillars as you see them***.[117]"

The Imam, peace be on him, quoted this sacred verse in the following tradition which was narrated by al-Husayn b. Kha'lid, who said: "I said to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: Tell me about these words of Allah: ***I swear by the heaven with weaving***. He said: 'It is woven to the earth, and then he knitted his fingers.' So I asked: 'How is it woven to the earth, while Allah says: ***Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you see***?' So he, peace be on him, replied: 'Glory belongs to Allah, do not Allah say: ***without any pillars as you see?***' 'Yes,' I replied. 'There are pillars, but you cannot see them,' he explained.[118]"

54. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants; but of them is he who makes his soul to suffer a loss, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who foremost in deeds of goodness***.[119]"

Ahmed b. 'Umar narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about these

words of Him: *Then We gave the Book for an inheritance to those whom We chose from among Our servants*, and he, peace be on him, said: 'They are the children of Fa'tima. *And of them is he who foremost in deeds of goodness* is the Imam.'120"

55. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere***.121"

Al-Ash'ath b. Qays narrated, saying: "I was in Khurasa'n when al-Ridha' held a meeting with al-Fadl b. Sahl and al-Ma'mu'n at al-Iwa'', in Maru'. When the food was put (before us), al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: 'A man from the children of Isra''il asked me in Medina, saying: 'Was the day created before the night? What do you have?' He (al-Ridha') said: 'They discussed the matter, but they had nothing about that.'

"So al-Fadl said to al-Ridha': 'May Allah set you right, tell us about it.' 'Yes,' he said, 'From (the viewpoint of) the Qur'an or arithmetic?' 'From the viewpoint of arithmetic,' requested al-Fadl. So he (al-Ridha') said: 'O Fadl, you know that the ascendant of the world is Cancer, and the stars are in the situations of their high rank; so Saturn is in Balance, Jupiter is in Cancer, Mars is in Capricorn, the Sun is in Ram, Venus is in Fishes, Mercury is in Virgo, and the moon is in Taurus, so the sun in the tenth (day) is in the middle of the heaven; therefore, the day was (created) before the night.

"'As for (the viewpoint of) the Qur'an, it is these words of Him, the Exalted: *nor can the night outstrip the day*.'"

In his book *Ru'h al-Ma'a'ni*, al-Alu'si has mentioned this tradition and commented on it, saying: "There is a manifest research in deducting through the verse, and through arithmetic it has an approximate viewpoint, and the view of the astrologers is that the beginning of the circle is the circle of the half of the day, agrees with what he has mentioned. It is more likely that the tradition is not correct from the beginning, for al-Ridha' is more exalted than concluding his claim, which you have heard, through the verse."

Al-Sayyid al-Ta'bataba''i commented on the statement of al-Alu'si, saying: "It was vague for him (al-Alu'si) to attain the reality of the night and the day. This matter can be explained (as follows): Surely the night and the day are opposite (to each other) as the oppositeness of non-existence and faculty like blindness and sight; just as blindness is not absolute non-sight so that the wall, for example, may be blind; rather it is non-sight for that which is distinguished by sight such as man; likewise the night is not absolute non-light; rather it is the time of non-illumination one of the parts of the earth through the light of the sun. It is known that the accomplishment of non-faculty depends on the accomplishment of the opposite faculty before it, that it may be specified through adding (it) to it, so had it not been for sight, blindness would not have become real; and had it not been for the day, the night would not have become real.

"So the absolute meaning of the night in which he (al-Alu'si) believed is that there is night preceded in

existence by day, and (this is proved by) these words of him: *nor can the night outstrip the day;* and even if he reflected on the supposed order between the day and the night, and there is day and night, day and night, and none of these nights can precede the day which is beside it.

"However He, the Most High, took the absolute night in these words of Him: *nor can the night outstrip the day*, and negated its coming before the absolute day; and He did not say: 'Surely one of the nights which are in this order does not precede the day which is in the order before it.'

"Therefore, the decision in the verse is based on that which the nature of the night and the day requires according to the oppositeness which Allah has placed between them; and a decision has been concluded from it through the decrease of the order in the alternation of the night and the day, for every night means losing the day which follows it, so it does not come before it; and he (Imam al-Ridha'), peace be on him, refers to this (sense) after he has mentioned the verse through these words of him: namely, the day comes before the night, namely, He (Allah) created the day before the night because the day precedes the night; and it is not as (some people) imagine that there are days and nights, and then the place of each of them is specified.

"And the words of the objector (al-Alu'si): 'And through arithmetic it has an approximate viewpoint,' he does not know the meaning of his statement which should be exactly not nearly based on the principles of astrology.

"Likewise, his statement: 'And the view of the astrologers is that the beginning of the circle is the circle of the half of the day, agrees with what he (al-Ridha') has mentioned,' is incorrect, for it has the circle of midday, which is the circle that passes thorough the two poles, and there is between them a third point which is not limited in number, for which no certain point apart from other point can be specified in the heaven, hence it is a day for the earth because the sun is in one of them apart from the other.[122]"

56. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: "And has there come to you the story of the litigants, when they made an entry into the private chamber by ascending over the walls. When they entered in upon Da'wud and he was frightened at them, they said: Fear not; two litigants, of whom one has acted wrongfully towards the other, therefore decide between us with justice.[123]"

The Imam, peace be on him, quoted these two verses and those after them in order to disprove the viewpoints of 'Ali b. al-Jahm and his people concerning Da'wud, Allah's prophet, peace be on him.

The Imam, peace be on him, asked 'Ali b. al-Jahm: "What did those before you say about Da'wud?"

'Ali b. al-Jahm replied: [They said:] "While Da'wud, peace be on him, was praying in his mihrab, Iblis appeared in front of him in the form of the most beautiful bird. He cut his prayer and rose in order to take the bird to the house. Then he went out following its tracks. The bird flew to the top (of the house), so Da'wud ascended looking for it. The bird alighted in the house of Uryah b. Hana'n.

“Da’wud followed the tracks of the bird, and suddenly he saw Uryah’s wife washing. When he looked at her, he fell in love with her. As for Uryah, he had been on a raid. Da’wud wrote to his companion in order to place Uryah in front of the coffin. Uryah was placed in front (of the coffin), and he defeated the polytheists. So Da’wud find that difficult and again wrote to his companion in order to place Uryah in front of the coffin. Uryah was placed in front of it and he was killed, so Da’wud married his wife.”

When the Imam heard these false stories which were ascribed to one of Allah’s prophets, he hit his forehead and said: “We belong to Allah and to Him is our return! You have ascribed one of Allah’s prophets to neglecting his prayers and (accused him of) going out and looking for the tracks of the bird, fornication and killing!”

‘Ali b. al-Jahm asked the Imam to explain the matter to him, saying: “Son of Allah’s Apostle, what was Da’wud’s sin?”

The Imam told him about the true story of Da’wud, saying: “Da’wud thought that he was more learned than the rest of Allah’s creatures, hence Allah, the Great and Almighty, sent him to angels and they climbed the mihrab and said to him: ***Fear not; two litigants, of whom one has acted wrongfully towards the other; therefore, decide between us with justice, and do not act unjustly, and guide us to the right way: Surely this is my brother; he has ninety-nine ewes and I have a single one; but he said, make it over to me, and he has prevailed against me in discourse***. Da’wud hurried to decide the case for the plaintiff when he said: ***Surely he has been unjust to you in demanding your ewe* (to add) *to his own ewes***. He did not asked the plaintiff for the evidence for that; nor did he turn to the defendant and asked him: ‘What do you say?’ It was an error only within the framework of the case and was not as you thought. Have you not heard that Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: ***Da’wud, surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow desire***.”

Ibn al-Jahm asked the Imam to tell him about the story of Da’wud with Uryah, saying: “Then, son of Allah’s Apostle, what is Da’wud’s story with Uryah.”

The Imam, peace be on him, started explaining to him Da’wud’s story, saying: “During the days of Da’wud, a widow never get married after the death of her husband. Da’wud, peace be on him, was the first man whom Allah permitted to marry the widow whose husband had been killed. Accordingly, he married Uryah’s wife after he had been killed, and her waiting period had been over. This made the people accused Da’wud of killing Uryah.[124]”

57. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: “to what I have created with My hand,” which are part of His saying: ***“He said: O Iblis, what prohibited you from prostrating to what I have created with My hand.***[125]”

Muhammad b. ‘Ubayda asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and he replied: “It means *with my might and power* .[126]”

58. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"Surely those who pledge allegiance to you do but pledge allegiance to Allah***.[127]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, quoted this sacred verse in the following tradition: 'Abd al-Sala'm b. Sa'lih al-Harawi narrated, saying: [I asked 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him: O son of Allah's Apostle, what do you say about the tradition which has been narrated by the traditionalists: 'The believers visit their Lord from their abodes in the Garden?' He, peace be on him, answered:] "O Abu' al-Salt, surely Allah, the Exalted, preferred His Prophet Muhammad to the prophets and the angels from among His creatures. He regarded obedience to him as obedience to Him, pledging allegiance to him as pledging allegiance to Him, visiting him in this world and the next as visiting Him, hence He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***He who obeys the Messenger certainly obeys Allah***. **And He said: *Surely those who pledge allegiance to you do but pledge allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands***. And the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'He who visits me during my lifetime or after my death certainly visits Allah.' His grade in the Garden is the highest of all grades, and he who visits him in his grade of position in the Garden certainly visits Allah, the Blessed and Exalted.[128]"

59. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"And in the night, give Him glory too, and at the setting of the stars***[129]," he, peace be on him, said: "At the end of the prostration is four *rak'as* after sunset, *and at the setting of the stars* is two *rak'as* before the morning prayer.[130]"

60. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was asked about the reminder in these words of Him, the Most High: ***"Allah has indeed revealed to you a reminder, and Apostle who recites to you the clear signs of Allah*** [131]," and he, peace be on him, replied: "The reminder is Allah's Messenger and we are his family.[132]"

61. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"The Knower of the unseen, so He does not reveal His secrets to any except to him whom He chooses as an apostle*** [133]," the Imam met Ibn Hadda'b and asked him: "Do you believe me when I tell you that you will be tried during these days by murdering one of your blood relatives?"

"No," was the answer, "for none knows the unseen except Allah, the Most High."

The Imam answered: "Doesn't Allah, the Most High say: *The Knower of the unseen, so He does not reveal His secrets to any except to him whom He chooses as an apostle?* Allah is pleased with His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and we are the inheritors of the Messenger whom Allah informed of whatever He willed of His secrets, and he (the Messenger) informed us of what was and what will be until the Day of Resurrection.[134]"

62. Regarding the words of Him, the Most high: ***"(Some) faces on that day shall be bright, looking to their Lord*** [135]," he, peace be on him, said: "They mean that they (the faces) will be bright and wait for the reward of their Lord.[136]"

63. Regarding the 'glorification' in the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"And give glory to Him*** (***a***) ***long*** (***part of the***) ***night***[137]," Ahmed b. Muhammad asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he answered: "It is the night prayer.[138]"

64. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"And your Lord comes and*** (***also***) ***the angels in ranks***[139]," 'Ali b. Fadda'l asked Imam al-Ridha', and he, peace be on him, replied: 'Surely Allah cannot be described by coming and going, Allah is far above movement. Rather, by that He means that the command of your Lord comes and (also) the angels in ranks.[140]"

65. Regarding the words of Him, the Most High: ***"But He would not attempt the uphill road***[141]," Imam al-Ridha' quoted them in the following tradition: Ja'far b. Khalla'd narrated, saying: "When Abu' al-Hasan ate, he ordered a big bowl to be put beside his food. He put into the bowl the most delicious food and ordered it to be given to the poor, and then he recited this verse: *But He would not attempt the uphill road*, and then he said: 'Allah, the Great and Almighty, knows that not everyone is able to release a slave, so He has showed them the way to the Garden (through giving food to the poor).'[142]"

66. Regarding the words of Him, the Exalted: ***"Did He not find you an orphan and gave you shelter? And find you unable to see and show the way? And find you in want and make you to be free from want?*** [143]"

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he answered: "Allah, the Most High, said to His Prophet: ***Did He not find you an orphan and gave you shelter****?* He says: Did He not find you alone and make the people seek shelter in you? ***And find you unable to see and show the way?*** He means with your people, ***and show the way*** means that He show them the way to recognize you. ***And find you in want and make you to be free from want?*** He says: He has made you to be free from want because He has made your supplication accepted."

So al-Ma'mu'n said: "May Allah bless you, O son of Allah's Apostle![144]"

67. Regarding the word 'One' in these words of Him, the Most High: ***"Say: He, Allah, is One.***[145]"

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "He is One not through interpreting number.[146]"

With this sacred verse we will end our talk about some verses which Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, explained and interpreted or quoted in his traditions, which indicate that he was the companion of the Qur'an, and that he took great care of it during his lectures and researches.

1. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 180.
2. Ibid., p. 180. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 23.
3. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 180.
4. Ibid., p. 183.
5. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 21.
6. Ibid., p. 20.
7. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 180.

8. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 20.
9. Qur'an, 2, 7.
10. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 85.
11. Qur'an, 2, 20.
12. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 106.
13. Qur'an, 2, 35.
14. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha'.
15. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 188.
16. Qur'an, 2, 55.
17. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 255.
18. Qur'an, 2, 67-71.
19. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
20. Qur'an, 2, 102.
21. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 355.
22. Qur'an, 2, 196.
23. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an.
24. Qur'an, 2, 205.
25. Al-Durr al-Manthu'r.
26. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
27. Qur'an, 2, 210.
28. Ibid., 89, 22.
29. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 3, p. 270.
30. Ibid., 4, 270.
31. Qur'an, 2, 260.
32. Al-Qummi, Tafsir.
33. Qur'an, 3, 33-34.
34. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 5, p. 328.
35. Qur'an, 3, 54.
36. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha'.
37. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an.
38. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
39. Qur'an, 3, 185.
40. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 162.
41. Qur'an, 3, 199.
42. Al-Qummi, Tafsir.
43. Qur'an, 4, 3.
44. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 7, p. 279.
45. Qur'an, 4, 26.
46. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 8, p. 140.
47. Qur'an, 4, 34.
48. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 8, p. 195.
49. Qur'an, 4, 58.
50. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, vol. 8, p. 367.
51. Qur'an, 4, 125.
52. Al-Miza'n, vol. 5, 96.
53. Qur'an, 4, 140.
54. Al-Miza'n, vol. 5, 120.
55. Qur'an, 4, 141.

56. Al-Miza'n, vol. 5, 120.
57. Qur'an, 4, 142.
58. Al-Miza'n.
59. Qur'an, 5, 33.
60. Al-Miza'n, vol. 5, 331.
61. Qur'an, 5, 101.
62. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
63. Qur'an, 6, 19.
64. Al-Miza'n, vol. 7, 41.
65. Qur'an, 6, 38.
66. Al-Miza'n, vol. 7, 106.
67. Qur'an, 6, 77.
68. Al-Miza'n, vol. 7, 205.
69. Qur'an, 6, 126.
70. Al-Miza'n, vol. 7, 348.
71. Qur'an, 7, 32.
72. Qurb al-Isna'd.
73. Qur'an, 7, 175.
74. Al-Qummi, Tafsir.
75. Qur'an, 8, 15.
76. Man La' Yahdarahu al-Faqih.
77. Qur'an, 10, 98.
78. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
79. Qur'an, 11, 34.
80. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
81. Qur'an, 11, 46.
82. Al-Miza'n, vol. 11, 245.
83. Qur'an, 12, 24.
84. Al-Miza'n, vol. 11, p. 166.
85. Qur'an, 12, 47.
86. Al-Burha'n.
87. Qur'an, 12, 55.
88. Al-Miza'n, vol. 11, 207.
89. Qur'an, 12, 77.
90. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
91. Qur'an, 12, 106.
92. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
93. Ibid., 12, 110.
94. Al-Miza'n, vol. 11, p. 282.
95. Qur'an, 13, 12.
96. Al-Ma'a'ni.
97. Qur'an, 13, 11.
98. Al-'Ayya'shi, Tafsir.
99. Qur'an, 15, 85.
100. Al-Miza'n, vol. 11, p. 297.
101. Qur'an, 18, 66.
102. Al-Miza'n.
103. Qur'an, 21, 19.

104. Al-Miza'n, vol. 14, 281.
105. Qur'an, 21, 72-73.
106. Al-Miza'n, vol. 14, p. 308.
107. Qur'an, 22, 28.
108. Al-Miza'n, vol. 14, p. 377-378.
109. Qur'an, 22, 29.
110. Man la' Yahdarahu al-Faqih.
111. Qur'an, 24, 35.
112. Al-Miza'n, vol. 15, p. 139.
113. Ibid., 28, 15.
114. Al-Miza'n, vol. 16, p. 22-23.
115. Qur'an, 29, 57.
116. Al-Miza'n, vol. 16, p. 146.
117. Qur'an, 31, 10.
118. Al-Qummi, Tafsir.
119. Qur'an, 35, 32.
120. Al-Miza'n, vol. 17, p. 49.
121. Qur'an, 36, 40.
122. Al-Miza'n, vol. 17, pp. 95-96.
123. Qur'an, 38, 21-22.
124. Al-Miza'n, vol. 17, 200.
125. Qur'an, 38, 75.
126. Al-Miza'n, vol. 17, 229.
127. Qur'an, 48, 10.
128. Al-Miza'n, vol. 18, 225-226.
129. Qur'an, 52, 49.
130. Al-Qummi, Tafsir.
131. Qur'an, 65, 10-11.
132. Al-Burha'n.
133. Qur'an, 72, 26-27.
134. Al-Khara"ijj wa al-Jara"ih.
135. Qur'an, 75, 22-23.
136. Al-Miza'n, vol. 20,116.
137. Qur'an, 76, 26.
138. Majjma' al-Baya'n.
139. Qur'an, 89, 22.
140. Al-Miza'n, vol. 20, p. 278.
141. Qur'an, 90, 11.
142. Al-Miza'n, vol. 20, p. 295.
143. Qur'an, 93, 6-8.
144. Al-Burha'n.
145. Qur'an, 112, 1.
146. Al-Miza'n, vol. 20, p. 391.

Chapter 9: The Science Of Islamic Jurisprudence

It is not an act of exaggeration or extremism when we say that the Islamic jurisprudence of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, is the best of that which has been codified in the world of legislation, for it complies with innate and reason, does not deviate from the laws of the cosmos; there is neither difficulty nor narrowness nor backwardness in its items. Rather it is balanced, progressive, and perfect. It has treated man's affairs and given to them decisive solutions in the light of intellect and logic.

Moreover this jurisprudence has another characteristic of great importance, and this characteristic is that it has been taken form the Imams of guidance who are among the pillars of awareness and guidance in the world of Islam, for they announced that they did not give religious edicts regarding a certain matter according to their own opinions or their personal decisions; rather they announced that they took their religious decisions from their grandfather the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who supplied them with his knowledge, singled them out with his wisdom, regarded them as lifeboats and security for mankind, and made it obligatory on the community to follow their creed and their example; and this has been proved by many traditions which has been transmitted from them by the trustworthy narrators from among their companions.

It is worth mentioning that the Shi'ites regard all the precepts which have been narrated on the authority of the Imams of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, as part of the Sunna, which is one of the sources of *Fatwa'* or religious edict and among the concepts of Islamic legislation according which man should act and worship, if the way of the chain of authorities to them (the Imams) is authentic, and if the *fatwa'* was issued by them to explain the real precept, not for precautionary dissimulation, and other conditions which have been mentioned by the jurists concerning authentic traditions.

Any how, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was among the leading Imams of guidance, peace be on them; therefore, his words and actions are part of the Sunna, for a group of legislative precepts have been transmitted from him. We will mention some examples of them in one of the researches of this book. Now, we will talk about his science of Islamic jurisprudence.

Examples of his Jurisprudence

In the previous researches, we mentioned one of the treatises of Imam, peace be on him, in which he recorded excellent legislative precepts. Another group of juristic matters has been reported from him, and it is as follows.

1. The Purity of Well Water

Muhammad b. Isma'"il wrote to a man who asked him to ask Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, about well water, and he, peace be on him, answered: "Well water is running; nothing spoils it except when its smell or taste changes, so (some water) should be bailed out of it until the smell terminates and its taste becomes good, for it has a source.1"

As for well water, it has the same rank of running water; it does not become unclean except when it changes. The Imami jurists have given a religious decision on well water according to this narration (of the Imam) and others.

2. Things that Invalidate wudu"

The Imam has mentioned the things that invalidate *wudu"* as follows: discharge of urine, discharge of feces, discharge of flatus (through the anus), and sleep (to the extent that it makes a person unaware of his surroundings). He, peace be on him, said: "*Wudu"* is obligatory on the things that discharge especially from the two parts, and sleep apart from other things, for the two parts are the way of uncleanness. Man has no way which brings about uncleanness to him except through them, so they (men) have been commanded to clean themselves from this uncleanness.2"

The Imam, peace be on him, also declared that vomiting, nosebleed, and pus were not among things which invalidated *wudu"*.3 However, some Imams of the Islamic schools declared that these things invalidated *wudu"*.

3. The Limit of the Face in Wudu"

Isma'"i'l b. Mahra'n narrated, saying: "I wrote to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, to ask him about the limit of the face (i.e. the part which should be washed during *wudu"*), and he, peace be on him, wrote: from the beginning of the hair to the end of the face in addition to the two foreheads.4" As for the jurists, they say that one should wash the face from the point where the hair of the head normally grows down to the chin in length. Breadthwise, the span is that area which is covered by the thumb and the middle finger when they are spread out.

4. Wudu" with a Bandage (jabira)

'Abd al-Rahma'n b. al-Hajja'jj narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'How can one who has a bandage perform *wudu" or ghusl* of *jana'ba* or *ghusl* for the Friday prayer?' He, peace be on him, replied: 'He should wash the uncovered part with no bandage to which water reaches, and leave apart from that; he should not remove the bandage and play with his surgery(i.e. wound, cut, burn, or broken limb).'5"

Al-jaba"ir are bandages (in the term of the time) or others which are put on fractures, wounds, cuts, and abscesses; and they are either on the area which should be washed during *wudu"* or *ghusl* or on the area which should be rubbed. If it is possible for him to wash or rub the affected area without any harm, then it is obligatory on him to do that. If it is not possible for him to do that because of the harm of water or the like, then it is obligatory on him to wash the place where the bandage (*jabira*) is, and then he rubs over it. If the bandage (*jabira*) on the area which should be rubbed and he cannot remove it to rub on the skin, then he should rub over it. It is worth mentioning that the Imami jurists have mentioned important researches on these matters.

5. The Wudu" of Man and Woman

Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Buzaygh narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "In *wudu"* for prayer, Allah has made it obligatory on women to start with the inward part of their hands and on men to start with the outward part of their hands.[6]"

Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn narrated. He said: [Al-Ridha', peace be on him, said:] "Allah, the Great and Almighty, has made it obligatory on people in *wudu"* that women should start with the inward part of their hands and men start with the outward part of their hands.[7]"

In *wudu"* it is recommended for man to start with washing the outward part of his hands; and as for woman, it is recommended for her to start with washing the inward part of her hands. The meaning of the word *farada* in the two traditions is that He (Allah) has ordained and explained (performing *wudu"* in this manner), and not that He has made (it) obligatory.[8]

6. Seeking of Help from others in Wudu" is Reprehensible

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha" narrated, saying: "I went in to al-Ridha', peace be on him, and there was a pitcher of water before him. When he wanted to perform *wudu"* for prayer, I approached him to pour water on his hands, but he refused that and said: 'No, O Hasan!' he said. So I asked him: 'Why are you preventing me from pouring water on your hands? Do you hate that I am rewarded?' 'You will be rewarded,' he answered, 'but I will commit a sin.' 'And how is that?' I asked. He replied: 'Have you not heard these words of Allah, the Great and Almighty: *Therefore, whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join any one in the service of his Lord* ?[9] Here I am! I am going to perform *wudu"* for the prayer, which is an act of worship, and I hate that someone helps me in it.'[10]"

In the light of this narration and others which have been transmitted from the Imams of guidance, the Imami jurists have given a religious decision that it is reprehensible for someone to seek help from others in the prerequisites of *wudu"* .[11]

7. How Tayammum is Performed

Isma'‘il b. Hamma'm al-Kindi reported on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "*Tayammum* is one stroke for the face, and one stroke for the back of the hands.[12]"

The famous jurists believe that when *tayammum* is performed instead of *wudu"*, then one stroke is sufficient for the face and the (back of) the hands, and that when it is performed instead of *ghusl*, then two strokes are obligatory.[13] The narration regards multiplicity as absolute; and perhaps it (the narration) has been interpreted as recommended.

8. Tayammum with Mud

'Ali b. Matar narrated on the authority of one of our companions, who said: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: Shall one perform *tayammum* with mud when he finds neither water nor earth? He said: 'Yes, pure earth and pure water.'"

The narration is clear in making it permissible (for someone) to perform *tayammum* with mud when neither water nor earth is available.

9. Incapability of Performing the Ghusl of Jana'ba

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him: "Shall one practice (*tayammum*) when he is impure and has wound or cut or fear for himself of cold? 'He should not perform *ghusl;* he should practice *tayammum*[14]*'*, he answered."

The narration is clear in making it permissible (for someone) to practice *tayammum* when he is incapable of performing *ghusl* which brings about harm which is negated (according to these words of Him, the Most High:) "And has not laid upon you any hardship in religion."

10. The Skins of Dead Animals

Qa'sim al-Saqi'l narrated, saying: "I wrote to al-Ridha', peace be on him: I make sheaths from the skins of dead asses for swords, and they touch my own clothes, and I pray while wearing them. So he, peace be on him, wrote me: 'Use a garment for your prayer.'[15]"

As for the skins of dead animals, they are impure. When a wet garment touches them, it becomes impure. Hence prayer is not permissible except in pure clothes.

11. Gold and Silver Containers

Muhammad b. Isma'‘il reported, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about gold

and siliver containers, and he regarded them as reprehensible. So I said: One of our companions narrated that Abu' al-Hasan (Imam al-Ka'zim), peace be on him, had a mirror clothed in silver, and he, peace be on him, said: 'No, praise belongs to Allah, it had a silver ring and the ring is with me.' Then he said: 'When al-'Abba's was excused, an (iron) bar clothed in silver was made for him; the bar was like that made for boys, and (its weight) was about ten (silver) dirhams, but Abu' al-Hasan ordered it to be broken.'[16]"

Most jurists believe that it is prohibited to use gold and silver containers. As for the reprehensibility in the narration, it is interpreted as either prohibition or precautionary dissimulation, for a group of the non-Shi'ites (*'a'mma*) regards them as not prohibited.

12. Ghusl On Friday

'Abd Allah b. al-Mughira reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "I asked him about *ghusl* on Friday, and he answered: 'It is obligatory on everyone, male or female, slave or free.'[17]"

As for *ghusl* on Friday, it is one of the strongly recommended things. The obligation in the narration is interpreted as a certain recommendation.

13. Touching the Corpse of other than Man

One should not perform *ghusl* when he touches the corpse of other than man, for al-Fadl b. Sha'dha'n transmitted from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "It is not obligatory for one to perform *ghusl* when he touches the dead bodies of those other than man such as birds, animals, beasts of prey, and others, for all these things are clothed in feathers or hair; and all these things are alive and do not die; the only thing which is touched is the alive from among the living and the dead (animals)."

Shaykh al-Hur al-'Amili said: "The justification is untrue and the examples of it are many. It is likely that it is a justification especially for the most dominant individual.[18]"

14. The Prayer for the Dead without Wudu"

Al-Fadl b. Sha'dha'n narrated from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "We have made it permissible to perform the prayer for the dead without *wudu"*, for it has neither bow (*ruku'*) nor adoration (*suju'd*); rather it is a supplication and request; and it is permissible for you to supplicate Allah and ask Him in any state in which you are; *wudu"* (is practiced) only for the prayer which has bow (*ruku'*) and adoration (*suju'd*).[19]"

Most Imami jurists believe that the prayer for the dead is a mere supplication, and not a real prayer; for this reason neither purity nor permissible clothes are conditions therein.

15. Raising the Hands during the Takbir for the Prayer for the Dead

Yunus said: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: May I be your ransom, the people raise their hands during the *takbir* (exclaiming: Allah is Great!) for the dead in the first *takbir*, and they do not raise (their hands) after that. Shall I confine myself to the first *takbir* just as they do or raise my hands in each *takbir*? 'Raise your hands in each *takbir*,' he said.[20]"

16. Prayer is the best Act of Worship

Yahya' b. Habib reported, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the best prayer through which the servants seek nearness to Allah. He answered: 'Forty-six obligatory and supererogatory *rak'as*.' I said: 'This is the narration of Zara'ra.' 'Do you think that there is a person better than him in declaring the truth?' he asked.[21]"

17. Prayer is the Sacrifice of the Allah- fearing

Muhammad b. al-Fadl reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "Prayer is the sacrifice of the Allah-fearing.[22]"

18. Prayer should be performed in its Timing

Sa'd b. Sa'd narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', who said: "When it is time for you to pray, then perform the prayer, for you do not know what will happen.[23]"

Many traditions have mentioned that it is recommended to perform prayer in its timing, and that it is reprehensible to delay it. In another tradition Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "It is good to perform prayer in its timing.[24]"

19. Timing of the Evening Prayer

Isma''il b. Mahra'n narrated, saying: "I wrote to al-Ridha', peace be on him, to ask him about the timings of the prayers, especially as it concerns the evening prayer, and he, peace be on him, wrote me: 'The time of the evening (prayer) is little, and its last timing is the disappearance of the red sky and the appearance of the white sky on the western horizon.[25]"

The Imam reflected on the best timing of prayer, not on the obligatory time, for its timing and that of the night prayer last up to midnight.[26]

20. Timings of the Noon and Afternoon Prayers

Isma'‘il b. Mahra'n narrated, saying: "I wrote to al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Our companions have mentioned that when the sun comes near to descending (from its midday zenith), then it is time to start the noon and afternoon prayers; and when it sets, it is time to start the evening and night prayers, but this (the evening prayer) is before this (the night prayer) during travel and residence.' So he wrote: 'Such is the time, but the time of the evening (prayer) is narrow (little).'27"

21. The Compensatory Supererogatory Prayers

Muhammad b. Yahya' reported, saying: "I wrote to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'When will I compensate supererogatory prayers?' 'Any hour, you like, of night or day,' he replied.28"

In the light of this narration and other narrations which have been reported from the Imams of guidance, the Imami jurists have given a religious decision that it is recommended to recompensate supererogatory prayers, and that when one is incapable of compensating them, it is recommended for him to pay *mudd* (measure) as alms instead of each two *rak'aks*.29

22. The Late-night Supererogatory Prayers for those who have Excuses

It is permissible for those who have excuses to perform the late-night supererogatory prayers (*sala't al-layl*) at the beginning of night, for al-Fadl b. Sha'dha'n transmitted from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: 'It is permissible for the travelers and the sick to perform the late-night supererogatory prayers (*sala't al-layl*) at the beginning of night because of their business and weakness; and that they may gain their prayers. Accordingly, the sick may rest at the time of their rest, and the travelers may prepare themselves for travel.30"

23. It is not Permissible to perform Prayer while wearing the Skins of Beasts of Prey

It is not permissible for the worshipper to perform prayer while wearing the skins of beasts of prey, for Isma'‘il b. Sa'd al-Ahwas narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about (him who performs) prayer (while wearing) the skins of beasts of prey, and he replied: 'Do not pray while (wearing) them.'31"

24. Prayer when Wearing Silk Clothing

The Imam, peace be on him, made it permissible for the worshipper to pray wearing silk clothing, for

Mu‘ammar b. Khalla’d reported, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about the prayer when wearing a silk garment, and he answered: ‘Pray wearing it.’32”

Sa‘d b. Sa‘d narrated on the authority of al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He said: “I asked him about silk skins, and he said: ‘This is silk (pointing to his garment). We wear silk (clothing).’ So I said to him: ‘May I be your ransom, that is hair.’ ‘If its (the animal’s) hair is lawful, then its skin is lawful,’ he retorted.33”

25. Performing Prayer on Roads is Reprehensible

The Imami jurists have given a religious decision that performing prayer on roads is reprehensible. One of their proofs of that is what al-Hasan b. al-Jahm has narrated on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, who said: “Do not pray on every road on which (men) walk.” I (i.e. al-Hasan b. al-Jahm) said to him: “It has been narrated on the authority of your grandfather that there is no harm in praying on high valleys and lands.” “Perhaps, the man agrees with me on that,” he retorted. He (i.e. al-Hasan b. al-Jahm) said: “I said: “If the man fears for his provisions?” “If he fears (for his provisions), then let him pray,” he declared.34

26. Prayer by the Grave of the Prophet

It is permissible to perform prayer behind the grave of the infallible or on one of its sides, for al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Fadda’l narrated, saying: “I saw Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’ when he wanted to go out to perform ‘Umra (lesser pilgrimage). He came to the grave from the place of the head of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. He clung to the grave, and then he walked until he came to the grave, so he stood and began praying. He stuck his left shoulder to the pillar at the head of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and performed six or eight *rak‘as*.35”

27. Prayer in al-Masjid al-Hara’m

The Imam urged (men) to pray in al-Masjid al-Hara’m (the holy mosque in Mecca). In this connection, Musa’ b. Sala’m reported, saying: “Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, made the ‘Umra (lesser pilgrimage). When he said farewell to the House and arrived at Ba’b al-Hanna’tin in order to go out of it, he stood at the yard of al-Mesjid at the back of the Ka‘ba. Then he raised his hands and supplicated (Allah). Then he turned to us and said: ‘It it the best thing through which the need is requested from Him. The prayer wherein is sixty years and months better than the prayer in other than it.’ When he reached the gate, he said: ‘O Allah, I have gone out, but there is no god but you!’36”

28. Prayer at al-Hatim

Al-Hasan b. al-Jahm narrated, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’ about the best place of prayer, and he replied: ‘Al-Hatim, which is between the (Black) Stone and the Gate of the House.’ I asked: ‘And

what follows that in excellence?' 'The standing place of Ibra'him,' he replied. 'Then what follows that in excellence?' I asked. 'The (Black) Stone,' he answered. 'Then what follows that (in excellence)?' I asked. 'All that which is nearby the House,' he replied.[37]"

29. Prayer in the two Mosques

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'' narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him: Is the prayer in the Holy Mosque (in Mecca) and the Mosque of the Prophet the same? 'Yes,' he answered, 'and the prayer between them is equal to one thousand prayers.'[38]"

30. Supplication during leaving the House is Recommended

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, urged (the Muslims) to cling to supplication during leaving their houses, saying: "When my father left his own house, he said: 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. I have gone out with Allah's help and through His power! I have neither help nor power! Rather through Your help and power, O Lord, I seek daily bread from You, so bring it to me in well-being!'[39]"

31. Sitting between al-Adha'n and al-Iqa'ma

Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr al-Bizanti reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about the sitting between *al-Adha'n* (the call to prayer) and *al-Iqa'ma* (the declaration of standing for prayer), and he replied: 'There is sitting between them when there is no supererogatory prayer.'[40]"

32. Al-Adha'n

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "One may perform *al-Adha'n* (the call to prayer) in sitting position, and he may perform it in riding position.[41]"

33. Al-Iqa'ma

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "You may perform *al-Adha'n* (the call to prayer) and you are in sitting position, and you may not perform *al-Iqa'ma* (the declaration of standing for prayer) except when you are on the ground and in standing position.[42]"

34. Raising and Lowering Voice during Prayer

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, aloud recited (the suras) in the evening prayer, the night prayer, the late-night prayer, the even prayer, the odd prayer, and the morning prayer; and he quietly recited (the suras) in the noon and afternoon prayers.[43]

Men must recite the two suras in the two-*rak'a* prayer of the morning aloud. Similarly, the suras in the first two *rak'as* of the evening and night prayers must be recited aloud. The suras of the noon and afternoon prayers, apart from the Friday prayer, must be recited quietly. If he intentionally recites the suras aloud, his prayer is invalid; and if he recites them aloud out of forgetfulness or ignorance, his prayer is valid. It is recommended to recite the suras of the Friday prayer aloud.[44]

35. Postponing some of the Recitation of the Supererogatory Prayer

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr al-Bizanti, the companion of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, reported, saying: "I asked him: A man wants to recite one hundred verses or more in a supererogatory prayer, but he fears that he may become weak or lazy. Is it correct for him to recite them in sitting position? He replied: 'Let him pray two *rak'as* with whatever (verses) he likes, and then let him go; and then let him recite the rest of the (verses) which he had wanted to recite, for that is sufficient to replace his recitation in standing position. If it seems to him that he wants to recite after the *taslim* [45] of the two *rak'as*, then let him recite; there is no harm (on him).[46]'"

If one wants to recite one hundred *rak'as* in a supererogatory prayer and he is not forced to do that out of vow and the like, he has to choose between praying two *rak'as* in sitting position and recites whatever verses he likes, and praying two *rak'as* (in standing position) and recite the *taslim*; and then he recites whatever verses he likes after the prayer.

36. Turning the Face during Prayer

Al-Bizanti narrated, saying: "I asked him (i.e. al-Ridha') about the person who turns (his face) during prayer: Does such a person turn aside from his prayer? He answered: 'If the prayer is obligatory and he (or she) turns his (or her) face, then he (or she) must turn aside from his (or her) prayer, repeat it, and do not regard it (as prayer).'[47]"

Certainly, turning the face changes the form of prayer, and all things which change the form of prayer invalidate it.

37. Zaka't al-Fitra

Muhammad b. al-Qa'sim b. al-Fadl reported, saying: "I wrote to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, to ask him: Does the guardian pay *Zaka't al-Fitra* [48] on behalf of the orphans who have wealth? So he wrote: 'There is no *zaka't* (imposed) on the orphan.'[49]"

As for *Zaka't al-Fitra*, it is not obligatory on the orphan nor on his guardian, who has no right to take it out of the orphan's wealth, as it is indicated by the narration through which the jurists have given a religious edict, for there is no religious duty on the orphan until he or she reaches ritual puberty (15 years in the case of boys and 9 years in the case of girls).

38. Zaka't due on Deposit and Loan

Ibra'him b. Abu' Mahmu'd narrated, saying: "I said to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: The person has a deposit or a debt, but he does not reach them, and then he takes them, when *zaka't* is payable on him? He replied: 'If he takes them and a year has passed, he must pay *zaka't*.'[50]" On of the conditions of *zaka't* is that one has the authority to dispose of wealth, for it is not obligatory on the wealth over which its owner has no authority because of his absence from it. For example if the owner is able to regain his deposit (and one year) has passed, then it is due on him to pay *zaka't*. Similarly, he must pay the *zaka't* due on his loan after he has received it and one year has passed.

39. Zaka't on Crops

Sa'd b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him: 'When *zaka't* is due on wheat, barley, dates, and raisins?' He answered: 'When they are reaped and assessed.'[51]"

The famous jurists think that *zaka't* is due on wheat and barley when they become ripe; on dates when they become yellow or red; on grapes when they are unripe; and other than that is said.[52]

40. 'Alawide's zaka't is for the 'Alawides

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported from al-Ridha', saying: "I asked him about alms (*zaka't*): Is it lawful for the Hashimites to take alms (*zaka't*)? 'No,' he replied, 'but it is lawful for them to take alms from each other.'[53]"

41. Zaka't must be paid when due

Sa'd b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about the person on whom *zaka't* is obligatory three times a year, shall he delay them to pay

them at one time? 'No,' he answered, 'pay it (*zaka't*) when it becomes due.'[54]" If the person has numerous items on which *zaka't* is payable such as the crops, the livestock, gold, and silver, he must pay the *zaka't* of each kind when it becomes due.

42. The Fitra on behalf of him who does not belong to the Family

'Abd al-Rahma'n b. al-Hajja'jj narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the man who spends on a man who does not belong to his own family, but he finds difficulty in spending on him and his clothing, is his *fitra* obligatory on him? 'No,' he answered, 'the *fitra* of his family is obligatory as alms on him apart from him (i.e. the man who does not belong to the family.' Then he said: 'The family are: the child, the slave, and the wife who is the mother of the child.'[55]"

Zaka't al-fitra is obligatory on the responsible and his family when the night of ('Id) al-Fitr comes. There is no difference between those whose expenditure is obligatory on him and other than them, between the young and the old. It is not obligatory on him to pay *fitra* on behalf of those who do not belong to his own family, and in whose clothing and expenditure he finds difficulty. Generally speaking, *fitra* is paid on behalf of the person when actually belongs to the family, as the jurists have mentioned.

43. The One-Fifth Tax (Khums)

'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Fadda'l reported on the authority of his father, on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said (in a tradition): "'Abd al-Muttalib had five practices (*sunan*), which Allah, for him, put into effect in Islam: He ('Abd al-Muttalib) made it prohibited for sons to marry their fathers' women, specified one hundred camels as blood money, circumambulated the House (the Ka'ba) seven times, found a treasure and took out the one-fifth of it, and called (the well) Zamzam when he dug it as a watering place for pilgrims.[56]"

44. Khums on Treasure

Shaykh al-Mufid narrated through his chain of authorities, saying: "Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was asked about the amount of treasure on which *khums* is obligatory, and he replied: '*Khums* is obligatory on the thing on which *zaka't* is obligatory; *khums* is not obligatory on the thing which does not reach the minimum amount of property liable to payment of *zaka't*.[57]"

Treasure is the property stored in the earth; whether it is of the coined and uncoined gold and silver or of other than them. One of its conditions is that it must reach the minimum amount which is twenty dinars. If it does not reach this amount, then there is no *khums* on it.

45. Khums must be given to the Imam

Muhammad b. Zayd al-Tabari reported, saying: "A Persian merchant, who was a follower of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, asked him to exempt him from *khums*, and he wrote to him: 'In the name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Surely Allah is All-embracing, generous. He has guaranteed reward according to work. No property is lawful except through the way which Allah has made lawful. Surely *khums* helps us (serve) our religion, our family, our followers, spend freely, and protect our honor from him whose power we fear. So do not cut us off from *khums*, and as far as possible do not deprive yourselves of our supplication. Surely giving *khums* is a key to your daily bread, forgiving your sins, and what you pave for yourselves for the day of your neediness. The Muslim is he who fulfills what Allah has entrusted to him; the Muslim is not he who responds through his tongue and opposes through his heart. Greetings.'[58]"

46. Khums should be paid to the Imam

Muhammad b. Zayd narrated, saying: "A group of people from Khurasa'n came to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and asked him to exempt them from *khums*, and he said: 'I do not exempt (anyone from) this. You show sincere affection toward us through your tongues, while you deprive us of the right which Allah has apportioned to us and appointed us for it, which is *khums*. We will not exempt anyone of you from it.'[59]"

This tradition and the one before it indicate that *khums* should be paid to the present Imam, and in the period of his occultation (*ghayba*) it should be given to his deputy, who is the general authority of Islamic world.

47. Religious Expiation on breaking the fast through the Lawful and Unlawful

'Abd al-Sala'm b. Sa'lih al-Harawi reported, saying: "I said to al-Ridha', peace be on him: O son of Allah's Apostle, it has been reported from your fathers that there are three religious expiations on him who has a sexual intercourse in the month of Ramada'n or breaks the fast during it; it has also been narrated from them that there is one religious expiation, then which of the two traditions should we follow? 'Both of them,' he replied, 'When the man has a sexual intercourse with a prohibited woman or breaks the fast through the unlawful, then three are three religious expiations due on him: releasing a slave, fasting two successive months, feeding sixty needy ones, and compensating that day; and if he indulges in lawful intercourse or breaks the fast through the lawful, then there is one expiation obligatory on him; and if he is forgetful, then there is nothing due on him.'[60]"

In the light of this narration and other narrations transmitted from the Imams of guidance, the Imami jurists have given a religious decision that if one breaks the fast through the unlawful during the day such

as drinking wine or eating a usurped thing or the like, he is subjected to all the religious expiations, which are: releasing a slave, fasting two successive months, feeding sixty needy ones, and compensating that day; and if he breaks the fast through a lawful thing such as drinking water, then he has to choose between these three religious expiations.

48. Liquid Enemas

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr al-Bizanti narrated that he asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, about one who had a liquid enema in the month of Ramada'n, and he, peace be on him, answered: "It is not permissible for him to have a liquid enema.61"

The Imami jurists have depended on this narration and other narrations reported from the Imams of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, hence they have given a religious decision that a liquid enema is one of the things which invalidate the fast.

49. Brushing Teeth in the Month of Ramada'n

Musa' b. Abu' al-Hasan al-Ra'zi reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "One of those who were sitting in his presence asked him about cleaning teeth with the stick (*al-Siwa'k*) in the month of Ramada'n, and he replied: 'It is permissible.' So one of them declared: 'The wetness of the stick goes down, what do you say about the wetness of the stick which goes down?' He (the Imam) replied: 'The water of gargle moistens (the mouth) more than the wet stick does. If someone says that water is necessary for gargle according to the *Sunna*, then the stick is also necessary according to the *Sunna* which Gabriel brought to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.'62"

50. Intention for Travel at Night

In a tradition Safwa'n narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "If one wants to go to al-Nahrwa'n and returns from it, then he should make an intention for travel and breaking the fast at night. If he enters upon morning and has not make the intention for the travel (at night) and it seems to him (that he has not made the intention) after he has started the travel, then he should shorten (his prayers) and should not break (the fast) of that day of his.63"

In the light of this narration, Imam al-Khu"i has given a religious decision that the traveler should make an intention for travel at night. If he does not make the intention and travels before the declination (of the sun), then it is obligatory on him to complete the fast and to compensate for (it).

51. Recommended Fast is not compensated

Al-Marzba'n b. 'Umra'n reported, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: I want to travel, then shall I fast the month of mine in which I shall travel? 'No,' he answered. Then I asked: Shall I

compensate for it when I return?' 'No,' he replied, 'you do not compensate for it just as you do not fast it.'64" Similar to this narration is what has been reported by Sa'd b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "I asked him about the three-day fast in (each) month: Is it obligatory on the traveler to compensate for it? 'No,' he answered.65"

52. Fast on the Day of Doubt

Muhammad b. Sina'n reported, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the day of doubt, and he answered: 'Surely my father would fast on it, so fast on it.'66"

If one doubts whether the new moon of the month of Ramada'n has appeared or not: The Imam (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, ordered (the Muslims) to fast on it; and the intention for the fast is according to what the jurists have mentioned that one makes intention as (a day) of Sha'ba'n as recommendation or compensation. If it appears that it (the day) is of Ramada'n, then it is sufficient for him, but if one fasts on it through the intention of Ramada'n, then his fast is invalid.67"

53. If a Fast of Ramada'n is Missed

In a tradition al-Fadl b. Sha'dha'n narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "If someone says: If one becomes sick or travels in the month of Ramada'n, and he does not end his travel or does not recover from his illness until another month of Ramada'n comes, then why should he pay redemption and should not compensate for (it)? If he recovers or resides (in his homeland), then why should he compensate (the fast) and should not pay redemption? It is said: Because that fast was obligatory on him in this month in that year. As for him who does not recover, he, as the whole year has passed and Allah has overcome him and not helped him to perform the fast, then he must not fast.

Likewise, all those whom Allah overcomes such as one who faints for a day and a night, then it is not obligatory on him to compensate the prayers, just as al-Sa'diq, peace be on him, said: 'If Allah overcomes him, then he has an excuse.' For the month has come, and he is still ill, so it is not incumbent on him in the month of him and the year of him because of the illness in which he is; but it is obligatory on him to pay redemption just as Allah, the Exalted, says: ***Let him fast for two successive months; then as for him who is not able let him feed sixty needy ones***, and just as He says: ***So a compensation by fasting or alms or sacrificing***. So He has put alms in the place of fasting when it is difficult for him to fast. If it is said that one was not able then and now he is able, it is said: As another month of Ramada'n has come to him, it is obligatory on him to pay redemption for the past (Ramada'n); if he is in the rank of him upon whom it is incumbent to fast as a religious expiation, but he is not able, then redemption is due on him; and if redemption is obligatory on him, then he should not fast; the fast drops but redemption is a must. If he recovers between them (i.e. between the past and the present months of Ramada'n) and he has not fasted the past month of Ramada'n, then redemption is obligatory on him because he has neglected it, and (also) the fast because he has been able.68"

If one misses the month of Ramada'n or some of it because of an illness and the excuse continues to the next Ramada'n, he should not fast it but he should pay a *mudd* (750 gms) of food as alms for each day. However, if he misses it because of an excuse other than illness, then both compensation and redemption are obligatory.69

54. Recommended Fasts

Isma''il b. Da'wud narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the fast (i.e. recommended fasts), and he answered: 'Three days in a month: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.'70"

55. The fast on the Day of 'Id al-Ghadir

Al-Fa'rid b. Muhammad b. 'Amr al-Tu'si narrated that he saw Abu' al-Hasan 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, on the Day of al-Ghadir along with a group of his special companions whom he had invited to break the fast. He sent to their houses food, wheat, gifts, clothing, rings, sandals, and the like. He changed their conditions and those of his retinues. He changed the rites familiar before that day, and then he mentioned the excellence and precedence of that day. They following are some of his words:

"My father al-Ha'di related to me on the authority of his father, on the authority of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, that al-Ghadir occurred on Friday in his time, so he went up on the pulpit for five hours at the daytime of that day, and then he, peace be on him, mentioned his long sermon until he said: 'Then Allah, the Most High, has brought together for you, O group of the believers, on this day two great 'Ids; none of them stands except through its companion, that His beautiful favor toward you may be perfect.' Then he mentioned a great deal of the excellence of al-Ghadir until he said:

"'So the dirham on it (al-Ghadir) equals one hundred dirhams, and the increase is from Allah, the Exalted; and the fast on this day is one of those fasts which Allah, the Most High, has made recommended, and placed great reward from Him for it, to the extant that if one of the servants worships during youth from the beginning of the world to its end, fasting by its daytime performing prayer by its day, if the faithful is sincere to his fast, the days of the world will fall short of being equal to it. He who aids his brother of his own accord and does good to him willingly wins the reward of him who fasts on this day and performs prayer on its night; and he who breaks a believer's fast on its night, it is as if that he broke the fast of one hundred thousand prophets, very truthful ones, and martyrs. Just imagine how much more is (the reward) of him who maintains a number of the believers, male and female; and I, on behalf of Allah the Exalted, guarantee him safety from unbelief and poverty. He who dies by its night or daytime or after it, then his reward is from Allah. He who borrows a loan for his brothers and helps them; then I guarantee him before Allah; if He keeps him alive, then he pays it (the loan); and if He makes him die, He undertakes it. When you meet each other, then shake hands through greetings, grant the blessing to each other on this day, let the present inform the absent (of it), let the rich visit the poor, and the strong (visit) the weak. Allah's Messenger had ordered me (to do) that.' Then he, peace be on him,

continued his sermon, regarded his Friday prayer as ‘Id prayer, then he took his sons and his followers (Shi‘ites) and went to the house of al-Hasan b. ‘Ali, peace be on him, where food had been prepared; the poor and the rich took their gifts and went to their families.[71]”

Surely al-Ghadir ‘Id is one of the most important Islamic ‘Ids, for, on this immortal day, Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, installed Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, as his successor after him, and an authority for his community. Many traditions have been transmitted from the Imams of guidance concerning the recommended fast and celebrating a festival on it. The Imami Sect has been successful in commemorating it, holding literary festivals in which wonderful poems and marvelous words are read in praising the excellence of Abu’ al-Husayn (i.e. Imam ‘Ali), peace be on him. Likewise, thousands of people visit his Holy Shrine in order to commemorate this day.

56. Summoning the Believers to make a Pilgrim is Recommended

Al-Hasan b. ‘Ali al-Daylami, the retainer of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, reported, saying: “I heard al-Ridha’ say: ‘He who summons the believers to make a pilgrim certainly buys his own soul from Allah, the Great and Almighty, for the money.’[72]”

This tradition is a proof of that summoning the believers to perform the *hajj* and spending on them is the best act which brings man nearer to Allah.

57. Hajj on behalf of the Dead

Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah narrated, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about the person who died and asked someone else to perform the *hajj* on his behalf, from where the *hajj* is perform on his behalf? He replied: ‘According to his money; if his money is plentiful, then (the *hajj*) is performed from his house; if his money is not plentiful, then from Kufa; and if his money is not enough (to perform the *hajj*) from Kufa, then from Medina.’[73]”

58. Hiring Someone to perform the Hajj

Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ al-Yaqtin narrated, saying: “Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, sent a parcel of clothing, and servants to me, my brother Musa’ b. ‘Ubayd, and Yunus b. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n; he ordered us to perform the *hajj* on his behalf; there was one hundred dinars and we (divided it) among us.[74]”

The jurists have depended on this narration and the like regarding that it is permissible for living one to hire someone else to perform the recommended *hajj* on his behalf; likewise, they have given a religious decision that it is permissible for living one to hire someone else to perform on his behalf the obligatory

hajj such as the *hajj* of Islam (*hujjat al-Isla'm*); that is when one is unable to perform the *hajj*.

59. Al-Ihra'm before the appointed Time and Place

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "*Al-Ihra'm* (the ceremonies of *'umra* and *hajj*) is not permissible before *al-miqa't* (the appointed time and place).75"

60. Passing through al-Miqa't

Safwa'n b. Yahya' reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "I wrote to him (al-Ridha') that some of your followers perform *al-ihra'm* from Batn al-'Aqiq, that there was neither water nor a house in that place, that there was a hard provisions against them, and that their companions and their camels hasten them; fifteen miles from beyond Batn al-'Aqiq, there was a station wherein water, and which was there station at which they stopped; so do you think that (it is permissible for them) to perform *al-ihram* from the place of the water as a sign of mercy to them and lightness toward them? Hence he wrote: 'Surely Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has appointed the times and places for its people and those other than its people who pass through them; he who has an illness is permitted (to do so); so none should break the appointed time and place (*al-miqa't*) except him who has an illness.'76"

All those who pass through the appointed time and place (*al-miqa't*) and intend to go to Holy Mecca should perform *al-ihram*, just as it has been indicated by this narration and others.

61. How 'Umrat al-Tamattu' is Performed

Ahmed b. Muhammad narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: How shall I perform *'umrat al-tamattu'* ? He answered: 'Exclaim: Here I am at Your service! Make a solemn intention for *'umrat al-Tamattu'*. When you enter Mecca, circumambulate the House; perform two *rak'as* behind the Standing place (*al-Maqa'm*); run seven times between al-Safa' and al-Marwa'; and then shorten and regard it as *'umrat al-Tamattu'*.'77"

This narration is a proof of that it is permissible for one to make a solemn intention for the *hajj* and *al-talbiya* (exclaiming: Here I am at Your service!) through which *al-ihra'm* is valid; and then he performs the rest of the ceremonies such as circumambulating the Holy House, praying behind the Standing place of Ibra'him, running seven times between al-Safa' and al-Marwa'; shortening and regarding it as *'umrat al-Tamattu*.

62. Ceasing al-Talbiya

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, that he was asked: "When will one who performs *'umrat al-Tamattu* cease *al-talbiya* (exclaiming: Here I am

at Your service!) ?" He (al-Ridha') replied: "When he looks at the bowers of Mecca, 'Aqabat Dhi Tiwa'." "The Houses of Mecca?" I (Ahmed) asked. "Yes," he replied.[78]

When the *hajji* performs *al-ihram* from one of the appointed places, it is recommended for to continue *al-talbiya* throughout the time until he arrives in Mecca. When he sees its houses, he ceases *al-talbiya*.

63. Al-Muhrim can buy female Salves

Sa'd b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari al-Qummi narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha') about *al-muhrim* (one who has entered the state of ritual consecration): Can *al-muhrim* buy and sell female slaves? 'Yes,' he replied.[79]"

It is prohibited for *al-muhrim* to marry a woman; likewise, it is prohibited for him to make the contract of marriage for those other than him. As for buying and selling female slaves, it is not forbidden, as it is indicated by this narration.

64. It is Permissible for al-Muhrim to wear a Ring

Muhammad b. Isma''il b. Buzaygh reported, saying: "I saw Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, wearing a ring while he was in the state of ritual consecration (*muhrim*).[80]"

65. Al-Muhrim can walk in Shade

Muhammad b. Isma''il b. Buzaygh narrated, saying: "I wrote to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Is it permissible for *al-muhrim* to walk in the shade of the double camel-litter (*al-Mahmal*)? 'Yes,' he, peace be on him, wrote.'[81]"

One of the things from which *al-muhrim* should refrain is casting a shadow over him. As for walking in shade, it is not forbidden. This matter has raised many questions, for al-Tabrasi narrated, saying: "Muhammad b. al-Hasan questioned Abu' al-Hasan Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him, in the presence of (Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid when they were in Mecca. He asked him: 'Is it permissible for *al-muhrim* to walk in the shade of the double camel-litter (*al-Mahmal*)?' 'It is not permissible for him (to do) that willingly,' the Imam answered him. 'Is it permissible for him to walk in shade willingly?' asked Muhammad b. al-Hasan. 'Yes,' he replied him. Muhammad b. al-Hasan laughed at that, hence the Imam asked: 'Do you wonder at the *Sunna* (practices) of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and ridicule it? Surely Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, removed his shade during his *ihra'm* and walked in the shade while he was *muhrim*. Surely Allah's laws, O Muhammad, are not compared. So he who compares them to each other deviates from the straight path.'[82]"

66. Religious Expiation for killing a Bird in the Holy Shrine

Safwa'n b. Yahya' narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "He who kills a bird in the Holy Shrine (of the Prophet) while he is in the ritual state of consecration (*muhrim*) should pay the value, which is one dirham, and buy food for the pigeons of the Holy Shrine.[83]"

67. Redemption for casting Shadow

Sa'd b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha') about *al-muhrim* (one who has entered the state of ritual consecration) who cast a shadow over himself, and he asked me: 'Is there an excuse?' 'The heat of the sun hurts him when he is in the state of ritual consecration (*muhrim*),' I answered. 'It is an excuse,' he explained, 'he can cast a shadow over himself and should pay a redemption.'[84]"

Ibra'him b. Abu' Mahmu'd narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Is it permissible for *al-muhrim* to cast over himself a shadow from his double camel-litter (*al-Mahmil*) and pay a redemption when the sun and rain hurt him?' 'Yes,' he replied. 'How much is the redemption?' I asked him. 'A ewe,' he answered.[85]"

68. Supplication by al-Rukn al-Yama'ni

Sa'd b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I was with him (al-Ridha') during circumambulating (the Ka'ba). When we approached al-Rukn al-Yama'ni, he raised his hands towards the heaven, and then he said: 'O Allah! O Keeper of well-being! O Creator of well-being! O Provider with well-being! O Benefactor through well-being! O Munificent with well-being! O You who have obliged me and all Your creatures through well-being! O Most Gracious in this world and the next and Most Merciful in both of them! Bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, provide us with well-being, completing well-being, giving thanks for well-being in here and the hereafter, O Most Merciful of the merciful![86]"

69. Obligatory Circumambulation

He (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, said: "One should say nothing during obligatory circumambulation except supplication, invocation of Allah, and reciting the Qur'an. As for the supererogatory (i.e. recommended circumambulation), there is no harm in it (when) one meet his brother and talks with him about one of the affairs of the world.[87]" This precept is not obligatory; rather it is recommended; and it is recommended for *al-muhrim* to say nothing during his circumambulation except the invocation of Allah, the Most High.

70. Stone-Throwing

Isma'il b. Hamma'm reported, saying: "I heard Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, say: 'Do not throw stones on the Day of Great Sacrifice (i.e. the Day of 'Id) until the sun rises.[88]" The surface meaning of this order is the prevention from throwing stones before the sunrise.

71. Animal for Immolation is sufficient for a Group of People

Sawa'da and 'Ali b. Asba't narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. They said: "We asked him (al-Ridha'): 'May we be your ransom, the sacrifices in Mecca have become expensive; is it sufficient for two persons to take part in a sheep?' 'Yes,' he replied 'and (it is sufficient) for seventy (persons).'[89]"

This narration concerns the recommended *hajj*. As for the obligatory *hajj*, one sacrifice is not sufficient except for one person, nor is it sufficient for two persons.

72. Clothes should not be sold for buying an Animal for Immolation

'Ali b. Asba't reported on the authority of one of our companions, on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "I said to him (al-Ridha'): 'A man has performed *hajj al-tamattu'*, and there are some clothes in his bag, shall he sell some of them in order to buy a sacrifice?' 'No,' he answered, 'the believer should adorn himself with them. He should fast and not sell any of his clothes.'[90]" When the pilgrim is unable to buy a sacrifice, he should fast for three days during the *hajj* and seven days when he comes back to his homeland.

73. Visiting the Prophet is Recommended

Al-Hasan b. al-Jahm narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Which is better the man who comes to Mecca and does not go to Medina or the man who comes to the Prophet and does not go to Mecca?' 'In which thing do you believe?' he asked me. 'We believe in al-Husayn, peace be on him,' I replied, 'then what about the Prophet?' 'Since you said that,' he retorted, 'Abu' 'Abd Allah (al-Husayn), peace be on him, witnessed 'Id in Medina, came to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and greeted him, and then he said to those present: 'We are better than the people of all the cities, Mecca and other than it, for we have greeted Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family.'[91]"

74. Running away from Fighting in the Way of Allah is Prohibited

“Allah has prohibited escaping from fighting in His path, for it leads to undermining the religion; disdaining the just prophets and Imams; leaving helping them against the enemies who should be punished for their leaving professing the Lord to whom they are summoned, (and who are summoned to) establishing justice, leaving oppression, and deadening corruption. Moreover it encourages the enemies to (attack) the Muslims, and (this attack) results in murdering (them), taking them as prisoners, and abolishing the religion of Allah, the Great and Almighty, and (this attack leads to) other corrupt things.92”

Islam has prohibited running away from fighting in the way of Allah, for it brings about dangerous harms to the Muslims, of which is that the unbelieving forces dominate Islam, destroy the Muslims, and severely punish the believers.

75. Adopting the Bedouin Customs after the Emigration is Prohibited

Muhammad b. Sina’n narrated that Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, wrote to him in response to his questions: “And Allah has prohibited adopting the Bedouin customs after the Emigration, for it brings about withdrawal from the religion, leaving supporting the prophets and the proofs (Imams), peace be on him, corrupting and invalidating the rights of those who have rights, because of the residence of the Bedouins; likewise, if one fully knows the religion, it is not permissible for him to live with men of ignorance, for fear that he may leave knowledge and adopt the customs of men of ignorance and go too far in that.93”

Islam has prohibited adopting the Bedouin customs after the Emigration, for it brings about withdrawal from the religion and acquiring the manners of the ignorant, for social life is the life of effect and being affected, so every person is affected by his surroundings, and he produces an effect on them; for this reason Islam has prohibited living with men of ignorance. This prohibition concerns those ignorant from among the Muslims. However, it does not concerns those who have knowledge and virtue, for they do not follow the manners of the ignorant.

76. Buying Infidel Captives is Permissible

Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah reported, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about a group of people who went out (in mutiny), killed a group of Muslims, and demolished the Mosques; and Ha’ru’n, who was in charge (of the Muslims), sent for them, and they were taken and killed, the women and the boys were taken prisoners is it permissible (for us) to buy some women of them and marry them? ‘There is no harm in buying their commodities and taking them prisoners,’ he replied.94”

Zakariya’ b. Adam narrated, saying: “I asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about a group of the enemies

who made peace, and then they broke their promise; perhaps, they broke their promise because they were not treated with justice is it permissible to buy some of their captives? He, peace be on him, answered: 'If they were from among the enemies whose enmity is manifest, then buy from them; and if they are estranged and wronged, then do not buy their captives.'[95]"

In the second tradition the Imam, peace be on him, talked about those who mutinied against the basic government: if they mutinied against it because they suffered from oppression or it did not accomplish its treaties and broke its promises, then there would be no way to buy some of their captives; and if their mutiny was as a sign of enmity toward Isla'm and malice toward the Muslims, then it was permissible for the Muslims to buy their captives.

77. The Precepts of al-Khra'jj

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, detailed the precepts of land tax (*al-khara'jj*) through his talk with Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr, who said: "I mentioned *al-khara'jj* before Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and how the members of his household behaved toward it, and he said: 'One-tenth and half a one-tenth is due on him who adopts Islam willingly; his land is left in his hand; and one-tenth and half a one-tenth is taken from him concerning what he has reformed from it. As for that which he has not reformed, it is taken by the governor who accepts it from him who reforms it, and it belongs to the Muslims. Nothing is due on that which less than five camel-loads (*awsa'q*). As for the land which is taken by the sword, it is up to the Imam, who accepts it with what he sees; just as Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, did toward Khaybar; he accepted its land and its date-palms; and the people say: 'The acceptance of the land and the date-palms is not good when whiteness (barren land) is more than blackness (fertile land); and certainly Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, accepted Khaybar and (specified) one-tenth and half a one-tenth as due on their portions.'[96]"

78. Al-Amr bi al-Ma'ru'f and al-Nahy 'an al-Munkar

He (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, said: "You should direct others towards good and direct them away from evil; otherwise, He (Allah) will employ your evil ones over you, so your good ones supplicate (Him) but He does respond to them.[97]"

And he, peace be on him, said: Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, would say: "When (the members of) my community depend on each other concerning *al-amr bi al-ma'ru'f* and *al-nahy 'an al-munkar*, then they will face a punishment from Allah.[98]"

Surely *al-amr bi al-ma'ru'f* and *al-nahy 'an al-munkar* are two main Islamic bases on which the development of the community, its security, and its safety from discords and deviation (from the truth) are built.

And he, peace be on him, said: "*Al-amr bi al-ma'ru'f* and *al-nahy 'an al-munkar* are two obligatory

(things) when it is possible and there is no fear for the soul.[99]”

Surely *al-amr bi al-ma‘ru’f* and *al-nahy ‘an al-munkar* require conditions of which is that there should be no fear for the soul, the family, and the wealth. When these conditions are not available, then this religious duty drops.

79. Making Use of the fat Tails which are cut off from Living Sheep

Al-Bizanti, the companion of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, narrated, saying: “I asked him (al-Ridha’) about the person who cuts off the fat tails of his living sheep is it permissible for him to make use of them? ‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘he should melt them, light (a lamp) through them, but he should not eat them; nor should he sell them.’[100]”

This narration is a proof of that it is permissible for one to make use of the fat tails which are cut off from living sheep, but this use is confined to illumination only.

80. Wage for Writing the Qur’an

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, was asked about the wage for writing the Qur’an, and he, peace be on him, replied: “There is no harm in it.[101]”

81. Al-Maysar is a Game of Hazard

Islam has prohibited *al-maysar* (game of hazard) and associated it with wine. As for Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, he explained *al-maysar*, saying: “*Al-maysar* is a game of hazard.[102]” And he, peace be on him, said: “Surely, chess, game at dice (*nard*), fourteen (*arba‘at ‘ashar*), and all things used as gamble are *maysar*.[103]”

82. Work for Tyrannical Ruler

Sulayma’n al-Ja‘fari reported, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him: ‘What do say about work for the tyrannical ruler (Sultan)?’ He answered: ‘O Sulayma’n, work for tyrannical rulers, helping them, and striving for accomplishing their needs are equal to unbelief; likewise, looking at them deliberately is one of the great sins because of which one deserves the Fire.’[104]” Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, made it permissible for a tyrannical ruler to undertake authority, provided that he should benefit the believers and drive harm away from them. He, peace be on him, said: “Surely Allah has friends along with the (tyrannical) ruler, through whom He drives (harm) away from His friends.[105]”

Al-Hasan b. al-Husayn al-Anba’ri narrated on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on

him, saying: “I wrote to him (al-Ridha’) for fourteen years and asked him to permit me in order to work for the ruler (Sultan); in the last letter I wrote him and mentioned that my neck would be struck off, that the ruler said to me that I was a Rafidite (apostate), and that I refused to work for the ruler because of my being a Rafidite.

“So Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, wrote me: ‘I have understood your letter and what you have mentioned concerning the fear for your soul. If you become a governor, work according to the orders of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, your helpers and scribes follow your creed, and you help the poor believers to the extent that you become one of them, then it is okay; otherwise, no.’106”

83. Option of Animals

‘Ali b. Asba’t reported on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, saying: “I heard him (al-Ridha’) say: ‘The buyer has the right of option of an animals for three days; as for (the things) other than animals, (the right of option terminates) when they leave each other.’107”

In the light of this narration and others, the jurists have given a religious decision that the buyer has the right of option of an animals for three days; and as for the things other than animals, the right of option terminates when they leave each other; and that is called ‘option of meeting place.’

84. Changing Coins

Yunus narrated, saying: “I wrote to al-Ridha’: ‘I owed a man three thousands dirhams; the people used those dirhams in those days; they do not use them nowadays shall I take the same dirhams or the dirhams which the people use nowadays?’ So he wrote me: ‘You have the right to take from him the dirhams which the people use just as you gave him the dirhams which the people used.’108”

85. Selling unripe Fruit

Al-Hasan b. ‘Ali al-Washsha” reported, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him: ‘Is it permissible to sell unripe dates?’ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘it is not permissible to sell them until they grow.’ ‘May I be your ransom, what is the growth (*zahw*)?’ I asked him. ‘When they become red or yellow or the like,’ he answered.109”

86. Buying the Children of the protected People is Prohibited

Zakariya b. Adam narrated, saying: “I asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about one of the protected people (*Ahl al-dhimma*) who faced famine and brought me his boy, saying: ‘This (boy) belongs to you; feed him and take him as a slave for you.’ So he (al-Ridha’) declared: ‘Do not buy a free man; nor do buy one of the protected people, for it is not permissible for you (to do that).’110”

The protected people (*Ahl al-dhimma*) are free, and it is not permissible to buy them.

87. The Imam pays the Debts of the Debtors

Muhammad b. Sulayma'n reported on the authority of a man called Abu' Muhammad from al-Jazira. He (the man) said: "A man asked al-Ridha', peace be on him. The man said and I could hear him: 'May I be your ransom, Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: *And if* (*the debtor*) *is in straitness, then let there be postponement until* (*he is in*) *ease*. Tell me about this postponement which Allah, the Great and Almighty, has mentioned in His Book: Is there any fixed period for it, that the creditor may wait for this impoverished one, who has taken the creditor's money and spent it on his family, and who has neither a crop nor a debt nor an absent wealth?'

"He (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, replied: 'Yes, he (the creditor) must wait until the Imam hears of his news; and he pays his (the debtor's) debt from the share of the debtors. That is when he (the debtor) had spent it (debt) on the acts of obedience to Allah, the Great and Almighty. If he had spent it on the acts of disobedience to Allah, then he would have nothing against the Imam.' I (i.e. the man) asked: 'What about this man who entrusted (his money) to him while he did not know whether he spent it on the acts of obedience to Allah or on acts of disobedience to Him? He (al-Ridha') answered: 'He (debtor) should strive for him concerning his money and humbly return it to him.'111"

88. Buying Debt

Muhammad b. al-Fudayl narrated, saying: "I said to al-Ridha', peace be on him: A man bought a debt against a man, and then he went to the owner of the debt (the debtor) and said to him: 'Pay to me what so-and-so has against you, for I have bought it (the doubt) from him.' He (al-Ridha') said: 'He (debtor) should pay to him what he has paid to the owner of the debt (the creditor); he against whom the money is is free from all what has remained against him.'112"

89. The Debtor should not be oppressed

'Ali b. Isma''il reported on the authority of a man from Syria (al-Sha'm) that he (the man) asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man against whom there was a heavy debt, who associated with the people, whom was entrusted (with money), and who bought surplus food and drink is it lawful for him (to do that) or not? 'There is no harm in what he eats,' the Imam, peace be on him, answered.113"

The surface meaning of the tradition is that the creditor should not straiten the debtor even if he is able to buy his food requirements.

90. Employing Worker before Specifying his Wage is Reprehensible

Sulayma'n b. Ja'far al-Ja'fari narrated, saying: "I was with al-Ridha', peace be on him, for a certain need. When I wanted to go home, he said to me: 'Go and spend the night with me.' So I went with him. When he entered his house, he saw his retainers carrying mud. There was a black man among them. 'Who is that man among you?' he asked them. 'He is helping us, and we will give him something,' they replied. 'Did you specify his wage?' he asked. 'No,' they answered, 'he is satisfied with what you will give to him.' He became so angry that I said to him: 'May I be your ransom, why have you become angry?' 'I ordered them several times that if one wanted to work with them, they should specify his wage,' he replied, 'know that if one works for you without fixing his wage and you give him three folds of it, I think that you have decreased it. If you define his wage and give it to him, he will thank you for honesty. If you increase him something, he will thank you for it and know that you have increased him.'[114]"

One of the good acts of Islamic legislation is that you should specify the worker's wage before you let him work. If you do not specify it, he will not be satisfied with whatever you give to him, and this brings about quarrel and dispute.

91. Rent does not invalidate Selling Property

Yunus reported, saying: "I wrote to al-Ridha', peace be on him, to ask him about a man who accepted a land or other than that from a man for some known years. Then the owner of the land wanted to sell his land before the termination of the fixed years does the tenant have the right to prevent him from that? 'He (the land owner) has the right to sell it if he had made it a condition on him,' he, peace be on him, answered.[115]"

The owner is not objected when he wants to sell his rented property, but he should inform the tenant of that. He can sell it to him without an interest until the rent terminates. If he does not inform him of that, he (the tenant) has the stipulated right of cancellation.

92. Revoking Grant before Receiving it

Safwa'n b. Yahya' narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who had property and he granted it to his eldest son. The man mentioned to him the property which he had against him, so he said: There is nothing of it against you in this world and the next (namely, he granted it to him) is it permissible for him to do that while he had granted it (the property) to his son? 'Yes,' he answered 'it is permissible to him to grant it to him, and then he revokes (it) and gives it to another son.'[116]"

Surely it is permissible to revoke grant before it is received; and it is one of the permissible contracts which one can revoke. As for grant given to womb relatives, it is obligatory after receiving not before it.

93. A Magian orders his Wealth to be given to the Poor

Abu' Ta'lib 'Abd Allah b. al-Salt reported, saying: "Al-Khalil b. Ha'shim wrote to Dhu' al-Ri'a'satayn[117], the governor of Nisa'bu'r, that a Magian ordered some of his wealth to be given to the poor. When he died, the judge of Nisa'bu'r took it and divided it among the poor Muslims. So al-Khalil wrote to Dhu' al-Ri'a'satayn about that, and he asked al-Ma'mu'n about that, and he said: 'I have nothing concerning that.' So he asked Abu' al-Hasan, and he said: 'The Magian did not order his wealth to be given to the poor Muslims, so he (the judge of Nisha'bu'r) should take an amount of money from the alms equal to that amount and distribute it among the poor Magians.'[118]"

A narration similar to this has been reported by 'Ali b. Ibra'him on the authority of Ya'sir al-Kha'dim, who said: "From Nisa'bu'r he wrote to al-Ma'mu'n that a Magian was about to die and ordered his great wealth to be divided among the miserable and the poor, but the judge of Nisha'bu'r distributed it among the poor Muslims, so al-Ma'mu'n asked al-Ridha': 'What do you say about that?' 'The Magian did not give (his wealth) as alms to the poor Muslims,' answered al-Ridha', peace be on him, 'so write to him to specify an amount from the alms of the Muslims equal to that amount and give it as alms to the poor Magians.'[119]"

94. A Muslim Woman orders two Beds to be given to the Christians

Al-Rayya'n b. Shabib (b. al-Salt) reported, saying: "Marida ordered two beds to be given to a group of the Christians, so our companions said: 'Divide them among your believing companions.' So I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: My sister ordered (two beds) to be given to a group of the Christians, and I wanted to divide them among a group of our Muslim companions, so he, peace be on him, replied: 'Carry out the will as you had been ordered, for Allah, the Exalted, says: ***Whoever then alters it after he has heard it, the sin of it then is only upon those who alters it***.'[120]"

95. The Orphan should take his Wealth when he becomes Adult

Sa'd b. Isma''il narrated on the authority of his father, who said: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the guardian of the orphans: He orders his orphans to take their properties when they become adult, but they refuse to accept them, what shall he do? 'He should return their properties to them and force them to take them,' he answered.[121]"

When the orphan becomes adult, then the guardian has no power over him. He should take his wealth; and if he refuses to take it, then the legal judge should force him to accept it.

96. A Man orders a Share of his wealth to be given to the Imam

Safwa'n and Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported, saying: "We asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who ordered a share of his wealth to be given to him, and we did not know what the share was, and he, peace be on him, said: 'Have you anything of what you heard from Ja'far and Abu' Ja'far?' 'We have not heard our companions say anything about this (matter) on the authority of your fathers,' we replied. So he retorted: 'The share is one per eight (shares, i.e. one-eighth), until he mentioned these words of Him the Exalted: ***Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials*** (***appointed***) ***over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline*** (***to truth***) ***and the*** (***ransoming of***) ***the captives and those in debts and in the way of Allah and the wayfarer***.' Then he knitted the eight fingers of his hand and said: 'Likewise, Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, divided it into eight shares; therefore, it is one-eighth.'[122]"

97. A Man orders a Sword to be given to a Man

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of Abu' Jamila, on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha') about a man who ordered a man to be given a sword in a sheath inlaid with jewels, but the inheritors said to him: 'Only the blade belongs to you, and the sword does not belong to you.' So he, peace be on him, said: 'No, rather the sword and what it includes (belongs to him).'[123]"

98. The Precept of Will concerning Disowning a Child

Sa'd b. Sa'd reported, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'), peace be on him: 'A man claimed that he had a boy. The man disowned the boy and excluded him from the inheritance, and I am his executor, then how shall I do?' He, peace be on him, answered: 'The boy belongs to him because of his confession in the presence of the people; the executor does not turn him away from anything which he has known.'[124]"

Surely when the man confesses that the child belongs to him, then it is incumbent on him to take care of him; and he has no right to disown him.

99. Good Wife

Safwa'n b. Yahya' narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "The servant gains nothing more useful than a good wife; when he sees her, she pleases him; and when he is absent from her; she keeps him regarding herself and his property.[125]"

100. It is Permissible to marry a Woman along with the Slave-

wife of her Father

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about a man who married a woman and married the slave-wife of her father, and he, peace be on him, answered: 'There is no harm in that.' Then I said: We have been informed on the authority of your father that 'Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him, married the daughter of al-Hasan b. 'Ali, peace be on him, and the slave-wife (*umm walad*) of al-Hasan, so he said: 'It is not as you say; 'Ali b. al-Husayn married the daughter of al-Hasan and the slave-wife of 'Ali b. al-Husayn, the one who was killed in your country.'126"

101. It is Reprehensible for a Woman to marry an Ill-natured Man

Al-Husayn b. Bashsha'r al-Wa'siti narrated, saying: "I wrote to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: An ill-natured man from among my relatives has proposed (to marry my daughter), and he replied: 'Do not marry (her to) him if he is an ill-natured man.'127" This prohibition is explained as reprehensible not as unlawful.

102. Marriage at Night

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'' reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I heard him (al-Ridha') say concerning marriage: 'It is an act of the Sunna is that marriage should be at night, for Allah has made night for rest; and women have been (made) for rest.'128"

103. Giving Food at Marriage

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'' narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I heard him (al-Ridha') say: 'When Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, proposed to marry Amina, daughter of Abu' Sufya'n, and married her, he called for food, and then he said: 'Surely, one of the practices (*sunan*) of the messengers is giving food at marriage.'129"

104. Looking at the Hair of unrelated Woman is Prohibited

He (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, said in what he wrote to Muhammad b. Sina'n, as answer to his question: "Looking at the hair of married and single women is forbidden, for it excites men, and this excitement leads to corruption and committing the unlawful; likewise, (it is forbidden to look at those things) like hair except what Allah, the Most High, has said: *And* (*as for*) *women advanced in years who do not hope for marriage, it is no sin for them if they put off their clothes without displaying their ornaments*, namely other than the garment; there is no harm in looking at the hair of the like of them.'130"

105. Looking at the Hair of Sister-in-law is not Permissible

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): is it permissible for a man to look at the hair of his sister-in-law? 'No,' he replied, 'except when she is one of the women advanced in years.' Then I asked him: Are his sister-in-law and unrelated woman the same? 'Yes,' he answered.[131]"

106. A Person claims that he has married a Woman

'Abd al-'Aziz b. al-Muhtadi narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: May I be your ransom, my brother died and I married his wife, but my uncle came and claimed that he had married her secretly; so I asked her about that and she strongly denied it, and then she said: 'There was nothing between me and him.' Hence he, peace be on him, replied: 'Her confession binds you (to believe her), and her denial obligates him (to say the truth).'[132]" This means that the truth was what the woman said, and her denying the right of the uncle was valid.

107. Marriage Contract with the Intention of Joke is invalid

Ibn Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Mashriqi, on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): What do you say about a man who claimed that he proposed to marry a woman with (the intention of) joke, and that he asked her about that and she replied, 'Yes,'? So he answered: 'It is nothing.' I asked: 'It is lawful for the man to marry her?' 'Yes,' he replied.[133]"

108. It is Permissible for Son to marry the Daughter of his Father's Slave-wife

'Ali b. Idris narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: I had a slave-wife; I had a sexual intercourse with her. Then I emancipated her and she gave birth to a slave-girl. Is it lawful for my son to marry her? 'Yes,' he answered, 'before and after the sexual intercourse.'[134]"

109. It is unlawful to marry two Sisters at the same Time

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): 'A husband has a wife, is it lawful for him to marry her sister as a fixed term marriage (*Muta'a*)?' 'No,' he answered.[135]"

It is not permissible to marry two sisters at the same time, whether the marriage contract is temporary or permanent, but if his first wife dies or he divorces her irrevocably and the *'idda* [136] terminates, then it is permissible for him to marry her sister.

110. It is Lawful to marry Midwife

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): 'A midwife helped a woman with childbirth, and the woman gave birth to a boy, is it lawful for the boy to marry the midwife of his mother?' 'Glory belongs to Allah,' he replied, 'What of that is unlawful for him?'[137]"

111. Contracting a Fixed-term Marriage with a dhimmi dclxxxiiWoman

Al-Hasan al-Taflisi reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): 'Is it permissible for a Muslim to marry a Jewish or a Christian woman for a fixed term marriage?' 'He can marry the believing, free woman for a fixed term marriage, while she is more sacred than her,' he answered.[138]

112. If Wife becomes a Muslim

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked al-Ridha': 'A man has a Christian wife and she has become a Muslim, is it lawful for her to reside with him?' 'If she becomes a Muslim, it is not lawful for her to reside with him,' he replied.[139]"

113. Choosing Trustworthy Woman

In a tradition Muhammad b. Isma"il reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "You should marry no woman except a trustworthy one, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: *The fornicator shall not marry any but a fornicatress or idolatress, and* (*as for*) *the fornicatress, none shall marry her but a fornicator or an idolater; and that is forbidden to the believers*.[140]"

114. Man should believe Woman when she denies Husband

Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Ash'ari narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'A man married a woman and imagined that she had a husband, how is he sure of that?' 'If he asks her about a proof (of that),' he replied, 'she will witness that she has no husband.'[141]"

115. Contracting a Fixed-term Marriage with Bond maid

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): 'Is it permissible for a Muslim to marry a bond maid for a fixed-term marriage with the permission of her family? 'Yes,' he answered, 'for Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: *So marry*

them with the permission of their families.'[142]"

116. The 'Idda of Muta'a

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: [Abu' Ja'far said:] "The *'idda*[143] of *Muta'a* is forty-five days, and the precaution is forty-five nights.[144]"

117. The Period of Muta'a

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha'): 'Is it permissible for a man to marry a woman for one year or more or less?' 'If it is a fixed thing for a fixed period.' 'Does it terminate without divorce?' I asked him. 'Yes,' he replied.[145]"

118. No Inheritance in Muta'a

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "*Muta'a* is a marriage with or without inheritance. If you make it a condition, then there is (an inheritance); and if you do not make it a condition, then there is no (inheritance).[146]"

119. Moving the Woman of Fixed-term Marriage from one City to another

Mu'ammar b. Khalla'd reported, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Is it permissible for a man to move the woman of a fixed term marriage from one city to another?' 'It is permissible in the other marriage,' he answered, 'but it is not permissible in this (marriage).[147]"

This tradition is a proof of that it is permissible to move her from one city to another; there is no objection in that.

120. It is Lawful for the Wife to grant her Female Slave to her Husband

Isma''il b. Buzaygh narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a wife who granted her female slave to her husband, and he replied: 'That is up to him.' 'If he feared that she was joking?' I asked him. 'If he knew that she was joking, then no,' he answered.[148]"

121. It is Permissible for the man to take Grant from his Salve-wife

Isma'‘il b. Buzaygh reported, saying: “I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who took from his slave-wife what he had granted to her such as servants and provisions Is permissible for him to do that? ‘Yes,' he replied, ‘if she was his slave-wife.'149”

122. Giving Dower more than that in the Sunna

Al-Washsha'' narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: “I heard him (al-Ridha') say: ‘If a man married a woman and appointed her dower as twenty-thousand (dirhams) and appointed for her father ten thousand (dirhams), the dower would be permissible, and what he appointed for her father would be void.'150” As for that which he appointed for her father, it was part of the dower and he was not worthy of it, for this reason it was invalid.

123. A Precept for him who stipulates that he and his Wife should not inherit each other

Sa‘d b. Isma'‘il reported on the authority of his father, who said: “I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who married a woman and had stipulated that they should not inherit one another, and that he should not ask her for a child; and he, peace be on him, answered: ‘I do not like (that).'151” The narration is a proof of that this condition is not obligatory; and it is not obligatory for one to fulfill it.

124. Congratulation on Child on the seventh Day

Al-Husayn b. Kha'lid narrated, saying: “I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the congratulation on a child when will it be? ‘When al-Hasan b. ‘Ali, peace be on him, was born,' he replied, ‘Gabriel came down to Allah's Messenger to congratulate him on the seventh day; and he ordered him to give him a name and a *kunya*, to shave his hair, to sacrifice a ram on his behalf, and to pierce his ear. Likewise, when al-Husayn was born, he (Gabriel) came down to him on the seventh day and ordered him to do the same.'152”

125. The Period of Suckling Baby

Sa‘d b. Sa‘d al-Ash‘ari reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: “I asked him about baby is it permissible for it to suck more than two years? ‘Only two years,' he answered. ‘If it sucks more than two years, then is there anything of that against its parents?' I asked. ‘No,' he replied.153”

126. Preferring a Child to the rest of the Children

Sa‘d b. Sa‘d al-Ash‘ari narrated, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him: ‘Is it permissible for a man to love a child more than the rest of the children and prefer him to them?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, did that when he gave a gift to Muhammad; and Abu’ al-Hasan did that when he gave something to Ahmed; and I stood up and gave it to him.’ Then I asked: ‘What about the man who loves his daughters more than his sons?’ ‘The daughters and sons are the same,’ he answered, ‘they are equal in the view of Allah, the Great and Almighty.’154”

127. Keeping Woman in good Fellowship

Abu’ al-Qa’sim al-Fa’risi reported, saying: “I said to al-Ridha’, peace be on him: May I be your ransom, Allah says in His Book: *Then keep* (*them*) *in good fellowship or let* (*them*) *go with kindness*. What does He mean by that? ‘As for *keeping* (*them*) *in good fellowship*,’ he replied, ‘means refraining from harming them and spending on them; and as for *letting* (*them*) *go with kindness* means divorce according to what has been revealed in the Book.’155”

128. Spending generously on Family

Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn narrated, saying: [Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, said:] “One should spend generously on his family lest they should wish for his death.156”

129. Divorce lacking Conditions is Invalid

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu’ Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha’, peace be on him, saying: “I asked him about a man who divorced his wife with two just witnesses after he had slept with her, and he replied: ‘This is not a divorce.’ ‘How is the divorce of the Sunna?’ I asked him. ‘He should divorce her (in the presence) of two just witnesses when she is pure from her menstruation and before he sleeps with her,’ he answered, ‘if he opposes that, he should refer to the Book of Allah, the Great and Almighty.’ ‘If he divorces her in the presence of one man and two women?’ I asked. ‘The testimony of women is not permissible in divorce,’ he replied.157”

130 The Divorce of the Drunk

Zakariya b. Adam narrated, saying: “I asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about the divorce of the drunken, the boy, the mad, the one whose reason is overcome, and the one who has not gotten married yet; and he answered: ‘It is not permissible.’158”

The divorce of these people is not correct. As for the drunk, his divorce is not correct, for he has no awareness. As for the boy and the mad, the pen has been raised from them; therefore their divorce is

not correct. As for him who has not gotten married yet, namely has not made a marriage contract with his wife, his divorce is invalid.

131. The Divorce of the Dumb

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr al-Bizanti reported, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who has a wife, but he keeps silent and does not speak; and he asked me: 'Is he dumb?' I replied: 'Yes, and I know that he detests and hates his wife is it permissible for his guardian to divorce her on his behalf?' 'No,' he answered, 'but he should write and make (two just witnesses) bear witness to him.' Then I asked him: 'He neither writes nor hears, so how will he divorce her?' 'Through his acts which are recognized just as you have mentioned concerning his detesting and hating (her),' he replied.[159]"

132. The Correctness of Divorce before those Present

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of Safwa'n, on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He (Safwa'n) said: "He (al-Ridha') was asked about a man whose wife was pure from her menstruation; and he (the man) said: 'So-and-so is divorced;' and a group of people heard his words; but he did not say: 'Bear witness.' Does divorce occur against her? 'Yes,' he (al-Ridha') replied, 'this is a testimony.'[160]"

133. A Three-time Divorce after 'Idda

In his letter to al-Ma'mu'n, al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "When women is divorced three times after *'idda*, it is not lawful for her husband to remarry until she marries a husband other than him.[161]"

134. Al-Muhalil should be Adult

134. *Al-Muhalil* [162] **should be Adult**

'Ali b. al-Fadl al-Wa'siti reported, saying: "I wrote to al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'A husband has divorced his wife with the divorce in which it is not lawful for him to remarry her until she marries a husband other than him; and a minor has married her?' 'No,' he answered, 'until he becomes of age.' Then I wrote to him: 'What is the period of maturity?' 'According to the periods which Allah has made obligatory on the believers.'[163]"

135. The Castrated cannot be Muhalil

Muhammad b. Muda'rib narrated, saying: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Can the castrated be *Muhalil?'* 'No, he replied, 'he cannot be *Muhalil*.'[164]"

136. Witnesses for Returning to Wife

Sa‘d b. Sa‘d al-Ash‘ari reported on the authority of al-Marzba’n, who said: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about a husband who said to his wife: ‘Be in *‘idda*, for I have released you’, namely he has divorced her with a divorce including all the pre-conditions.’ Some days ago, he made (two just witnesses) bear witness to his returning to her; and then he was absent from her before he slept with her; and then some months after *‘idda* passed. So how do you order him? He answered: ‘If he had made (two just witnesses) bear witness to his returning to her, then she would have been his wife.’[165]”

137. Second Divorce without having Sexual Intercourse

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu’ Nasr narrated, saying: “I asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about a man who divorced his wife in the presence of two witnesses, and then he returned to her and did not have a sexual intercourse with her until she became pure from her menstruation, and then he divorced her in purity and in the presence of two witnesses did the second divorce occur against her, while he had returned to her and not taken a sexual intercourse with her? ‘Yes,’ he replied.[166]”

138. Driving the Woman with Revocable ‘Idda out of her House

Al-Ma’mu’n asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *Do not drive them out of their houses, nor should they themselves go forth, unless they commit an open indecency*, and he answered: ‘By *the open indecency* He meant that she harmed the family of her husband. If she does that, then he has the right to drive her out (of her house) before her *‘idda’* terminates.’[167]”

139. The Difference between the ‘Idda of Divorce and that of Death

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu’ Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha’, peace be on him, saying: “Safwa’n asked him (al-Ridha’) in my presence about a man who divorced his wife and he was absent. Some months ago, and he replied: ‘If a proof was established that he divorced her from so-and-so (month) and her *‘idda* terminated, then it was lawful for her to marry.’ He (Safwa’n) asked: ‘What about her whose husband died?’ ‘This is not similar to that,’ he answered, ‘this (woman) should start her *‘idda* from the day when she hears of the news (of his death), for she should mourn.’[168]”

140. If al-Mukhtala‘a returns to her Husband

140. If al-Mukhtala‘a [169] returns to her Husband

In the tradition of *al-Khal'*, Isma''il b. Buzaygh narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "And if she wants him to return to her what he had taken from her and to be his wife, then she can do.[170]" If *al-mukhtala'a* returns to her husband and takes what she had given to him, then the divorce is revocable, and the husband has the right to return to her.

141. Al-Zaha'r does not occur due to Anger

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "*Al-zaha'r*[171] does not occur because of anger.[172]" *Al-zaha'r* is correct when it occurs because of willingness and consent; it is incorrect when husband is angry or forced.

142. Al-Zaha'r occurs against Bond maid

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about the man who likened the back of his bond maid to that of his mother (*za'hara*), and he answered: '*Al-zaha'r* occurs against the free woman and the bond maid.'[173]"

143. Precepts for him who likens the Back of his Wife to that of his Mother

Al-Husayn b. Mahra'n asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who likened the backs of four wives to that of his mother, and he replied: "He should pay a religious expiation on behalf of each of them." Then he asked him about a man who likened the back of his wife and of his slave-wife to that of his mother, and he, peace be on him, answered: "He should pay a religious expiation on behalf of each of them: releasing a slave or fasting two successive months or feeding sixty needy ones.[174]"

144. Abandoning Bond maid for Swearing

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about the man who abandoned his bond maid because of his swearing, and he replied: 'No, why has he abandoned her while she is not divorced?'[175]"

145. Releasing old Salves

Ibn Abu' Sa'd al-Imka'ri went in to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: "A man was about to die and he said: 'All my old slaves are free for the pleasure of Allah,' and he (al-Ridha') said: 'Yes, for Allah says in His Book: *till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch*, so all his slaves who spent sixth months are free and old.'[176]"

146. A Man had anal Sexual Intercourse with his Pregnant Female-slave

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'' narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha') about a man who had an anal sexual intercourse with his pregnant female-slave, and he answered: 'If he knew what was in the womb of the female-slave, then it had the same rank of her; and if he did not know, then what was in her womb was a slave.' 177"

The supposed question concerning the female-slave with whom the man had an anal sexual intercourse and to whom he said: 'You are free after my death,' should be as follows: She was made pregnant by someone other than him; otherwise, if she was made pregnant by him, then she was a slave-wife and would be released after his death by her child's share.

147. A Precept for unpromissory Oath

Isma''il b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about a man who swore (by Allah) to cut the ties of the womb, and he replied: 'Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'There is no vow for an act of disobedience (to Allah), nor is there an oath for cutting the ties of the womb.'178"

Oath and vow are promissory when the thing is acceptable; and they are unpromissory when the thing is unacceptable.

148. False Oath

In a tradition Isma''il b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari narrated on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him about a man whom the ruler (Sultan) made swear by divorce or other than that, and he swore; and he (al-Ridha') replied: 'No blame is put on him.' Then I asked him about a man who swore (by Allah) to save his property from the ruler, and he answered: 'No blame is put on him.' Then I asked him: 'Does one swear (by Allah) (to save) the property of his brother just as he swears (to save) his own property?' 'Yes,' he replied.179"

Oath is promissory when one swears by Allah, the Most High. As for oath by divorce without mentioning the name of Allah, it is unpromissory. It is permissible for one to swear by Allah before the unjust ruler in order to drive oppression away from his own soul and his brothers; and there is no religious expiation against him.

149. Hunting Birds at Night is lawful

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I

asked him about hunting birds in their nests by night, and he answered: 'There is no harm in it.'[180]"

Yunus b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', saying: "I asked him: 'May I be your ransom, what do you say about hunting birds in their nests and wild animals in their places by night, for the people hate that?' 'There is no harm in that,' he replied.[181]"

150. Hunting Birds belong to someone

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu' Nasr reported, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man who hunted a bird which equaled many dirhams and whose wings are even; and who knows its owner or its owner comes and asks it from him without any accusation; and he (al-Ridha') answered: 'He has no right to keep it; he should return it to him.' Then I asked him: 'What do you say about a man who hunted a bird whose owner he did not know?' 'It belongs to him (the hunter),' he replied.[182]"

151. Rabitha' is Lawful

Muhammad b. Isma''il narrated, saying: "I wrote to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'The people have differed over *rabitha'* (a kind of fish), what do you say about it? He, peace be on him, wrote: 'There is no harm in it.'[183]"

152. The Meat of Vulture is Prohibited

Sulayma'n b. Ja'far al-Ha'shimi, reported, saying: [Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, related to me:] "One night we visited Ibn Abu' Maryam while Ha'ru'n was in Medina, and he said: 'Tonight Ha'run has an ache in his waist. We asked someone to send us some meat of a vulture, and he sent it to us.' So he (al-Ridha') said: 'We do not eat such a thing; nor do we bring it to our houses; and if we have such a thing, we will not give it (to anyone).'[184]"

153. Mutton

Sa'd b. Sa'd narrated, saying: "I said to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'My household eat the meat of goats and do not eat the meat of sheep.' 'Why?' he asked. 'It excites the gallbladder,' they say. 'If Allah had known that there was something better than sheep,' he answered, 'He would have sacrificed it for Isha'q (Isaac).'[185]"

154. Wine is Prohibited

Muhammad b. Ahmed reported on the authority of al-'Amraki, who said: "I said to al-Ridha', peace be on him: Ibn Da'wud said: 'You said that one who drank wine was an unbeliever.' So he (al-Ridha')

replied: ‘He was right; I said that to him.’186”

155. Beer is Prohibited

Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ narrated on the authority of al-Washsha”, who said: “I wrote to him (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, to ask him about beer, and he wrote: ‘It is prohibited; and it is wine.’187”

156. Selling the Pasture within a Personal Property

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu’ Nasr reported on the authority of Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah, who said: “I asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him, about a man who had a productive land which was about twenty miles, and a man came to him and said: ‘Give one of the pastures of your land, and I will give you so-and-so dirhams. ‘There is no harm in it if the land belongs to him,’ he replied.188”

157. The nearest Woman inherits Property when there is none except her

Al-Qa’sim b. al-Fadl narrated on the authority of al-Ridha’, peace be on him, concerning a man who died and left none but his close wife behind him; he (al-Ridha’) said: “All the property is given to her.189”

158. The Testimony of Women

Muhammad b. al-Fudayl reported, saying: “I asked Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him: ‘Is it permissible for women to bear witness to marriage, divorce, and stoning?’ He replied: ‘It is permissible for women to bear witness to that at which men cannot look and there is no man with them. It is permissible for them to bear witness to marriage when there is a man with them. It is permissible for them to bear witness to the prescribed punishment for fornication when there are three men and two women. As for the testimony of two men and four women regarding fornication or stoning, it is not permissible; and it is not permissible for women to bear witness to divorce or murder.’190”

159. The prescribed Punishment for him who wars against Allah

‘Ubayd Allah al-Mada”ini narrated on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, saying: “He (al-Ridha’) was questioned about these words of Him, the Exalted: ***The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His apostle and strive to make mischief in land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be banished from the land***. When does one deserve one of these four punishments? He, peace be on him, replied: ‘When he wages war against Allah and His apostle and strives to make mischief in the land and kills (someone), he should be murdered. If he kills (someone) and takes (his) property, then he should be murdered and crucified. If he takes the property and does

not kill (someone), his hand and his feet should be cut off on opposite sides. If he draws the sword, wages war against Allah and His apostle, strives to make mischief in the land, but he does not kill (someone) nor does he take the property, he should be banished from the land.'191"

160. Banishing the anti-Islam Warrior

In the tradition of warrior (*hadith al-muha'rib*) 'Ubayd Allah al-Mada"ini reported on the authority of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him: 'How is he banished? What is the prescribed punishment for banishing him?'

"He, peace be on him, answered: 'He is banished from the city in which he does what he does, and it is written to the people of that city that the person is banished, so do not sit with him nor deals with him nor marry him nor eat with him nor drink with him. This is done toward him for a year, but if he comes out that city to other than it, then it is written to them in the same manner until the year terminates.' I (the asker) asked: 'If he heads for the land of polytheism in order to enter it?' 'If he heads for the land of polytheism in order to enter it, then a war should be waged against its people', he answered.192"

161. The Blood of a Thief is not protected by the Law

Muhammad b. Fudayl narrated on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: "I asked him (al-Ridha') about a thief who went in to a pregnant woman and killed what was in her womb, hence the woman took a knife, stabbed and killed the thief. So he (al-Ridha') replied: 'The blood of a thief is not protected by Islamic law.'193"

162. Precept for him who helps and kills a person

Muhammad b. Sulayma'n and Yunus b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n reported, saying: "We asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, about a man whom a group of people asked for help in order to save them from a group of people who attacked them in order to take their properties and capture their children, so the man went out running and carrying his weapon in the dark night. He passed by a man standing by the brink of a well and drinking water out of it. He pushed him unintentionally and without awareness, so the man fell into the well and died. However, the man went on running and saved the properties of those people who asked him for help. When he came back to his family, they asked him: 'What have you done?' 'The people departed from them, and they are safe and sound,' he replied. 'Did you know that so-and-so fell into the well and died?' they asked him. 'By Allah, I pushed him,' he answered. 'How?' they asked. 'I went out running and carrying my weapon in the dark night. I feared that I might miss the people who asked me for help, so I passed by so-and-so who was standing and drinking out of the well. I pushed him without any intention, and he fell into the well and died,' he replied.' Therefore, who should pay blood-money?

“He (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, answered: ‘His blood-money should be paid by the people who asked the man for help, and he helped them and saved their properties, their women, and their children. If they had given him a wage (to help them), then he and his family would have paid the blood-money apart from them. That is because an old woman came to Sulayma’n b. Da’wud and asked him for help against the wind, saying: ‘O Prophet of Allah, while I was sleeping on the roof of mine, the wind dropped me and broke my hand, so help me against her.’ So Sulayma’n b. Da’wud summoned the wind and asked her: ‘What made you do this toward this woman?’ ‘You are right, O Prophet of Allah,’ the wind answered, ‘surely the Lord of mightiness, the Great and Almighty, had sent me to the ship of the children of so-and-so in order to save it from drowning. So I went out according to the laws, and Allah, the Great and Almighty, hastened me to what He had ordered me, so I passed by this woman while she was on her roof, and I stumbled across her; and I had no (ill) intention toward her, so she fell and broke her hand.’ So Sulayma’n said: ‘My Lord, how shall I judge against the wind?’ He revealed to him: ‘O Sulayma’n, decide the blood-money of the broken hand of this woman against the owners of the ship which the wind save from drowning, for none of people is wronged before Me.’”

With this matter we will finish our talk about some precepts which have been reported from Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and which have included most chapters of the science of Islamic jurisprudence such as the acts of worship, dealings, contracts, and others from among the Sunna on which the Shi‘ites depend and in whose light the Imami jurists give religious decisions.

It is worth mentioning that Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, has another group of traditions regarding religious precepts; this group has been mentioned in the encyclopedias of demonstrative jurisprudence, but it requires a study and contemplation. The books of jurisprudence have objectively presented them, but I (i.e. the author) have not presented them because this book is not one of the jurisprudence books; I have mentioned these examples of jurisprudence as proofs of the Imam’s scientific wealth and of that he was the highest authority of religious decisions in the Islamic world of his time.

1. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 1, p. 127.
2. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 5.
3. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, Chapter on Wudu”.
4. Ibid.
5. Furu‘ al-Ka’fi, vol. 1, p. 11.
6. Ibid., p. 10.
7. Man la’ Yahdarahu’ al-Faqih, vol. 1, p. 16.
8. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 1, p. 328.
9. Qur’an, 18, 110.
10. Furu‘ al-Ka’fi, vol. 1, p. 21.
11. Al-‘Urwat al-Withqa’, Hateful Things in Wudu”.
12. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 2, p. 978. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 59.
13. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 59. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 2, p. 973.
14. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 55. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 2, p. 968.
15. Furu‘ al-Ka’fi, vol. 1, p. 113. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 2, p. 1070.
16. Furu‘ al-Ka’fi, vol. 2, p. 156. Wasa”il al-Shi‘a, vol. 2, p. 1083.

17. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 2, p. 946. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 14.
18. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 2, p. 936.
19. Ibid., p. 799.
20. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 50. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 2, p. 786.
21. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 135. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 43.
22. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 73. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 30.
23. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 213.
24. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 90.
25. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 77.
26. Minha'jj al-Sa'lihin.
27. Wasa''il al-Shi'a.
28. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 68.
29. Minha'jj al-Sa'lihin.
30. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 1, p. 147.
31. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 111. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 257.
32. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 96. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 261.
33. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 242. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 266.
34. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 445.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p. 53.
37. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 308. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 3, p. 538.
38. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 324. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 3, p. 550.
39. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 3, p. 579.
40. Ibid., p. 633.
41. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 1, p. 91.
42. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 159. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 4, p. 630.
43. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 4, p. 765.
44. Ibid.
45. The taslim is recited after the final rak'a of every prayer. The worshipper remains kneeling after the tashahud, and says: السلام عليك أيها النبي ورحمة الله وبركاته السلام علينا وعلى عباد الله الصالحين السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته
As-sala'mu 'alay-ka ayyuha'n-nabiyu' wa-rahmatu'lla'hi wa-baraka'tu-h. As-sala'mu 'alay-na' wa-'ala' 'iba'di'lla'hi's-sa'lihin. As-sala'mu 'alay-kum wa-rahmatu'lla'hi wa-baraka'tu-h.
Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and Allah's mercy and blessing. Peace be upon us, and upon the righteous servants of Allah. Peace be upon you (all), and Allah's mercy and blessing.
46. Al-Sara''ir, p. 469
47. Ibid.
48. Zaka't al-fitra: the amount (in cash or kind) paid to the need at the end of the month of Ramada'n; see text for more details.
49. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 6, p. 455. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 153.
50. Al-Tahdhib, 358.
51. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 147.
52. Al-'Urwat al-Withqa'.
53. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 163. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 6, p. 190.
54. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 147. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 6, p. 213.
55. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 1, p. 64.
56. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 6, p. 345.
57. Al-Maqna'a, p. 46.
58. Ibid. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 6, p. 375.

59. Al-Maqna'a, p. 46. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 6, p. 375.
60. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 4111. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 121.
61. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 8, p. 39.
62. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 416. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 8, p. 133.
63. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 416. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 8, p. 133.
64. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 168. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 7, p. 133.
65. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 198.
66. Al-Maqna'a, p. 48.
67. Minha'jj al-Sa'lihin, Chapter on Fasting.
68. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 7, pp. 246-247.
69. Al-Imam al-Khu''i, Minha'jj al-Sa'lihin. As for Imam al-Hakim, he gave a religious decision that compensation is obligatory apart from redemption, and he said: "If it is possible to add travel to illness, then it is a strong precaution to perform both compensation and redemption."
70. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 438.
71. Musba'h al-Mutahajjidin, p. 524. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 7, p. 326.
72. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 1, p. 77. Wasa''il al-Shi'a.
73. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 250. Al-Wasa''il vol. 8, p. 117.
74. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 261. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 8, p. 147.
75. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 8, p. 232.
76. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 324.
77. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 471. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 1, p. 31.
78. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 57.
79. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 267. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 92.
80. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 127.
81. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 262.
82. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 51.
83. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, p. 536.
84. Ibid.
85. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 9, p. 287.
86. Ibid., p. 417.
87. Ibid., p. 465.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid., vol. 10, p. 114.
90. Ibid., p. 114. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 348.
91. Ka'mil al-Ziya'ra't, p. 331. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 10, p. 273.
92. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 65.
93. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 188. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 75.
94. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 1, p. 99.
95. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 53.
96. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 383.
97. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 343.
98. Ibid., p. 344. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 364.
99. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 402.
100. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 115. Al-Sara''ir, p. 469.
101. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 117.
102. Tafsir al-'Ayya'shi, vol. 1, p. 336.
103. Ibid., p. 339.
104. Ibid., p. 238. Al-Wasa''il, vol. 12, 138.

105. Al-Maqna'a, p. 31.
106. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 359. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 12, p. 145.
107. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 390.
108. Ibid., p. 401. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 12, p. 481.
109. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 387.
110. Ibid. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 28.
111. Tafsir al-'Ayya'shi, vol. 1, p. 155. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 91.
112. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 355.
113. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 61. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 115.
114. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 414. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 245.
115. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 267.
116. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 378.
117. Al-Fadl b. SAhl, nicknamed Dhu' al-Ri'a'satayn (the man with two offices) because he was in the charge of the military and civil administration under the Caliph al-Ma'mu'n.
118. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 238. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 415.
119. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 415.
120. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 238.
121. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 436.
122. Ibid., p. 438.
123. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 282.
124. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 13, p. 476. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 282.
125. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 14, p. 22.
126. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 15.
127. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 131.
128. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 14, p. 62.
129. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 26.
130. Al-Wasa''il.
131. Ibid.
132. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 160.
133. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 77.
134. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 240.
135. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 14, p. 367.
136. 'Idda is the prescribed period of waiting after the dissolution of marriage during which a widow or a divorced woman may not arrange another fixed-term or permanent marriage. Its purpose is to leave no doubt about the paternity of a child born after the dissolution of the marriage.
137. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 17.
138. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 14, p. 415.
139. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 200.
140. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 44.
141. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 187.
142. Tafsir al-'Ayya'shi, vol. 1, p. 134.
143. See note on 109.
144. Furu'' al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 45.
145. Ibid.
146. Ibid., p. 47.
147. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 14, p. 494.
148. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 147.
149. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 309.

150. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 23.
151. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 51.
152. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 90.
153. Ibid., p. 63.
154. Ibid., 95.
155. Tafsir al-Qummi, p. 686.
156. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 249.
157. Ibid., p. 276.
158. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 2, p. 270.
159. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 2, p. 168.
160. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 101. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 302.
161. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 317.
162. Al-muhalil is he who marries a divorced woman in order to dismiss her, so that the first husband may marry her again.
163. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 103.
164. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 369.
165. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 102.
166. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 378.
167. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 110.
168. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 159. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 445.
169. Al-Mukhtala‘a is the woman who pays compensation to her husband in order to divorce her.
170. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 499.
171. Al-Zaha'r means putting away the wife by likening her back to that of his mother's back.
172. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 128.
173. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 15, p. 527.
174. Ibid.
175. Qurb al-Isna'd, p. 160.
176. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 40, p. 16.
177. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 6, p. 184.
178. Ibid., vol. 7, p. 440. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 16, p. 157.
179. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 7, p. 440.
180. Ibid., vol. 6, p. 215.
181. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a.
182. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 6, p. 222.
183. Al-Tahdhib. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 16, p. 407.
184. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 9, p. 20.
185. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 6, p. 310.
186. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 17, p. 256.
187. Ibid., p. 287.
188. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 5, p. 276.
189. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 17, p. 480.
190. Ibid., 18, p. 259.
191. Furu'‘ al-Ka'fi, vol. 7, p. 246.
192. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 18, p. 539.
193. Man la' Yahdarahu' al-Faqih, vol. 4, p. 122. Wasa''il al-Shi‘a, vol. 19, p. 42.

Chapter 10: Reasons For Some Religious Precepts And Others

The ‘Addliya[1] from among the Shi‘a and the Mu‘tazilites have unanimously agreed that every precept issues from the Holy Legislator (Allah) is never spontaneous; rather it concerns an inclusive individual and social interest which brings about to them general good, whether this precept is obligatory or recommended; likewise, if the precept is unlawful or reprehensible, for surely it includes an inseparable corruption or not inseparable corruption which causes heavy harm to man, and it is impossible that a precept issues from the Great Legislator and is void of interests or has some acts of corruption, for surely that requires impugning the wisdom of the Legislator; likewise, it requires the voidness and uselessness of legislation. The Ash‘arites have opposed that and maintained that all precepts of the Legislator are spontaneous and devoid of wisdom and interests. The weakness of this view is clear, for many corrupt adhesions result from it and they have been mentioned in the theological books.

Any how, the Imam, peace be on him, has announced that it is necessary for religious precepts to include interests in the side of the obligatory and acts of corruption in the side of the unlawful. He stated that during giving answers to the reasons of some precepts about which al-Fadl b. Sha’dha’n asked him. He, peace be on him, said:

“If a questioner asks: ‘Is it permissible for the Wise One (Allah) to charge a servant with one of the acts (of worship) without a cause or a meaning?’ It is said to him: ‘That is not permissible, for He is wise, not frivolous nor ignorant.’ If a sayer says: ‘Tell me: Why has He charged the creatures (with acts of worship)?’ It is said: ‘For many reasons.’ If a sayer says: ‘Tell me about these reasons: Are they known and available or are they neither known nor available?’ It is said: ‘Rather, they are known and available with their people.’[2]”

Any how, many questions about the reasons for some theological researches spread in the time of the Imam. Other questions about the reasons for legislating some religious precepts were also asked. Yet other questions about the conditions of the prophets and the affairs of the bygone communities were asked. The Imam, peace be on him, was asked about these questions and he answered them. Muhammad b. Sina’n asked him about a group of them, and al-Fadl b. Sha’dha’n heard some of the Imam’s answers to them. The questions are as follows:

Theological Questions

As for the theological questions whose reasons the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned, they are as follows:

A. The Reason for ordering the creation to profess Allah

The Imam, peace be on him, has stated the firm reason why it is obligatory on servants to profess Allah, the Most High, His messengers, and what has been brought from Him. He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have the creatures been ordered to profess Allah, His Messenger, His argument, and what has been brought from Allah, the Great and Almighty?’”

The Imam’s answer is as follows: “It is said: ‘For many reasons, of which are: If men do not profess Allah, the Great and Almighty, do not refrain from disobeying him, do not abstain from committing great sins, do not fear anyone regarding what they desire and enjoy of corruption and oppression, they will be corrupt, attack each other, rape women, plunder properties, shed blood, and killed each other without right. Without doubt, this results in the ruin of the world, the destruction of the creation, the corruption of the tilth and the stock.

“Yet of which are: Surely Allah, the Great and Almighty, is wise. None is wise and described by wisdom except him who bans corruption, enjoins righteousness, restrains (men) from oppression, and prevent (them) from atrocities. Banning corruption, enjoining righteousness, and preventing atrocities are not (available) except after professing Allah, the Great and Almighty, and recognizing the one who enjoins and forbids.

“If the people were left without professing Allah, the Great and Almighty, and without knowledge of Him, then neither enjoining righteousness nor preventing corruption was established. For there is no one who enjoins (men to do good) and forbids (them from doing evil). Yet some of which are: We have found that the creatures may be corrupt through hidden, covered affairs. So were it not for professing Allah and fear of Him in secret, none, when he is alone with his desire and will, fears anyone regarding giving up sin, violating sacredness, and committing great sins. That is when his deed is covered from the creation and none sees it. So through that is the difference between all creation. Therefore, straightness and righteousness do not occur except through their professing the Omniscient, the All-aware, Who knows the secret and what is yet more hidden, enjoins righteousness and forbids corruption, from Whom no secret remains hidden, that through that they may prevent themselves from all kinds of corruption when they are alone with them.’[3]”

Surely the firmest deed for uprooting crime, driving it away from individual and society, purifying the earth from sins and offenses is planting the faith in Allah, the Exalted, in the depths of souls and hearts, and the faith in that Allah watches him who commits crime or sin with respect to his own soul and his society, and that He will severely punish him because of it.

As man loves his own soul and seeks good for it, he normally refrains from any sin which leads to destruction and misery.

Crimes have increased during these time; terrorist deeds such as killing the innocent, hijacking, and the

like from among crimes and offenses have also increased because of the weakness of the faith in Allah and the paucity of the religious restraint in souls.

Surely the forces of good and peace are built on faith in Allah, the Most High. The faith in Him is the firmest way for spreading justice, security, and welfare among men. So man will increase in affliction and misery because he has little faith in Allah or he has no faith in Him.

B. Professing Allah's Oneness

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has it been made incumbent on them (men) to profess and recognize that Allah is One and Unique?'

" It is said: 'For reasons of which is that if He did not make profession and knowledge (of Him) obligatory on them (men), then it would be permissible for them to imagine (that there were) two directors or more than that; and if that was permissible, they would not distinguish the One Who created them from other than him, for every human being of them did not come to know (of Him), for he worshipped the one other than Him who created him, and obey the one other than Him who ordered him, so they were not sure of their Maker and Creator; neither the command of the commander nor the prohibition of the prohibiter is established with them; therefore, the commander himself is not known; nor is the prohibiter (distinguished) from other than him.

"'Of which is that if it was possible for two (creators to exist), one of the two partners was not worthier of worship and obedience than the other; if it was permissible to obey that partner, then it was permissible not to obey Allah; and if it was permissible not to obey Allah, then that would result in: disbelief in Allah, all His messengers and His Books; establishing all kinds of falsehood; leaving all kinds of right; making lawful all kinds of the unlawful; making unlawful all kinds of the lawful; entering all acts of disobedience; coming out of all acts of obedience; permitting all kinds of corruption; and invalidating all kinds of right.

"'Yet of which is that if it was possible for more than one (creator to exist), then it would be possible for Iblis to claim that he was that other (one), that he might oppose Allah, the Exalted, in all His decrees and make the servants incline to him, so, through that, there will be the greatest unbelief and the most intense hypocrisy.'[4]"

This part gives an account of the necessity of faith in the Oneness of Allah, the Most High, and the impossibility of existence of a partner along with Him. The Imam, peace be on him, has stated his wonderful proofs of that, and that the existence of a partner along with Allah, the Exalted, results in the disorder of the regulation, the corruption of the world, and the absence of balance in these worlds.

C. There is Nothing like Allah

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why it has been made incumbent on them (men) to confess that there is nothing like Allah?'

“It is said: ‘For reasons of which are that they should not mean other than Him by acts of worship and obedience, and that the affair of their Lord, their Maker, and their Provider is not vague for them. Of which is that were it not for that they knew that there was nothing like him, they would come to know that their lord and maker were those idols, which their forefathers had installed for them, the sun, the moon, and the fires. If it was possible for Him to be vague to them, then that would result in corruption, leaving all acts of obedience to Him, and committing all acts of disobedience to Him according to what came to their knowledge of the stories of these lords, their order and their prohibition. Of which is that were it not for that it was incumbent on them to know that there was nothing like Him, then it would be permissible for them to subject Him to the same (qualities) of the creatures such as incapability, ignorance, change, disappearance, extinction, lying, and aggression. He who is subject to these things, none can give security to his extinction, have confidence in his justice, be sure of his saying, his order and his prohibition, his promise and his threat, his reward and his punishment; and that results in the corruption of the creation and invalidating lordship.’5”

In this part the Imam has mentioned the firm reasons why it has been made incumbent on servants to believe that there is nothing like Him. For if there was something like Him, then He would be subject to servants’ qualities such as incapability, ignorance, extinction, and the like; and that results in the corruption of the creation and the invalidity of Lordship.

D. The Cause for Charging Servants (with Religious Duties)

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has Allah, the Exalted, enjoined and prohibited servants?’

“It is said: ‘Because their existence and their righteousness are not except through the order, the prohibition, the ban from corruption and usurping each other.’6”

The Imam, peace be on him, means that the cause for the religious duties from among the obligatory and the unlawful is the subsistence of man and the continuation of his existence, for therein are his righteousness, keeping his security, his interests, and his happiness; and in leaving them are his misery and his destruction.

E. The Cause for Knowledge of the Messengers

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why it has been made incumbent on them (people) to know the messengers, to profess them, and to yield to them through obedience?’

“It is said: ‘As that through which they complete their interests is not in their creation and their forces, the Maker is far above from being seen, their frailty and their feebleness to attain Him is manifest, there is no escape for them from an infallible messenger between Him and them (in order to) convey to them His order, His prohibition, and His good manners, and to inform them of that which leads to their profits and their harms. So if it was not incumbent on them to know and obey him (the messenger), then there

would for them no profit nor fulfilling a need in the coming of the messenger, and his coming not for profit nor righteousness is vanity; and this is not one of the attributes of the Wise (Allah) Who has mastered all things.'"

This part gives an account of the reason why it is obligatory on men to know the messengers, to acknowledge their Prophethood, and to believe in them; otherwise knowledge of them is vanity and nonsense.

F. The Reason for Obeying Rulers

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why He has appointed rulers and ordered (men) to obey them?' It is said: 'For many reasons of which is that when the creatures have been ordered to stop by a limited limit and have been ordered not to exceed that limit, because therein is their corruption, that is not established nor stands except through that He must appoint among them a trusted one who prevents them from exceeding and entering that from which He has banned them, for if that was not, then none would leave his pleasure and his profit because of the corruption of other than him, so He has appointed over them a custodian in order to prevent them from corruption and to administer among them the punishments and the precepts.

"'Of which is that we do not find a sect from among the sects nor a people from among the peoples subsist and live except through a custodian and a head, and as there is no escape for them from him (the ruler) regarding the affairs of the religion and the world, then it is not permissible in the wisdom of the Wise to leave the creation without him whom He knows that there is no escape for them (the creation) from him (the ruler); nor do they subsist except through him, so they through him fight against their enemy and divide their booty, and he establishes for them their gathering and their community, and prevents their oppressive from their oppressed.

"'Yet of which is that if He does not appoint for them an Imam custodian, trusted, protector, and gentle, then the community will be effaced, the religion be removed, the laws and precepts will be changed, the innovators will increase it (the religion), the infidels will decrease it, and make that as vague errors for the people, for we have found the creatures incomplete, needy, not complete, along with their difference, their different caprices, and their scattered manners. If He does not appoint for them a custodian keeping what the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has brought, they will become corrupt, as we have explained, laws, practices, precepts and faith will be changed; and in that will be the corruption of the creation in general.'[7]"

In this part the Imam, peace be on him, talks about that the Imamate is necessary, and that it is a basic element for establishing Islamic life, administering the punishments and precepts of Allah, the Exalted. The Imam has given many causes and reasons for that.

G. The Imam is from among the Progeny of the Prophet

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why is it not permissible that the Imam is from other than the progeny of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family?’

“It is said: ‘For many reasons of which is that as obedience to the Imam is obligatory, there is no escape from an indication which indicates him, and he is distinguished by it from other than him, and it (the indication) is the famous relationship and the manifest testament, that (the people) may distinguish him from other than him and find the right way to him. And of which is that if it was permissible (to entrust the Imamate) to other than the progeny of the Messenger, then He (Allah) would prefer him who was not a messenger to the messengers, for He would make the sons of the messengers follow the sons of His enemies such as Abu’ JAhl and Ibn Abu’ Mi‘yat, for it might be permissible for that (i.e. the Imamate), according to their claim, to pass to their sons if they were believers. So the sons of the Messengers became followers; the sons of the enemies of Allah and the enemies of His Messenger became followed; therefore, the Messenger was worthier of this excellence than other than him.

“‘Surely, if the creation acknowledged the message of the Messenger and yielded to obedience to him, then none of them would show haughtiness toward following his own son and obeying his own progeny, and that would not intensify in the souls of the people. And if that (i.e. the Imamate) was (entrusted to) other than the progeny of the Messenger, then each one of them (the people) would feel that he was worthier of it (the Imamate) than other than him; out of that they would be haughty and would not obey those inferior to them; therefore, that would lead to corruption, hypocrisy, and difference.’8”

The Imam, peace be on him, has established these firm reasons for the necessity that the Imam should belong to the grandsons and progeny of the Prophet, for he would be better for unifying the community and protecting it from the calamities of discord and difference like those occurred when the pure family (of the Prophet) was removed from government and responsibility, so the community differed; caprices spread among it; discords and enmities dominated it; and that was among the disasters and misfortunes which befell the community.

The Causes of the Religious Precepts

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, has stated many causes for the religious precepts and the reasons of their legislation. That was in the answers which he wrote to the questions of Muhammad b. Sina’n; al-Fadl b. Sha’dha’n has transmitted these answers from him. These researches are wonderful and useful, for they highlight the firm reason why the Almighty Legislator has legislated His holy precepts, and that is as follows:

A. The Ghusl of Jana’ba

The Imam talked about the reason why the Legislator has made the *ghusl* of *jana’ba* obligatory. He,

peace be on him, has said: “The reason for the *ghusl* of *jana’ba* is cleanness and man’s purifying his own soul from its harm which befalls him and purifying his entire body, for the *jana’ba* comes out of all the body, so it is obligatory on him to purify his entire body.[9]”

The Imam, peace be on him, has explained the sublime purposes for which Islam has legislated the *ghusl* of *jana’ba*, and they are as follows:

B. Cleanness

Islam takes great care of cleanness and regards it as part of faith, for it is among the most modern means of prevention from diseases which results from dirt; and wash (*ghusl*) is among the most manifest means of purity and cleanness of the body.

C. Returning Vitality to the Body

Surely *jana’ba* (the ejaculation of semen) brings about the emaciation and withering of the body, so wash (*ghusl*) returns activity and vitality to it, and this has been emphasized by the modern medical researches.

D. The ghusl for the two ‘Ids and Friday

In his answers to the questions of Muhammad b. Sina’n, the Imam, peace be on him, said: “The cause for the *ghusl* for the two ‘Ids, Friday, and other *ghusls* is that, through it, the servant magnifies his Lord, receives the Generous and the Great (Allah), and asks Him to forgive him his sins, and that it may be for them a known ‘Id when they gather in order to mention Allah, the Exalted, so *ghusl* has been appointed therein in order that it may be magnified, preferred to all days, and an increase in the supererogatory prayers and the acts of worship. And that purity for it (the body) should be from Friday to Friday.[10]”

It is recommended to wash on the day of ‘Id al-Addha’, ‘Id al-Fitr, Friday, and other religious occasions such as the day of ‘Id al-Ghadir, the visitation to the Shrines of the pure Imams, peace be on them, and other than that from among which the jurists have mentioned. The Imam, peace be on him, has shown the reason for legislating *ghusl* on these occasions as follows:

1. It (*ghusl*) makes man magnify His Great Creator when he asks pardon and forgiveness from Him, the Exalted.

2. It makes the Muslims magnify the ‘Ids and urges them to associate with each other.

3. The Muslims must prefer these days to the rest of the days of the year, for this great occasion occurs in them.

4. They must increase the acts of worship and to celebrate these days through mentioning Allah, the Exalted.

5. As for the reason for the *ghusl* for Friday, it is that the body is pure and clean from Friday to Friday.

E. Ghusl al-Maiyit

The Imam, peace be on him, has given two reasons for that *ghusl al-maiyit* [11] is obligatory:

Regarding the first reason, he, peace be on him, said: "The cause of *ghusl al-maiyit* is that he is washed, for he becomes pure and is free from the dirt of his illness and all kinds of maladies which befall him, for he will meet the angels and associate with the people of the hereafter. When he goes to Allah, he meets the pure people; they touch him and he touches them, then it is recommended for him to be pure and clean, that they may turn to Allah and to intercede for him with Him."

Regarding the second reason, he, peace be on him, said: "Yet another reason is that the semen from which he had been created comes out of him, so he is impure, and accordingly he is washed.[12]"

Islam takes great care of the dead Muslims; it summons the Muslims to escort them to their final resting places and to console their families on their misfortunes; it has made it incumbent, sufficient necessity, to wash them, to payer over them, and to bury them. The Imam has justified washing them as follows:

A. The dead should be cleansed of dirt and the germs which are in his body and which result from his illness, and that is through washing him with water mixed with leaves of nabk tree (*sidr*) and camphor which are among the things which sterilize the body.

B. Surely after washing, the dead are pure. If they are believers, then they will shake hand with the angels and the believers from among the inhabitants of the next world.

C. The last thing which comes out of the bodies of the dead is the sperm from which they had been created. For this reason it is obligatory to wash them. Some modern theories have emphasized this meaning, and they believe that the sperm from which man is created remains living, and that from it he will be raised from the dead on the Day of Resurrection.

Any how, Islam has legislated for the dead the most wonderful precepts such as washing (*ghusl*) and burying in the ground.

F. Ghusl for Touching a Corpse

He, peace be on him, said: "And the reason for his washing because of washing him (the dead) or touching him, so it is purity of what befalls him of the sweat of the dead, for when the soul comes out of him, most of his blight remains, so he must cleanse himself of it and he becomes pure.[13]"

When one touches the cold corpse of the dead, he should wash his body. The Imam, peace be on him, has justified this *ghusl* saying that it is obligatory because man becomes a mass of germs after his death; therefore, it is obligatory on him who touches the cold corpse of the dead to wash his body in

order to get rid of germs.

G. Ghusl for Urine and Feces is not obligatory

He, peace be on him, said: “And the reason for decrease regarding urine and feces because they are more abundant and lasting more than *jana'ba*, so *wudu'* has been made obligatory for them, for they are abundant, hard, come without any will, and no libido results from them; *jana'ba* does not occur except through their practicing pleasure and forcing their own souls.[14]”

The Imam, peace be on him, has given reasons that *ghusl* for urine and feces is not obligatory, and that it is sufficient to cleanse the two places, for making *ghusl* for them obligatory is an intense and unbearable difficulty, so the Legislator has raised it.

H. Wudu

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have they (men) been order to perform *wudu”* and to start with it?’

“It is said: ‘Because the servant is pure when he stands up before the Almighty (Allah), says whispered prayers to Him, obey Him regarding what He has ordered him, pure of dirt and uncleanness; in addition to that (*wudu”*) drives away inactivity, dismisses drowsiness, and purifies the heart before the Almighty.’[15]”

The Imam, peace be on him, has justified *wudu”* through the following spiritual reasons:

A. Surely *wudu”* is the precondition and essence of the prayers; it is coming to Allah, the Creator of the universe and Giver of life. It is obligatory on the worshipper to rid himself of the concerns of life, to come through his feelings and sentiments to Allah, the Most High. When Imam al-Hasan the master of the youths of the Garden and sweet basil of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family stood up for prayer, he would shake with fear of Allah and his skin would turn yellow. He was asked about that, and he answered: “I am going to stand before the Almighty King.” So *wudu”* is a precondition for this great act of worship, and it means freeing the body from dirt and uncleanness, and this is of that which suits the greatness of the prayers.

B. Surely, *wudu”* dismisses inactivity, takes drowsiness away, and prepares the worshippers for the prayer with activity and vitality.

C. Surely, *wudu”* purifies the heart and soul, for it is a precondition for standing before Allah, the Exalted.

Moreover, it leads to the spiritual profits which the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned. In other words it results in health profits of great importance of which is that it protects the eyes from Trachoma, for they are washed with clean water several times a day.

Of which is washing the nose with cool water which protects (man) from cold, which is the key to diseases.

Of which is washing the face and the hands in order to protect them from skin diseases and inflammations, for it has been mentioned in modern medicine that many microbes bring about diseases to man through penetrating his skin, and especially as it concerns parasites. Without doubt washing the uncovered parts of man's body frequently is an important way to get rid of parasites.

And of which is that the germs which enter man's body through the mouth result from the pollution of the hands, so if the hands are washed and always clean, then it will be the best way to get rid of germs.[16]

I. The Acts of "Wudu"

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has He made it obligatory to wash the face and the hands, appointed the rubbing to the head and the feet, and has not made that full washing or full rubbing?'

"It is said: 'For various reasons of which is that the greatest act of worship is *ruku'* (bow) and *suju'd* (adoration) which one performs through the face and the hands, not through the head and the feet.

"'Of which is that the creatures cannot every time bear washing the head and the feat, and that it is difficult for them (to perform that) during cold, travel, illness, and times of the night and the day. Washing the face and the hands is easier than washing the head and the feet. He (Allah) has imposed the religious duties according to the least of the healthy people in obedience, and then He has made them (religious duties) include both the strong and the weak.

"'Yet of which is that the head and the feet are not every time apparent and manifest like the face and the hands, because of wearing the turban, the sandals, and the like.'[17]"

Wudu" in the viewpoint of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, is washing the face, the hands, rubbing the head and the feet. As for the Imam, peace be on him, he has mentioned the reasons for the acts of *wudu"* as follows:

A. The main parts of the prayer, for which *wudu"* has been legislated, are *ruku'* and *suju'd,* which one performs through the face and the hands, so washing is for them, not for other than them.

B. Surely, washing the head and the feet brings about intense difficulty, especially during the days of cold, travel, and illness. So the Legislator is content with rubbing them.

C. The apparent limbs in man's body are the face and the hands apart from other than them, so washing is for them only.

In his answers to the questions of Muhammad b. Sina'n, the Imam, peace be on him, has given another

reason for *wudu"* similar to the one mentioned above, saying: "And the reason for *wudu"* for which the washing of the face and the hands, rubbing of the head and the feet has been (legislated) is because of his standing before Allah, the Great and Almighty, his receiving Him with his apparent limbs, and his meeting with them the noble scribes.

"So washing the face is for *suju'd* and submission, washing the hands for receiving (Allah) with them, to ask (Him), to fear (Him), to devote himself (to Him) with them. Rubbing is for the head and the feet because they are apparent and uncovered, and he receives with them (Allah) in all his circumstance, and there is (nothing) in them of submission and devotion to (Allah) just as that in the face and the hands.[18]"

J. The Prayer

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why have they (men) been ordered to perform prayer?'

"It is said: 'Because through prayer one professes Lordship, and it (profession) is general righteousness, because therein is deposing equals before the Almighty (Allah) with submissiveness, yielding, submission, humility, profession, asking forgiveness from the past sins, placing the forehead on the ground by day and night; that the servant may praise Allah, not forget Him, be lowly, afraid, abased, seeking, desirous for an increase in the religion and the world, along with refraining from corruption. The prayer has become obligatory on the servant by day and night lest he should forget his Lord and his Creator and standing before his Lord; and it (the prayer may) restrain him from the acts of disobedience and prevent him from all kinds of corruption.[19]"

The believer can use prayer as a ladder to ascend to the heaven, and through it the Allah-fearing can seek nearness to Allah. The Imam, peace be on him, has stated some interests in legislating prayer as follows:

A. Some profits and fruit of prayer are: The worshipper absolutely professes Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty Creator, *nothing like a likeness of Him*. He increases in lowliness, submission, and abasement before Allah. He asks Him to pardon him and to forgive him his sins which he has committed during his lifetime.

B. Prayer protects man from acts of disobedience, prevents him from evil deeds, and guides him to good, on the condition that he should perform it in the right manner and conform to its preconditions.

C. If man repeats prayer every day, he will have firm and constant links with his Creator and Director of his affairs. In addition to these profits which the Imam, peace be on him, has stated, prayer is the best way of providing society with creative, spiritual forces.

If man spiritually communicate with his Creator, then he feels no loneliness and depression. So prayer helps him communicate with the Generous Creator. It removes from him fear, loneliness, and

depression. Moreover it supplies him with spiritual forces through which he can face all difficulties and hardships.

K. The Adha'n of Prayer

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Tell me about *adha'n* (the call to prayer): Why have they (people) been ordered to say it?'

"It is said: 'For many reasons of which are: It reminds the inattentive (of prayer), calls the attention of the heedless (to it), makes him who is ignorant of time and forgets prayer know (it), and summons (men) to worship the Creator. It makes (men) desirous of prayer, profess His Oneness, declare faith publicly, announce Islam. It calls him who forgets it (prayer to perform it). It is said that he is a *mu'adhin* because he says the *adha'n* (the call to prayer).'[20]"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reasons for legislating the *adha'n* or call to prayer as follows:

A. It reminds the inattentive of prayer and draws the attention of the heedless, that they may perform this religious duty.

B. It makes the Muslims know the timing of prayer, that they may prepare themselves for performing it individually or in congregation.

C. It summons men to worship the Great Creator and to profess His Oneness.

L. The Phrases which make up the adha'n

The Imam, peace be on him, has given an account of the reasons for the phrases which make up the *adha'n* as follows:

A. Starting with *takkbir* or exclaiming 'Allah is Great!':

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why does he (*mu'adhin*) starts it (the *adha'n*) with *takkbir* (Allah is Great!) before *tahlil* (there is no god but Allah)?'

"It is said: 'Because he wants to start with His name, for the name of Allah, the Exalted, is in the first letters of *takkbir*, and in *tahlil* (His name) is in the last letters, so he starts with the letters in which the name of Allah is at the beginning, not at the end.'[21]"

The Imam, peace be on him, has shown the reason for starting the *adha'n* with exclaiming *Allahu akbar* (Allah is Great!) before starting it with *la' ila'ha illa'lla'h* (there is no god but Allah). That is because the *mu'adhin* (the person who recites the *adha'n*) may start the *adha'n* and open it with His name, the Exalted, and that is contrary to *tahlil*, for His name, the Exalted, is at the end of it, and this is not

appropriate for starting the *adha'n.*

B. *Al-takkbir arba'an* or exclaiming 'Allah is great!' four times:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has the *takkbir* at the beginning of the *adha'n* been made four (times)?'

"It is said: 'Because the *adha'n* starts suddenly, and there is no speech before it in order to call the attention of the listeners to it, so it has been made (four times) in order to call the attention of the listeners to that which is after it in the *adha'n*.'22"

The purpose of the *adha'n* is to draw the attention of the Muslims in order to prepare themselves for performing prayer, and for this purpose the *takkbir* therein has been made four times, just as the Imam, peace be on him, says.

C. The phrases which make up the *adha'n* are said two times by two times:

He, peace be on him, said: "Why has it (the *adha'n*) been recited two (times) by two (times)?

"It is said: 'Because it is repeated in the ears of the listeners and is emphasized for them. If someone is headless of the first (time), he is not heedless of the second (time). And because prayer (is performed) two *rak'as* by two *rak'as*, and for this reason (the phrases of) the *adha'n* (are recited) two (times) by two (times).'23"

Surely each of the phrases which make up the *adha'n* summons men to good, salvation, and success. So repeating them fixes these concepts in the minds of the listeners.

D. Regarding the *shaha'datayn* or twin formulae of faith: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has He placed the *shaha'datayn* after the *takkbir?'*

"It is said: 'Because the first (part) of faith is Oneness and professing the Oneness of Allah, the Great and Almighty, and the second (part of faith) is professing the message of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, that obedience to them and knowledge of them are associated (with each other), and that the origin of faith is the *shaha'datayn* (the twofold testimony), so He has placed the *Shaha'datayn* just as He has placed *Shaha'datayn* (two testimonies) in the rest of the rights; therefore, if one professes the Oneness of Allah and the message of the Messenger, then he professes the entire faith, for the origin of faith is professing Allah and His Messenger.'24"

The *adha'n* is opened with the *Shaha'datayn* after the *takkbir:* bearing witness that Allah is One and that Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is His Messenger, and these two witnesses are the origin and slogan of Islam, so he who believes in them enjoys all the Muslim's rights such as sparing his

blood and protecting his property. As the rest of the rights are established by these two testimonies, Islam is established by them.

E. The Call to Prayer (*haya 'ala"sala'h*):

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer say: 'Why has He placed the call to prayer (*haya 'ala"sala'h*) after the *shaha'datayn*?'

"It is said: 'Because the *adha'n* has been placed for prayer, and it is the call to prayer, so the call has been placed in the middle of the *adha'n*. The *mu'adhin* says four (phrases) before it: the two *takkbirs* and the *shaha'datayn* (two testimonies). Then he says four (phrases) after it calling (men) to salvation (*fala'h*) urging (them) to kindness and prayer. Then he calls (them) to the best of actions (*khayr al-'amal*) making them desirous of it (prayer), its action, and its performing. Then he calls through the *takkbir* and the *tahlil*, that he may complete after it four (phrases) just as he completes four (phrases) before it, and that he may complete his speech through mentioning the name of Allah just as he opens it through mentioning the name of Allah, the Exalted.'25"

Islam takes great care of prayer, so it has placed it among its foremost religious rites, and legislated the *adha'n* as a sign for entering the timing of prayer, that the Muslims may prepare themselves for performing this great, religious duty. It has placed *hayya 'ala's sala'h* (make haste to the prayer) after the *shaha'datayn* (the two testimonies), and it (*hayya 'ala's sala'h*) is a call to begin prayer. Similarly, the call to salvation (*fala'h*) and the best of actions (*khayr al-'amal*), which are two of the phrases of the *adha'n*, include prayer; therefore, prayer is part of salvation(*fala'h*) and of the best actions (*khayr al-'amal*).

F. The *tahlil* at the end of the *adha'n*:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has He placed the *tahlil* at the end of it (prayer), and not placed the *takkbir* at the end of it just as He has placed the *takkbir* at the beginning of it?'

"It is said: 'Because the name of Allah is at the end of the *tahlil*, so Allah, the Exalted, desires to end the speech with His name just as He has opened it with His name.'"

Surely, the *tahlil* (there is no god but Allah) at the end of the *adha'n* means negating all kinds of gods except Allah, the Most High, the Originator of the universes and Creator of life. The *adha'n* is started with *Alla'hu akbar* (Allah is Great!) just as it is ended with *la' ila'ha illa'llah* (there is no god but Allah).

G. The *tasbih* instead of the *tahlil*

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why He has not placed the *tasbih* (glory belongs to Allah), the *tahmid* (praise belongs to Allah), and the name of Allah instead of the *tahlil* at the end of it (the *adha'n*)?'

"It is said: 'Because the *tahlil* is professing the Oneness of Allah and removing the equals other than

Allah; it is the beginning of faith and is the greatest of the *tasbih* and the *tahmid*.'"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reason for placing the *tahlil* at the end of the *adha'n* in stead of the *tasbih* (glory belongs to Allah) and the *tahmid* (praise belongs to Allah), for it is the greatest of them in professing the Oneness of Allah, the Most High, and negating all gods except Him. As for the *tasbih* and the *tahmid*, they do not give this meaning.

M. The Phrases which make up the Prayer

The Imam has mentioned the reasons for most parts and conditions of prayer as follows:

1. The seven *takkbirs:*

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has He made the *takkbir* at the beginning seven times?'

"It is said: 'He has made that because the *takkbir* in the first *rak'a*, which is the origin, is seven times: the *takkbir* for the commencement which is *takkbirat al-ihra'm* through which the prayer is commenced the *takkbir* for the *ruku'* during bow down two *takkbirs* for *suju'd*. So if man mentions the *takkbir* at the beginning of prayer seven times, then he achieves the entire *takkbir*. If he forgets some of them or leaves them, then there is no decrease in his prayer."

For this purpose the seven-time *takkbir* has been legislated during commencing prayer, one of these *takkbirs* is *takkbirat al-ihra'm*.

2. Reciting the Qur'an:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why have they been ordered to recite (the Qur'an) in prayer?'

"It is said: 'Lest the Qur'an should be deserted and lost, and that it may be kept, so it will not disappear; nor will it be unknown."

For this reason men have been ordered to recite surat al-Fa'tiha and another sura of the Qur'an in the first and second *rak'a* of prayer.

3. Reciting Surat al-Fa'tiha:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why does he (the worshipper) starts (prayer) with reciting (surat) al-Hamad (al-Fa'tiha) apart from the rest of the suras?'

"It is said: 'Because there is nothing in the Qur'an and the Speech has brought together good and wisdom just as surat al-Hamd has done, and that is according to these words of Him, the Exalted:

"'***Praise belongs to Allah*** means the thanksgiving which Allah, the Exalted, has made incumbent on His servants, and (also means) showing gratitude (toward Him) for the good through which He has given success to His servant.

"'***The Lord of the Worlds*** means glorifying, praising, and professing Him, and means that it is He who is the Creator and Master.

"'***The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*** means seeking sympathy, mentioning His boons and favors toward all His creation.

"'***Master of the Day of Judgment*** means acknowledging before Him the Resurrection, the Reckoning, the repayments, regarding as obligatory that here and the hereafter belong to Him.

"'***You do we serve*** means (seeking) wish and nearness to Allah, the Great and Almighty, (and means) sincerity in work for Him apart from other than Him.

"'***And You do we beseech for help*** means asking Him for more success and acts of worship, asking Him for continuing what He has bestowed upon him and made him see.

"'***Guide us to the right path*** means seeking guidance to His good manners, holding fast by His covenant, seeking more knowledge of his Lord, His tremendousness, and His magnificence.

"'***The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favors*** means an emphasis on the request and the wish, mentioning His previous benefits, His favors toward His friends, and a wish for such favors.

"'***Not*** (***the path***) ***of those upon whom Your wrath is brought down*** means seeking refuge (in Allah) from being one of the stubborn unbelievers who disparage Him, His command, and His prohibition.

"'***Nor of those who go astray*** means seeking protection from being one of those who go astray who have lost the (right) path without knowledge, while they think that they do well.

"'So it (Surat al-Hamd) contains inclusive good and wisdom regarding the affairs of this world and the next to the extent that nothing can contain them (more than it can).'"

Because of these great requests and sublime meanings, the Legislator has ordered prayer to be commenced by Surat al-Fa'tiha, not by other than it from among the Suras of the Holy Qur'an. It has been reported from Imam al-Ridha' that there is no prayer except through the opening sura of the Book. This negation is the negation of the essence; if prayer is commenced by a sura other than al-Fa'tiha', then it is incorrect.

4. The *tasbih* in the *ruku'* and the *suju'd:*

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why the *tasbih* (glory belongs to Allah) has been placed in the *ruku'* and the *suju'd?'*

“It is said: ‘For reasons of which is that through his submission, his lowliness, his worship, his piety, his yielding, his abasement, his humbleness, and his (seeking) nearness to Allah, the servant must call Him holy, praise Him, glorify Him, magnify Him, thank his Creator and Provider, that thinking and wishes do not take him to other than Allah.’”

Because of these exalted meanings, the *tasbih* has been placed in the *ruku’‘* and the *suju’d* apart from the rest of the phrases through which Allah is mentioned.

5. The *ruku’‘* and the two *sajjdas*:

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have one *rak‘a* and two *suju’ds* been specified?’

“It is said: ‘Because the *ruku’‘* is one of the actions of the *qiya’m* (standing position) and the *suju’d* is one of the actions of the *julu’s* (sitting position); the prayer of one who sits is the half of that of one who stands, so the *suju’d* has been doubled that it may be equal to the *ruku’‘*, so there is no difference between them, for prayer consists of *ruku’‘* and *suju’d*.’”

For this reason the *suju’d* has been doubled so that it may equal the *ruku’‘*, just as the Imam, peace be on him, has stated.

6. The supplication in the *Qunu’t:*

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has the supplication been placed in the first *rak‘a* before the recitation? And why the *qunu’t* has been in the second *rak‘a* after the recitation?’

“It is said: ‘Because it is recommended for him (the worshipper) to start his standing and his act of worship for his Lord with praise, sanctification, wish, and fear; and he ends them with (phrases) similar to these; and he must stand a longer time during the *Qunu’t*.’”

The Imam, peace be on him, has shown the reason for that it is recommended to recite a certain supplication before entering prayer. That is because one must show absolute submission to Allah, the Most High. The supplication during the *qunu’t* must be longer, that one may show obedience to Allah, the Exalted.

7. The loud and quiet recitation:

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why are some prayers (recited) loudly, while others are not?’

“It is said: ‘Because the prayers which are performed loudly are performed in dark times, so it is incumbent on him (the worshipper) to perform them loudly, that the passer-by may know that there is a group of people here. So if he (the passer-by) wants to perform a prayer, he can perform it. If he cannot see a group of people pray, he hears and knows that because of hearing. As for the prayers which are

not performed loudly, they are performed by daytime, and in bright times. So he understands that because of vision and is in no need of hearing.'"

As for the prayers which are performed loudly, they are the morning prayer, the evening prayer, and the night prayer. They are performed in such a manner, that the passer-by in the dark may be attentive and prepare himself for performing the prayer, just as the Imam's justification. As for the prayers which are performed quietly, they are the noon prayer and the after noon prayer. There is no reason for performing them loudly, and that is because there is no darkness during their timings.

8. Raising the hands during the *takkbir:*

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why does he (the worshipper) raise his hands during the *takkbir?'*

"It is said: 'Because raising the hands is a kind of supplication and imploring. As for Allah, He wants His servant to supplicate and implore Him when he mentions Him. And because raising the hands means that the intention is present and the heart attends to what he says and means.'"

As for raising the hands during the *takkbir*, it is a kind of the absolute submission to Allah, the Most High as well as during it is the intention, which is the beginning of entering prayer.

9. The timings of the prayers:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why have the prayers been confined to these times? And (why) are they not advanced or delayed?'

"It is said: 'Because the famous and known times include the people of the earth in general, so the ignorant and the learned know (that they are) four: the setting of the sun is famous and known, the evening (prayer) is obligatory during it; the falling of the evening twilight is famous and known, the night (prayer) is obligatory during it; the daybreak is famous and known, the dawn (prayer) is obligatory during it; the declination of the sun is famous and known, the noon (prayer) is obligatory during it; and there is no known time for the afternoon, so its time (i.e. the time of the prayer) is after finishing the payer before it.'"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the causes of the timings specified for the prayers, and that they are famous and known with the entire people of the earth regardless of their different languages. As these times are exact, they have been appointed for the prayers.

The Imam, peace be on him, added another cause to the timings of the prayers, saying: "Yet there is another cause: Surely Allah wants men to start every act with obedience to Him in the first place. He has ordered them to start the day with worshipping Him; and then they can spread regarding what they like of the affairs of their world. He has made the dawn prayer obligatory on them. When midday comes and men leave their work and it is time for them to take off their clothes, take a rest, busy themselves with

their food and their siesta, Allah has ordered them to start first of all with remembering and worshipping Him, so He has made the noon prayer obligatory on them, then they can turn to what they like of that. When they finish their wish and want to spread for work to the end of the day, they should also begin with an act of obedience to Him. Whey they attain what they like of that, He has made the afternoon prayer obligatory on them, then they can spread for what they like of the affairs of their world. When the night comes and they leave their embellishment and return to their houses, they should start in the first place with worshipping their Lord, then they can return to what they like of that, so He has made the evening prayer obligatory on them. When the time of sleep comes and they are free from that with which they are busy, He wants them to start first of all with worshipping and obeying Him, then they can attend to what they attend of that; therefore, they start every work with obeying and worshipping Him, so He has made obligatory on them the night prayer; therefore, if they do that, they do not forget Him and are not heedless of Him, their hearts do not become cruel, and their desire does not decrease."

The Imam has shown the reason why the prayers have been legislated in these specified times and not in other than them. He has also shown the benefits of these times.

10. The afternoon prayer:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Therefore, why is there no famous time for the afternoon prayer like these times? Why has He not made it obligatory between the night prayer and the early morning one or between the early morning prayer and the noon one?'

"It is said: 'Because there is no time lighter nor easier nor better than this time, that He may include the weak and the strong through this prayer. And because all people work in commerce and dealings at the beginning of daytime; they go to accomplish (their) needs and reside in the markets. So He does not desire to divert them (through prayer) from seeking their daily bread and the affairs of their world. And (because) not all creation are able to rise for the night (prayer); nor do they feel it; nor are they aware of its time if it is obligatory; nor are they capable of that, so Allah has decreased (that for) them. He has not placed it in the most difficult times for them; rather He has placed it in the easiest time for them; just as He, the Great and Almighty, says: *Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty*.[26]"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the cause for extending the time of the afternoon prayer up to the end of daytime. That is because Allah desires to relieve people, though an excellent time has been appointed for performing the afternoon prayer, and it is that when the shade is equal to two sevenths of the stake (*sha'khis*), and that the excellent time ends when the shade is equal to four sevenths of the stake.[27]

11. Congregational prayer:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why He (the Legislator) has (ordered prayer to be performed in) congregation?'

“It is said: ‘Because sincerity, Oneness, Islam, and acts of worship to Allah are apparent, uncovered, famous; because manifesting them is an argument for only Allah, the Great and Almighty, against the people of the east and of the west; because the hypocrites and those who disparage Islam and believe in it apparently are kept under observation; because the people can bear witness to each other through Islam and their witness is permissible and possible; and because performing prayer in congregation includes help, kindness, Allah–fearingness, and protection from the acts of disobedience to Allah, the Great and Almighty.’”

Congregational prayer is the most important act of worship in Islam, for the Muslims take advantages of it, for example, they know each other; love and friendship spread among them; and they appear as one rank in front of their enemies. In this part of his speech, the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reason why prayer is performed in congregation.

12. *Sala’t al–sunna* or supererogatory prayers:

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has *sala’t al–sunna* been confined to thirty–four *rak‘as?’*

“It is said: ‘Because the obligatory (prayers) are seventeen *rak‘as*, so (*sala’t*) *al–sunna* has been specified twice as much as the obligatory (prayers), as the perfection of the obligatory (prayers).’”

As for *sala’t al–sunna*, which is the daily supererogatory prayers, is eight *rak‘as* before the noon prayer, eight *rak‘as* before the afternoon prayer, four *rak‘as* after the evening prayers, two *rak‘as* in sitting position and regarded as one *rak‘a* after the night prayer, eight *rak‘as* for the late night prayer, the two *rak‘as* of the even prayer after it (the late night prayer), the *rak‘a* of the odd prayer after it (the even prayer), and two *rak‘as* before the dawn prayer, so they are thirty–four *rak‘as*. The Imam, peace be on him, has justified that through making *sala’t al–sunna* twice as much as the obligatory prayers, that it may perfect them.

13. *Sala’t al–sunna* or supererogatory prayers are performed in various times:

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has *sala’t al–sunna* appointed in various times, and has not appointed in one time?’

“It is said: ‘Because the best times are three: during the declination of the sun, after the evening, and the early mornings, so He desires him (the worshipper) to pray for Him in all these three times, that is because if (*sala’t*) *al–sunna* is separated into various times, then their performing is lighter and easier than gathering them together in one time.’”

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reason for separating the times of *sala’t al–sunna*, for they have appointed in the most excellent time and the most lovable of them to Allah, the Most High. In addition to that, performing them in one time brings about confusion and difficulty.

14. Prayer is ended by the *taslim:*

He, peace be on him, has said: “Why has the *taslim* been made (as means for) ending prayer? (Why) has neither the *takkbir* nor the *tasbih* nor another kind has been placed in stead of it?’

“It is said: ‘As the speech of the creatures is unlawful during entering prayer (that they may) turn toward the Creator, it is lawful and they can return (to the previous state) and begin speaking after the *taslim*.’”

For this reason speech is lawful after the *taslim;* the Legislator has made it unlawful on the worshipper to speak during prayer and other acts of worship. As for this prohibition, it ends after the *taslim*.

The Friday prayer:

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, has mentioned some reasons for the Friday pray as follows:

A. The Friday prayer is two *rik‘as:*

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why does the Friday prayer consist of two *rik‘as* if it is performed by the Imam? And why does it consist of two *rik‘as* and two *rik‘as* (i.e. the worshipper performs the noon prayer) if it is performed by other than the Imam?’

“It is said: ‘For various reasons of which is that the people come from distant (places), so Allah, the Great and Almighty, desires to decrease it for them because they are tired when they arrive at the place (of the prayer).

“‘Of which is that the Imam prevents them from going, that he may deliver his sermon and make them wait for the prayer, for he who waits for the prayer performs a complete prayer.

“‘Of which is that the prayer performed by the Imam is more complete and more perfect because of his knowledge, his understanding, his justice, and his excellence.

“‘Yet of which is that Friday is ‘Id, and the ‘Id prayer is two *rik‘as*, and it (the Friday prayer) is not shortened because of the two sermons.’”

The Friday prayer has been shortened and become two *rik‘as* for this reason and the reasons which have been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him.

B. The cause for the sermon in the Friday prayer:

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has the sermon been determined?’

“It is said: ‘Because the Friday (prayer) is a general view, so He (Allah) desires the Imam to be a cause for preaching to them in order to make them desire the acts of obedience, fear the acts of disobedience, aware of what He desires (to do) for the interest of their religion and their world, and to tell them about

harm and profit which he has gained from the times and the conditions'"

Surely the greatest interest in the Friday prayer is the sermon which the Imam delivers, for it spreads political and religious awareness among the Muslims, develops good inclinations in their souls, and guides them to the right path.

C. Two sermons in the Friday prayer:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has two sermons been determined?'

"It is said: 'Because one (sermon) is for lauding, praising, and sanctifying Allah, the Great and Almighty. And the other is for needs, excuses, warning, supplication, and what he (the Imam) desires to teach them of His command and prohibition including righteousness and corruption.'"

The Imam has stated the reason for legislating two sermons in the Friday prayer, so the first sermon is regarding lauding Allah, the Most High, the Creator of the universe, and Giver of life, explaining his tremendousness concerning what He creates of His marvelous creatures. As for the second sermon, it concerns explaining that which set the Muslims right in this world and the next.

D. The Friday sermon is before the prayer:

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has the Friday sermon been determined before the prayer while it has been determined after the prayer on the two 'Ids?'

"It is said: 'Because Friday is an everlasting condition; it is several (times) in the month and many (times) in the year. So if the people regard it (the sermon) as many, they pray and leave it; they do not persist in it and scatter from it. So it (the sermon) has been determined before the prayer so that they may wait for the prayer, may not scatter and go away.

"'As for the two 'Ids, they are twice in the year; they are greater than Friday; the congregation therein is more (than that on Friday); and the people are more desirous of them. So if some people scatter, then most of them remain. They (the two 'Ids) are not so many that they (the people) are tired of them or disparage them.'"

Shaykh al-Sadu'q, may Allah rest him in peace, has commented on this tradition, saying: "The tradition has been mentioned in this manner; the two sermons on Friday (are before the prayer); (the two sermons of) the 'Id are after the prayer because they are with the same rank to the two final *rak'as*, and that 'Uthma'n b. 'Affa'n was the first to advance the two sermons. Because he had done what he did, the people did not persist in the sermon and said: 'What have we to do with his sermons while he had done what he did?' As a result he advanced the two sermons, that the people might wait for the prayer and not scatter from him."

E. The Friday prayer is obligatory on those who live with in two leagues (about six miles):

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has the Friday (prayer) been made obligatory on him who (lives) within two leagues, not more than that?’

“It is said: ‘Because the distance in which the prayer is shortened is two *barids* (24 miles) going or one *barid* (12 miles) back and forth. And the *barid* is four leagues, so the Friday (prayer) is obligatory on him who (lives) within half a barid because of which shortening (the prayer) is obligatory. And that is because he (the traveler covers) two leagues when he comes and two leagues when he goes. So that is four leagues, and it is the half of the road of the traveler.’”

For this reason stated by the Imam, peace be on him, the Friday prayer is obligatory on those who live within two leagues, not more.

F. The Friday supererogatory prayer:

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has four *rak‘as* been added to the Friday supererogatory payers?’

“It is said: ‘Because this day should be magnified and distinguished from the rest of the days. It is recommended to perform twenty *rak‘as* as supererogatory prayers on Friday. So four *rak‘as* has been added to the sixteen supererogatory prayers which are performed during the rest of the days. It is recommended for (the worshipper) to perform six (*rak‘as*) of them during the extension (*inbisa’t*) of the sun, six during its rising, six before the declination (of the sun), and two *rak‘as* during the declination.”

N. The Traveler’s Shortened Prayer

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has prayer been shortened on journey?’

“It is said: ‘Because the obligatory prayers are ten *rak‘as*, and the seven (*rak‘as*) was later added to them. So Allah has decreased that increase for them because of his (the traveler’s) place of travel, his tiredness, his pains, his taking care of his affairs, his departure, and his residence, lest he should busy himself with (something other than) that which is his livelihood. (This is) mercy and sympathy from Allah, the Great and Almighty, toward him (the traveler); except the evening prayer, it is not shortened, for it is originally a shortened prayer.’”

The Imam, peace be on him, has displayed the reason for the traveler’s shortened prayer, and that is because the traveler faces during his journey troubles and difficulties, especially as it concerns those times when travel was confined to animals and ships which caused to him hardships and sufferings. So the Legislator has shown favor and mercy toward servants when He omitted for the traveler the half of the four– *rak‘a* prayer.

O. The distance making shortening prayer obligatory

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has shortening prayer confined to eight leagues, no

less, no more than that?'

"It is said: 'Because eight leagues is a day's travel for the commoners, the caravans, and the baggage, so it is obligatory to shorten (prayer) during a day's travel.'"

The Imam, peace be on him, has explained the reason for that the Legislator has determined eight leagues as a distance for shortening prayer, then he, peace be on him, has commented on that, saying: "If a sayer says: 'So why is it obligatory to shorten (prayer) during a day's travel, not more?'

"It is said: 'Because if it was not obligatory (to shorten prayer) during a day's travel, then it would not be obligatory during a year's walk, and that is because every day which follows this day is like this day. So if it was not obligatory (to shorten prayer) on this day, then it was not obligatory on the like of it if the like of it was similar to it, and there was no difference between them."

The Imam, peace be on him, has stated that if the distance for shortening prayer was not determined in eight leagues, which is a day's walk, then the distance necessary for shortening prayer would be on the following day, for it is the like of the previous day and has no excellence over it; like this is on the days that follow, and this leads to the vicious circle.

The Imam added, saying: "If a sayer says: 'Walk may be different, so why has a day's travel confined to eight leagues?'

"It is said: 'Because eight leagues is the walk of camels and the caravans, and it is the distance which covered by the camel–drivers and those who hire animals.'"

P. Daytime supererogatory prayers are canceled

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why does the traveler leave the daytime supererogatory prayers and does not leave those are by night?'

"It is said: 'Because you do not leave the supererogatory prayers of every prayer which you do not shorten. And that is the evening prayer is not shortened, so the supererogatory prayers after it are not shortened; likewise, the dawn prayer is not shortened, so the supererogatory prayers before it are not shortened.'"

The Imam has stated that the daytime supererogatory prayers are canceled, and that the night ones are not canceled. The reason for that is that the supererogatory prayers are canceled when the prayer is shortened. As the evening prayer and the dawn one are not shortened, their supererogatory prayers are not canceled. Then he commented on that, saying: "If a sayer says: 'The night prayer is shortened, so why is its two–*rak'a* (supererogatory prayer) not canceled?'

"It is said: 'These two *rak'as* are not of the fifty (supererogatory prayers); rather they are an addition to them, that each two *rak'as* of the supererogatory prayers may complete one *rak'a* of the obligatory

player.’”

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned that the night prayer is shortened during journey while its supererogatory prayer, which is two *rak‘as* in sitting position, is not abolished. So the Imam, peace be on him, answered: “Surely in the viewpoint of the Legislator, the supererogatory prayer of the night prayer is equal to one *rak‘a* in standing position.” And the reason for that is that each two *rak‘as* of the supererogatory prayers are in stead of one *rak‘a* of the obligatory prayer. As a result the traveler has no right to cancel the supererogatory prayer of the night prayer as well as he must perform the late night prayer at the beginning of the night.

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why is it permissible for the traveler and the sick to perform the late night prayer at the beginning of the night?’

“It is said: ‘Because they are busy and weak, that they may attain their prayer, so that the sick may take a rest at the time of their rest, and the traveler may busy himself with his works, his departure, and his journey.”

Q. The Prayer for the Dead

The Imam, peace be on him, talked about some reasons for the prayer for the dead as follows: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have they (the people) been ordered to pray over the dead?’

“It is said: ‘Because they intercede (with Allah) for him and asked (Him) to forgive him. Because he is not at any of those times more needy of intercession (with Allah) for him, asking, and seeking forgiveness than that hour.’”

Surely the supplication of the believers who pray over the dead is the most important thing which the dead need, that Allah may respond to their supplication, pardon the dead, forgive them their sins, and give to them His good pleasure.

R. The five takkbirs over the Dead

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has five *takkbirs*, and not four or six, been determined (for the dead)?’

“It is said: ‘Surely the five (*takkbirs*) have been taken from the five prayers by day and night.’”

Surely, the five (*takkbirs*) stands for the daily prayers, which are five.

S. The Prayer for the Dead without “wudu”

He, peace be on him, said: “Why has He (the Legislator) made it permissible to pray over the dead without *wudu”?’*

“It is said: ‘Because it has neither *ruku’‘* nor *suju’d;* rather it is a supplication and an asking. It is permissible for you to supplicate Allah and ask Him in all circumstances; *wudu”* is obligatory on (men when they perform) the prayer which has *ruku’‘* and *suju’d*.’”

T. The Prayer for the Dead is at all Times

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have you made it permissible to pray over the dead before the evening and after the dawn?’

“It is said: ‘Because this prayer is obligatory at the time of the presence, and that is because it (the prayer) is not timed like all the prayers; rather it is the payer which is obligatory when an event occurs; regarding it man has no option; rather it is a right which is performed; and it is permissible to perform the rights at any time if the right is not timed.’”

The Legislator has not appointed a certain time for the prayer for the dead. Rather the people pray over them at any time, for the prayer is one of their rights against the living, and the right is performed at any time.

U. Ghusl al-maiyit

We have already talked in detail about this matter.

V. Shrouding the Dead

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have they been ordered to shroud the dead?’

“It is said: ‘Because they (the dead) will meet their Lord and their bodies are pure, lest their private parts should appear before those who carry and bury them; lest the people should come to know about some of their conditions, their ugly view, the change of their smell; lest the heart should not be cruel out of looking many times at the like of that of handicap and corruption, and that they may be more agreeable to the souls of the living; that a bosom friend may not detest them, so he will cancel their names and his love (for them), so he will not maintain them in what they have left behind, willed, and ordered; whether it is obligatory or recommended.’”

For these firm reasons of great importance, the Great Legislator (Allah) has made it incumbent on men to shroud the dead as a sign of respect for them and covering their corpses which the living hate and disdain when they look at them.

W. The Burial of the Dead

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have they been ordered to bury the dead?’

“It is said: ‘Lest the people come to know about the corruption of their corpses, their ugly view, the

change of their smell; lest the living should be harmed by their smell, their illness, and their corruption, that they may be covered from the friends and the enemies, so their enemies will not gloat over them; nor will their friends be sad for them.'"

For these firm reasons, it has been made incumbent on the living to bury the dead. For if their corpses decay and their bad smell spread, the air is polluted and diseases spread. In addition to this, their view is ugly, their smell is abominable, and the like from that which the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned.

X. The Prayer for an eclipse of the Sun

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: "Why has prayer for an eclipse (of the sun) been determined?"

"It is said: 'Because it is one of the signs of Allah, the Great and Almighty. None knows whether for a mercy or a punishment it appears. So the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, desired his community to resort to its Merciful Creator during that (time), that He (Allah) may drive away its evil from it (the community) and protect it from its ordeal just as He had driven away (the punishment) from the people of Yunus when they pleaded to Allah, the Great and Almighty.'"

For this reason the Legislator has ordered a prayer to be performed during an eclipse of the sun or the moon, during heavenly or earthly fearful things such as the black and red winds, an earthquake, and the like from among that which the jurists have mentioned.

Y. The Reason for the Performance of the Prayer for Unusual Natural Events (Aya't)

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: "Why has it (the prayer) been determined in ten *rak'as?'*

"It is said: 'Because the obligatory prayer which was first sent down from the heaven to earth regarding the day and the night was ten *rak'as*. So prayer was gathered together, and the *suju'd* was determined in it, because every prayer which has the *ruku'* has the *suju'd*, and that they may also complete their prayer with the *suju'd* and submission. It (the prayer) has been determined in four *suju'ds*, because every prayer whose *suju'd* is less than four *suju'ds* is not a prayer, because the least religious duty in prayer is *suju'd*, and it is not (correct) unless it is four *suju'ds* (i.e. prostration four times).'"

The prayer for unusual natural events (*Sala't al–Aya't*) consists of two *rak'as*; each of five *ruku's*; the worshipper should rise after each *ruku'*. After the worshipper has risen for the fifth *ruku'*, he should perform two *sajdas*, recite the *tashahud* and *sala'm*. The Imam has given an account of the reason for determining this prayer in ten *ruku's*, and that it represents the ten *–rak'a* prayer which was first imposed on servants.

‘Id al-Fitr

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has the day of fast breaking been regarded as ‘Id?’

“It is said: ‘That the Muslims may have a meeting place in which they meet, appear for Allah, the Great and Almighty, so they praise Him for what He has bestowed upon them, so it is the day of ‘Id, the day of meeting, the day of fast breaking, the day of *Zaka’t*, the day of desire, and the day of supplication, and because it is the first day of the year in which eating and drinking is lawful, for the first of the months of the year with the people of the Truth is the month of Ramada’n, so Allah, the Great and Almighty, desires that they may have a meeting place in which they praise and sanctify Him.’”

For these reasons which have been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him, the day of fast breaking has been regarded as ‘Id for the Muslims; they gather together therein and congratulate each other on that Allah has made them successful in fasting the blessed month of Ramada’n.

The ‘Id Prayers

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has the *takkbir* therein (‘Id prayers) been made more than that in the prayers other than it?’

“It is said: ‘Because *takkbir* is for Allah and is glorification (for Him) for guiding (them) and (giving them) well-being, just as Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said: ***That you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks***.[28]’”

The Imam, peace be on him, has expressed the reason for making the *takkbir* in the ‘Id prayer more than that in the other prayers, and that is because this excellent day is great with Allah, the Most High.

Fasting

The Imam, peace be on him, talked about the reason for legislating fasting, and about some reasons for the legislation concerning the blessed month of Ramada’n.

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why have they been ordered to fast?’

“It is said: ‘That they may come to know about the pain of hunger and thirst, so they conclude the poverty in the hereafter, and that the fasting person may be lowly, abased, miserable, rewarded, relying (on Allah), and patient toward that which befall him of hunger and thirst, so he is worthy of reward, in addition to refraining from desires, and this may be a preacher for them in the immediate, a trainer for them against what He has entrusted to them, and a guide for them to the deferred, and that they may know the severity of that (hunger and thirst) against the people of poverty and misery in the world, so they give to them what Allah has apportioned as a religious duty in their properties.’”

The Imam has mentioned the profits which result from fasting of which is showing sympathy for the poor, for when the fasting person becomes hungry, he feels the pain of hunger, and this urges him to show affection toward the poor and the needy. Among the reasons for fasting is equality between the rich and the poor in this religious duty.

Yet another reason for it is that it strengthens man's will, and that is through his refraining from eating and drinking. Jiha'rdat, a German author, has written a book on building and strengthening will through fasting. He believes that fasting is the effective means for the authority of the soul over the body, and that man lives holding the reins of his own soul and is not a captive to his material inclinations.

These are some reasons of fasting. As for the Imam, peace be on him, he has mentioned many profits of it.

The Month of Ramada'n

He, peace be on him, said: 'If a sayer says: 'Why has fasting been appointed especially in (the month of Ramada'n) apart from the rest of the months?'

"It is said: 'Because (the month of Ramada'n) is the month in which Allah, the Exalted, sent down the Qur'an, and therein is a distinction between right and wrong, as Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said: ***The month of Ramada'n is that in which the Qur'an was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction.***[29] In it Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, was appointed as a prophet, and in it is *Laylat al-Qadr*, ***which is better than a thousand months, therein every wise affair is distinct****;* it is new year; He ordains therein what is in the year of good and evil, harm or profit, provision or death, and for this reason it has been called *Laylat al-Qadr.*'"

For this reason Allah, the Most High, has made fasting obligatory in this blessed month and distinguished it from the other months.

Fasting is confined to the Month of Ramada'n

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why have they been ordered to fast the month of Ramada'n, not less than that nor more (than it)?'

"It is said: "Because it is the strength of worship through which He includes the strong and the weak; Allah has made religious duties on most things, and He has included the strong, then He has given permission to men of weakness, and make men of strength desire for excellence, and if they are set right by the less than that, then He will decrease them, and if they are in need of more than that, He will increase them.'"

Surely Allah's wisdom and His directing things require that the interest of servants is in fasting thirty days, and if the interest was less than that, he would decrease them; likewise, if the interest was more

than that, he would increase them.

The menstruating Women leave Fasting and Prayer

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why does the menstruating woman not fast nor pray?’

“It is said: ‘Because she is in the limit of uncleanness30, so Allah desires that she does not serve Him except (when she is) pure, and because one who does not pray does not fast.’”

For this reason the menstruating woman does not fast; nor does she perform prayer. However, she has to compensate for fasting when she is pure.

The menstruating Women have to compensate for Fasting

He, peace be on him, said: “Why has she to compensate for fasting and has not to compensate prayer?’

“It is said: ‘For various reasons of which is that fasting does not prevent her from serving herself, serving her husband, setting right her house, undertaking her affair, and fulfilling her livelihood, while prayer prevents her from all of that, for prayer is several times by day and night, so she is not able to (do) that, while fasting is not as such.

“‘Of which surely there are suffering and tiredness in prayer and the limbs are busy, and there is nothing of that in fasting; rather it is refraining from eating and drinking, and the limbs are not busy therein.

“‘Of which is that when a time comes, on her obligatory is a prayer new in day and night, while fasting is not as such, because it is not whenever a day comes fasting is obligatory on her, and whenever a time comes prayer is obligatory on her.’”

For these firm reasons, the Legislator has not ordered the menstruating woman to compensate prayer, for performing it causes difficulties and tiredness to her, and it is contrary to fasting, for compensating for it causes to her neither difficulties nor tiredness.

Compensating for the Month of Ramada’n

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘If a man falls ill or travels in the month of Ramada’n and does not end his travel nor does he recover from his illness until another (month of Ramada’n) comes to him, then a redemption for the first (month) is obligatory on him and the compensation drops. If he recovers or rises between them and does not compensate for it, then (both) compensation and redemption are obligatory on him?

“It is said: ‘Because that fast was obligatory on him in that month, in that year. As for him who does not recover during the whole year, and Allah, the Exalted, overcame him and made a way for him to perform it, then it is not obligatory on him to perform it; likewise, those whom Allah overcomes such as the one

who faints for a day and a night, so it is not obligatory on him to perform the prayer; just as al-Sa'diq, peace be on him, has said: 'If the servant is overcome by Allah, then he has an excuse, for the month (of Ramada'n) has come while he is still ill, so it is not obligatory on him to fast in the month of him nor in the year of him because of the illness in which he is, and redemption is obligatory on him, for he is with the same rank to him on whom fasting is obligatory but cannot perform it, so redemption is obligatory on him.' Just as Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said: ***Let him fast for two months successively; then as for him who is not able, let him feed sixty needy ones***.[31] And as Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said: ***A compensation by fasting or alms or sacrificing***.[32] So He has put alms in the place of fasting when it is difficult for him (the worshipper to fast).'"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned those whose illness lasts from a month of Ramada'n to another, and they do not recover, so compensation for fasting is not obligatory on them; rather redemption is obligatory on them. As for those who recover during the year and have not fasted yet, it is obligatory on them to compensate for the fast, for they are able to fast as well as redemption is obligatory on them.

Then the Imam commented on that, saying: "If a sayer says: 'If he (the worshipper) was unable (to fast) at that time and is able now?'

"It is said: 'As another month of Ramada'n has come to him, then redemption for the past (months) is obligatory on him, for he is with the same rank to him on whom fasting in religious expiation is obligatory, but he was not able to fast it, so redemption is obligatory on him. And if redemption is obligatory, then fasting is not obligatory; fasting is not obligatory but redemption is obligatory. If he (the worshipper) recovers between them (the two months of Ramada'n) but had not fast it, then redemption is obligatory on him, because of his negligence, and fasting because he was able (to fast).'"

Fasting instead of Releasing a Salve

He, peace be on him, said: "Regarding the religious expiation due on him who cannot find, why is it obligatory on him to release a slave, fasting apart from the hajj, prayer, and the like?

"It is said: 'Because prayer, the hajj, and all the religious duties prevent man from being changeable in the affairs of his world and interest of his livelihood, in addition to those reasons which we have mentioned regarding the menstruating woman who has to compensate for fasting and has not to compensate prayer.'"

For these reasons the Legislator has decided fasting instead of releasing a slave, and He has not decided prayer, the hajj, and the like instead of it, for this requires stopping works and makes man unable to get his daily bread.

Fasting two successive Months

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘So why has He made it obligatory on him (the worshipper) to fast two successive months, and has not made it obligatory on him to fast one month or three months?’

“It is said: ‘Because the religious duty which Allah has made incumbent upon people is one month, so He has doubled the religious expiation of this month as sign of emphasizing strictness.

The Succession in fasting two Months

He, peace be on him, said: “Why has the two months been made successive?

“It is said: “Lest he (the worshipper) should find it easy to perform (them), so he disparages it (fasting). Because if he compensate them separately, then compensation (for fasting) is easy for him.’”

Surely the succession in fasting the two months is a punishment on him who intentionally breaks the fast and violates the things made unlawful by Allah, the Most High. So Allah, the Exalted, is severe with him regarding that.

The Hajj

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reason for legislating the hajj and the reasons for some precepts concerning it.

The Hajj is obligatory

He, peace be on him, said: “If a sayer says: ‘Why has He ordered them (to perform) the hajj?’

“It is said: ‘The reason for the hajj is to seek to be the guest of Allah, to request more blessings, to part with past sins, to feel repentant about the past, and to look forward to the future. It is due to spending on the trip, seeking nearness to Allah, tiring the body, abstaining from pleasures and desires, seeking nearness to Allah by worshipping Him, yielding and submitting to Him, looking up towards Him in cases of hot weather and chilling cold, during security and fear, incessantly doing so, and due to all the benefits in it in the east and west of the earth, and those who are in cold and heat33, from among those who perform the hajj and from among those who do not perform the hajj, from among the merchants, the importers, the sellers, the buyers, the tradesmen, the needy, those who hire animals, the poor, and accomplishing the needs of the people of the outskirts in the places in which it is possible for them to collect expenses and reporting the news of the Imams, peace be on him, to every region and district, just as Allah, the Exalted, has said:

Why should not then a company from every party from among them go forth that they may apply

themselves to obtain understanding in religion, and that they may warn their people when they come back to them that they may be cautious? 34***"'***

The hajj is a general conference aiming at great purposes and important benefits brining about general good to Islamic world, and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has stated some of them. If we desire to mention the fruits and benefits of the hajj, the book will be unduly long. Any how, the most important thing in the hajj is that the Muslim peoples come to know about each other, that they may reach an exalted level among the peoples and communities of the world, and, in addition, it is useful from economic point of view, for every Muslim country has industries and products which are not available in other than it, and through the hajj it is possible for the Muslim countries to make commercial agreements in order to exchange such industries and products.

Any how, the hajj aims at raising the level of the intellectual, scientific, and economic life of the Muslims; therefore, it is a unique conference in the world.

The Hajj is one Time

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'So why have they been ordered to perform the hajj one time, not more than that?'

"It is said: 'Because Allah, the Exalted, has decided the religious duties according to the minimum (degree) of the people, just as He, the Great and Almighty, has said:

Whatever offering is easy to obtain 35**,**

namely one ewe, that the strong and the weak may be able to perform it; likewise, all the religious duties have been decided according to the minimum strength of the people, so one of these religious duties is the hajj which is obligatory one time, then He has made the men of strength desire for (more than one time) according to their ability.'"

The obligatory hajj in Islam is one time, and performing the hajj many times is not obligatory according to the reasons which have been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him, and of which is that Islam has legislated its religious duties and precepts according to the least of the people in strength, and the least of them in body and property is not able to perform the hajj more than one time.

For this reason it is incumbent on everybody to perform the hajj one time, yes, the hajj may be obligatory through vow, hiring, and the like from among that which the jurists have mentioned.

The Ihra'm

The Ihra'm 36

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why have they been ordered to enter the state of ritual

consecration (*ihra'm*)*?'*

"It is said: 'Because they become humble before they enter the sanctuary and security of Allah, the Great and Almighty; lest they should amuse and busy themselves with one of the affairs of the world and its embellishment, that they may be earnest regarding that which is among them, heading for it, walking toward it thoroughly, and, in addition, they magnify Allah, the Exalted, and His House, abase their own souls during their heading for Allah, the Exalted, for they are His guests, hoping for His reward, fearing His punishment, going towards Him, walking towards Him with abasement, submission, and yielding.'"

If the pilgrim enters the state of ritual consecration, then he has to abstain from desires and pleasures; it is unlawful for him to practice the means of luxury and embellishment such as women, wearing sewn clothes, and perfume. He has to have his hair cut and to abstain from obscene words, for their is neither sexual intercourse nor fornication nor quarreling during the hajj.

Surely the *ihra'm* trains soul to bear exertions and hardships, to magnify Allah, the Most High, and to be humble before Him, and the like from among the reasons which have been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him.

The Procession round the Ka'ba

In his answer to Muhammad b. Sina'n, the Imam, peace be on him, wrote: "The reason for the procession round the Ka'ba is that Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, said to the angels: ***And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth vicegerent, they said: What! Will You place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood***.[37] So they answered Allah, the Exalted, with this answer; then they repented, sought refuge in the Throne and asked (Allah) for forgiveness. Allah, the Great and Almighty, desired (servants) to serve Him with such an act of worship. He placed a House called al-Dura'h in the fourth heaven, then He placed in the heaven of the world a House called al-Ma'mu'r beside the inhabited House. Then He ordered Adam to go round it and he did, so Allah, the Great and Almighty, forgave him, and this (procession) has been put into practice by his (Adam's) sons till the Day of Resurrection."

Surely the circumambulation round the Holy Ka'ba consists of high lessons of which are: It immortalizes the Magnified Place which was built by the Shaykh of the prophets, Ibra'him, peace be on him, that men may wherein serve Allah, the One and the Compeller. That was in the time when there was no place of worship except it. And of which is that circumambulation round the Ka'ba is a ladder for the believer like prayer, for through it soul becomes sublime and communicates with the Great Creator, and the like from among the fruits and benefits.

Kissing and Touching the Black Stone

He, peace be on him, said: "And the reason for kissing and touching the (Black) Stone: Surely when Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, took a promise from the children of Adam, he fed him the stone, and

then He entrusted the people with undertaking that promise, and then it is said: 'I have accomplished my trust and the promise I have undertaken by the (Black) Stone, that it may bear witness that I am truthful.' Yet of which is the statement of Sulayma'n: 'Surely the (Black) Stone will come on the Day of Resurrection like Abu' Qubays having a tongue and two lips bearing witness to the sincerity of him who comes to it.'"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reason for kissing and touching the Black Stone, which is the place of sanctification and magnification with the Muslims. That is because the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, had honored and kissed it. Without doubt this indicates the exalted position of this Stone, which will bear witness to the sincerity of him who comes to it on the Day of Resurrection.

The Hajj in Dhu al-Hijja

He, peace be on him, said: "If a sayer says: 'Why has its time been appointed on the tenth of Dhu al-Hijja?'

"It is said: 'Because Allah, the Exalted, desires to be served with this act of worship during *ayya'm al-tashriq* 38 and it was the first time when the angles performed the hajj (to the Ka'ba) and circumambulated it. As for the prophets: Adam, Nu'h, Ibra'him, Musa', 'Isa', and Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, they performed the hajj at this time. So their children have regarded it as *sunna* (a religious practice) until the Day of Resurrection."

For these reasons the hajj has been appointed at this blessed time, and not at a time other than it.

Philip Hatti's Statement regarding the Hajj

It is worth mentioning that we end this research on the hajj with the statement of Dr. Philip Hatti, who has said: "And the hajj is still throughout the ages a system with which (no system) competes for strengthening the ties of Islamic understanding and harmony among the different classes of the Muslims; and thanks to it that it is possible for every Muslim to be a traveler at least one time during his lifetime, to meet with other than him from among his believing brothers at a brotherly meeting, and to unify his feeling with the feeling of other than him from among those who come (to Mecca) from the parts of the earth. And by virtue of this system, it is easy for the Negroes, the Barbers, the Chinese, the Persians, the Turks, the Arabs, and the like, whether they are rich or poor, great or paupers to harmonize with each other in language, faith, and thought. Islam has made a success which no religion in the world has made in abolishing differences due to gender, color, and nationality, especially among its followers, for it does not recognize any difference among mankind except that which stands between the believers and unbelievers. Without doubt the meeting in the season of the hajj has rendered a great service in this path.39"

Zaka't

In his answer to Muhammad b. Sina'n's questions, the Imam, peace be on him, said:

"And the reason for *zaka't* (alms) is for the sake of the food of the poor and fortifying the properties of the rich, for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has entrusted the healthy with undertaking the affairs of the sick and the afflicted; just as Allah, the Exalted, has said: ***You shall certainly be tried respecting your wealth and your souls***.[40] Respecting your wealth is through giving *zaka't;* respecting your souls is through adjusting the souls to patience; in addition to showing gratitude toward the blessings of Allah, the Great and Almighty, craving for an increase, showing affection and mercy to the weak, sympathizing with the miserable and urging to help them, strengthening the poor and helping (them) with the affairs of the religion, for they are an exhortation for the rich and a lesson for them, that they may be shown the way to the poor of the next world through them; and this urges them to thank Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, for what He has entrusted them with and given to them; (*zaka't* urges) them (the rich) to supplicate and plead (Allah) and to fear (Him) lest they should be like them (the poor) in many affairs; they should pay *zaka't* and alms, tighten the bonds of kinship and do favor."

Zaka't is a creative, social system which keeps balance among the classes of the community and puts an end to poverty which is the cause of all crimes. Extreme creeds and wild deeds spread among the communities who lead a poor life.

Surely *zaka't* removes from souls miserliness, cruelty, selfishness, greediness, and the like from among dirty, social vices which lead to discords, hatred, and enmities. As for the Imam, peace be on him, he has talked about *zaka't* which leads to general, social benefits.

The Reasons for some unlawful Things

In his answer to the questions of Muhammad b. Sina'n, the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reasons for some unlawful deeds in Islam as follows:

1. Killing the Soul

He, peace be on him, said: "And Allah has made it unlawful to kill the soul, for if He made it lawful, then it would lead to the corruption of the creation, their annihilation, and the corruption of direction."

Premeditated murder is the most dangerous one, for it disturbs peace. As for Islam, it has forbidden it and legislated a severe punishment on him who commits it. In this connection Allah, the Most High, has said: "And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding.[41]" If this crime was made lawful, then it would result in the corruption and annihilation of the creation.

2. The Disobedience of Parents

He, peace be on him, said: “And Allah has made unlawful the disobedience of parents because therein is the violation of reverence.”

Surely Allah, the Most High, has associated the rights of parents with His rights and obedience to them with obedience to Him. The ugliest and most unlawful thing is the disobedience of parents and denying their kindness to their children.

3. Adultery

He, peace be on him, said: “And adultery is prohibited due to the corruption it causes such as murders, loss of lineage, child desertion, chaos regarding inheritance, and other such aspects of corruption.”

Adultery is among the ugliest kinds of vice; Allah, the Most High, has described it in the Qur’an as an indecency, saying: “And go not nigh to adultery; surely it is an indecency and evil is the way.[42]”

As for the adulterer, he causes crime to society. For if a child results from him, then the child will have no father to look after him, commit the most horrible crime and, in addition, adultery results in the loss of lineage. As for lawful marriage, it is a natural law which makes it incumbent on one to sacrifice his own life for educating his own children with righteous education, that they may be the delight of his eye.

The Punishment for Adulterer

He, peace be on him, said: “And the reason for flogging adulterer with the severest flogging is due to his committing adultery in which the whole body takes pleasure, so flogging has been determined as a punishment for him and a lesson to other than him; and it (adultery) is the greatest crime.”

An example of the good Islamic legislation is this heavy punishment for this vice, which is one hundred lashes for the single adulterer and stoning for the married one. In this respect Allah has said: “(As for) the adulterer and the adulteress, flog each of them, (giving) a hundred stripes, and let not pity for them detain you in the matter of obedience to Allah, if you believe in Allah and the last day, and let a party of the believers witness their chastisement.[43]”

The Testimony which establishes Adultery

He, peace be on him, said: “And the reason for the witness of four (witnesses) regarding adultery and two (witnesses) respecting all the rights is due to the severe punishment of the married, for therein is killing, so the witness regarding it (adultery) has been doubled due to killing his soul, the loss of the lineage of his children, and the corruption of the inheritance.”

Surely the punishment is not established except through four just witnesses. So if one of them fails to attend, then the three witnesses are liable to the punishment of slander. The witness has been made

strict lest people should carelessly accuse each other.

4. Sodomy and Lesbianism

He, peace be on him, said: "And the reason for prohibiting males for males and females for females is due to that which has been created in females and that which males have by nature, and due to the cessation of progeny, the corruption of planning, and the destruction of the world which happens when males (practice sodomy) with males and when females (practice lesbianism) with females."

As for sodomy, it is among immoral crimes and leads to deviation from the laws of nature, and Allah has named it indecency. He, the Exalted, has said: "**And (We sent) Lut when he said to his people: Most surely you are guilty of an indecency which none of the nations has ever done before you.**[44]"

The punishment for sodomy is killing, because this crime leads to the loss of lineage and the destruction of the world, as the Imam, peace be on him, has said.

As for lesbianism, it is among immoral vices and leads to deviation from the law of Allah, the Most High, and man's nature.

5. Looking at the hair of women

He, peace be on him, said: "Looking at the hair of married and single women is prohibited, for it excites men, and this excitement results in (committing) the unlawful; likewise (looking at) that which is like hair (is unlawful) except that concerning which Allah has said: ***And (as for) women advanced in years who do not hope for a marriage, it is no sin for them to put off their clothes without displaying their ornaments.***[45] He means other than the garment; there is no harm in looking at the hair of such a kind of women."

Surely looking at woman's hair excites man and motivates him to commit the unlawful. As for looking at the hair of women advanced in years, it does not excite man, so Islam has made it permissible.

6. Usury

The Imam, peace be on him, explained the reasons for prohibiting usury (*riba'*) as follows:

A. He, peace be on him, said: "And as for the reason for prohibiting usury is because Allah has prohibited it; because it corrupts funds, for when one buys a dirham for two dirhams, then the price of the dirham is a dirham, and the price of the other is injustice, so the sale of usury is any how a loss for the buyer and the seller. So Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has prohibited usury because of the corruption of funds just as He has prohibited fund to be given to the fool until his sane is perceived. For this reason Allah has prohibited usury and the sale of the two dirhams hand in hand."

B. He, peace be on him, said: "The reason for prohibiting usury after the evidence because it (makes the

usurer) disparage the unlawful, and it is a great (sin) after the explanation, and the prohibition of Allah, the Exalted, for it. And that does not occur through him (the usurer) except disparaging the unlawful; and disparaging that (means) entering unbelief."

C. He, peace be on him, said: "The reason for prohibiting usury is because it eliminates favors, ruins funds, causes greed for profit, causes people to abandon their dealing with loans to each other or in paying with cash, or when they do one another favors, and due to all the bad consequences of corruption and oppression and the exhaustion of funds."

Islam has inclusively prohibited usury and regarded it as the most excessive of all kinds of oppression. Usury opposes the Islamic teachings which summon men to help each other and have mercy on one another. It brings about enmity and hatred, spreads misery and poverty among men.

It has been established that usury is a means for colonizing and occupying peoples, for some colonists double the profits against loans, accordingly those who take such a kind of loan are unable to repay them and fall into the net of the colonists who plunder their wealth and spread poverty in their countries.

Usury has decisively been prohibited in the Qur'an. Allah, the Exalted, has said: **"O you who believe, do not devour usury, making it double and redouble.**[46]" He, the Exalted, has also said: "O you who believe, be careful of (your duty to) Allah and relinquish what remains (due) from usury, if you are believers. But if you do (it) not, then be apprised of war from Allah and His Messenger; and if you repent, then you shall have your capital; neither shall you make (the debtor) suffer loss, nor shall you be made to suffer loss.[47]"

Islam has cursed the capitalist, the creditor, the scribe, and the witness, for they help the usurer with that which Allah has prohibited.

7. Swallowing the Property of the Orphans

He, peace be on him, said: "Swallowing the property of the orphans unjustly has been prohibited for many reasons of the aspects of corruption. The first of that is that if one swallows the property of the orphan, surely he helps with killing him, for the orphan is not free from need; nor does he undertake his own soul; nor does he know his affairs; nor has he anyone to take care of him and spare him as his parents do. So if one swallows his property, he kills him, makes him poor and needy. And due to that Allah, the Great and Almighty, has frightened (men) through the punishment He has decided in these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: ***And let those fear who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring, would fear on their account; so let them be careful of*** (***their duty to***) ***Allah, and let them speak right words***.[48]

"And due to the statement of Abu' Ja'far, peace be on him: 'Surely Allah, the Great and Almighty, has promised two punishments regarding swallowing the property of the orphan: one punishment is in the world and the other is in the next. So through making the property of the orphan prohibited, the orphan

subsists, depends on himself, the offspring are saved from what has befallen him, because of the punishment Allah has promised regarding it (swallowing the property of the orphan), and, in addition, the orphan will avenge himself when he becomes a grown-up; enmity and hatred occur to the extent that they annihilate each other.'"

Islam has strongly prohibited swallowing the property of the orphan and ordered men to maintain his property until he becomes an adult. Allah, the Most High, has said: "And test the orphans until they attain puberty; then if you find in them maturity of intellect, make over to them their property.[49]"

The Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned the reasons for prohibiting swallowing the property of the orphan.

8. Theft

He, peace be on him, said: "Theft is prohibited. If it was permissible, then it would lead to the corruption of funds, killing, disputes, envy, abandoning trades and industries, and acquiring properties without any right."

As for theft, it is among the ugliest prohibited things, for it means swallowing the funds of people without any right. The thief takes the funds of those who have sacrificed their own souls for gathering them, makes them lead a life of neediness, while he leads a happy life through the funds he has taken. Theft is among the worst kinds of injustice, for this reason Allah, the Most High, has said: "And (as for) the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their hands as a punishment for what they have earned.[50]"

The jurists have mentioned numerous conditions regarding cutting the hand off. If these conditions are available, the thief's hand is cut off.

Amputating the right hand of the Thief

He, peace be on him, said: "And the reason for amputating the right hand of the thief is because he undertakes the things with his own right hand, which is the best of his limbs and most useful of them to him. So amputating the right hand has been decided as a punishment and lesson to the creatures lest they should seek taking funds without any right; and because he (the thief) most times undertakes theft with his own right hand.

"Usurping and taking funds without right has been prohibited, for it results in kinds of corruption; corruption is prohibited because it leads to total ruin, and other aspects of corruption."

For these firm reasons which the Imam, peace be on him, has mentioned, Islam has ordered the right hand of the thief to be cut off, and not his left hand.

9. Wine

He, peace be on him, said: "Allah has prohibited wine because it leads to corruption, changes the intellects of those who drink it, makes them deny Allah, the Great and Almighty, and fabricate lies against Him and his apostles, and makes them do other things such as corruption, murder, slander, and adultery; therefore they do not refrain from the unlawful. For this reason we have decided that all intoxicating drinks are unlawful for they result in that which results from wine; therefore, he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should turn aside from it, show love for us, for their is no safeguard between us and those who drink it (wine)."

As wine does man and society abundant harm, Islam has decisively prohibited it. In this connection Allah, the Most High, has said: "***O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance and*** (***sacrificing***) ***stones set up and*** (***dividing by***) ***arrows are only an uncleanness, the Shaitan's work; shun it therefor that you may be successful***.[51]"

Surely wine brings about all vices and leads to committing all the prohibited such as fornication and theft, and, in addition, it destroys man's health, for it gives rise to enteritis, high blood pressure, and the like. Moreover, the drunk's blood is full of alcohol to the extent that it burns just as alcohol does. I (the author) have mentioned the damages of wine in my book *Work and the Rights of the Worker in Islam*.

10. Dead Animals

He, peace be on him, said: "As regarding dead animals, the prohibition of eating their meat is due to the damage such meat will cause to the body, and due to the fact that Allah has made lawful the meat of animals slaughtered in His names so that that would be a distinction between what is lawful and what is not."

As for eating the meat of dead animals, it gives rise to many diseases and, perhaps, death.[52] That is because dead animals are still accompanied by germs which sometimes do not die even through roasting their meat, as it has been mentioned by modern medicine.

11. The Blood

He, peace be on him, said: "And Allah, the Great and Almighty, has prohibited the blood just as He has made unlawful dead animals, for it (the blood) gives rise to the corruption of the bodies, the yellow water, bad breath, bad smell, bad manners, the cruelty of the heart, the paucity of graciousness and mercy, to the extent (that the one who drinks it) kills his father and his friend."

Islam has prohibited drinking the blood, for it conveys deadly secretions and poisons. If one drinks the blood of a sick animal, surely his blood will have the germs of such an animal. Physicians have unanimously agreed on that the blood is never a food.

12. The Spleen

He, peace be on him, said: “The spleen has been prohibited because of the blood it contains; the cause of its prohibition is similar to that of the blood and dead animals; it is equally bad in its consequences.”

Islam has prohibited the spleen and regarded it as the blood and dead animals, for eating it causes damages and corruption to man’s body, just as the Imam, peace be on him, has stated.

13. Pigs and Apes

He, peace be on him, said: “And pigs are prohibited; their creation was distorted by Allah in order to provide a moral lesson to the creation, and in order to remind them to fear Allah, and as evidence of Allah’s might to distort what He creates at will, and because the food they eat is the filthiest of filth, in addition to many other reasons.

“And likewise, pigs are prohibited; (Allah) distorted their creation as He distorted that of pigs in order to provide a moral lesson to the creation, and as evidence of Allah’s might to distort what He creates at will; and He has placed in them (qualities) similar to that of man in order to indicate that they (apes) belong to the creation upon whom (His) wrath was brought down.”

Islam has prohibited the meat of pigs, and, through that, it has saved the Muslims from great evil. Bity Wdikson says: “Surely the infection by the worms of the pig’s meat is about general in special regions from France, Germany, Italy, and Briton, but it is rare in the eastern country, for the religion of its people has prohibited eating pig’s meat; pig’s meat also conveys Tarnjina to man.”

The following are some realities on pig’s meat and the extent of its danger:

A. The specialist physician cannot decide that one pig is not infected by these worms; rather all pigs are infected by them.

B. Each female of these worms lays 1500 ova in the mucous membrane of the sick person’s bowels. So the blood distributes and spreads the million ova laid by all the female worms all over the body, and the fetuses come together in muscles, so the give rise to severe aches, and very painful muscular inflammations, and after that one is inflected by malignant tumors.

C. There is no medicine for this disease and, in addition, pig’s meat coveys to man some germs and paratyphoid, and they cause to him an acute poisoning accompanied by severe inflammations in the digestive system, and they may give rise to death within some hours.[53]

14. Rabbits

He, peace be on him, said: “The rabbits are prohibited because they are with the same rank to cats: their claws are like those of cats and like wild animals, so their behavior is equally wild, in addition to

their own inner dirtiness and due to their bleeding which is similar to the bleeding of women during their menstrual period; and because they are miscreants."

As for eating the meat of rabbits, it is prohibited according to the reasons given by the Imam, peace be on him. However, some Islamic schools do not regard rabbit as dirty, and they have regarded eating the meat of rabbits as permissible.

15. Beasts and Birds of Prey

He, peace be on him, said: "Beasts and birds of prey are prohibited because they eat carcasses, the flesh of men, feces, and the like. So Allah, the Great and Almighty, has placed signs in the lawful and the unlawful animals and birds. And just as my father has said: 'Beasts with canine teeth and birds with claws are prohibited; birds with gizzards are lawful.'

"Yet another reason for distinguishing lawful birds from unlawful ones is these words of him, peace be on him: 'Eat birds which flap their wings and do not eat those birds which glide their wings.'"

Islam has prohibited birds of prey such as falcon and Egyptian vulture; likewise, the birds which have neither crop nor gizzard nor spurs on their feet; it is sufficient when one spur is on the feet of the lawful birds.[54]

The Imam, peace be on him, has stated that such birds and animals are prohibited because they eat carcasses, the flesh of men, feces, and their meat is affected by that, so their meat is not appropriate for man's stomach.

16. That over which any other (Name) than that of Allah has been invoked

He, peace be on him, said: "It is prohibited (to eat) that over which any other (name) than that of Allah has been invoked, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, has made it incumbent on His creation to profess Him and to invoke His name over the lawful sacrifices; lest that through which they seek nearness to Him and that which has been made as act of worship to Satan and idols should be equal, because invoking the name of Allah, the Great and Almighty, (over sacrifices) means professing His Lordship and His Oneness. As for that over which any other (name) than that of Allah has been invoked, it has nothing except associating others with Him and seeking nearness through it to other than Him, that mentioning and invoking the name of Allah over sacrifice may be a difference between what Allah has made lawful and what He has made unlawful."

It is prohibited to eat the meat of the sacrifices over which any other name than that of Allah is invoked, for they are slaughtered to seek nearness to other than Allah such as idols, and this was the custom of those people who lived before Islam, and who had neither awareness nor thought; rather they were like beasts. When Islam came, it prohibited their sacrifices. It regarded their thoughts and works as dirty, their sacrifices as unclean and inedible.

17. Eating the Meat of Mules is Reprehensible

He, peace be on him, said: “It is reprehensible to eat the meat of domestic mules because the people are in need of their backs and employing them; and for fear that they may be few; not because of the dirtiness of their creation nor because of the dirtiness of their food.”

Islam has made it reprehensible to eat the meat of domestic donkeys and mules, for they were the most important means for transportation during those times. If they had been slaughtered, the means of transportation would have been few. As for their meat, it is eatable and has nothing to damage general health.

18. Man may marry up to four Women

He, peace be on him, said: “Why may a man marry up to four women, while a woman is prohibited from marrying more than one man? Because when a man marries four women, his children will all be related to him; had a woman married two husbands or more simultaneously, nobody would know for sure who fathered the sons she gave birth to, since they all were in cohabiting with her, and this causes a complete disorder for relating one to his father, and who should inherit who, and who is the kin of who.”

The Imam, peace be on him, has explained the reason why a man may marry four women, while a woman may not marry two husbands or more simultaneously. Had it was permissible for her to marry more than a husband at the same time, then who would father the son she gave birth to? Surely such a kind of marriage loses lineage and corrupts inheritances.

19. Repeating the Divorce Statement thrice

He, peace be on him, said: “The reason for repeating the divorce statement thrice is due to the time interval between each, and due to a possible desire for reconciliation or the calming of anger, if any, and to teach women to respect their husbands and deter them from disobeying them.”

The revocable divorce (*tala’q al-‘idda*) is that the husband divorces his wife when the pre-conditions are available; then he has the right to return to her during the *‘idda* and to remarry her. Then he divorces her during another purity, so it is prohibited for him to remarry her until she marries another husband; the reasons for such a kind of divorce has been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him.

20. The Woman divorced nine times

He, peace be on him, said: “The reason why a husband can never remarry his wife whom he divorced nine times is that it is his right penalty so that men do not take divorce lightly or take advantage of women and think of them as weak, and so that the man would be considering his affairs, remaining awake and aware, so that he would lose all hope of a reunion after the ninth pronouncement of the divorce statement.”

If a woman is divorced in the manner mentioned in the previous question, and someone else marries her, then he divorces her, and her first husband marries her and divorces her three times in the previous manner, then it is prohibited for him to marry her until she marries someone else. If someone else marries her and divorces her, then her first husbands marries her and divorces her thrice in the previous manner, then he can never marry her again. As for the reasons for such a kind of divorce, they have been mentioned by the Imam, peace be on him. If the divorce is not revocable, the divorced woman can never be prohibited, even if the divorce is more than nine times.

21. The Inheritance of Woman

As for the inheritance of a woman, it is that she inherits half what men get of inheritance. The Imam, peace be on him, has given two reasons for that:

Regarding the first reason, he, peace be on him, said: "The reason for giving women half what men get of inheritance is that when the woman marries, she receives, while the man gives; therefore, Allah decided to assist the males to be able to give."

Regarding the second reason, he, peace be on him, said: "Yet another reason for giving the male twice as much as the female is that the female is considered dependent on the male when she needs, and he has to take care of her living expenses and to spend on her, while the woman is not required to take care of the expenses of the man, nor can she be required to pay his expenses if he was in need; therefore, Allah decreed to give the man more according to these words of Him, the Great and Almighty:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women because Allah has given the one more than the other, and because they support them from their means.[55]"

As the man is responsible for paying the expenses of the woman such as those of house, food, clothes, and others mentioned by the jurists, the woman is given half what the man gets of inheritance, just as the Imam, peace be on him, has stated. With this question we will end our talk about the reasons for some precepts which have been reported from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

The Conditions of the Prophets and Bygone Communities

The Imam, peace be on him, was asked about the reasons for the conditions of some prophets and bygone communities, and he answered. The following are some of them:

The Drowning of Pharaoh

Ibra'him b. Muhammad al-Hamada'ni narrated, saying: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'What is the reason for which Allah, the Great and Almighty, drowned Pharaoh even after Pharaoh had believed in Him and admitted His unity?'"

He, peace be on him, answered: “Because he believed only when he saw Allah’s retribution, and belief to avoid danger is not accepted. This is Allah’s judgment regarding past and future generations. Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said:

When they saw Our punishment, they said: We believe in Allah, the One, and we reject the partners we used to associate with Him. But their professing the faith when they (actually) saw Our punishment was not going to benefit them.[56]

And He, the Great and Almighty, has said:

The day that certain signs of your Lord do come, no good will it do to a soul to believe in them then, if it did not believe before nor did it earn righteousness through its faith.[57]

“So when Pharaoh was about to be drowned, he said:

I believe that there is no god except the One in Whom the children of Israel believe, and I am of those who submit (to Allah in Islam). (It was said to him): Ah now! But a little before were you in rebellion! And you did mischief (and violence)! This day shall We save you in your body, so that you may be a Sign to those who come after you![58]

“Pharaoh was dressed in iron from head to foot; he had worn it on his body. When he drowned, Allah placed him in his body on an upland, that he might be a Sign to those who came after him, so they would see him on a lofty ground though he was heavy in iron; heavy things go down and do not go up; and that was a sign and mark.

“And for another reason Allah, the Great and Almighty, drowned Pharaoh; and it is that when he was about to be drowned, he sought the help of Musa’ and did not seek the help of Allah, so Allah, the Great and Almighty, revealed to Musa’: *O Musa’, why do you help Pharaoh? Because you did not create him. If he asked Me for help, I would help him*.”

The Drowning of the World during the Days of Nu’h

‘Abd al-Sala’m b. Sa’lih al-Harawi narrated, saying: “I asked al-Ridha’, peace be on him: ‘O son of Allah’s Messenger, what is the reason for which Allah, the Great and Almighty, drowned all the world in the time of Nu’h, while there were among them children and those who had no sins?’

“He, peace be on him, answered: ‘There were no children among them because Allah, the Great and Almighty, sterilized the loins of the people of Nu’h and the wombs of their wives for forty days, so their progeny ceased. They were drowned and there was no child among them; and Allah, the Great and Almighty, does not destroy with His punishment him who has no sin. As for the rest of the people of Nu’h, they were drowned due to the lying of the liars; and he who is absent from an affair and is satisfied with it is like him who witnesses and does it.”

The Miracle of Musa'

Ibn al-Sikkit asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him: "Why did Allah, the Great and Almighty, send Musa' (Moses) b. 'Umra'n with a miraculous cane and white hand and the tool of sorcery, 'Isa' (Jesus) with miraculous medicine, and Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, with miraculous speech and oratory?"

He, peace be on him, replied: "When Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, sent Musa', sorcery dominated the minds of the people of his time, so he brought them from Allah, the Great and Almighty, something which they never had, nor could they bring about anything like it, thus rendering their sorcery void and proving his argument against them. When Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, sent 'Isa' during a period of time when chronic diseases were widespread and people were in dire need of cure, 'Isa' brought them from Allah, the Great and Almighty, something they never had, bringing the dead back to life, curing those born blind and the lepers by the will of Allah, proving his argument against them. And when Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, sent Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, during the time when speeches and oratory dominated the minds of the people of his time, he brought them the Book of Allah, the Great and Almighty, and with the wisdom and counsel, thereby voiding their arguments."

Ibn al-Sikkit admired this answer of the Imam and said: "By Allah, I have never seen anyone like you! What is the argument against people these days, then?"

"Reason," answered the Imam, "through it can you come to know who tells the truth about Allah, so you believe in him, and who tells lies about Allah, so you disbelieve in him."

"This, by Allah, is the right answer," retorted Ibn al-Sikkit.

Ulu' al-'Azm

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Ulu' al-'Azm have been called Ulu' al-'Azm because they were the possessors of the laws and resolutions, and that is every prophet after Nu'h, and every prophet during the days of Ibra'him and after him adopted his law and his method and followed his Book, to the time of our Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. So these five (prophets) are Ulu' al-'Azm (the Possessors of Constancy); they are the most excellent of the prophets and the messengers; the shari'a (law) of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is not abrogated until the Day of Resurrection, nor is there a prophet after him until the Day of Resurrection. So if one claims prophecy after him or brings a book after the Qur'an, then his blood is permitted for all those who hear that from him."

Al-Hawariyu'n (the Disciples)

'Ali b. al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Fadda'l narrated on the authority of his father, who said: "I asked Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'Why have the Hawariyu'n been called the Hawariyu'n?'"

He, peace be on him, answered: “In the opinion of the people is that they have been called the Hawariyu’n because they shortened (their clothes) purified their clothes of dirt through washing; and it is a name derived from *al-khubz al-hawa’r* 59. In my opinion the Hawariyu’n have been called the Hawariyu’n because they purified their own souls and purified those other them of the dirtiness of sins through preaching (to them) and reminding (them of Allah)”

He (‘Ali’s father) said: “I asked him (al-Ridha’): ‘Why have they been call al-Nasa’ra’.’”

“Because they were from a village called Na’sira in Syria (*bila’d al-Sha’m*) inhabited by Maryam (Mary) and ‘Isa’ after their return from Egypt,” he answered.

Ibra’him, the Bosom Friend of Allah

Al-Husayn b. Kha’lid narrated on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, who said: [I heard my father relate on the authority of his father, peace be on him, who said:] “Allah, the Great and Almighty, took Ibra’him for friend because he did not come to anyone and never asked anyone except Allah, the Great and Almighty.”

Isma”il, the Truthful in his Promise

Sulayma’n al-Ja‘fari narrated on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, who said: “Did you know why Isma’‘il was called the Truthful in his promise?”

“No, I did not know,” replied Isma’‘il.

“He promised a man and sat down for a year waiting for him,” retorted the Imam.

With this matter we will end our talk about the reasons which the Imam, peace be on him, has given for the conditions of some prophets and bygone communities.

The Reasons for some Islamic Affairs

A group of traditions regarding the reasons for some Islamic affairs has been reported from the Imam, peace be on him, as follows:

The Qur’an is always new

Ibra’him b. al-‘Abba’s narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, that he narrated on the authority of his father that a man asked Imam al-Sa’diq, peace be on him, saying: “Why does the Qur’an not increase during spreading and studying but newness?”

He, peace be on him, replied: “Because Allah did not send it down to a time apart from a time nor to a people apart from a people, so it is new every time and is fresh with every people until the Day of

Resurrection."

Surely the Qur'an is the great miracle of Islam, and that is because therein are moral lessons appropriate for all times and developments; therein is nothing deviates from the laws of the cosmos or opposes innate; moreover, it is wonderful in eloquence and great in style, so it is fresh and new throughout times.

'Ali is the Divider of Paradise and of Hell

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him: "O Abu' al-Hasan, tell me about your grandfather the Commander of the faithful: Why is he called the divider of Paradise and of Hell, and how that attribute came to be applied to him?"

He, peace be on him, in turn asked him: "O commander of the faithful, have you not narrated from your father from his forefathers quoting 'Abd Allah b. 'Abba's saying that he had heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, saying: 'Loving 'Ali is belief and hating him is unbelief?'"

"Yes," replied al-Ma'mu'n.

"If the distribution of Paradise and of Hell is done according to loving and hating him, then he is the distributor of Paradise and of Hell," explained al-Ridha', peace be on him.

So al-Ma'mu'n said: "May Allah never permit me to live after your demise, O Abu' al-Hasan! I witness that you are the heir of the knowledge of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family."

Abu' al-Salt al-Harawi said: "After al-Ridha' had gone back home, I came to visit him, and I said to him: 'O son of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, what an excellent answer you have given the Commander of the faithful! He said: 'O Abu' al-Salt, I spoke to him in the way he understood best, and I have heard my father telling a tradition from his forefathers, on the authority of 'Ali, who said: 'Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'O 'Ali, you are the distributor of Paradise and of Hell on the Day of Judgment; you say to Hell: 'This is mine, and that is yours.'"

Imam 'Ali the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, stands for every noble deed in Islam. Without doubt he is the distributor of Paradise and of Hell. In this respect many authentic traditions have been reported from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.60 Al-Ma'mu'n admired this firm justification of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

'Ali does not restore Fadak

'Ali b. al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Fadda'l narrated on the authority of his father, who said: "I asked al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the Commander of the faithful (Imam 'Ali), peace be on him, as to why he did not restore Fadak (to its rightful owners) when he undertook the affairs of men? He, peace be on him, replied: 'We are members of a family who, upon becoming rulers, do not take their rights from those who

confiscated them. Should we become in charge of the Muslims, we shall rule them and restore their confiscated rights to them, but we do not do so for our own selves.'"

Abu' Bakr confiscated Fadak and took it from the hand of Fa'tima, the Leader of the women of the world. As for the reason for that, it is that he desired to undermine the rank of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. He intended to wage an economic warfare against the enemy forces to paralyze them. Fadak remained in the hands of the governors and the rulers. However, the 'Alawide Sayyids restored it during the days of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz and of al-Ma'mu'n. The talk about it has many branches, and the judge is Allah, the Exalted, Who will decide among His servants on the day when neither property nor sons will avail.

The Companions of the Prophet

Muhammad b. Musa' b. Nasr al-Ra'zi narrated, saying: [My father related to me, saying: al-Ridha', peace be on him, was asked about the tradition of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family: 'My companions are like the stars: If you follow any of them, you shall receive guidance.' And about his tradition: 'Leave my companions to me.' So he, peace be on him, replied:]

"Yes, he did say this tradition, meaning thereby the companions who did not make any alteration after him or any change (to the Islamic creed)."

The Imam was asked: "How can you tell that they altered and changed?"

He answered: "This is due to what is reported about him (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, that he said: 'Certain individuals among my companions will be pushed away by force from my Pool (of Kawther) on the Day of Resurrection just as strange camels are pushed away from the watering place, and I shall say: 'O Lord! My companions! My companions!' And it shall be said to me: 'You do not know what innovations they invented after you.' So they will be pushed away towards the left side (where Hell is), and I shall say: 'Away with them; ruined they shall be.' Such will be the penalty of those who alter and change (the Prophet's traditions and practices).61"

As for companionship, it did not protect the Prophet's companions from making mistakes, for some of his companions were Samra b. Jundub, 'Amru b. al-'As, al-Mughira b. Shu'ba, and the like from among the heads of hypocrisy and mischief.

The People desert 'Ali

'Ali b. al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Fadda'l narrated on the authority of his father, who said: [I asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, about the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, as to why the people deserted him after knowing his distinction, his past feats, and his rank to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. He, peace be on him, answered:]

“They deserted him and preferred others over him after having come to know his merits simply because he had killed a great number of their fathers, grandfathers, brothers, uncles, and other relatives who defied Allah and His Apostle; therefore, they kept their grudge against him inside their hearts and they did not like him when he became their ruler. They did not have grudge against anyone else as much as they had against him, for nobody else was so forceful in making *jiha'd* in the defense of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, as much as he was; so, they deserted him for someone else.”

Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, killed those far and close for the sake of Allah, the Most High, and struck off the heads of those polytheists with his own sword through which he established Islam, so they harbored malice against him and deserted him for someone else.

Imam ‘Ali does not take his own Right

Al-Haythem b. ‘Abd Allah al-Rumma'ni narrated, saying: [I asked ‘Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, saying: ‘O son of Allah's Messenger, tell me about ‘Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him: Why did he not fight his enemies during the twenty-five years after the demise of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, as he did during the days of his caliphate?' He, peace be on him, answered:]

“It is due to his following the example of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, who did not fight the polytheists of Mecca during the thirteen years after his Prophethood, or the ones in Medina during the nineteen months period of his stay there; it is due to the numbers of his supporters being too small. Likewise, ‘Ali did not engage himself in fighting his enemies because his owner supporters were too few. Since the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, was not nullified by the fact that he did not make *jiha'd* during the period of thirteen years (in Mecca) and nineteen months (in Medina), the Imamate of ‘Ali was not nullified because he did not perform *jiha'd* for twenty-five years, for the deterring factor in both examples was one and the same.”

Surely Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, left his own right and did not make *jihad* against his enemies, for his own supporters were too few. In this connection, he has said: “Then I began to think whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown up are feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throats.”

Surely Imam ‘Ali had no group of people to support him, though he had many enemies and opponents, so he, peace be on him, was patient and left his own right preferring over it the general interest and keeping the word of the Muslims.

With this matter we will end our speech about the reasons which the Imam, peace be on him, has given for some Islamic affairs.

1. The ‘Addliya are those who believe in Divine Justice.
2. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 99.
3. Ibid., p. 100.
4. Ibid., p. 102.
5. Ibid., p. 103.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 100-101.
8. Ibid., p. 102.
9. Ibid., p. 88.
10. Ibid., pp. 88-89.
11. Ghusl al-maiyit: obligatory ceremonial washing of the corpse of a Muslim.
12. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 89.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Dr. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, al-Isla’m wa al-Tibb al-Hadith, pp. 62-63.
17. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 104.
18. Ibid., p. 89.
19. Ibid., p. 103-104.
20. Ibid., p. 105.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Qur’an, 2, 185.
27. Minha’jj al-Sa’lihin, vol. 1, p. 113.
28. Qur’an, 2, 185.
29. Ibid., 2, 185.
30. Perhaps the correct is: She is in the state of uncleanness.
31. Qur’an, 58, 4.
32. Ibid., 2, 196.
33. Perhaps the correct is in the land and on sea.
34. Qur’an, 9, 122.
35. Ibid., 2, 196.
36. Ihra’m is entering into the state of ritual consecration.
37. Qur’an, 2, 30.
38. Ayya’m al-tashriq are the days following the day of immolation.
39. Ta’rikh al-‘Arab (2nd edition), vol. 1, p. 187.
40. Qur’an, 3, 185.
41. Ibid., 2, 179.
42. Ibid., 17, 32.
43. Ibid., 24, 2.
44. Ibid., 29, 28.
45. Ibid., 24, 60.
46. Ibid., 3, 129.
47. Ibid., 2, 278-279.
48. Ibid., 4, 9.

49. Ibid., 4, 6.
50. Ibid., 5, 38.
51. Ibid., 5, 90.
52. Dr. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Isma’il, al-Isla’m wa al-Tibb al-Hadith, p. 17.
53. Ru’h al-Din al-Isla’mi (3rd edition), p. 405.
54. Minha’jj al-Sa’lihi’n, vol. 2, p. 274.
55. Qur’an, 4, 34.
56. Ibid., 40, 84-85.
57. Ibid., 6, 158.
58. Ibid., 10, 90-92.
59. Al-khubz al-hawa’r it is that which is sifted several time; and in al-Qa’mu’s, it is the white flour.
60. Al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqa, p. 75. In Kanz al-‘Umma’l, vol. 6, p. 402, it has been mentioned: “‘Ali said: ‘I am the distributor of Hell.’” And in Kunu’z al-Haqa”iq by al-Mana’wi, p. 92: “Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘‘Ali is the divider of Hell.’”
61. Al-Bukha’ri (vol. 6, p. 119, al-Amiriya edition) has narrated on the authority of ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘u’d, on the authority of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who said: “I shall be the first to reach the Pool, then the souls of some men from among you will be resurrected and they shall be prohibited from coming near me, and I shall say: ‘O Lord! These are my companions!’ And it shall be said to me: ‘You do not know what they did after you.’” Narrations similar to this are numerous.

Chapter 11: Inclusive Wise Sayings

It is related from Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, a group of outstanding wise sayings, manners, commandments, pieces of advice, and other than them from among that which profit men. They indicate that he was the greatest educator in Islamic world, and that he spared no effort to educate the Muslims and to bring them up with wise reason. We will mention some wise sayings on his authority.

The Excellence of Reason

As for reason, it is the best favor which Allah has given to man and through which He distinguished him from grazing animals. Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, spoke about reason in some of his traditions, which are as follows:

A. He, peace be on him, said: “Everyone’s friend is his reason; his enemy is his ignorance.1”

How wonderful this wise statement is! That is because reason is the great friend of man; it protects him, safeguards him from the afflictions and misfortunes of this world. The great enemy of man is ignorance, which throws him into deep mazes of this world.

B. Abu’ Ha’shim al-Ja‘far narrated: [We were with al-Ridha’, peace be on him. We discussed reason and he said:] “O Abu” Ha’shim, reason is a free gift from Allah, and politeness is acquisition. He who

undertakes politeness has power over it. He who undertakes reason increases (himself) through that nothing but ignorance.2"

As for courtesy, it is an acquisitive matter. Man can acquire it. As for reason, it is a free gift from Allah, the Most High. Man cannot acquire it.

C. Al-Hasan b. al-Jahm reported: [Reason was mentioned in the presence of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he said:] "(None) pays attention to the men of religion who have no reason." I (i.e. al-Hasan b. al-Jahm) said: "May I be your ransom. In our opinion there is no harm upon the people who describes this affair. Do they have not reason?" "They are not from among those whom Allah addressed," he replied, "Allah created reason and ordered it to come forward, and it came forward. Then He ordered it to go back and it went back. Hence He said: 'By My might and majesty, I have not created anything better than you or more lovable to me than you. I punish (men) and reward (them) through you.3"

Allah did not create anything better than reason. All religious obligations depend on it, hence he who loses his reason is not required to perform them and is not sinful when he commits sins. That is because reason is the only condition in the correctness of religious duties and their validity on him whom performs them.

D. He, peace be on him, said: "The best reason is that man knows his own soul.4"

When man knows how his soul was shaped and ended, he will gain abundant good. That is because such knowledge will drive him away from evil inclinations, urges him to cling to good inclinations, and makes him know his Almighty Creator. It has been mentioned in the tradition: "He who knows his own soul knows his Lord."

Reflecting on the Affair of Allah

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "Worship is not abundant prayer and fasting; rather it is abundant reflecting on the affair of Allah, the Great and Almighty.5"

Reflecting on the creatures of Allah, contemplating His wonderful creatures, and thinking of the secrets and wonders of this universe are clear evidence for the existence of the Almighty Creator. When man knows his Lord, he is safe from evil and committing crime, and he becomes the source of bestowal and good for his own soul and his society.

Reckoning Soul

He, peace be on him, said: "He who reckons his own soul is successful; he who is heedless of it is unsuccessful.6"

If man reckons his own soul with regard to doing good and evil deeds and prevents it from committing evil deeds, he will be sublime and attain success and good. If he is heedless of it, he will throw himself into endless evil.

Clemency

He, peace be on him, said: “Man is not worshipful unless he is clement.[7]”

Clemency is the noblest quality by which man is distinguished. Clemency toward evildoer and pardoning aggressor indicate that soul is sublime and has reached the highest degree of perfection. Through clemency man is the master of other than him and is a good guide to his own society.

Silence

He, peace be on him, said: “Some signs of understanding are clemency, knowledge, and silence. Silence is one of the doors to wisdom. It brings about love and is evidence for all good.[8]”

Silence and controlling the tongue protect man from great evil and turn him aside from detested things which result from speech and utterance.

Humbleness

He, peace be on him, said: “Humbleness is that you give to men that which you want them to give to you.”

He, peace be on him, wrote to Muhammad b. Sina’n: “Humbleness is degrees. One of them is that man should know the measure of his own soul and sincerely place it in its rank. He does not like to do anything for others except that which he wants others to do for him. If others do evil deed for him, he repels the evil deed with a good one. He restrains his anger, pardons men, *and Allah loves good-doers*.[9]”

The reality of humbleness is that man should honor men and treat them kindly just as he wants them to treat him in the same manner.

Humbleness is evidence for the honor and exaltedness of soul. Men love and honor him who shows humbleness toward them. Meanwhile Allah loves and exalts him.

Believer’s Noble Qualities

He, peace be on him, said: “The believer is not believing unless he has three qualities: a quality from his Lord, a quality from his Prophet, and a quality from his ruler. As for the quality from his Lord, it is concealing his secret. Allah, the Great and Almighty has said: ***The Knower of the unseen, so He does***

not reveal His secrets to any. As for the quality from his Prophet, it is humoring with men, for Allah, the Great and Almighty ordered His Prophet to humor with men, saying: ***Take to forgiveness and enjoin good.*** As for the quality from his ruler, it is patience during prosperity and adversity.[10]"

How noble qualities are these! They raise the level of man to the top of honor and perfection, and they turn him aside from falling into destruction.

The Best and Worst of Men

'Ali b. Shu'ayb said: [I visited Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he asked me:] "O 'Ali, do you know whose subsistence is the best?"

"Master, you know better than me," I replied

"It is that of one through whom others' subsistence is improved," he explained.

"O 'Ali, do you know who has the worst subsistence?" he asked.

"Master, you know better than me," I answered.

"It is that of the one who does not include others in it," he declared.

The Imam went on advising him to do good and kindness to men, saying: "O 'Ali, be thoughtful to the boons, for they are wild: if they leave people, they never come back to them. O 'Ali, the worst of men is he who stops his contributions to charity, eats by himself, and whips his slave.[11]"

These words summons man to do good and kindness to men.

Faith and Islam

He, peace be on him, said: "Faith is a degree above Islam; Allah-fearingness is a degree above faith; and nothing less than Allah-fearingness has been divided among men.[12]"

Certainty of Allah is the best degree of faith and is one of qualities of the great Allah-fearing whose hearts Allah examines for faith.

Vainglory corrupts deeds

Ahmed b. Najm asked Imam al-Ridha' about vainglory which corrupted deeds, and he, peace be on him, answered: "Vainglory is degrees: One of them is that the deed of a servant is embellished and he regards it as good. One of them is that the servant believes (in Allah) and reminds Him of favor, while Allah shows kindness toward him.[13]"

The vainglory, in the second sense, results from unbelief and unripe thoughts, and hence it corrupts deeds.

Sins

He, peace be on him, said: “When the servants commit sins which they have not known before, affliction which they have not known before befalls them.[14]”

Men have committed terrible kinds of sins and acts of disobedience which have not been known before. Hence Allah has let down upon them various kinds of afflictions and misfortunes which they have not known before.

Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil

Imam al-Ridha’ said: “Either you enjoin (men) to do good and forbid (them) from evil or Allah will employ the wicked from among you over you, hence the righteous from among you supplicate (Him), but (He) does not respond to them.[15]”

Enjoining good and forbidding evil is an original method in Islamic life; hence neglecting it leads to bad results of which are spreading abominable things and the supplication of the righteous is not accepted.

He Who loves the Disobedient!

He, peace be on him, said: “He who loves the disobedient is disobedient; he who loves the obedient is obedient. He who helps a wrongdoer is a wrongdoer; he who deserts a wrongdoer is just. There is no kinship between Allah and any, and the protection of Allah is not attained but through obedience.[16]”

He who loves the work of people, he will be mustered in their band, just as it has been mentioned in the tradition. So whoever loves the disobedient is disobedient, and whoever loves the obedient is obedient.

The Good Men

The Imam, peace be on him, was asked about the good men, and he replied: “It is they who are delighted when they do good, ask Allah’s forgiveness when they do evil, give thanks when they are given, are patient when they are tried, and pardon (men) when they become angry.[17]”

He who has such noble qualities is indeed one of the good men and is perfect and meritorious.

Honest Work

He, peace be on him, said: “The reward of him who works to spare his family is greater than that of the

struggler in the way of Allah.[18]”

The work for sparing family is struggle in the way of Allah, honor which the worker attains, and glory of which he boasts.

Perfect Reason

He, peace be on him, said: “The discretion of a Muslim is not perfect except after he acquires ten qualities: Allah accepts his good deeds, he is trustworthy, he sees as plentiful the little good that others do for him, while seeing his own abundant good as little; he does not fret from being asked for favor, nor does he feel tired of constantly seeking knowledge; poverty reached in order to please Allah is better for him than wealth accumulated otherwise; to be subjected to power while trying to serve Allah is better in his regard than achieving power over his foe, and obscurity he prefers over fame.”

Then he, peace be on him, said: “And the tenth (one), do you know what the tenth (one) is?”

He was asked: “What is it?”

He, peace be on him, replied: “Whenever he sees someone, he says to himself: ‘He is better than me and more pious. People are two types: a person better than him and more pious, and one who is more evil than him and more lowly. If he meets the one who is more evil than him and more lowly, he says to himself: ‘Maybe, the goodness of this (statement) is implied, and it is better that he hears such a compliment, while my own goodness is apparent and it is detrimental to me. And when he sees someone better than him and pious, he would humble himself before him trying to raise himself to his level. So if he does that, his glory will be higher, his reputation will be better, and he will become distinguished above his contemporaries.[19]”

He who has these ten qualities is indeed perfect in faith and reason. Moreover Allah exalts him, raise his reputation in the world, and gives him the highest degree on the Day of Resurrection.

The Reality of Reliance on Allah

A man asked the Imam about these words of Him, the Exalted: ***“Whoever relies on Allah, He suffices him***.[20]”

He, peace be on him, answered: “Reliance (on Allah) is in various degrees one of which is that you rely on Him in everything related to you, and when He does something to you which you know will not bring you anything good, you rely on His wisdom in doing it, so you nevertheless put your trust in Him willingly. Another you believe in the Unseen regarding Allah of which you have no knowledge, so you relied on Him and on His custodians, trusting in Him in their regard and in others.[21]”

The Imam, peace be on him, gives a clear picture of the reality of reliance on Allah, the Exalted, which is

that man should entrust all his affairs to Him, the Exalted, for this is pure faith and certitude in Allah.

The Pillars of Faith

He, peace be on him, said: “Faith is four pillars: trust in Allah, satisfaction with Allah’s decree, submission to Allah’s command, and entrusting (affairs) to Allah. The Righteous Servant[22] said: *And I entrust my affair to Allah, so Allah protected him from the evil deeds of what they had schemed.*[23]”

Faith in Allah stands on these four pillars. When a person has them, he attains the top of faith.

Noble Traits

He, peace be on him, said: “If one lacks five attributes, do not expect to gain anything good out of him for your life in this world or your life to come: if his lineage is known to be untrustworthy, if his nature lacks generosity, if his temper lacks balance, if he lacks a noble conduct, and if he lacks fear of his Lord.[24]”

He who has these noble qualities scores a great success in honor and manhood and is hoped for help and generosity.

Giving Thanks for Favors

He, peace be on him, said: “He who does not thank the benefactor from among the creatures does not thank Allah, the Great and Almighty.[25]” Showing gratitude to the benefactor for his favor is a must. He who does not thank him and denies him does not thank Allah, the Great and Almighty, for His favors toward him.

His Commandments

The Imam, peace be on him, gave some commandments to his close Shi‘ites. The following are some of them:

A. His Commandments to Ahmed

The Imam, peace be on him, gave some commandments to Ahmed b. Abu’ Nasr. The following are some of them: “Do not be tired of supplicating, for it is of great importance with Allah. Be patient, seek the lawful, tighten (your) bonds of kin with gifts, beware of showing enmity toward men, for we, the members of the House, join him who cuts us off, and do good for him who does evil for us, so, by Allah, we see good results through that.[26]”

He advised him to cling to noble moral traits and good deeds through which man becomes exalted.

B. His Commandments to Ibra'him

The Imam, peace be on him, gave some commandments to Ibra'him b. Abu' Mahmu'd. (He said to him): [My father told me on the authority of his fathers, on the authority of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his Family, who said:] "He who listens to a speaker serves him. If the speaker (talks on behalf of) Allah, he serves Allah. If the speaker (talks on behalf) of Satan, he serves Satan." Then he said: "Son of Abu' Mahmu'd, when men go to left and right, then cling to our way, for we cling to him who clings to us and separate ourselves from him who separates himself from us. The least thing through which man deviate from faith is that he calls pebble stone, then he embraces this and renounces those who oppose him. Son of Abu' Mahmu'd, keep in mind what I have told you about, for I have gathered for you thereby the good of this world and the next.27"

C. His Commandments to Ahmed and al-Husayn

Ahmed b. 'Umar and al-Husayn b. Yazid said: "We visited Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: 'We were in plenty of provision and ease of livelihood. (Our) state has changed, so supplicate Allah to return that to us.'"

The Imam ordered them to be content and satisfied with that which Allah had apportioned for them, saying: "What do you want? Do you want to be kings? Does it please you to be like Ta'hir28 and Herthima29 while you oppose your doctrine?"

One of them interrupted the Imam, saying: "No, by Allah, it does not please me that I possess the gold and silver of the world. I oppose my doctrine." This means that he deviated from the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on him.

The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Allah says: *Give thanks, O family of Da'wud, and very few of My servants are grateful*. Have a good opinion in Allah, for he who has a good opinion of Allah, Allah has a good opinion of him. He who is satisfied with a little provision, his little work is accepted. He who is content with a little lawful thing, his provision is light, his family leads a life of ease and comfort, Allah makes him see the malady of the world and its medicine, brings him out of it sound and (sends him) to the Abode of Peace.30"

The Imam, peace be on him, advised them to cling to contentment which is an everlasting treasure. He made them know that they had something more expensive than silver and gold, which was showing friendship to the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, who were the greatest favor of Allah toward His righteous servants.

D. Equality between the Rich and the Poor

The Imam advised his companions (to spread) equality among the rich and the poor with greetings (*sala'm*). He said: "He who meets a poor and greets him in a manner different from greeting the rich

meets Allah, the Great and Almighty, and He is angry with him.[31]"

This commandment represents the great morals of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, whom Allah created as mercy for His servants, for they made it incumbent upon their Shi'ites to spread equality among Muslims even through greetings (*sala'm*) and made them hate color discrimination.

E. Smiling at the Believer

The Imam advised his companions to smile at the believer and not to receive him with anger. He, peace be on him, said: "He who smiles at his believing brother, Allah will write a good deed for him, and Allah will not torture him for whom He writes a good deed.[32]"

The Imams, peace be on them, advised their companions to follow these noble moral traits, that they might be an example to men.

F. General Commandments

The Imam, peace be on him, advised his companions and the rest of people to follow these valuable commandments: "Fear Allah, O men, regarding the favors of Allah toward you. Do not repel them from you through disobeying Him. Know that you do not thank Allah for a thing after faith in Him and His Messenger, and after confessing the rights of Allah's friends from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, more lovable (to Him) than your helping your believing brothers in their world, which is a bridge for you to the Gardens of their Lord. He who does that is among the close friends of Allah.[33]"

These commandments are full of urging men to fear Allah, the Exalted, to help their brothers, and to show kindness toward them.

Tightening the Bonds of Kin

A group of traditions has been reported from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, concerning urging his companions and Shi'ites to tighten the bonds of kin. Some of them are as follows:

A. He, peace be on him, said: "If only three years of a person's span of life has remained and he tightens the bond of kin, Allah will make them thirty years, and Allah does whatever He wills.[34]"

B. He, peace be on him, said: "We know that nothing increases the span of life except tightening the bonds of kin, to the extent that the person's fixed term is three years and he tightens the bonds of kin, so Allah adds thirty years to his span of life, and hence He makes them thirty-three years. If his fixed term is thirty-three and he cuts off the bonds of kin, Allah subtracts thirty years from it, and makes his fixed term three years.[35]"

C. He, peace be on him, said: [Abu' 'Abd Allah, peace be on him, said:] "Tighten the bonds of kin even through a drink of water. The best thing through which you tighten the bonds of kin is withholding harm from them. Tightening the bonds of kin delays the fixed term and (brings about) love among family.[36]"

The best means of strengthening social ties is showing kindness toward blood relatives. This will unify their sentiments and feelings and form righteous cells on which society stands.

Wise Sayings of some Prophets

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, narrated some valuable wise sayings of some prophets, peace be on them. The following are some of them:

Musa"s Whispered Prayers

He, peace be on him, said: "When Musa' b. 'Umra'n whispered (words) to his Lord in prayer, he said: 'My Lord, are You far from me, so I will call out for You? Or are You near, so I will whisper (words to) You in prayer?' Hence, Allah inspired him: 'Musa', I am the Friend of him who remembers Me.' Musa' said: 'I am in a state in which You are greater than to be remembered.' Allah said: 'Musa', remember Me in every state.[37]'"

In the Scriptures of Ibra'him

He, peace be on him, said: [(Allah says) in the Scriptures of Ibra'him:] "O vainglorious king, I did not send you in order to build the building nor to gather for this world, but I sent you in order to answer the supplication of the wronged, for I respond to it even if it (issues) from an unbeliever.[38]"

'Isa' with the Disciples

He, peace be on him, said: ['Isa' said to the disciples:] "O Children of Isra"il, do not grieve for that which escapes you of the world just as the people of the world who do not grieve for that which escapes them of their religion when they attain their world.[39]"

In the previous researches we mentioned some of the traditions reported from the Imam, peace be on him, regarding the states of the prophets, and which were full of their wise words.

Preaching and Guidance

The narrators and the historians mentioned a group of the worlds and poems of the Imam on preaching and guidance. The following are some of them:

1. Muhammad b. 'Ubayda said: [I visited 'Ali al-Ridha', peace be on him. He sent for Sa'lih b. Sa'id, and

then he preached to both of us. A part of his preaching was that he said:] “Abu’ Ja‘far (i.e. Imam Muhammad al-Ba’qir, peace be on him) said: ‘Be good with out evil; be leaves with out thorns. Do not be thorns without leaves and evil without good.’”

Then he said: “Surely Allah detests idle talk, wasting money, and much begging.”

Then he said: “The children of Isra”il became strict, so Allah became strict with them. Musa’ said to them: ‘Slaughter a cow.’ They asked: ‘What color is it?’ They were still so strict that they (were forced to) slaughter a very expensive cow.”

Then he said: [‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib said:] “The wise lost wisdom when they placed it with other than its people.40”

2. Al-Ma’mu’n wrote the Imam asking him to preach to him, and he wrote him these lines:

You are in the world with a period in which the deed of the doer is accepted.

Do you not see that death encompasses it and deprives the hopeful of their hope.

You hasten to sin as you like and expect repentance from the Acceptor.

Death surprisingly comes to people. This is not the deed of the one resolute and wise.41

3. The following poetry lines are part of what he composed on preaching:

All of us hope for drawn out fixed term, while death is the blight of expectation.

Let not the false things of desires deceive you, cling to moderation, and leave defects.

The world is like perishing shade in which a rider stops and then he departs.42

4. He was asked once: “How did you start your day?”

He, peace be on him, answered: “With a shorter life-span, with our deeds being recorded, with death round our necks, with Fire behind our backs, and we do not know what will be done to us.43”

5. Ya’sir, the retainer, said: [I heard ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him, say:] “This creature (i.e. man) is lonely in three situations: On the day when he is born in the world and sees it, on the day when he dies and sees the next world and its people, and on the day when he is resurrected and sees the rules which he did not see in the world. Allah, the Exalted, greeted Yahya’ in these three situations and calmed his fear, saying: ***And peace on him on the day he was born, and on the day he dies, and on the day he is raised to life.*** ‘Isa’ b. Maryam greeted himself in these three situations, saying: ***And peace be on me on the day when I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised to life.***44”

6. A man complained to the Imam of his brother, and he, peace be on him, composed, saying:

Forgive your brother's sin; cover and cloak his defects.

Be patient toward the slander of the foolish and the misfortunes of time.

Leave the answer as bounty and entrust the wrongdoer to his Lover.[45]

7. Al-Nawfali recited the following poetry lines before the Imam, peace be on him:

I have seen that white hair is detested, respect thereby, and sins are not appropriate for it.

When the possessor of white hair commit sins, all will say: When will he repent?

I will make friends with it through Allah-fearingness until the close fixed term separates us.[46]

His Short Wise Sayings

The following group of short wise sayings has been reported from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him:

1. He, peace be on him, said: "People's hearts are sometimes coming towards you, sometimes keeping away from you; sometimes they are active, sometimes they are relaxed. If they come along, they will achieve wisdom understanding, and if they stay away, they will be exhausted and worn out; so, take them when they come to you and when they are active, and shun them when they stay away or are relaxed.[47]"

2. He, peace be on him, said: "Accompany with caution the person who has authority over you; be humble when in the company of a friend; stay alert when facing an enemy, and mingle with the public with a smile on your face.[48]"

3. He, peace be on him, said: "Postponement is detrimental of the fulfillment of desires. Fulfillment is the gain of the strict. Wastefulness is the calamity of one who can afford it. Miserliness tears up honor. Passion invites trouble. The best and most honorable of virtues is to do others favors, to aid the one who calls for helps, to bring the hope of the hopeful to reality, not to disappoint the optimist, to have an ever increase of the number of friends when you are alive, and the number of those who will cry when you die.[49]"

4. He, peace be on him, said: "Only the believer who takes admonishment can enjoin the good and forbid the evil. As for the possessor of whip and sword, he cannot.[50]"

5. He, peace be on him, said: "He who opposes an unjust ruler and an affliction from him befalls him will not rewarded for it nor will be provided with patience during it.[51]"

6. He, peace be on him, said: "When two groups (of people) meet (in battlefield), Allah helps the greater

in pardoning.52”

7. He, peace be on him, said: “Man’s walking behind a man is a trial for the followed and abasement for the follower.53”

8. He, peace be on him, said: “One who is blessed with plenty must spend generously on his family.54”

9. He, peace be on him, said: “Showing love toward men is the half of reason.55”

10. He, peace be on him, said: “The rank of the eldest brother is like that of father.56”

11. He, peace be on him, said: “Among the habits of Prophets is cleanliness.57”

12. He, peace be on him, said: “The trustworthy do not betray you but you trust the traitor.58”

13. He, peace be on him, said: “Every curiosity is in need of the curiosity of speech.59”

14. He, peace be on him, said: ““Surely Allah detests idle talk, wasting money, and excessive questioning.60”

15. The Imam, peace be on him, was questioned about the lowly and he said: “Anyone who has something to distract him from Allah.61”

16. He, peace be on him, said: “Among the practices (of the Prophet) is giving food during marriage.62”

17. He, peace be on him, said: “The generous one eats from the food of men, that they may eat from his food.63”

18. He, peace be on him, said: “We, the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), think that our promise is a debt against us, as Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, did.64”

19. He, peace be on him, said: “Time will come when one’s safety lies in ten things nine of which are in staying aloof from men, and the tenth in staying silent.65”

20. He, peace be on him, said: “Assisting the weak is better for you than your act of charity.66”

21. He, peace be on him, said to Abu’ Ha’shim, Da’wud b. al-Qa’sim al-Ja‘fari: “We have a right against you through Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and you have a right against us. He who knows our right (against him), his right is incumbent (upon us). He who does not know our right (against him) has no right (against us).67”

22. He, peace be on him, said: “The miser one is never restful; the envious is never pleased; the grumbling is never loyal; the liar has no conscience.68”

23. He, peace be on him, said: “If you mention someone who is present, then call him with his own

kunya (i.e. the father of someone, usually his eldest son). When he is absent, then mention his full name.[69]"

24. He, peace be on him, said: "The believer is the brother of a believer (on the side of) his father and mother. Cursed, cursed is he who accuses his brother! Cursed, cursed is he who cheats his brother! Cursed, cursed is he who does not counsel his brother! Cursed, cursed is he who veiled himself from his brother! Cursed, cursed is he who backbites his brother![70]"

25. He, peace be on him, said: "He who benefits a brother in Allah will make use of a house in the Garden.[71]"

26. He, peace be on him, said: "When the believer does a good deed, he becomes happy. When he does an evil deed, he asks Allah' forgiveness. The Muslim is he from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe. To us does not belong he from whose calamities his neighbors are not safe."

27. A man said to him, peace be on him, said: "Ask for me from your Lord: good reverential fear, knowledge of the rights of brothers, and putting into effect what I know of that." Al-Ridha', peace be on him, said: "Allah has given that to you, for you have asked the excellent outward and inward qualities of the righteous.[72]"

28. He, peace be on him, said: "Do not give to your brother of your own soul that whose harm against you is more than its profit for them.[73]"

29. He, peace be on him, said: "He who gives relief to a believer, Allah will give him relief on the Day of Resurrection.[74]"

30. He, peace be on him, said: "Wealth is not accumulated except by five qualities: extreme miserliness, a drawn out expectation, an overwhelming care, a boycott of the relatives, and a preference of this life over the life to come.[75]"

31. He, peace be on him, said: "If one saves the food of his year, his back is light, and he finds rest.[76]"

32. He, peace be on him, said: "He whose good qualities are many is praised by them and is in no need of praise through mentioning them."

33. He, peace be on him, said: "He who seeks the affair through its (proper) way does not slip. If he slips, stratagems do not abandon him."

34. He, peace be on him, said: "Beware of one who wants to offer you advice by speaking behind others' back; he does not recognize how bad his own end shall be."

35. He, peace be on him, said: "Poverty is the key to misery."

36. He, peace be on him, said: "Do not pay attention to the view of someone who does not follow your

advice for his own good."

37. He, peace be on him, said to al-Hasan b. SAhl regarding his condolence: "To congratulate one for a reward in store for him is better than to console him on a swift calamity."

38. He, peace be on him, said: "Surely, renouncing Abu' Musa' al-Ash'ary is an act of pure Islam."

39. He, peace be on him, said: "The mobs were the killers of the prophets."

40. He, peace be on him, said: "Small sins are paths to great ones."

41. He, peace be on him, said: "He who does not fear Allah regarding little does not fear him regarding much."

With this wise saying we will end our talk about the wonderful wise sayings and manners which have reported from Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

1. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 11. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 1, p. 161.
2. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 23.
3. Ibid., p. 11.
4. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/196.
5. Al-Miza'n, vol. 8, p. 369. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 16.
6. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 111.
7. Ibid., p. 113.
8. Ibid., p. 124.
9. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 216.
10. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 241.
11. Al-Biha'r, vol. 78, p. 335.
12. Mawa'hib al-Rahma'n, vol. 1, p. 64.
13. Al-Biha'r, vol. 78, p. 335.
14. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 240.
15. Ibid., p. 394.
16. Ibid., p. 446.
17. Tuhaf al-'Uqu'l, p. 445.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 443.
20. Qur'an, 65, 3.
21. Tuhaf al-'Uqu'l, p. 443.
22. The Righteous Servant was the believer of the family of Pharaoh.
23. Tuhaf al-'Uqu'l, p. 445.
24. Ibid., p. 446.
25. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 11, p. 542.
26. Ibid., vol. 4, p. 1129.
27. Ibid., vol. 18, p. 92.
28. Ta'hir was Abu' al-Tayyib, who was given the nick-name of Dhi al-Yamin (the possessor of the right hand), for he stroke a person with his left hand and cut him into two halves. Concerning him a poet said: "Both your hands are right when you hit with them." Al-Ma'mu'n appointed him as governor over Khurasa'n. It was he who overthrew the government of al-

Amin and killed him and installed al-Ma'mu'n in his place. He was a Shi'ite and was among the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

29. Hirthima b. A'yun was among the leaders of al-Ma'mu'n and one of the close companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

30. Thuhaf al-'Uqu'l, p. 448.

31. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 8, p. 442.

32. Ibid., vol. 8, p. 483.

33. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 215.

34. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 15, p. 243.

35. Ibid., p. 245.

36. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 245.

37. Al-Fusu'l al-Muhimma, p. 224. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, 1/0.

38. Al-Ya'qu'bi, Ta'rikh.

39. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 2, p. 137.

40. Al-Biha'r, vol. 72, p. 345.

41. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/199. Quoted from al-Ikhtisa's.

42. 'Uyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 227. Photographed, in the Library of Imam Amir al-Mu'minin, no. 2769. Al-Bida'ya wa al-Niha'ya, vol. 10, p. 250.

43. Tuha'f al-'Uqu'l, p. 446.

44. Nu'r al-Absa'r, p. 140.

45. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/198.

46. 'Uyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 227.

47. A'ya'n al-Shi'a.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Al-Ya'qu'bi, Ta'rikh, vol. 3, p. 181.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 78, p. 335.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Tuhaf al-'Uqu'l, pp. 446-450.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 8, p. 563.

71. Ibid., p. 565.

72. Ibid., vol. 11, p. 474.

73. Ibid., p. 544.
74. Ibid., vol. 12, p. 587.
75. Ibid., p. 19.
76. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 320.

Chapter 12: His Companions And Narrators Of His Traditions

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was, in his time, the giant of Islamic thought and the most learned person on the face of the earth, as al-M'mu'n said. He supplied Islamic world with all elements of progress and renaissance. He employed the Prophetic Mosque, may Allah increase it in honor, as an institute for his lessons and lectures. The religious scholars, the narrators, and the students of jurisprudence surrounded him, while he was twenty and some years old.1 They recorded his verdicts, his marvelous wise sayings, and arts.

The religious scholars found in his traditions knowledge similar to that of his grandfather, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, the first Inspirer of the ideological and scientific matters on earth; they came to know that he was as brilliant as his forefathers, the pure Imam, the pioneers of the cultural and scientific renaissance in the world of Islam. The narrators said: "There are no seven noble persons on earth from whom the Shi'a (*khas*) and non-Shi'a (*'a'm*) wrote traditions except 'Ali b. Musa' (al-Ridha'), peace be on him.2"

The religious scholars took great care of his traditions to the extent that when he passed through Nisa'bu'r (Iran), they gathered around him. Their number was more than twenty thousand persons. They held ink pots and asked him to relate to them the traditions of his grandfather, Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. He narrated to them the tradition called *al-hadith al-dhahabi* (the Golden Tradition), as we will mention it. As the tradition was of great importance, one of the Sa'm'ni Emirs ordered it to be written in gold and to be buried with him.3 Some students of his grandfather, Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him, and of his father Imam Musa', peace be on him, narrated (traditions) on his authority.4 A group of the religious scholars who were coincided with him also narrated from him. We will present the biographies of his companions and the narrators of his traditions. That is because, as we think, they will complete the research on the personality of the Imam and shows a side of his scientific life. (They are as follows:)

1. Ibra'him Bin al-'Abba's

b. Muhammad al-Sawli, the great, inspired poet. He was given the *kunya* of Abu' Isha'q. He was the

most brilliant poet of his time and best of all the poets in showing friendship and love toward the Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. There were close ties between him and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He showed deep, sincere love toward Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. We will present some sides of his life.

His Paying a Visit to the Imam

Ibra'him along with Di'bil al-Khaza''i, the poet of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, visited Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. That was when al-Ma'mu'n pledged allegiance to him and appointed him as his successor. Di'bil recited to him his everlasting poem, which is regarded as one of the Arab excellent poems. We will mention it in his biography. Then Ibra'him recited to him his poem of which nothing is known except this line:

The murders of the children of the Prophet, Muhammad,

have removed the comfort of the heart after endurance.

This poetry line shows the sufferings and sorrow of al-Sawli toward the trials and tribulations which the enemy of Islam wreaked upon the Household of the Prophet. I (i.e. the author) think that the whole poem is good and firm and is regarding the lamentation for the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. When he had finished reciting it, the Imam gave them twenty thousand of the dirhams which held his holy name. As for Di'bil, he took his prize and went to (the holy city) of Qum. There the people bought each dirham for ten dirhams, hence he bought his portion for one hundred thousand dirhams. As for Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's, he kept some of the dirhams until he died.[5]

The following lines are some of his poetry on praising Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him:

One's actions are a sufficient, just witness for his being the most knowledgeable of his people.[6]

I can see that they have a modern one, but the modern is

not similar to the old (in their good deeds).[7]

He (al-Ma'mu'n) bestows upon you through your own

properties, and you are given one percent.[8]

May Allah not praise him who seeks the help of your

enemies and praises them.

You have preferred your partner, who is a close relative,

just as the parent prefers his own son.[9]

These lines show his deep faith in the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and his friendship toward them. He metaphorically used these lines for them, for he was afraid of the tyrannical authority which punished due to doubt and accusation all those who showed friendship toward the Family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

Examples of his Poetry

Al-Sawli's poems are regarded as part of wonderful Arab poetry. The following lines are some of his chosen poems:

A visit has brought near men to each other in spite of their being far, and the shrine of Layla' has become distant in spite of its being near.

And (the houses) standing at Mun'rajj al-Liwa' are nearer (to me) than (the shrine of) Layla'; and that is her house.[10]

The following lines belong to him:

One maybe tired of a misfortune and the escape from it is

with Allah.

It (the misfortune) became more intense.

When its episodes intensified, it was driven away, while I

thought that it would not be driven away.[11]

The following lines belong to him too:

You were the iris of my eyeball, so the eye wept for you.

Whoever desires to die after you, then let him die. For I

took care of you.[12]

His Burning the Divan of his Poetry

Ibra'him was the friend of Isha'q b. Ibra'him, so he wrote a copy of his poetry concerning Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, and gave it to him. The copy remained with him until al-Mutawakkil, the tyrannical, became a caliph. Ibra'him was in charge of expenditure for al-Mutawakkil. Separation and hate took place between Ibra'him and Isha'q, hence Ibra'him removed him from some expenditures which were at his hand, asked him for some money, insisted on it, and demanded him in a bad manner. Hence Isha'q summoned one of his trustworthy brothers and said to him: "Go to Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's

and say to him: 'Your poetry concerning 'Ali b. Musa' in your own handwriting and other than your handwriting is with Isha'q. By Allah, if you continue wronging him and do not refrain from asking him (for money), he will hand over (your) poetry to al-Mutawakkil.'" As a result the man went to Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's and told him about that. Ibra'him was so worried that he entrusted the affair to the man. He released him (Isha'q) from all that which he asked from him, took the poetry from him, and made him swear by Allah that he had no poetry with him. When he received the poetry, he burnt it in his presence.[13]

Examples of his Writings

Ibra'him was an eloquent writer. The following is a piece of his writing on behalf of an 'Abba'sid king who threatened the rebels:

"Now, then, the Commander of the faithful has patience. If it is not sufficient, a threat will follow it. If it is not sufficient, his resolutions will be sufficient. Greetings."

Ibn Khullaka'n commented on this letter, saying: "This statement, though brief, is very marvelous.[14]"

His Death

Ibra'him died in Samara'' in Sha'ba'n 15, in the year 243 A. H.[15]

2. Ibra'him Bin Abu' al-Bila'd

The real name of Abu' al-Bila'd is Yahya' b. Salim al-Ghatafa'ni. He (Ibra'him) was given the *kunya* of Abu Isma''il. In his book *al-Rija'l*, Shaykh al-Tu'si number him as one of the companions of Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him. He said: "He (Ibra'him) was trustworthy, a jurist, and a reciter (of the Qur'an). He lived for a long time until 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' sent him a letter. His two sons (Yahya' and Muhammad), SAhl b. al-Yasa', and others narrated (traditions) on his authority.[16]"

Al-Naja'shi said: "Ibra'him was trustworthy, a reciter (of the Qur'an), and an author. His father was blind and a narrator of poetry; al-Farazdaq said to him: 'O sorrow of my soul at your eyes, O man!'"

Ibra'him narrated (traditions) on the authority of Abu' 'Abd Allah, Abu' al-Hasan Musa', and al-Ridha', peace be on them. Imam al-Ridha' sent him a letter and lauded him. He has a book. A group (of narrators) reported the book on his authority.[17]

3. Ibra'him Bin Abu' Mahmu'd

al-Khurasa'ni. Al-Naja'shi regarded him as reliable and said: "He (Ibra'him) reported (traditions) on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book. Ahmed b. 'Isa' narrated the book on his authority.[18]"

Al-Kashi said: [Nasr b. al-Saba'h said:] "Ibra'him b. Abu' Mahmu'd was blind. Ahmed b. 'Isa' narrated on his authority the questions of Musa', peace be on him, which are about twenty-five pages. He lived after (the death of) al-Ridha'."

Hamdawayh narrated, saying: [Al-Hasan b. Musa' al-Khashsha'b informed us, saying: Ibra'him b. Abu' Mahmu'd informed us, saying:] "I visited Abu' Ja'far and there were books with me for him from his father. He began reading them and putting a big book on his eyes. He wept until his tears flowed down his cheeks, so I said to him: 'May I be your ransom, your father, perhaps, said to me in one session several times: 'May Allah make you dwell the Garden.' So he said: 'I also say to you: 'May Allah make you dwell the Garden!' Then I asked him: 'Do you guarantee that your Lord will make me enter the Garden?' 'Yes,' he replied. He (Ibra'him b. Abu' Mahmu'd) said: 'I took his foot and kissed it.[19]'"

4. Ibra'him Bin Isha'q al-Naha'wandi

He narrated (traditions) on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Sa'lih b. Muhammad al-Naha'wandi reported (the traditions) on his authority.[20]

5. Ibra'him Bin Isma"il Bin Da'wud

He narrated (traditions) on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Musa' b. Ja'far al-Mada"ini reported (the traditions) on his authority.[21]

6. Ibra'him Bin Bashir

Al-Naja'shi said: "He narrated questions on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Hamid narrated on his authority.[22]

7. Ibra'him Bin Sala'ma al-Nisha'bu'ri

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was an agent.[23] Al-Sayyid al-Khu"i said: "The men differed over his state. Some regarded him as an argument; others did not regard him (as argument). Those who regarded him (as argument) gave evidence through two premises: The first (premise) is that he was the agent of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. The second (premise) is that they (the Imams) did not appoint the sinner as an agent." The Sayyid discussed both premises.[24]

8. Ibra'him Bin Shu'ayb al-Wa'qifi

He (i.e. Ibra'him Bin Shu'ayb) said: "I was sitting in the Mosque of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and there was beside me a man from the people of Iraq. I asked him: 'Who are you?'

‘The retainer of Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him,’ he replied. I said to him: ‘I have a need of you.’ ‘What is it?’ he asked. I want you to hand over a letter (*ruq’a*) to him. ‘Yes,’ he said, ‘as you like.’ So I went out, took a sheet of paper, and wrote in it: ‘In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Your fathers, who were before you, would tell us of something therein were signs and proofs. I want you to tell me my name and my father’s name.”

He (i.e. Ibra’him Bin Shu‘ayb) said: “Then I stamped the letter and gave it to him. On the following morning, he (the retainer) brought me a sealed letter. I opened the letter and read it. At the bottom of the letter (it was written): ‘In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Abu’ Ibra’him, among your fathers are Shu‘ayb and Sa’lih; among your sons are Muhammad, ‘Ali, and so-and-so.[25]”

9. Ibra’him Bin Shu‘ayb al-‘Aqarqu’ficmi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. Shaykh al-Ma’maqa’ni said: “His state is unknown to us, and knowledge belongs to Allah.[26]”

10. Ibra’him Bin Sa’lih

In his (book) al-Rija’l without mentioning any nick-name or description, Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[27] Al-Naja’shi said: “Ibra’him b. Sa’lih al-Anma’ti[28] al-Asadi was trustworthy and narrated (traditions) on the authority of Abu’ al-Hasan, peace be on him. He has a book. A group (of narrators) reported the book.[29]”

11. Ibra’him Bin ‘Abd al-Hamid

Shaykh al-Tu’si said: “He (Ibra’him) was among the companions of Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah; he coincided with Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and did not hear from him according to the statement of Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allah. He was a Wa’qifi and has a book.[30]” He (Shaykh al-Tu’si) said in al-Fihrast: “Ibra’him b. ‘Abd al-Hamid is reliable. He has a book (*asl*). Abu’ ‘Abd Allah Muhammad b. Muhammad b. al-Nu‘ma’n al-Mufid told us about the book.[31]”

As Shaykh al-Tu’si has regarded him as trustworthy in *al-Fihrast,* then he was not a Wa’qifi. Perhaps he withdrew from the Wa’qifiya and adopted the True Religion (of the Shi‘ites).

12. Ibra’him Bin ‘Ali

b. ‘Abd Allah b. Ja‘far b. Abu’ Ta’lib. ‘Ali’s mother was the Leader of the women, the heroine of Karbala”, the lady Zaynab, peace be on her. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[32]

13. Ibra’him Bin Muhammad

al-Ash‘ari, al-Qummi. Al-Naja’shi said: “He (Ibra’him) is trustworthy and narrated on the authority of Imam Musa’ and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on them, and his brother al-Fadl. Their book is mutual. Al-Hasan b. Abu’ ‘Ali b. Fadda’l narrated the book on their authority.[33] In his (book) al-Rija’l Ibn Da’wud regarded him as reliable, and so did al-Fa’dil al-Majjlisi, and others.[34]

14. Ibra’him Bin Muhammad

al-Khazza’z. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and al-Hasan b. Sa‘id reported on his authority.[35]

15. Ibra’him Bin Muhammad

He was a retainer from Khurasa’n (Iran). Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[36]

16. Ibra’him Bin Muhammad al-Hamada’ni

He was the agent of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[37] Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, Imam al-Jawa’d, and Imam al-Ha’di peace be on them.[38] Al-Kashi said: “He performed the hajj forty times.”[39]

17. Ibra’him Bin Musa’

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Hamza reported on his authority.[40]

18. Ibra’him Bin Ha’shim

Abu’ Isha’q al-Qummi. He was originally from Ku’fa and then moved to (the Holy City of) Qum. Shaykh al-Naja’shi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and said: [Our companions say:] “He (Ibra’him b. Ha’shim) was the first to publish the traditions of the Kufa’ns in Qum. He has books. Among them are the Book of al-Nawa’dir and the Book of the Legal Decisions of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.[41]

19. Ibra’him Bin Ha’shim al-‘Abba’sicmxviii

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[42] Apparently, he was an unknown Imami (traditionalist)[43] Al-Sayyid al-Khu”i said: “The correct (name) is

Ha'shim b. Ibra'him, not Ibra'him b. Ha'shim as in (al-Rija'l by) al-Naja'shi.[44]"

20. Ahmed Bin Abu' Nasr

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Muhammad reported on his authority.[45]

21. Ahmed Bin Ashyam

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[46] He narrated on the authority of Yunus, and Ahmed b. Muhammad reported on his authority.[47]

22. Ahmed Bin 'Amir

b. Sulayma'n b. Sa'lih b. Wahab who was martyred along with (Imam al-Husayn), the sweet basil of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. His son 'Abd Allah reported: "My father was born in the year 157 A. H. He met Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, in the year 174 A. H. Al-Ridha' died in Tu's, on Tuesday, Jama'di al-Ula' 18, in the year 202 A. H. I saw Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha') and Abu' Muhammad, peace be on them." In this manner he has been mentioned in al-Naja'shi's (book of al-Rija'l).

23. Ahmed Bin 'Umar al-Halla'l

He sold sesame oil. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has questions on his authority.[48]

24. Ahmed Bin al-Fayd

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha'), peace be on him.[49] He is an unknown Imami (Shi'ite).

25. Ahmed Bin Muhammad

b. Abu' Nasr al-Bizanti. He was a trustworthy Kufa'n. He met Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and had a great rank with him. He reported a book on his authority. He has books such as the Comprehensive Book (*kita'b al-Ja'mi'*), and the Book of the Miscellaneous Traditions (*kita'b al-nawa'dir*). In his book *al-Ghayba,* Shaykh al-Tu'si said: "He (Ahmed b. Muhammad) was a Wa'qifi, then he withdrew when he saw the miracles at the hand of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, which declared the correctness of his Imamate. Hence he clung to the argument, adopted his Imamate and that of his children after him.

Ahmed said: “I was with Imam al-Ridha’ and spent the evening with him.” He (Ahmed) said: “I said: Shall I leave?” He, peace be on him, said to me: “Don’t leave, for you have entered into evening.” He (Ahmed) said: “I stayed with him, and he said to his slave-girl: ‘Fetch my mat and pillow and spread them for Ahmed in that room.’” He (Ahmed) said: “When I entered the room, I asked myself: ‘Was anyone like me in the house of Allah’s friend[50] and in his bed?’ So he called me: ‘Ahmed, the Commander of the faithful visited Sa‘sa‘a b. Soha’n and said to him: ‘Sa‘sa‘a, don’t regard my visit to you as pride over your people. Be humble before Allah and He will raise you.’” (The Shi‘ite traditionalists) have unanimously agreed that he is meritorious, and that his narration is correct when it is narrated in correct manner from him. He died in the year 221 A. H.[51]

26. Ahmed Bin Muhammad

b. Hanbal b. Hila’l al-Shayba’ni. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu’ (al-Ridha’), peace be on him.[52] Ibn Hajar said: “Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Hanbal b. Hila’l b. Asad al-Shayba’ni, al-Marwazi, who lived in Baghdad, Abu ‘Abd Allah, one of the Imams, is trustworthy, a memorizer (of the Qur’an), a jurist, and an argument. He is the head of the tenth class. He died in the year 241 A. H. and was 77 years old.[53]”

27. Ahmed Bin Muhammad

b. ‘Isa’ al-Ash‘ari, al-Qummi was the Shaykh of the Qummis, their eminent figure, their jurist. He was the only head who met the Sultan. He met Abu’ Ja’far, the Second, and Abu’ al-Hasan al-‘Askari, peace be on them.

He has books. The following are some of them:

1. Kita’b Fadl al-Nabi (the Book of the Excellence of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family).

2. Kita’b al-Muta’a (the Book of Fixed-term Marriage).

3. Kita’b al-Nawa’dir (the Book of Miscellaneous Traditions). It was not classified, and then it was classified by Da’wud b. Kawra.

4. Kita’b al-Na’sikh wa al-Mansu’kh (the Book of the Abrogating and the Abrogated Verses).

5. Kita’b al-Att‘ima (the Book of Foods).

6. Kita’b al-Mansu’kh (the Book of the Transformed).

7. Kita’b Fada’’il al-‘Arab (the Book of the Excellences of the Arabs).

Ibn Nu’h said: “I have seen his book on the hajj with al-Dabili.”

28. Ahmed Bin Yusuf

He was the retainer of the Banu' (children) of Taym Allah. He was from Ku'fa, but his house was in Basrah. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was trustworthy.54

29. Idris Bin Zayd

He was among the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Al-Sadu'q mentioned him firstly along with 'Ali b. Idris and numbered them as two companions of al-Ridha', peace be on him. He (al-Sadu'q) described him as al-Qummi when he mentioned his way to him again.55

30. Idris Bin 'Abd Allah

b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari. He is trustworthy and has a book. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.56

31. Idris Bin 'Isa'

al-Ash'ari, al-Qummi. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He is reliable, and he narrated on tradition on His (the Imam's) authority.57

32. Idris Bin Yaqtin

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him.58

33. Isha'q Bin Adam

al-Ash'ari, al-Qummi. He narrated a book on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and a group (of traditionalists) narrated the book on his authority.59

34. Isha'q Bin Ibra'him

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha' and Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on them.60 Al-Kashi said: "He (Isha'q) reached serving Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, through al-Hasan b. Sa'id al-Ahwa'zi.61"

35. Isha’q Bin Ibra’him

al-Hanzali, better known as Ibn Ra’hawayh. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.62

36. Isha’q Bin Muhammad

al-Hudayni. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.63

37. Isha’q Bin Imam Musa’

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He (Isha’q) narrated on the authority of his brother, on the authority of his uncle, on the authority of Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him. Muhammad b. Muslim reported on his authority.64

38. Isma”il Bin Sa‘d

al-Ahwas. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Kha’lid reported on his authority.65

39. Isma”il Bin ‘Abba’d

al-Qasri, from the Qasr of the children of Hubayra. Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him.66

40. Isma”il Bin ‘Isa’

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on them, and his son Sa‘d reported on his authority.67

41. Isma”il Bin Qutayba

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.68

42. Isma”il Bin Mahra’n

b. Abu’ Nasr al-Suku’ni. He was a Kufa’n retainer. He was given the *kunya* of Abu’ Ya‘qu’b. He is trustworthy and reliable. He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He wrote

a group of books. The following are some of them:

1. Al-Mala'him (Bloody Fights).

2. Thawa'b al-Qur'an (the Reward of the Qur'an).

3. Al-Ihlilijya (the Myrobalan).

4. Sifat al-Mu'min wa al-Fa'jir (the Qualities of the Believer and the Sinner).

5. Khutab al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin, peace be on him (the Sermons of Imam the Commander of the faithful).

6. Nawa'dir (Miscellaneous Traditions).

7. Al-Nawa'dir (the Miscellaneous Traditions).[69]

Ibn al-Ghada"iri criticized his traditions, saying: "His (Isma"il's) traditions are not pure. They sometimes become disordered and are sometimes right. He narrated many (traditions) on the authority of the very weak (traditionalists). It is permissible to regard him as a witness. Our master al-Khu"i regarded him as trustworthy because of the testimony of Ja'far b. Muhammad b. Qawlawayh, 'Ali b. Ibra'him, Shaykh al-Tu'si, al-Naja'shi, and al-'Ayya'shi. What Ibn al-Ghada"iri has mentioned does not mean that he is not trustworthy; rather he negated purity of his (Isma"il's) traditions because he narrated on the authority of the weak (traditionalists).[70]

43. Isma"il Bin Hamma'm

b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n al-Basri, the retainer of Kinda. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He, his father, and his grandfather are trustworthy. He has a book, and a group (of traditionalists) reported the book on his authority.[71]

44. Asram Bin Matar

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[72]

45. Aflah Bin Zayd

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[73]

46. Aflah Bin Zayd

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.[74]

47. Al-Ya’s Bin ‘Mru’

al-Sayrafi, al-Khazza’z. He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. When death came to him, he said to those who were around him: [Witness against me, and this is not the hour of lying. I heard Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, say:] “By Allah, if the servant who loves Allah and His Messenger and shows friendship toward the Imams dies, the Fire will not touch him.75”

48. Ayyu’b Bin Nu’h

He was from Ku’fa and was the retainer of al-Nakha‘. He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.76 He was an agent. When he died, he left behind him only one hundred and fifty dinars. The people thought that he had a lot of money because he was the agent of the Imams, peace be on them.77

49. Al-Ba”is

He was the retainer of Hamza b. al-Yasa‘ al-Ash‘ari. He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.78

50. Bakr Bin Sa’lih

al-Ra’zi. Shaykh al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.79 The Shaykh said: “He has a book on the degrees of faith and kinds of unbelief, seeking forgiveness, and jiha’d (struggle).80”

Ibn al-Ghada”iri said: “He is very weak. He was unique in (mentioning) the oddities.81”

51. Thaljj Bin Abu’ Thaljj

al-Ya‘qu’bi. He was one of the sons of Da’wud b. ‘Ali al-Ya‘qu’bi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.82

52. Ja‘far Bin Bashir al-Bujayli

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.83 He was one of the ascetic, worshipful Shi‘ites. His mosque is still at Bujayla, in Ku’fa. Al-Naja’shi said: “When my companions and I went to Ku’fa, we performed the prayer in the mosque.”

Ja‘far, may Allah have mercy on him, died in al-Abwa”, in the year 208 A. H. He was given the nick-name of the Basket of Knowledge (*quffat al-‘ilm*). His books are as follows:

1. Kita’b al-Mashyakha (the Book of the Shaykhs).

2. Kita’b al-Sala’t (the Book of Prayer).

3. Kita’b al-Maka’sib (the Book of Gains).

4. Kita’b al-Sayd (the Book of Hunting).

5. Kita’b al-Dhaba”ih (the Book of Slaughtering).[84]

Shaykh al-Tu’si said: “He has a book; the book is ascribed to Ja‘far b. Muhammad, peace be on him, and the narration of Imam ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[85]”

53. Ja‘far Bin Ibra’him al-Haddrami

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[86]

54. Ja‘far Bin Ibra’him

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ja‘far b. Ha’shim reported on his authority.[87]

55. Ja‘far Bin ‘Isa’

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[88] He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ka’zim and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on them, and his brother Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ reported on his authority.[89]

56. Ja‘far Bin al-Muthanna’ al-Khatib

He was the retainer of Thaqif and was a Wa’qifi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[90]

57. Ja‘far Bin Muhammad al-Qazwini

In the Chapter on Kuna’, Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[91]

58. Al-Hasan Bin Ibra’him al-Ku’fi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[92]

59. Al-Hasan Bin Asba't al-Kindi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[93]

60. Al-Hasan Bin Asad al-Basri

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[94]

61. Al-Hasan Bin Bashir

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.[95]

62. Al-Hasan Bin Bashsha'r al-Mada"ini

He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ka'zim and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on them. He his trustworthy and correct. He was a Wa'qifi, and then he withdrew.[96]

63. Al-Hasan Bin al-Jahm

b. Bukayr b. A'yun, Abu' Muhammad al-Shayba'ni. He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.[97]

64. Al-Hasan Bin al-Jahm al-Ra'zi

He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[98]

65. Al-Hasan Bin al-Husayn al-Anba'ri

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and 'Ali b. al-Hakam reported on his authority.[99]

66. Al-Hasan Bin al-Husayn

b. Sa'lih. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and 'Ali b. 'Abd al-Ghaffa'r reported on his authority.[100]

67. Al-Hasan Bin al-Husayn al-'Alawi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Ahmed

b. Muhammad reported on his authority.

68. Al-Hasan Bin Ra'shid

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him, without any description, as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[101]

69. Al-Hasan Bin Ziya'd

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he had a book.[102]

70. Al-Hasan Bin Sa'id al-Ku'fi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[103]

71. Al-Hasan Bin Sha'dha'n al-Wa'siti

He (i.e. Al-Hasan b. Sha'dha'n) said: [I wrote to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and complained to him of the alienation of the people of (Wa'sit) and their wrong against me. A group of the 'Uthma'niya harmed me. Hence, he, peace be on him, wrote with his own hand:] "Verily, Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, took a promise from His friends for patience in the state of falsehood. Therefore, show forbearance toward the decree of your Lord. If the Master of the creatures rose, they would say: *O woe to us! Who has raised us from our sleeping-place? This is what the Beneficent (Allah) promised and the apostles told the truth*.[104]"

72. Al-Hasan Bin Shu'ayb al-Mada"ini

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[105]

73. Al-Hasan Bin 'Abba'd

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[106]

74. Al-Hasan Bin al-'Abba's al-Ma'ru'fi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Muhammad b. 'Ali reported on his authority.[107]

75. Al-Hasan Bin ‘Ali

b. Fadda’l. He was the retainer of Taym al-Raba’b. He is a trustworthy Kufa’n.[108] Al-Naja’shi said: [Abu’ ‘Amru’ said: al-Fadl b. Sha’da’n said:] “In the mosque of al-Rabi‘, in the estate of al-Rabi‘, while I was reciting (the Qur’an) under a reciter (of the Qur’an) called Isma’‘il b. ‘Abba’d, I saw some people exchange secrets. One of them said: ‘On the mountain there is a man called b. Fadda’l. He is the most worshipful of those whom we have seen or heard about. He goes out to the desert and performs a long prostration to the extent that birds come and sit on him, for they think that he is a garment or a rag. Wild animals graze around him; they are not afraid of him, for they are intimate with him. When the armed paupers come to attack the people or fight against them, they flee in the world out of fear of his person.’” Al-Fayd said: “I thought that this man was in the first time. Shortly after that, while I was sitting with my father, may Allah have mercy on him, in the estate of al-Rabi‘, a handsome old man came wearing a yellowish shirt and cloak and greenish sandals. He greeted my father and he got up for him, greeted him, and magnified him. When he wanted to go to Ibn Abu’ ‘Umayr, I asked (my father): ‘Who is this old man?.’ ‘This is al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Fadda’l,’ replied (my father). ‘Is he the meritorious worshipful?’ I asked. ‘Yes, he is,’ answered (my father). ‘Isn’t he on the mountain?’ I asked. ‘Yes he is,’ answered (my father), ‘what heedless your reason is , boy!’ I told him about what I heard from the people concerning him and he said: ‘That is true.’ After that he came constantly to my father. Then I went to him in Ku’fa and heard from him the book of Ibn Abu’ Bukayr and traditions other than it. He carried his book, came to al-Hijjra, and recited it for me. When the son-in-law of Ta’hir b. al-Husayn performed the hajj, the people magnified him because of his money and his important position with the Sultan (ruler). He (al-Husayn) was described for him, but he did not go to him. He (the son-in-law of Ta’hir b. al-Husayn) sent for him asking his coming. He (al-Husayn) said: ‘I have no kinship; there is no work between them and me.’ After that I knew that his coming to me was for his religion. As for his place of praying, it was near the pillar called *al-Sa’bi‘a* (the Seventh) or the Pillar of Ibra’him, peace be on him, in the mosque of Ku’fa. He, Abu’ Muhammad, and ‘Ali b. Asba’t met. Al-Hajja’l claimed theology; he was the best of the people in theology. Ibn Fadda’l ascribed me to him concerning theology and knowledge. He loved me very much. Al-Hasan was famous for that throughout his lifetime until death came to him, and he died. He believed in the True Religion, may Allah have mercy on him.”

He has the following books:

1. Kita’b al-Ziya’ra’t (the Book of Visitations).

2. Kita’b al-Tha’ra’t (the Book of the Revenges).

3. Kita’b al-Nawa’dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions).

4. Kita’b al-Radd ‘ala’ al-Gha’liya (the Book of the Answers to the Extremists).

5. Kita'b al-Shawa'hid min Kita'b Allah (the Book of the Examples from the Book of Allah).

6. Kita'b al-Muta'a (the Book of Fixed-Term Marriage).

7. Kita'b al-Na'sikh wa al-Mansu'kh (the Book of the

Abrogating and the Abrogated verses).

8. Kita'b al-Mala'him (the Book of the Bloody fights).

9. Kita'b al-Sala't (the Book of Prayer).

10. The book which his son 'Ali narrated on the authority

of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

His death, may Allah have mercy on him, was in the year 224 A. H.[109]

76. Al-Hasan Bin 'Ali

b. Ziya'd al-Washsha'', al-Bujayli, al-Ku'fi. He was among the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and one of the eminent figures of this sect (i.e. the Shi'ites). He narrated on the authority of his grandfather al-Ya's, who said when death came to him: [Witness against me, and this is not the hour of lying. I heard Abu' 'Abd Allah, peace be on him, say:] "By Allah, if the servants who love Allah and His Messenger and shows friendship toward the Imams dies, the Fire will not touch him. Then he repeated the second and the third while I did not asked him (about that)."

Ahmed b. Muhammad b. 'Isa' reported: "I went out to Ku'fa to seek traditions and found in it al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'' and asked him to take out for me the book of al-'Ala'' b. Razin al-Qala' and of Aba'n b. 'Uthma'n al-Ahmar. He brought them for me and I said to him: 'I want you to permit me in order to take them (the two books).' He said to me: 'Hasan, may Allah have mercy on you, way are you in a hurry? Go and copy them.' I said to him: 'I am not safe from mishaps.' He said: 'If I had known that this tradition would be sought in such a manner, I would have written it many more, for I met in this mosque (i.e. the mosque of Ku'fa) nine hundred old men and they would say: 'Ja'far b. Muhammad related to us.'"

He has books of which are the following:

1. Kita'b Thawa'b al-Hajj (the Book of the Reward of the

Hajj).

2. Kita'b al-Nawa'dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions).

3. Kita'b Masa''il al-Ridha' (the Book of the Questions of al-

Ridha').[110]

77. Al-Hasan Bin 'Ali

b. Yaqtin b. Musa', the retainer of the Hashimites. He was a jurist and theologian. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has the book: *Masa''il Abu' al-Hasan Musa'* (the Questions of Abu' al-Hasan Musa'), peace be on him.[111]

78. Al-Hasan Bin 'Ali al-Daylami

Al-Wahid has mentioned him in *al-Ta'liqa* and said: "He (al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Daylami) was the retainer of al-Ridha', peace be on him.[112]"

79. Al-Hasan Bin 'Ali

He was the retainer of Taym Allah b. Tha'laba and was from Ku'fa'. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[113]

80. Al-Hasan Bin 'Ali al-Washsha"

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He said: "When young, my father and I had supper with Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[114]"

81. Al-Hasan Bin 'Umar

b. Yazid. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[115]

82. Al-Hasan Bin Fadda'l

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and on the authority of a group (of traditionalists). His sons Ahmed, 'Ali and Muhammad reported on his authority. Musa' b. 'Umar narrated on his authority.[116]

83. Al-Hasan Bin Qa'ru'n

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ibra'him b.

Ha'shim reported on his authority.[117]

84. Al-Hasan Bin al-Qa'sim

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[118] Al-Kashi narrated on the authority of al-Hasan b. al-Qa'sim, who said: "One of the sons of Ja'far, peace be on him, was dying. Al-Ridha' was late in coming to him. That grieved me, for he was late in coming to his uncle Muhammad. Then he came. Shortly after that he rose, and I rose along with him and asked him: 'May I be your ransom, why have you risen and left your uncle in the state in which he is?' 'My uncle will bury so-and-so (i.e. his brother),' he, peace be on him, replied." He (al-Hasan b. al-Qa'sim) said: "Shortly after that, the sick person recovered and buried his brother, who was sound with them." After that al-Hasan realized the True Religion and believed in it.[119]

85. Al-Hasan Bin Mahbu'b al-Sarra'd

He is also called al-Zarra'd. He was given the *kunya* of Abu' 'Ali. He was the retainer of Bujayla. He was a trustworthy Kufa'n. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and reported on the authority of sixty men from among the companions of Imam Abu' 'Abd Allah, peace be on him. He was of great position. He wrote a group of books of which are the following:

- Kita'b al-Mashyakha (the Book of the Shaykhs).
- Kita'b al-Hudu'd (the Book of Islamic Punishments).
- Kita'b al-Diya't (the Book of Blood Money).
- Kita'b al-Fara"id (the Book of Religious Obligations).
- Kita'b al-Nika'h (the Book of Marriage).
- Kita'b al-Tala'q (the Book of Divorce).
- Kita'b al-Nawa'dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions), about one thousand pages.

- Kita'b al-Tafsir (the Book of Interpretation (of the

Qur'an).

- Kita'b al-'Itqq (the Book of Emancipation of Slaves).

Shaykh al-Kashi numbered him as one of the jurists on whose authentic traditions our companions unanimously agreed. That was when he (the Shaykh) nominated the jurists from among the companions

of Imam al-Ka'zim and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on them. He (al-Hasan b. Mahbu'b) died at the age of seventy-five, in the year 224 A. H.[120]

86. Al-Hasan Bin Muhammad

b. Abu' Tallha. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[121]

87. Al-Hasan Bin Muhammad

b. SAhl al-Nawfali. Al-Naja'shi regarded him as a weak (traditionalist) and said: "However, he has a good book with many interests. He called it *Maja'lis al-Ridha' ma'a Ahl al-Adya'n* (the Sessions of al-Ridha' with the People of Religions).[122]"

88. Al-Hasan Bin Muhammad al-Qummi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and al-Khabiri reported on his authority.[123]

89. Al-Hasan Bin Muhammad

al-Nawfali, al-Ha'shimi. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[124]

90. Al-Hasan Bin al-Nadr al-Armani

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Isa' reported on his authority.[125]

91. Al-Hasan Bin Yazid

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[126]

92. Al-Hasan Bin Yunus

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[127]

93. Al-Hasan al-Taflisi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[128]

94. Al-Husayn Bin Ibra'him

b. Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[129]

95. Al-Husayn Bin Abu' Sa'id

al-Maka'ri, Abu' 'Abd Allah. He and his father were two eminent figures of the Wa'qifa. He went in to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: "You have opened your door for the people and sat to give them religious opinions, while your father had never done that." He (the Imam), peace be on him, said to him: "There is no harm on me from Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid)." Then he said to him: "May Allah put out the light of your heart and make poverty enter your house. Woe unto you! Did you not know that Allah revealed to Maryam that there was a prophet in her womb? Accordingly, Maryam gave birth to 'Isa', peace be on him, so Maryam belonged to 'Isa', and Isa' belonged to Maryam. As for me, I belong to my father and my father belong to me." He (al-Husayn b. Abu' Sa'id) said (to the Imam): "I want to ask you a question." "I do not think that you will hear from me," explained the Imam, "however, question (me)." He said: "A man was near to death, and he said: 'Whomever I possessed in the past is free, and whomever I possess at present is not free." "Have you not recited this verse: *For the moon we have appointed stages until it becomes again like an old dry branch of palm tree* (*'urju'n*)*?* Whomever the man possessed before the six moths was old, and whomever he possessed after the six months was not old." Then he left the Imam, peace be on him. Shortly after that, poverty and affliction befell him.[130]

96. Al-Husayn Bin Bashsha'r al-Wa'siti

He was Ziya'd's retainer. He is a trustworthy and correct (traditionalist). He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan Musa' (al-Ka'zim), peace be on him, and reported on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him.

When Imam (Musa') al-Ka'zim died, he (al-Husayn b. Bashsha'r) went out to Imam al-Ridha'. He did not think that Imam al-Ka'zim would die nor did he acknowledge the Imamate of al-Ridha'. He intended to ask him (Imam al-Ridha'). When he reached the Imam, who was at al-Sawi, he asked for permission and went in. The Imam welcomed him, brought him near to him, and then he said to him: "Husayn, if you want Allah to look at you without any veil and you look at Allah without any veil, then show friendship toward the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, and him who undertakes the affairs (of the Muslims) from among them." Al-Husayn hurried to say: "Will I look at Allah, the Great and Almighty?"

"Yes, by Allah," he, peace be on him, replied.

After that al-Husayn was sure that Imam al-Ka'zim died, and Imam al-Ridha' was the Imam after him.

The Imam, peace be on him, turned to him and said: “I did not want to permit you (to come in), for the affair is critical that is because of the observation imposed on him by the ‘Abba’sid authority. However, I have known your affair (i.e. that you belong to the Wa’qifiya).”

The Imam added, saying: “Did you know your affair well?”

“Yes,” al-Husayn replied.[131]

97. Al-Husayn Bin Bashir

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Muhammad reported on his authority.[132]

98. AL-Husayn Bin al-Jahm

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[133] Imam, professor al-Khu”i said: “It is possible that his name has been changed, for his correct name is al-Hasan. His biography has already been mentioned in al-Hasan Bin al-Jahm al-Ra’zi.[134]”

99. Al-Husayn Bin Kha’lid al-Sayrafi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[135] Al-Sadu’q narrated on the authority of Safwa’n b. Yahya’, who said: “I was with al-Ridha’, peace be on him, when al-Husayn b. Kha’lid al-Sayrafi came in to him and said to him: ‘May I be your ransom, I want to go out to al-A‘wad.’ He (the Imam), peace be on him, said: ‘Cling to well-being wherever you find it.’ He (al-Husayn) was not satisfied with that. He went out and headed for al-A‘wad. However, he was attacked and all his money was robbed on a highway.[136]”

100. Al-Husayn Bin Ziya’d

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the narrators of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he had the *Book of al-Ridha’*, peace be on him.[137]

101. Al-Husayn Bin Sa‘id

b. Hamma’d b. Mahra’n al-Ahwa’zi. He was one of the retainers of Imam ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him. He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, Abu’ Ja‘far, the Second, and Abu’ al-Hasan, the Third, peace be on them. He was originally from Ku’fa. Then he and his brother al-Hasan moved to al-Ahwa’z. Then he moved to the Holy (City) of Qum. He stopped at (the House of) al-Hasan b. Aba’n and died in Qum.

He has thirty books. They are as follows:

- Kita'b al-Wudu'' (the Book of Ablution).
- Kita'b al- Sala't (the Book of Prayer).
- Kita'b al- Zaka't(the Book of Alms).
- Kita'b al-Sawm (the Book of Fasting).
- Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of Hajj).
- Kita'b al-Nika'h (the Book of Marriage).
- Kita'b al-Tala'q (the Book of Divorce).
- Kita'b al-Wasa'ya' (the Book of Wills).
- Kita'b al-Fara''id (the Book of Religious Duties).
- Kita'b al-Tija'ra't (the Book of Trades).
- Kita'b al-IJa'ra't (the Book of Rents).
- Kita'b al-Shaha'da't (the Book of Testimonies).
- Kita'b al-Ayma'n (the Book of Oaths).
- Kita'b al-Nudhu'r wa al-Kaffa'ra't (the Book of Vows and Expiatory Gifts).
- Kita'b al-Ashriba (the Book of Drinks).
- Kita'b al-Maka'sib (the Book of Gains).
- Kita'b al-Taqiya (the Book of Precautionary Dissimulation).
- Kita'b al-Khumus (the Book of One-Fifth).
- Kita'b al-Muruwa wa al-Tajjmil (the Book of Manhood and Beautifying).
- Kita'b al-Sayd wa al-Dhaba''ih (the Book of Hunting

and Slaughtering).

- Kita'b al-Mana'qib (the Book of Excellences)
- Kita'b al-Matha'lib (the Book of Defects).
- Kita'b al-Tafsir (the Book of Interpretation).
- Kita'b al-Mu'min (the Book of Believer).
- Kita'b al-Mala'him (the Book of Bloody Fights).
- Kita'b al-Maza'r (the Book of Visitations).
- Kita'b al-Du'a" (the Book of Supplication).
- Kita'b al-Radd 'Ala' al-Gha'liya (the Book of the Answers to the Extremists).
- Kita'b al-'Ittq (the Book of the Emancipation of Slaves).
- Kita'b al-Taddbir (the Book of Management).[138]

102. Al-Husayn Bin Shu'ayb al-Mada"ini

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[139]

103. Al-Husayn Bin Sa'lih al-Khath'ami

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[140]

104. Al-Husayn Bin 'Abd Rabbah

He exchanged letters with Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. His son 'Ali b. al-Husayn narrated the letters.[141]

105. Al-Husayn Bin 'Ali Bin Rabi'

He was the retainer of the Ha'shimites. Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[142]

106. Al-Husayn Bin ‘Ali Bin Yaqtin

He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[143]

107. Al-Husayn Bin ‘Umar

He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[144]

108. Al-Husayn Bin Qiya’ma’

He was a Wa’qifi. Al-Kashi narrated on the authority of al-Husayn b. Bashsha’r, who said: “I and al-Husayn b. Qiya’ma’ asked permission (to visit) Imam al-Ridha’ and he gave us permission. He asked us: ‘What is your need?’ Al-Husayn asked him: ‘Will the earth be empty of an Imam?’ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘except the one who is silent and does not speak.’ ‘I have come to know that you are not an Imam,’ al-Husayn declared. ‘From whom have you come to know (that)?’ asked the Imam. ‘You have no son,’ replied al-Husayn, ‘it (the Imamate) belongs to the children. ‘By Allah,’ he, peace be on him, said, ‘The days and nights will not pass unless a male is born from my own loins. He will undertake my position, give life to the truth, and destroy falsehood.[145]’”

109. Al-Husayn Bin Musa’

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, he also numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ka’zim, and said: “He (al-Husayn b. Musa’) was a Wa’qifi.[146]” The Imam, peace be on him, has a letter which we will mention when we mention his letters.

110. Al-Husayn Bin Mayya’h

Ibn Da’wud reported on the authority of Ibn al-Ghada”iri, (who said:) “He (al-Husayn b. Mayya’h) was one of the companions of Imam al-Ka’zim and al-Ridha’, peace be on them. He is a weak (traditionalist) and an extremist).[147]”

111. Al-Husayn Bin Yasa’r al-Mada”ini

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and ‘Ali b. Ahmed b. Ashyam reported on his authority.[148]

112. Hamma'd Bin Bakr Bin Muhammad al-Azdi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[149]

113. Hamma'd Bin 'Uthma'n

b. 'Amru' b. Kha'lid al-Faza'ri. He was their (the Imams') retainer. He was a Kufa'n. He lived at 'Arzam, and so he was ascribed to it. He and his brother 'Abd Allah are trustworthy. They narrated on the authority of Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him. As for Hamma'd, he narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ka'zim and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on them. He died in Ku'fa, in the year 190 A. H.

114. Hamma'd Bin 'Uthma'n al-Na'b

Shaykh al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' Abd Allah, al-Ka'zim and al-Ridha', peace be on them.[150] Al-Kashi numbered him as one of those whose traditions the Shi'ites regard as authentic. He (Hamma'd b. 'Uthma'n) died in Ku'fa, in the year 190 A. H.[151]

115. Hamma'd Bin 'Isa'

His *kunya* is Abu' Muhammad al-Juhni. He was originally from Ku'fa and lived in Basrah. He narrated twenty traditions on the authority of Imam Abu' 'Abd Allah al-Sa'diq, Imam Abu' Hasan and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on them. He is trustworthy and very truthful in his tradition. He said: "I heard seventy traditions from Abu' 'Abd Allah, peace be on him, and I was still having doubt in myself until I confined myself to these twenty (traditions).[152]"

He came to Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, and said to him: "May I be your ransom, supplicate Allah for me in order to provide me with a house, a wife, a son, a retainer and performing the hajj every year." So he (the Imam), peace be on him, said: "O Allah, bless Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad, and provide him with a house, a wife, a son, a retainer and performing the hajj more than fifty years."

Hamma'd said: "When he (the Imam) mentioned fifty years, I came to know that I would not perform the hajj more than fifty years." He added: "I performed the hajj forty-eight years. This is my house with which I have been provided. That is my wife behind the curtain, and she can hear my words. This is my son and this is my retainer. I have been provided with all of that." After this speech, he performed the hajj two years and completed fifty years. After the fifty (years), he went out to perform the hajj. He accompanied Abu' al-'Abba's al-Nawfali al-Qasir. When he reached the place of the ritual consecration, he entered the valley to wash himself. However, the flood carried him away and he drowned before performing the fifty-one hajj.[153]

He wrote some books of which are the following:

1. Kita’b al-Zaka’t (the Book of Alms).

2. Kita’b al-Sala’t (the Book of Prayer).[154]

116. Hamda’n Bin Ibra’him al-Ahwa’zi

He was from Ku’fa. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[155]

117. Hamza Bin Buzaygh al-Wa’qifi

‘Ali b. Abu’ Hamza al-Bata’iyini, Ziya’d b. Marwa’n al-Qandi, and ‘Uthma’n b. ‘Isa’ al-Rawa’si made him incline to the Wa’qifiya. That was when they craved for the lawful rights with which they were entrusted. They gave something of them to Hamza b. Buzaygh, Ibn Maka’ri, and Karra’m al-Khath‘ami.[156]

Ibra’him b. Yahya’ b. Abu’ al-Bila’d narrated, saying: [Al-Ridha’ said:] “What did Hamza b. Buzaygh, the wretched one, do?” I (i.e. Ibra’him b. Yahya’) replied: “He has just come.” So he, peace be on him, declared: “He (Hamza b. Buzaygh) claims that my father is still living. Today he is a doubter and tomorrow he will die unbeliever.[157]”

118. Haydar Bin Ayyu’b

He was one of those who narrated the text from Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’ for the Imamate of his son, ‘Ali al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[158]

119. Khalaf Bin Salama al-Basri

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[159]

120. Khayra’n, the Retainer of Imam al-Ridha’

Al-Naja’shi said: “He (Khayra’n) has a book. Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Ha’ru’n told us about the book.[160]”

121. Da’rim Bin Qubaysa

Al-Naja’shi said: “Da’rim b. Qubaysa b. Nahshal b. Majjma‘, Abu’ al-Hasan al-Tamimi al-Da’rimi al-Sa’bih narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He narrated on his authority *Kita’b al-Wuju’h wa al-Naza”ir* and *Kita’b al-Na’sikh wa al-Mansu’kh* (the Book of the Abrogating and the Abrogated (verses).”

However, Ibn al-Ghada"iri criticized him, saying: "None likes and trusts his (Da'rim's) traditions.[161]"

122. Da'wud Bin Sulayma'n

b. Ja'far, Abu' Ahmed al-Qazwini. Ibn Nu'h has mentioned him in his (book) *al-Rija'l*. He (Da'wud) has a book on the authority of al-Ridha', peace be on him.[162]

123. Da'wud Bin 'Ali al-'Abdi

He was one of the companions of al-Mahdi, the 'Abba'sid. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[163]

124. Da'wud Bin 'Ali al-Ya'qu'bi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[164] Al-Naja'shi numbered him as one of those who narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, and added that he was trustworthy and had a book.[165]

125. Da'wud Bin al-Qa'sim

b. Isha'q b. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. Abu' Ta'lib, Abu' Hisha'm al-Ja'fari. He had a great position with the Imams, peace be on them, such as Imam al-Ridha', Imam al-Jawa'd, Imam al-Ha'di, Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari, and the Argument of Allah on His earth, the awaited Imam, peace be on them. He narrated on their authority. He has traditions, questions, and good poetry concerning them. He was of great importance with the Sultan (ruler) and has a book.

Al-Kulayni reported on the authority of Da'wud b. al-Qa'sim, who said: "I went in to Abu' Ja'far, peace be on him, and there were three pieces of paper without titles. I was unable to distinguish them, so I became grieved. He (i.e. Abu' Ja'far) took one of them and said: 'This piece of paper belongs to so-and-so.' I became amazed (at him). Then he looked at me and smiled (at me). I said (to him): 'May I be your ransom, I am fond of eating clay. Pray to Allah for me.' He kept silent, and then he said to me: 'After three days starting (from this day), Abu' Ha'shim, Allah will remove eating clay from you.'" Abu' Ha'shim said: "Nothing is more hateful to me than eating clay today.[166]"

126. Da'wud Bin Ma'fna al-Sarmi

He was the retainer of the Banu' (children) of Qurra, and the Banu' of Hurma. He was from Ku'fa. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. His *kunya* is Abu' Sulayma'n. He remained alive until the days of Abu' al-Hasan al-'Askari, peace be on him, and he reported questions on his authority.[167]

127. Da'wud Bin al-Nu'ma'n

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[168] Al-Kashi reported on the authority of Hamdawayh, on the authority of his Shaykhs, who said: "Da'wud b. al-Nu'ma'n is good and meritorious. He is the uncle of al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. al-Nu'ma'n. 'Ali b. al-Nu'ma'n ordered his books to be given to Muhammad b. Isma''il b. Buzaygh.[169]"

128. Di'bil al-Khaza"i

He is the poet of Islam. He sacrificed his life for Allah, opposed the leaders of oppression and tyranny, supported the Imams of guidance and truth, and struggled bravely in their way. Hence, he was subject to the displeasure of the 'Abba'sid kings and their vengeance. Their organs and their detectives chased him, but he was steadfast paying no attention to terrors and misfortunes. Di'bil was the tongue of the front which opposed the corrupt 'Abba'sid government, which took exclusive possession of the blessings of the land and spent them generously on prostitution and impudence, and left the people to lead a life of poverty and deprivation. As a result, he satirized those kings and moved the discontent of the general populace against them.

We will briefly mention the life of Di'bil and give an outline of his inspired personality.

His Scientific Position

In addition to the literary talents with which he was endowed and which made him one of the leading generation of his time, Di'bil was a scholar. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Abu' Ja'far Muhammad al-Jawa'd, peace be on them[170], who were two of the sources of Imami Jurisprudence. He also narrated on the authority of a group of the eminent figures of his time. The following are some of them:

1. Al-Ha'fiz Shu'ba b. al-Hajja'j who died in 160 A. H. Through this authority traditions are narrated on his authority in the books of the two parties (i. e. the Sunnis and the Shi'ites), as it is in Shaykh al-Tu'si's Ama'li, p. 240, and Ibn 'Asa'kir's Ta'rikh, vol. 5, p. 228.

2. Al-Ha'fiz Sufya'n al-Thawri who died in the year 161 A. H. Ibn 'Asa'kir's Ta'rikh, vol. 5, p. 228.

3. The Imam of the Ma'likiya, Ma'lik b. Anas who died in the year 179 A. H.

4. Abu' Sa'id, Sa'lim b. Nu'h al-Basri who died after the year 200 A. H.

5. Abu' 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Amru' al-Wa'qidi who died in the year 207 A. H.

6. Al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abba'sid Caliph, who died in the year 218 A. H.

7. Abu' al-Fadl 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd al-Zuhri al-Baghda'di who died in the year 260 A. H.

8. Muhammad b. Sala'ma. He (Di'bil) narrated on his (Muhammad b. Sala'ma's) authority the famous sermon called *al-Shaqshaqiya* by the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, in the manner of the Shaykh of the (Shi'ite) Sect in his (book) al-Ama'li.

9. Sa'id b. Sufya'n al-Aslami al-Madani, Shaykh al-Tu'si's Ama'li, p. 227.

10. Muhammad b. Isma''il.

11. Muja'shi' b. 'Umar.

12. Musa' b. SAhl al-Ra'sibi.

A group of the famous narrators also reported on the authority of Di'bil. The following are some of them:

1. Abu' al-Hasan 'Ali, the brother of Di'bil.

2. Musa' b. Hamma'd al-Yazidi.

3. Abu' al-Salt al-Harawi who died 236 A. H.

4. Ha'ru'n b. 'Abd Allah al-MAhlabi.

5. 'Ali b. al-Hakam.

6. 'Abd Allah b. Sa'id al-Ashqari.

7. Musa' b. 'Isa' al-Marwazi.

8. Ibn al-Na'di Ahmed b. Abu' Da'wud who died 272 A. H.

9. Muhammad b. Musa' al-Burayri.[171]

This point reveals that he had a scientific position, and that his knowledge was not confined to literature and poetry; rather it included tradition and jurisprudence.

His Works

Di'bil wrote some books which show his scientific abilities. They are as follows:

1. *Kita'b Tabaqa't al-Shu'ara''* (the Book of the Classes of Poets):

It is one of the valuable books and among the reliable fundamentals in literature and biographies. The eminent authors such as Ibn 'Asa'kir, al-Khatib al-Baghda'di, Ibn Khulaka'n, al-Ya'fi'i, and others narrated on his authority. The following are some chapters of the book:

A. The Stories of the Poets of Basrah.

B. The Stories of the Poets of al-Hija'z.

C. The Stories of the Poets of Baghdad.

The book contains other chapters. It is one of the references.

2. *Kita'b al-Wa'hida fi Mana'qib al-'Arab wa Matha'libiha'* (the Book of the One on the good and bad Qualities of the Arabs).[172]

3. Poetry Divan

The Divan was collected by al-Sawli and it contains three hundred pages, as Ibn al-Nadim mentioned.[173] It is not available in the cases of the Arab manuscripts. It is most likely that it has been lost just as the rest of the other manuscripts which the Arab and Islamic world has lost.

The late Professor 'Abd al-Sa'hib al-Dujayli did his best for several years in order to collect Di'bil's poetry and to manifest it to the world of publications under the title of *Diwa'n Di'bil Bin 'Ali al-Khaza''i*. The Divan was printed in Holy Najaf in the year 1382. It contains a full introduction in which the late professor has demonstrated the life and works of Di'bil. Through this task he has offered a service to thought and literature.

His Poetry

As for the poetry of Di'bil, it is one of the sources of Arab literature, for, in many of its stanzas, he has sincerely described the political and social life of his time and the various kinds of oppression and tyranny the people received from the 'Abba'sid rulers, whose reign was similar to that of the Umayyads; rather it was worse than that of the Umayyads.

His Praising and Lamenting for the 'Alawides

Di'bil gave his literature and thought to the 'Alawides, who summoned (mankind) to social justice and sincerely struggled in order to declare Human rights and to save the poor and the deprived from the crimes of the Umayyad and 'Abba'sid reign. The following are some examples of what he said concerning his praising and lamenting for them:

His praising the Commander of the faithful:

Verily he is pure, chaste, purified, and quick toward good

things and blessings.

Youth and middle-aged, the best middle-aged and young

man, the most excellent of them in lending a helping hand

during distress.

The most brave of them in heart, the most truthful of them

in brotherhood, and the greatest of them in glory and

kinship.

He is the brother of the Chosen One; rather his son-in-law

and his testamentary trustee from among the people and

the cover for defects.

(His position to him) is as Ha'ru'n had with Musa' in spite

of the people low, ignoble, and with spilt skins.

He (the Prophet) said: Whomsoever I am his master, then

this ('Ali) is his master after my death.

He is my brother, my testamentary trustee, my cousin, my

inheritor, and the one who pays my debts from among my

promises.[174]

There is no affectation in this poetry; rather it is harmonious with reality and is very truthful, for it gives an account of some qualities of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, of which are: He is pure, purified, the most generous of the people, and the most courageous of them in heart, for he entered the terrors of the battles. He is the lion who destroyed the forces of polytheism and unbelief. Moreover, he is the closest of all people to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, for he is his brother, his son-in-law, and his testamentary trustee. His position to him is as Ha'ru'n had with Musa', and he (the Prophet) said concerning him on the Day of Ghadir Khum: "Whomsoever I am his master, then this ('Ali) is his master after my death."

Now, let us listen to another part of his (Di'bil's) poetry:

The Qur'an speaks of the excellence of the Household of

Muhammad, and the authority of their 'Ali cannot be

denied.

The authority of the chosen one and best of the people is

after the Prophet, the truthful one, the affectionate.

When the needy came to him, he (‘Ali) willingly

stretched out his arm and hand.

So the needy took from him a ring which was the gift of

the generous one, the munificent one and son of the

munificent.

So the Most Merciful (Allah) has singled him out in His

Revelation. He who has gained (qualities) like his glory,

then let him number them.

Surely your *walis* (friends) are Allah, His Messenger, and

the believers. So he who desires (to deny them), then let

him deny (them).

Tomorrow Allah will be his opponent concerning it

(authority), and Allah does not break His promise.[175]

This poetry is very clear, for it gives an account of one of the merits of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. This virtue is that a poor man went to the Mosque of the Messenger in Medina (Yathrib). The poor man asked the Muslims to help him, but none of them gave him anything. Meanwhile Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was praying. He beckoned to the poor man and gave him his only ring. When the Imam had finished his payer, the revelation came down to Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, in order to decorate him with the dearest medal of the heaven through this holy verse: *Only Allah is your Friend* (*wali*) *and His apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow*.[176] The meaning of this verse is clear, for it has confined the general authority to Allah, the Exalted, the greatest Prophet, and Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, who paid the poor-rate while he was bowing.

This verse is one of the definite proofs of the Imamate of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. Imam ‘Ali is more entitled and appropriate to undertake the caliphate over the Muslims than those other than him. That is because Allah, the exalted, associated His authority with that of His Messenger and of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.

Now, let us listen to other lines which Di‘bil composed concerning Imam ‘Ali, peace be on him:

May Allah bless the pledge of allegiance to Ahmed

(Muhammad) and his testamentary trustee. I mean the

Imam, our envied friend.

I mean him who supported the Prophet Muhammad before

the people, when he was young and a grown-up.

I mean him who removed the distresses and was not

cowardly at the battles.

I mean the monotheist before every monotheist, who

worshipped neither idol nor rock.

It was he who spent the night on Muhammad’s bed,

that he might protect him from schemes of the schemers.

He was advanced during the heat of the battles; neither old

nor young can deny that.[177]

In these lines Di‘bil demonstrates the support of Imam ‘Ali to the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. That is because the Imam was the first to protect the word of monotheism. Through his efforts and struggle the religion of Islam was established. He removed the distresses from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, during the most critical situations. At the Battles of Badr, Uhd, al-Khandaq (the Trench), he was the unique hero who struck off the heads of the polytheists, defeated their armies, and raised the banner of monotheism.

Then Di‘bil demonstrates Imam ‘Ali’s spending the night on the bed of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and his protecting him with his own soul. The Imam voluntarily sacrificed his own life for Islam. So how great his favors toward this religion are! This is an example of what Di‘bil composed on praising Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.

His Lamenting for al-Husayn

The Muslims were terrified by the tragedy of Karbala’’ at which the sacredness of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, was violated because of the murder of his children and progeny. That was when the armies of the Umayyads savagely destroyed the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless

him and his family, and, through killing them, committed the most horrible crime (in the history of mankind). This terrible tragedy shook human conscience, hence Di'bil, who was an 'Alawide in thought, mourned for Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him. He lamented for him in a group of wonderful poems of which are the following lines:

Have you shed tears, spent the night suffering from

intense sighs, wept over the ruins of the family of

Muhammad, and your chest has become narrow out of

regrets?

Oh! Truly weep for them; make flow for them tears shed

out of the misfortune.

Do not forget that they were befallen by the greatest

misfortune on the Day of the Plains (*tufu'f*).

May Allah water the graves on the plain of Kerbala'', the

quarters of rain clouds.

And may He bless the soul and body of al-Husayn, who

was thrown in the deserts between the two rivers, was

killed without any guilt, called (the people) to support him

when alone and single: Where, where are my protectors?

Shall I forget, while this river overflows, the one thirsty,

killed, and wronged without being oppressive?

So say to the son of Sa'd, may Allah drive away his

happiness: You will face the torture of the Fire and curses.

Throughout the time, as long as the east wind blows, in the late afternoon and in the early morning, I will invoke

(Allah) against the people who all have gone astray and

lost the statement of Allah's Messenger through vague

errors.

They displayed the head of al-Husayn on a spear and

drove (his) womenfolk bareheaded and sad.

They died thirsty and emigrants, and they left the schools

of Allah's Revelation effaced.

It was difficult for the chosen One (the Prophet) to see his

grandson remain thrown on earth and without burial

The spearhead raised the head of his beloved one, and it

was driven on the bayonets to Sha'm (Syria) by night.

He whose mother chewed Hamza's liver hit it with a rod.

These misfortunes made the eye of every monotheist flow

blood, so the heart has stricken them with tears.[178]

These lines represent the sorrow and grief of (Di'bil) al-Khaza''i for the heavy misfortune which befell the grandson of the Messenger and his sweet basil. That is because the aggressors killed him in response to the desires of their Umayyad masters, and left his holy body thrown on the plateau of Karbala''. They did not bury him. Rather they cut off his head, and displayed it throughout towns and cities in order to avenge themselves on Imam al-Husayn and to show their great happiness through murdering him. Now, let us listen to another part of Di'bil's lamenting for Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him:

The head of the daughter of Muhammad and his

testamentary trustee, O men, was displayed on a spear.

The Muslims saw it and hear (of it), but they showed

neither impatience nor mercy toward it.

You have woken eyelids while you were sleep for them,

and you have put to sleep an eye which had not slept but

through you.

Your view made blind every eye that could see, and the

news of your death deafened every hear that could hear.

Every garden wished that it could be a bed for you and a

place for your grave.[179]

Di'bil criticized the Muslims for their losing their enthusiasm, their submission to abasement and disgrace, cranked their necks with yielding to the government of Yazid (b. Mu'a'wiya) which disdained their values and fates, and raised the head of the grandson of their Prophet on the heads of their spears and displayed it through the cities and towns. All the Muslims heard and saw that but none of them showed his vengeance and displeasure toward Yazid. However, I (i.e. the author) think that this situation resulted from violence and terrorism which were practiced against the community. In other words the authority punished the people because of doubt and accusation. Of course, this attitude spread fear and terror among the Muslims. These are some of Di'bil's elegies for (Imam al-Husayn), the master of martyrs, peace be on him.

His Satire

Di'bil was indignant with the 'Abba'sid kings of his time and satirized them severely. He was not moved by sentiments and desires which had no relationship with the truth. He (satirized) those kings because they turned away from the truth, and employed the wealth of the community for their pleasures, for example, they spent a lot of money on the singers and the corrupt people, brought to their palaces what Allah had forbidden such as wine and various kinds of amusement, while the community led a life of poverty and deprivation. Now, let us listen to part of his satire:

His Satire upon al-Rashid

When Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, died, al-Ma'mu'n hurried to bury him beside his father (Ha'ru'n al-Rashid). He was asked about that and he replied: "That Allah may forgive Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid) through his neighboring Imam al-Ridha'." When Di'bil heard of that, he ridiculed it and said:

Two graves are at Tu's: (The grave) of the best of all

people and the grave of the most wicked of them; this is

among the moral lessons.

The nearness to the pure one does not benefit the unclean

one; nor does the nearness to the unclean one harm the

pure one.

How far! Everyone is hostage to that which his own hands

earn, so take or leave whatever you desire.

Which satire upon Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid) is bitterer than this? Di'bil sometimes described him as the most wicked of all people and sometimes as abominable, and that his nearness to the resting place of the Imam would not benefit him, for every person would be treated according to what his hands did, and there would be no advantage of other than that.

His Satire upon Ibra'him

When al-Ma'mu'n appointed Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as his heir apparent, the 'Abba'sids became angry and pledged allegiance to Ibra'him, the leader of the singers, so Di'bil satirized him, saying:

Ibn Shakkla cried in Iraq and (among) its people, so those

blind and foolish hurried to him.

If Ibra'him (Ibn Shakkla) undertakes it (the caliphate),

then, after him, Makha'riq and Zalzal will be appropriate

for it.

How do, and that does not occur, the dissolute inherit the

caliphate one by one?[180]

This is the bitterest kind of satire, for if the caliphate was appropriate for Ibra'him, then it would be appropriate for singers other than him such as Makha'riq, Zalzal, and Ma'riq. In this manner the state would belong to the singers, but it was impossible for it to reach this low level and the dissolute to undertake it one by one. It is strange that the soldiers gathered around Ibra'him's palace and asked him for their salaries, but he had no money left with him. A witty man addressed the soldiers, saying: "Ibra'him will go out. He will sing each group a song. Theses are your salaries!" As for Di'bil, he heard of that and said:

O soldiers, do not be hopeless; take your salaries

and do not be displeased.

He will sing you a song which the

beardless and the bearded enjoy.

Ma‘bad’s songs, for your leaders, neither enter the bag nor

tie it.

In this manner the Caliph, whose book is the lute,

provides his soldiers with the means of subsistence.

Have you seen this mockery at the leader of the singers who provided his soldiers with singing?

His Satire upon al-Mu‘tasim

As for Di‘bil’s satire upon al-Mu‘tasim, it is bitter and severe, for al-Mu‘tasim was tyrannical and oppressive, had neither compassion nor mercy. Di‘bil is truthful when he satirizes him with these poetry lines:

A sad lover weeps for the dispersion of the religion, and

his eyes overflow with tears (for it).

An Imam has undertaken (the caliphate) while he has

neither guidance nor religion nor intellect.

None has brought news that the like of him will someday

rule or the Arabs follow him.

However, it is just as the past ancestors said when the

misfortune became great:

The ‘Abba’sid kings are seven in the books, and the books

have not told us about the eighth of them.

Likewise, the People of the Cave were seven noble ones in

the Cave when they are numbered, and their eighth was a

dog.

Surely, I regard their dog as higher than you in

exaltedness, because you have sins while it had no sin.

When you have had an authority over us

because of our misery, you look like an old woman who

wears a crown, a necklace and a gown.

The authority of the people has become lost when Wasif

and Ashna's[181] have seized it, and the distress has become

great.[182]

These lines represent affliction and unhappiness of the Muslims during the caliphate of al-Mu'tasim, who had no noble trait which would qualify him for the office of Islamic caliphate, which was the shadow of Allah on earth. During his reign, Di'bil remained hidden and chased by terror and fear, for al-Mu'tasim order his police to arrest him, but they did not find him. When al-Mu'tasim died, Di'bil satirized him with these lines:

When they had hidden him in the most evil grave for the

most evil one and gone away, I said: Go to the Fire

because your quality belongs to none except to Satans.

You have not disappeared until you pledged allegiance to

him who damaged the Muslims and the religion.[183]

His Satire upon al-Wa'thiq

When al-Wa'thiq became caliph, Di'bil wrote the following lines in satirizing him. He gave the lines to the chamberlain and said to him: "Say to al-Wa'thiq: 'Di'bil has praised you with these lines.'" These lines are as follows:

Praise belongs to Allah! There is no steadfastness nor

endurance nor comfort when lovers repose.

A caliph has died but none has mourned for him; yet

another has undertaken (the caliphate) but none is

delighted with him.

So this (i.e. the former caliph) passed and evil omen

passed to follow him; this (the latter) has risen, so woe

and unhappiness have also risen.

When al-Wa'thiq opened (the letter) and read the poetry lines, he burst into anger. He ordered Di'bil to be arrested, but he did not find him until he (al-Wa'thiq) perished.[184]

This is an example of his satire, which represents his enthusiasm toward the truth, his helping the oppressed and persecuted of his time.

Di'bil was one of those leaders who opposed the 'Abba'sid government of his time. It is an act of crime against thought that Di'bil is described as one with evil tongue and that none of the caliphs was safe from his tongue.[185] This statement is cheap and far from reality. Di'bil adored the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, whom the 'Abba'sid government persecuted. This government spared no effort to wrong them and their followers. Accordingly, Di'bil was very eager, due to his faith, to support and defend them, and to defame their opponents. This is not a defect; rather it is pride and honor for him.

Di'bil joins the Garden

Throughout his life, Di'bil was a struggler and combatant. He ridiculed the kings of his time who made lawful what Allah had made unlawful. He lashed them with the bitterest kind of satire. As a result the authority followed him and intended to execute him, but he hid himself and began going from one country to another, followed by terror and fear. It is he who says in his immortal (poem) called al-Ta"iya:

I am terrified in the world and the efforts of its days, and I hope for security after my death.

Di'bil bravely announced his readiness for death, saying: "I have carried my wood (i.e. gibbet) on my shoulder for fifty years. I have looked for him who will crucify me on it, but I have not found him who will do that."

The death of Di'bil was at the hand of one of the wicked of his time, who was called Ma'lik b. Tawq al-Taghlubi. Malik sought him, but he escaped to Basrah whose governor was Isha'q b. al-'Abba's al-'Abba'si. Isha'q was informed of Di'bil's satire upon him and he ordered him to be arrested. Di'bil was brought before him and he ordered the leather rug and the sword to be brought in order to behead him. However, Di'bil denied the poem through which he satirized him. He said that one of his opponents had composed the poem and ascribed it to him in order to shed his blood. He begged Isha'q and he pardoned him from killing. But Isha'q ordered the sticks and whips to be brought and he began lashing Di'bil savagely. Then he released him and he fled to al-Ahwa'z.[186]

Malik b. Tawq hurried and dispatched a prudent, bold person and gave him poison. He ordered him to assassinate Di'bil. He gave him ten thousand dirhams in recompense for this crime. The man quickly headed for al-Ahwa'z. He spared no effort to find Di'bil. As a result he found him in one of the villages of al-Su's. He assassinated him after the night prayer. He hit him on the upper part of his foot with a

poisoned crutch. Di‘bil’s body became poisoned, and he died in the following morning. He was buried in the above-mentioned village. It was said that he was carried to al-Su’s and was buried wherein.[187] In this manner the life of this muja’hid, who fought with oppression, expired. His friend, the great poet, Abu’ Tamma’m al-Ta”i lamented for him in these poetry lines:

The graves of Habib and Di‘bil have increased my love and kindled my love sickness when they died.

My brothers, the heaven is still thin and covers you with rain cloud.

One grave is near al-Ahwa’z, it takes the mourner a long time to reach it, and the other is near al-Mousl.[188]

May Allah have mercy on Di‘bil, for he was one of the prominent Muslim figures. He died a martyr for the noble principles and the ideals which he adopted in all stages of his life.

129. Rahim ‘Abdu’s al-Khannji

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and ‘Ali b. al-Hakam reported on his authority.[189]

130. Rayya’n Bin Shubayb

He was the uncle of al-Mu‘tasim, the ‘Abba’sid. He is trustworthy. He lived in Qum and reported on the authority of its people. He collected the questions about which al-Saba’h al-Hindi asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[190] He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ibra’him b. Ha’shim reported on his authority.[191]

131. Al-Rayya’n Bin al-Salt Al-Ash‘ari al-Qummi

His *kunya* is Abu’ ‘Ali. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He is trustworthy and very truthful. He has a book in which he has collected the statement of al-Ridha’, peace be on him, on the difference between *al-a’l wa al-Umma* (the Household and the community).[192] Mu‘ammar b. Khalla’d narrated: “Al-Rayya’n b. al-Salt said to me at the time when al-Fadl b. SAhl sent him to one of the districts of Khurasa’n: ‘I want you to ask Abu’ al-Hasan ‘Ali (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, for permission for me in order to greet him and say farewell to him, and I want him to give me one of his garments and some of the dirhams bearing his name.’” He (al-Rayya’n b. al-Salt) said: “I went in to him and he said to Mu‘ammar: ‘Does he (al-Rayya’n b. al-Salt) want to come in to me and want me to give him one of my garments and some of my dirhams?’” He (Mu‘ammar) said: “I (i.e. Mu‘ammar) said: ‘Glory belongs to Allah! By Allah, he did not ask me except to ask that from you for him.” He (al-Ridha’) said: “Mu‘ammar, the believer is successful. Let him come in.” He (Mu‘ammar) said: “I permitted him and he went in to him and greeted him. He (al-Ridha’) called for one of his garments and it was

brought to him. When he (al-Rayya'n) went out, I asked him: 'What did he give you?' Suddenly, there was thirty dirhams in his hand.[193]"

132. Zakariya Bin Adam

b. 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd al-Ash'ari al-Qummi. He is trustworthy and great with great position. He was of great importance with Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.[194] Al-Kashi narrated that he heard from one of our companions on the authority of Abu' Ta'lib 'Abd Allah b. al-Salt al-Qummi, who said: "I (i.e. Abu' Ta'lib) went in to Abu' Ja'far, the Second, peace be on him, at the end of his span of life and heard him say: 'May Allah reward well on my behalf Safwa'n b. Yahya', Muhammad b. Sina'n, and Zakariya b. Adam, for they are loyal to me.'"

Muhammad b. Hamza reported on the authority of Zakariya b. Adam, who said: "I (i.e. Zakariya b. Adam) said to al-Ridha', peace be on him: 'I want to leave my household, for the foolish are many among them.' He (al-Ridha') said: 'Don't do (that), for affliction is repelled from your household through you just as affliction is repelled from the people of Baghdad through Abu' al-Hasan al-Ka'zim, peace be on him.[195]

What indicates his great ability and his exalted position is that which narrated by 'Ali b. al-Musayyab, who said: [My house is distant and I cannot come to you every time, so from whom shall I take the principal features (*ma'a'lim*) of my religion? He, peace be on him, replied:] "(Take them) from Zakariya b. Adam al-Qummi, who is entrusted (by me) with religion and the world." 'Ali b. al-Musayyab said: "When I departed, I went to Zakariya b. Adam and asked him about my (religious) needs."

Muhammad b. Isha'q and al-Hasan b. Muhammad narrated: "Three months after the death of Zakariya b. Adam, we went out in order to make the pilgrimage. On part of the road, we received his (al-Ridha"s) letter, peace be on him. In it has been mentioned: 'I have mentioned the decree of Allah toward the late man (i.e. Zakariya b. Adam), may Allah have mercy on him on the day when he was born, the day when he died, and the day when he will be raised from the dead. Throughout the days of his lifetime, he lived knowing the truth, believing in it, patient and having a fore-thought for the truth, performing what Allah and His Messenger loved. He, may Allah have mercy on him, passed away while he did not break (the oath of allegiance) nor did he changed it. May Allah reward him just as He rewards His Prophet and give him his best wishes. You mentioned the entrusted man, but you do not know our view regarding him, and we have knowledge of him more that what you have described he meant al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. 'Umra'n.[196] '" This account reveals the exalted position of Zakariya b. Adam with the Imam, peace be on him.

133. Zakariya Abu' Yahya'

He was nicknamed *Kawkab al-Dam* (the Star of Blood). In the Chapter on the *Kuna'*, Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[197] Abu' Yahya' al-

Mousili said: “Zakariya Abu’ Yahya’ was one of the good Shaykhs.[198]” Ibn al-Ghada”iri regarded him as a weak (traditionalist).

134. Zakariya’ Bin Idris

b. ‘Abd Allah b. Sa‘d al-Ash‘ari al-Qummi. His *kunya* is Abu’ Jarir. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, and (Imam) Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He has a book.[199] Zakariya reported, saying: “After the death of my father Jarir, I went in to al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He asked Allah to have mercy on him, and then he asked me about him from the evening to dawn. Then he rose and performed the dawn prayer.[200]”

135. Zakariya’ Bin ‘Abd al-Samad al-Qummi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was trustworthy. His *kunya* is Abu’ Jarir. He was one of the companions of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’, peace be on him.[201]

136. Zakariya’ Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Mu’min

His *kunya* is Abu’ ‘Abd Allah. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah and Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on them. He met Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, in the Sacred Mosque and narrated from him what indicated that he (Zakariya) was a Wa’qifi. His traditions are confused. He has a book containing plagiarized traditions.[202]

137. Zakariya’ Bin Yahya’

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Bakr b. Sa’lih reported on his authority.[203]

138. Sa‘d Bin Hamma’d

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.[204]

139. Sa‘d Bin Sa‘d

b. al-Ahwas b. Sa‘d b. Ma’lik al-Ash‘ari al-Qummi. He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and reported the classified book of Imam Abu’ Ja‘far. Muhammad b. Kha’lid narrated the questions about which he asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[205] ‘Abd Allah b. al-Salt al-Qummi reported, saying: “I went in to Imam Abu’ Ja‘far II at the end of his life and he said:

‘May Allah reward Safwa’n b. Yahya’, Muhammad b. Sina’n, Zakariya b. Adam, and Sa‘d b. Sa‘d, for they are loyal to me.206 ’”

140. Sa‘d, the Servant of Abu’ Dalaf

Shaykh al-Tu’si said: “He (i.e. Sa‘d) has reported questions from Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. We have been told about the questions by a number of our companions on the authority of Abu’ al-Fadl, on the authority of Ibn Batta, on the authority of Ahmed b. ‘Abd Allah.207”

141. Sa‘d Bin Jina’h al-Azdi al-Baghda’di

He was their (the Imams’) retainer. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He and his brother Abu’ ‘Amir are trustworthy. He has the book *Sifat al-Janna wa al-Na’r* (the quality of the Garden and the Fire), and the book *Qabd Ru’h al-Mu’min wa al-Ka’fir* (the Death of the Believer and Unbeliever).208

142. Sa‘id Bin Sa‘id al-Qummi

He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.209

143. Sulayma’n Bin Ja‘far

al-Ta’libi al-Ja‘fari. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. His father reported on the authority Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah and (Imam) Abu’ al-Hasan, peace be on them. Both of them are trustworthy. He (Sulayma’n) has a book (entitled) *Fadl al-Du‘a”* (the Excellence of Supplication).210

144. Sulayma’n Bin al-Ja‘fari

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Abu’ Ayyu’b al-Madani reported on his authority.211

145. Sulayma’n Bin Hafs

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Isma’‘il reported on his authority.212

146. Sulayma’n Bin Hafs al-Marwazi

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him.213

147. Sulayma’n Bin Da’wud al-Khaffa’f

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.214

148. Sulayma’n Bin Rashid

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.215 He narrated on the authority of his father, and Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ reported on his authority.216

149. Al-Sindi Bin al-Rabi‘ al-Ku’fi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.217

150. Sawa’da al-Qatta’n

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Fadda’l reported on his authority.218

151. Sahl Bin al-Ash‘ari

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and his son Muhammad reported on his authority.219

152. Sahl Bin al-Yasa‘

b. ‘Abd Allah b. Sa‘d al-Ash‘ari al-Qummi. He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam Musa’ and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on them.220

153. Shu‘ayb Bin Hamma’d

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.221 Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him.222

154. Sa’lih Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Khath‘ami

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him,223 and

so did al-Barqi.

155. Sa'lih Bin 'Ali

b. 'Atiya al-Baghda'di. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.224 Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him.

156. Sa'lih al-Khabba'z al-Ku'fi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.225

157. Saba'h Bin Nasr al-Hindi

He narrated the questions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.226

158. Sadaqa al-Khurasa'ni

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.227

159. Safwa'n Bin Yahya' al-Bujayli

His *kunya* is Abu' Muhammad. He was from Kufa'. He sold fine cloth (*sa'biri*). He is very truthful. His father narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' 'Abd Allah al-Sa'diq, peace be on him. As for he (Safwa'n), he narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He had a noble position with him (al-Ridha'). Al-Kashi regarded him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' al-Hasan Musa', peace be on him.

He was the agent of Imam al-Ridha' and of Imam Abu' Ja'far al-Jawa'd, peace be on them. As for his faith, it was safe from the Wa'qifa. He was very ascetic and worshipful. A group of the Wa'qifa gave him a lot of money, but he did not respond to them. He was the bosom friend of 'Abd Allah b. Jundub and 'Ali b. al-Nu'ma'n. It is reported that they made a covenant in the Sacred House of Allah that whoever of them died the rest should pray, fast, and pay the poor-rate on behalf of him. They died and Safwa'n remained living, hence prayed every day one hundred and fifty *ruk'as*, fasted every year three months, and paid the poor-rate three times. With the exception of what we have mentioned, he donated on behalf of them as he donated on behalf of his own soul.

As he had firm devotion to (religion) and reverential fear, he said to the man who asked him to carry two dinars to his family in Ku'fa: "My camels are hired and I should ask the hirers for permission." He was so pious and worshipful that none of his class was like him.

He compiled thirty books which are not known except the following:

A. Kita'b al-Wudu'' (the Book of Ablution).

B. Kita'b al-Sala't (the Book of Prayer).

C. Kita'b al-Sawm (the Book of Fasting).

D. Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of Pilgrimage).

E. Kita'b al-Zaka't (the Book of Alms).

F. Kita'b al-Nika'h (the Book of Marriage).

G. Kita'b al-Tala'q (the Book of Divorce).

H. Kita'b al-Fara''id (the Book of the Religious Duties).

I. Kita'b al-Wasa'ya' (the Book of Wills).

J. Kita'b al-Shira'' wa al-Bay' (the Book of Buying and

Selling)

K. Kita'b al-'Ittq wa al-Taddbir (the Book of

Emancipation of Salves and Direction.

L. Kita'b al-Bisha'ra't (the Book of Good News).

M. Kita'b al-Nawa'dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions).

Brilliant traditions on reverential fear have been narrated on his authority. Traditions concerning praising and lauding him have also been reported from the Imams of guidance. He , may Allah have mercy on him, died in the year 210 A. H.228

160. Ta'hir Bin Ha'tam

b. Ma'hawayh al-Qazwini. He was the brother of Fa'ris b. Ha'tam. He was correct, and then he confused. He has a book. Al-Hasan b. al-Husayn mentioned the book.229 Shaykh al-Tu'si said: "He (i.e. Ta'hir b. Ha'tam) was right, and then he changed. He manifested belief in extremism. He has reports.230"

161. ‘Abba’d Bin Muhammad

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.231

162. Al-‘Abba’s Bin Ja‘far

b. Muhammad b. al-Ash‘ath. Al-Sadu’q narrated on the authority of al-Hasan b. ‘Ali al-Washsha’’, who said: [Al-‘Abba’s b. Ja‘far asked me to ask Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, to burn his books after he had read them lest they should fall in the hands of other than him. Before I asked him, he, peace be on him, said:] “Tell your friend (al-‘Abba’s b. Ja‘far) that I burnt the books which he sent to me after I had read them.232”

163. Al-‘Abba’s Bin Muhammad

al-Warra’q, al-Yu’nisi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.233

164. Al-‘Abba’s Bin Ma‘ru’f

His *kunya* is Abu’ al-Fadl. He was the retainer of Ja‘far b. ‘Abd Allah al-Ash‘ari. He was from Qum. He is trustworthy. He has Kita’b al-Ada’b (the Book of Arts) and Kita’b al-Nawa’dir (the Book of Miscellaneous Traditions).234

165. Al-‘Abba’s Bin Musa’

al-Nakhkha’s. He was from Ku’fa and is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.235

166. Al-‘Abba’s Bin Hisha’m

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.236 Al-Naja’shi said: “He (i.e. Al-‘Abba’s b. Hisha’m) belonged to the tribe of the Banu’ Asad. He is great and trustworthy among our companions. He narrated many traditions. His name was broken, so it was said that his name was ‘Ubays. He has books of which are: *Kita’b al-Hajj* (the Book of the Pilgrimage), *Kita’b al-Sala’t* (the Book of Prayer), *Kita’b al-Matha’lib* (the Book of Shortcomings) which he named *Kita’b Kha’la’t Fula’n wa Fula’n* (the Book of the Aunts of So-and-So), *Kita’b Ja’mi‘ al-Hala’l wa al-Hara’m* (A Comprehensive Book on the Lawful and the Unlawful), *Kita’b al-Ghayba* (the Book of the Occultation), *Kita’b al-Nawa’dir* (the Book of Miscellaneous Traditions). Many narrators reported these books on his authority. He, may Allah have mercy on him, died in the year 220 A. H.237”

167. Al-‘Abba’s, the Retainer of Imam al-Ridha’

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. ‘Ali reported on his authority.238

168. Al-‘Abba’s al-Naja’shi

He was from Ku’fa. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.239

169. ‘Abd al-Jabba’r Bin al-Muba’rak

al-Naha’wandi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and of Imam al-Jawa’d, peace be on him.240

170. ‘Abd al-Hamid Bin Sa‘id

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and of Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him.241

171. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n Bin Abu’ Najjra’n

He was a retainer and was from Ku’fa. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and his father Abu’ Najjra’n reported on the authority of Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n is very trustworthy. His traditions are reliable. He has many books.” Abu’ al-‘Abba’s said: “I have not seen any of his books except his book on buying and selling.242”

172. ‘Abd al-Sala’m Bin Sa’lih al-Harawi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He is trustworthy. His traditions are authentic. He has the book *Wafa’t al-Ridha’* (the Death of al-Ridha’, peace be on him).243 Al-Sadu’q narrated on the authority of Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah b. Ta’hir, who said: “I was standing beside my father, and there were with him Abu’ al-Salt al-Harawi, Isha’q b. Ra’hawayh, and Ahmed b. Hanbel. My father said: ‘Let each of you relate a tradition to me.’ So Abu’ al-Salt al-Harawi said: “Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him, reported to us by Allah he was consent (*Ridha’*) as he was named on the authority of his father Musa’ b. Ja‘far, on the authority of his (grand) father Ja‘far b. Muhammad, on the authority of his (grand) father Muhammad b. ‘Ali, on the authority of his (grand) father ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, on the authority of his (grand) father al-Husayn b. ‘Ali, on the authority of his (grand) father ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on them, who said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] ‘Faith is words and actions.’ When we went out, Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Hanbel said: ‘What this *isna’d* (chain

of authorities) is?' My father answered: 'This is the sneezewort of the mad. When the mad are made to smell it, they recover.[244] '"

173. 'Abd al-'Aziz Bin Muslim

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[245] It was he who narrated on his (al-Ridha"s) authority a supported tradition on explaining the position of the Imam, peace be on him, that the position of the Imam is like that of the prophets, and that it is the vicegerency of Allah and the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, the position of Imam ('Ali) the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and inheritance of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be on them. In the tradition there are some verses which indicate that the Imamate is confined to the infallible (Imams), peace be on them.[246]

174. 'Abd al-'Aziz Bin al-Muhtadi

al-Ash'ari, al-Qummi. He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.[247] Concerning him, al-Fadl b. Sha'dha'n said: "I have never seen a Qummi like him in his time." He also said concerning him: "He was the best of the Qummis whom I have seen. He was the agent of al-Ridha', peace be on him.[248]" He ('Abd al-'Aziz) was also the agent of Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him. Al-Jawa'd gave him the money of the rights and he received them. He wrote him: "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. You have known the prominent persons from whom the money has come to you. May Allah forgive you your sins and them their sins, and have mercy on us and you.[249]"

175. 'Abd Allah Bin Aba'n

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[250] He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and 'Ali b. Isma"il al-Daghshani reported on his authority.[251]

176. 'Abd Allah Bin Ibra'him al-Ansa'ri

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[252]

177. 'Abd Allah Bin Ayyu'b al-Juzayni

His *Kunya* is Abu' Muhammad. He devoted himself to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He was a meritorious poet and writer. He lamented for Imam al-Ridha' and addressed his son Imam al-Jawa'd, saying:

O Son of the testamentary trustee, the testamentary trustee of the noblest Messenger,

I mean the Prophet, the truthful one and the trusted one!

None will be ahead of me through your intercession tomorrow, for none is ahead of me through my (showing) love for you.

O Father of the eight Imams who went westward and father of the three Imams who went eastward!

You are the east and west. The Book has come to confirm that.[253]

178. ‘Abd Allah Bin Jundub

He was an ascetic, worshipful, religious scholar. Shaykh al-Tu’si sometimes numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Sa’diq, peace be on him, sometimes numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, and sometimes numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. Jundub was one of the agents of Imam al-Ka’zim and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on them. He asked Imam al-Ka’zim: “Are you satisfied with me?” “Yes, by Allah,” replied the Imam, “and Allah’s Apostle is also satisfied with you.”

Yu’nus b. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n narrated: “I saw ‘Abd Allah b. Jundub when he finished (the rites of) ‘Arafa’t. He was one of the religious jurists (*mujjtahidin*).” Yunus said:[So I said to him:] “Allah has seen your diligence from today.” “By Allah with Whom there is no associate,” said ‘Abd Allah, “I stood in this place of mine and left (it), but Allah did not hear me supplicate for myself with one word, for I heard Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, say: ‘He who supplicates for his brother in his absence is called out from firmament: ‘You will have one hundred thousand (good deeds) for each (word).’ So I hated leaving a guaranteed hundred thousand (good deeds) for (a word). I do not know whether (Allah) accepts it or not.”

Al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Yaqqtin, who had a bad opinion of Yu’nus, reported: [It was said to Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, and I (i.e. al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Yaqqtin) could hear, that Yu’nus, the retainer of the family of Yaqqtin, claims that your follower and the one who has clung to obeying you, ‘Abd Allah b. Jundub, worships Allah (very shakily) on seventy edges, and says that he is a doubter. So he (al-Ridha’) said:] “What is between him and ‘Abd Allah b. Jundub? Surely ‘Abd Allah b. Jundub is one of the humble.[254]”

179. ‘Abd Allah Bin al-Ha’rith

He was one of those who narrated the text on the authority of al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, for the Imamate of his son Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[255]

180. ‘Abd Allah Bin al-Salt al-Qummi

His *kunya* is Abu’ Ta’lib. He was the retainer of the Banu’ Tamim. He is trustworthy and his traditions are reliable. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. It is well known that Kita’b al-Tafsir (the Book of Interpretation) belongs to him.256 Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’ and Imam al-Jawa’d, peace be on them.257

He wrote Imam al-Jawa’d in order to permit him to lament his father, and he, peace be on him, wrote him: “Lament me and my father.258” He wrote poetry lines to Imam al-Jawa’d, peace be on him, and mentioned in them his father Imam al-Ridha’. He asked him (al-Jawa’d) to permit him to compose poetry concerning him, but he cut the poetry and withheld it and wrote at the top of the page: “You have done well! May Allah reward you well!259”

181. ‘Abd Allah Bin Ta’wus

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he lived for a hundred years.260

182. ‘Abd Allah Bin ‘Ali

b. al-Husayn b. Zayd b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He has a book.261

183. ‘Abd Allah Bin al-Muba’rak

al-Naha’wandi. He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.262

184. ‘Abd Allah Bin Muhammad

al-Asadi, al-Hajja’l. He was the retainer of the Banu’ (children) of Taym. He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.263 And so did al-Barqi.264 Al-Naja’shi said: “He is trustworthy. It has been established that he has books. A group of our companions have narrated the books.”

185. ‘Abd Allah Bin Muhammad

b. Husayn al-Hudayni al-Ahwa’zi. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He is trustworthy. He has a book. A number of our companions has narrated the book. As for the title of the book, it is Questions by Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.265

186. ‘Abd Allah Bin Muhammad

b. ‘Ali b. al-‘Abba’s al-Tamimi al-Ra’zi. He has a book on Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[266]

187. ‘Abd Allah Bin al-Mughira

He was the retainer of Ibn Nawfal b. al-Ha’rith b. ‘Abd al-Muttalib. He was a Ku’fan silk dealer. Under this title, Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[267] Al-Kashi narrated, saying: “He reported the handwriting of Abu’ ‘Abd Allah al-Sha’dha’ni.” Al-‘Ubaydi said:[Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ related to me on the authority of al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Fadda’l, who said: ‘Abd Allah b. al-Mughira said:] “I was a Wa’qifite and performed the hajj in that state. When I arrived in Mecca, something came to my mind, so I clung to the Moltazam and said: ‘O Allah, you have known my request and want, hence guide me to the best religion.’ Then I though that I would go to al-Ridha’, peace be on him. I went to Medina, stopped at his door, and said to the retainer: ‘Say to your master that an Iraqi is at your door.’ I heard him call (me) out: ‘Come in, ‘Abd Allah b. al-Mughira.’ I went in to him. When he looked at me, he said: ‘Allah has accepted your supplication and guided you to His religion.’ As a result I said: ‘I witness that you are the proof of Allah and entrusted by Him over His creatures.[268] ’”

SAhl b. Ziya’d al-Adami narrated, saying: “When ‘Abd Allah b. al-Mughira wrote his book, he promised his companions to read it before them in one of the corners of the mosque of Ku’fa. He had an opposing brother. When they attended to listen to (his reading) the book, his brother came and sat down. ‘Abd Allah said to them: ‘Depart today!’ His brother said to him: ‘Where will they depart? I have come to what they have come.’ When they returned, he (‘Abd Allah’s brother) said: ‘I dreamt that the angels were coming down from the sky. I asked them: Why are you coming down from the sky? ‘We are coming down in order to listen to the book which ‘Abd Allah b. al-Mughira compiled,’ replied the angels. I have also come for this (purpose) and turned to Allah in repentance.’ ‘Abd Allah was pleased at that.[269]”

188. ‘Abd al-Wahha’b

He is better known as Abu’ Kuthayr al-Naha’wandi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[270]

189. ‘Ubayd al-Nasri

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[271]

190. ‘Ubayd Allah

b. Abu’ ‘Abd Allah. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and al-Sayya’ri

reported on his authority.272

191. ‘Ubayd Allah Bin Isha’q al-Mada”ini

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and ‘Amru’ b. ‘Uthma’n reported on his authority.273

192. ‘Ubayd Allah Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Dahqa’n

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and ‘Ali b. al-Rayya’n reported on his authority.274

193. ‘Ubayd Allah Bin ‘Ali

b. ‘Ubayd Allah. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.275

194. ‘Uthma’n Bin Rashid

He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He narrated on the authority of Ma‘ru’f b. Kharbu’dh, and ‘Ali b. Haddid reported on his authority.276

195. ‘Uthma’n Bin ‘Isa’ al-‘Amiri, al-Kila’bi

His *kunya* is Abu’ ‘Amru’. He was the shaykh and leading figure of the Wa’qifites. He was one of the agents who were singled out for the properties of Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, peace be on him. Nasr b. al-Saba’h reported: “He (Imam al-Ridha’), peace be on him, had money at his (‘Uthma’n b. ‘Isa”s) hand. He (‘Uthma’n b. ‘Isa) prevented him (al-Ridha’ from his money). As a result al-Ridha’ was displeased with him.”

He (Nasr b. al-Saba’h) added: “ He (‘Uthma’n b. ‘Isa) turned to Allah in repentance and sent the money to al-Ridha’. He narrated on the authority of Ibn Hamza. He dreamt that he would die at al-Ha”ir al-Husayni, so he abandoned his house in Ku’fa and stayed at al-Ha”ir al-Husayni until he died and was buried there.” He wrote books of which is *Kita’b al-Miya’h* (the Book of Water).

Ibn Shahr Ashu’b numbered him as one of the trustworthy (companions) of Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him. Imam al-Khu”i said: “Without doubt, ‘Uthma’n b. ‘Isa deviated from the True Religion, opposed Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, did not recognize his Imamate, regarded as lawful the properties of the Imam, peace be on him, and did not pay them to him. As for his repentance and his returning the properties, it has not been established, for it is the narration of Nasr b. al-Saba’h, who is nothing.277”

196. ‘Atiya Bin Rustam

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.278

197. ‘Aqaba Bin Rustam

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.279

198. ‘Ali Bin Abu’ Thawr

He was from Ku’fa. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.280

199. ‘Ali Bin Ahmed

b. Ashyam. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.281

200. ‘Ali Bin Idris

He was the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. Al-Sadu’q has mentioned him in (his book) *al-Mashyakha*. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. SAhl reported on his authority.282

201. ‘Ali Bin Asba’t al-Maqari

b. Sa’lim, the seller of *al-Zati*.283 His *kunya* is Abu’ al-Hasan. He is a trustworthy Ku’fan. He was an Aftahi. He exchanged letters with ‘Ali b. Mahzya’r concerning that (belief). As a result ‘Ali (b. Asba’t) withdrew from his viewpoint and believed in the Imamate of Imam al-Jawa’d, peace be on him. He was the most trustworthy of the people and most truthful of them in tradition. *Kita’b al-Dala”il* (the Book of Proofs) belongs to him.284

202. ‘Ali Bin Ja‘far

b. Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on them. His *kunya* is Abu’ al-Hasan. He had a great position and reliable faith. He was one of those who narrated the text for the Imamate of Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him, and was one of his trustworthy companions. The narrators have reported some signs of his faith and clinging to religion. The following are some of them:

A. ‘Ali b. Ja’far related to us and said: [A man whom I regarded as a Wa’qifite asked me:]

“What about your brother Abu’ al-Hasan (i.e. Imam Musa’ al-Ka’zim, peace be on him)?”

“He died,” I replied.

“How did you know that?” he asked.

“His properties have been divided; his wives have been married, and the spokesman after him has spoken (i.e. the Imam after him has undertaken the office of the Imamate), I answered.

“Who is the spokesman after him?” he asked.

“His son Abu’ Ja’far,” I replied.

“You are an old man, have a great position, and your father is Ja‘far b. Muhammad, so why do you say this statement concerning this young man (Imam al-Ridha’)?” he said.

“I see you nothing except Satan,” I said to him, “then I seized my beard and raised it toward the heaven and said: ‘What is my strength if Allah has seen him more appropriate for this (i.e. the Imamate) and has not seen this white hair more entitled to it?”

The Imamate is in the hand of Allah, the Most Exalted. It is He who chooses for it one of His righteous servants. As for the priority in age and other than it, it is not important.

B. Abu’ ‘Abd Allah b. al-Husayn b. Imam Musa’, peace be on him, reported, saying: [I was with Imam Abu’ Ja‘far (al-Jawa’d), peace be on him, in Medina. There was with him ‘Ali b. Ja‘far and A Medinan Bedouin. The Bedouin asked me:]

“Who is that young man, pointing to Imam al-Jawa’d?”

“He is the testamentary trustee of Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family,” I replied.

The Bedouin admired that and said: “Glory belongs to Allah! Allah’s Messenger died two hundred years ago, in the year so-and-so. This is a young man. How will he be the testamentary trustee of Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family?”

(‘Abd Allah b.) al-Husayn explained the matter to him, saying: “This is the testamentary trustee of ‘Ali b. Musa’; ‘Ali is the testamentary trustee of Musa’ b. Ja‘far; Musa’ is the testamentary trustee of Ja‘far b. Muhammad; Ja‘far is the testamentary trustee of Muhammad b. ‘Ali; Muhammad is the testamentary trustee of ‘Ali b. al-Husayn; ‘Ali is the testamentary trustee of al-Husayn; al-Husayn is the testamentary trustee of al-Hasan; al-Hasan is the testamentary trustee of the Commander of the faithful ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib; and ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib is the testamentary trustee of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family.”

Accordingly, the Bedouin understood that Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him, was the testamentary trustee of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

The Imam had sent for a doctor in order to bleed him, so 'Ali b. Ja'far stood up and said to him: "Master, let the doctor start with me, that the sharp iron may cut me before you!"

('Abd Allah b.) al-Husayn addressed the Bedouin, saying: "This is the uncle of his father."

When the doctor had finished the operation, the Imam intended to go out, but 'Ali b. Ja'far hurried to prepare his sandals, that he may wear them."

This is evidence for 'Ali b. Ja'far's deep faith in the Imam, his knowledge of him and of his position with Allah, the Exalted.

C. Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. 'Amma'r reported, saying: "I stayed with 'Ali b. Ja'far in Medina for two years. I wrote on his authority what he had heard from his brother (i.e. Abu' al-Hasan, peace be on him). (One day) while I was sitting with him, Abu' Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Ridha', peace be on him, entered the mosque of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. 'Ali b. Ja'far hurried bare-footed and without a cloak to kiss his hand and to magnify him, so the Imam said to him: "Uncle, sit down, may Allah have mercy on you."

'Ali answered him politely and humbly: "Master, how shall I sit while you are standing?

When 'Ali b. Ja'far returned to his session, his companions scolded him for his magnifying the Imam, saying: "You are the uncle of his father, so why did you behave in such a manner?"

They did not understand the reality of the Imamate, and that Allah, the Exalted, gave it to Imam al-Jawa'd. As result 'Ali answered them and said: "Keep silent! If Allah, the Great and Almighty, has not entitled this white hair (i.e. his beard) (to the Imamate) and entitled this young man (to it) and placed him where He has placed him, then how can I deny his outstanding merit? I seek refuge in Allah from what you have said; rather I am his servant.285"

203. 'Ali Bin Hadid

b. Hakim al-Mada''ini, al-Azdi, al-Sa'ba'ti. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.286 Al-Barqi regarded him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha' and al-Jawa'd, peace be on them. Al-Kashi reported on the authority of Abu' 'Ali b. Ra'shid, on the authority of Abu' Ja'far, peace be on him, that Abu' 'Ali said to the Imam: "May I be your ransom, our companions have differed in opinion, so shall I pray behind the followers of Hisha'm b. al-Hakam?" "Cling to 'Ali b. Haddid," replied the Imam, peace be on him. "Shall I follow his opinion?" I (i.e. 'Ali b. Haddid) asked him. "Yes," he answered. I met 'Ali b. Haddid and asked him: "Shall I pray behind the followers of Hisha'm b. al-Hakam?" "No," he replied.

This narration, if correct, is evidence for that the man (i.e. ‘Ali b. Haddid) is trustworthy and praiseworthy.

204. ‘Ali Bin al-Husayn

b. Ruba’t al-Bujayli al-Ku’fi. He is trustworthy and reliable. He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He has a book.[287]

205. ‘Ali Bin al-Husayn

b. Yahya’. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[288]

206. ‘Ali Bin Sa‘id al-Mada”ini

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[289]

207. ‘Ali Bin Swayd al-Sa”imclxvii

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was trustworthy.[290] Al-Kashi narrated that ‘Ali b. Swayd wrote a letter to Imam al-Ka’zim when he was in prison, and that he asked him about his state and the answers to some questions. The Imam answered him in a letter in which he mentioned: “In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise belongs to Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, Who through whose mightiness and light makes the hearts of the believers see, through whose mightiness and light the ignorant show enmity toward Him, and through whose mightiness nearness to Him is sought with different deeds and various religions, hence (men) are: right and wrong, errant and rightly-guided, hearing and deaf, seeing and blind, and perplexed. So praise belongs to Allah who made known and described His religion through Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. Now then, you are the man whom Allah has endowed with special position with the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, showing affection toward you when He inspired you with your reason, made you perceive the affairs of your religion through their outstanding qualities, made you refer to them regarding your affairs, and made you content with what they said.”

In another part of this letter, the Imam has mentioned: “Summon to the path of your Lord through us him whose response you expect. You do not encompass what we do. Show friendship toward Muhammad’s Household. If something reaches you from us and is attributed to us, do not say: ‘This is false’, even though you know something other than it, for you do not know why we have said it and in which point we have described it. Belive in what I have told you and do not reveal what I have asked you to conceal. I want to tell you that the most obligatory right of your brother against you is that you should not hide from him what benefits him in this world and the next.[291]”

This letter contains important points and is evidence for the exalted position of ‘Ali (b. Swayd) and his great rank with the Imam, peace be on him.

208. ‘Ali Bin Sayf

b. ‘Umayra al-Nakha‘i al-Ku’fi. He was a retainer and was trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He has a big book.[292]

209. ‘Ali Bin Sa”id al-Barbari

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and his son al-Hasan reported on his authority.[293]

210. ‘Ali Bin ‘Abd Allah

b. ‘Umra’n. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Sa‘d b. al-Sindi reported on his authority.[294]

211. ‘Ali Bin ‘Ubayd Allah

b. al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him. His *kunya* Abu’ al-Hasan. He was the most ascetic of the family of Abu’ Ta’lib and the most worshipful of them in his time. He devoted himself to Imam Musa’ (al-Ka’zim) and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He mixed with the Imami (Shi‘ites). When Muhammad b. Ibra’him b. Taba’taba’ wanted Abu’ al-Sara’ya’ to pledge allegiance to him after him, he refused that and entrusted the matter to Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Yazid. He has a book on the hajj. He narrated the whole book on the authority of Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, peace be on him.

Al-Kashi narrated, saying: [In the book of Muhammad b. al-Husayn b. Banda’r, in his own handwriting, I have read:] “Muhammad b. Yahya’ al-‘Atta’r related to me. He said: Ahmed b. Muhammad b. ‘Isa’ reported to me on the authority of ‘Ali b. al-Hakam, on the authority of Sulayma’n b. Ja‘far, who said: ‘Ali b. ‘Ubayd Allah b. al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, said to me: ‘I (i.e. ‘Ali Bin ‘Ubayd Allah) would like to go in to Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’ in order to greet him.’ I (i.e. Sulayma’n b. Ja‘far) asked him: ‘What has prevented you from that?’ ‘Because I magnify and respect him and fear for him.’”

He (Sulayma’n b. Ja‘far) said: “Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, became slightly sick, and the people visited him. I met ‘Ali b. ‘Ubayd Allah and said to him: ‘What you want has come to you; Abu’ al-Hasan, peace be on him, has fallen slightly ill, and the people visited him. If you want to visit him, then come today.’”

He (Sulayma’n b. Ja‘far) said: “ He came to Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, in order to visit

him. Abu' al-Hasan received him with honor and magnification, so 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah was very pleased with that. Then 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah became ill, hence Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, visited him. I was with him. He sat until those who were in the house went out. When we went out, a female slave of mine told me that Umm Sala'm, 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah's wife, was behind the curtain and looking at him (al-Ridha'). When Abu' al-Hasan, peace be on him, went out, she went out, stooped to the place in which he sat, kissed it and rubbed (her face) with it."

Sulayma'n (b. Ja'far) said: "Then I went in to 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah and he told about what Umm Salama had done. I told Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, (about that), and he said: 'Sulayma'n, 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah, his wife, and his children are of the people of the Garden. Sulayma'n, the children of 'Ali and Fa'tima are not like the rest of the people because Allah has singled them out for this matter (i.e. the Imamate).295'"

212. 'Ali Bin 'Uthma'n

b. Razin. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.296

213. 'Ali Bin 'Ali Bin Razin al-Khaza"i

He was Di'bil's brother. He has a big book on Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Isma"il narrated on the authority of his father 'Ali, saying: [My father related to me in the year 272 A. H., saying:] "Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, reported to us at Tu's in the year 198 A. H. We headed for him via Basrah. When we entered Basrah, we found wherein 'Abd al-Rahma'n b. al-Mahdi ill, hence we stayed for some days. Then 'Abd al-Rahma'n died, and we attended his funeral and prayed over him. My brother Di'bil and I went in to al-Ridha', peace be on him, and stayed with him to the end of the year 200 A. H. Then we went out to Qum. That was after al-Ridha' had given my brother Di'bil a green, silk shirt, a ring whose stone was agate, and Radawi dirhams. Then he said to him: 'Di'bil, pass through Qum, for you will make use of it.' And he said to him: 'Keep this shirt, for I wore it and prayed one thousand *ruk'as* in one thousand nights and completed reading the Qur'an one thousand times.'"

Isma"il said: "My father was born in the year 172 A. H. He died in the year 283 A. H. So his age was then 111 years. My uncle Di'bil was born in the year 148 A. H. That was during the caliphate of al-Mansu'r. He saw Imam Musa' (al-Ka'zim), peace be on him, and met Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He died in the year 245 A. H. during the days of al-Mutawakkil.297"

214. 'Ali Bin al-Fadl al-Wa'siti

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him. Al-Sadu'q described him

as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[298]

215. 'Ali Bin Mahdi

b. Sadaqa al-Raqqi. His *kunya* is Abu' al-Hasan. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[299] He narrated on his authority. Al-Naja'shi said: "He has a book on al-Ridha', peace be on him.[300]"

216. 'Ali Bin Mahzya'r al-Ahwa'zi

His *kunya* was Abu' al-Hasan. He was originally from Dawraq. He was one of the leading scholars and among the great jurists. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Imam Abu' Ja'far al-Jawa'd, peace be on him. He devoted himself to him (Abu' Ja'far al-Jawa'd) and was his agent. He also devoted himself to Imam al-Ha'di, peace be on him, and was his agent. He was among the pious, worshipful people. The narrators said: "When the sun rose, he prostrated himself in prayer and did not raise his head until he prayed for a thousand of his brothers. There was a callus in his forehead like that of the camel."

Imam al-Jawa'd's Letter to him

Imam Abu' Ja'far al-Jawa'd sent him several letters in which he praised, admired, and respected him. The following are some of them:

A. Imam al-Jawa'd sent him this letter: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. 'Ali, may Allah reward you well, make you live in the Garden, protect you from disgrace in this world and the next, and muster you with us! 'Ali, I tried and tested you in advice, obedience, service, respect, and carrying out your religious duties. I hope that I am truthful (when I say that) I have seen none like you. May Allah reward you the gardens of Paradise! It is not hidden from me that you worked and served during cold and heat, day and night. I ask Allah to endow you with mercy with which you are pleased when he will muster the creatures on the Resurrection Day! Verily, He hears supplication![301]"

In this letter the Imam lauded and praised the position of this righteous scholar, who was at the top of reverential fear, righteousness, and showing friendship toward the Imams of guidance, peace be on them.

B. This is one of the letters which the Imam sent to him: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. I ask Allah to protect you from before you and behind you and in all your states! Be delighted, for I hope that Allah will drive away (evil) from you! I ask Allah to place good in your departure which you will carry out on Sunday! Delay that to Monday, Allah willing! May Allah accompany you throughout your travel, replace you among your family, pay your trust on your behalf, and save you by His power![302]"

C. Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him, also sent him this letter: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. I have received your letter and understood what you have mentioned in it. Your letter have pleased me, may Allah please you! I hope that (Allah) the All-sufficient, the Repeller, will spare you the trickery of every schemer, Allah, the Exalted, willing![303]"

These are some of the letters which Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him, sent to him. The letters indicate 'Ali b. Mahzya'r's exalted position and great importance with the Imam, peace be on him.

His Works

'Ali b. Mahzya'r wrote a group of books most of which was on Islamic Jurisprudence. The following are some of them:

1. Kita'b al- Wudu'' (the Book of Ablution).

2. Kita'b al-Sala't (the Book of Prayer).

3. Kita'b al-Zaka't (the Book of Alms).

4. Kita'b al-Sawm (the Book of Fasting).

5. Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of Pilgrimage).

6. Kita'b al-Tala'q(the Book of Divorce).

7. Kita'b al-Hudu'd (the Book of Islamic Punishments).

8. Kita'b al-Diya't (the Book of Blood Money).

9. Kita'b al-Tafsir (the Book of Interpretation of the

Qur'an).

10. Kita'b al-Fada''il (the Book of Great Merits).

11. Kita'b al-'Itiq wa al-Taddbir (the Book of

Manumission and Direction).

12. Kita'b al-Tija'ra't wa al-Ija'ra't (the Book of Trades and

Wages).

13. Kita'b al-Maka'sib (the Book of Earnings).

14. Kita'b al-Matha'lib(the Book of Defects).

15. Kita'b al-Du'a'' (the Book of Supplication).

16. Kita'b al-Tajjmil wa al-Muru''a (the Book of Beautifying and Manhood).

17. Kita'b al-Maza'r (the Book of Visitations).

18. Kita'b al-Radd 'la' al-Ghula't (the Book of the Answers to the Extremists).

19. Kita'b al-Wasa'ya' (the Book of Wills).

20. Kita'b al-Mawa'rith (the Book of Inheritances).

21. Kita'b al-Khums (the Book of One-Fifth).

22. Kita'b al-Shaha'da't (the Book of Testimonies).

23. Kita'b Fada''il al-Mu'minin wa Birahum (the Book of Excellences and Kindness of Believers).

24. Kita'b al-Mala'him (the Book of Bloody Fights).

25. Kita'b al-Taqiya' (the Book of Precautionary Dissimulation).

26. Kita'b al-Sayd wa al-Dhaba''ih (the Book of Hunting and Slaughtering).

27. Kita'b al-Zuhd (the Book of Asceticism).

28. Kita'b al-Ashriba (the Book of Beverages).

29. Kita'b al-Nudhu'r wa al-Ayma'n wa al-Kuffa'ra't (the Book of Vows, Oaths, and Expiatory Gifts).

30. Kita'b al-Huru'f (the Book of the Letters).

31. Kita'b al-Qa''im (the Book of al-Qa''im).

32. Kita'b al-Bisha'ra't (the Book of Good News).

33. Kita'b al-Anbiya'' (the Book of the Prophets).

34. Kita'b al-Nawa'dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions).304

217. 'Ali Bin Yahya'

His *kunya* is Abu' al-Husayn. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.305

218. 'Ali Bin Yunus Bin Behman

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.306

219. 'Amma'r Bin Yazid

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.307 Al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the two sons of Sa'id, narrated on his authority.308

220. 'Amr Bin Zuhayr al-Jazzri

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.309

221. 'Amr Bin Fura't al-Ka'tib, al-Baghda'di

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was active.310 It has been mentioned in some books that he was the doorkeeper of the Imam.

222. 'Amr Bin Sa'id al-Mada''ini

He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book. A group (of traditionalists) narrated the book.311

223. 'Isa' Bin 'Uthma'n

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.312

224. ‘Isa’ Bin ‘Isa” al-Kala’mi

He was the retainer of the Banu’ (children) of ‘Amir. He was from Ku’fa and was a Wa’qifi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.313

225. ‘Ubays Bin ‘Uthma’n

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of the Imam (al-Ridha’), peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.314

226. Fuda’lah Bin Ayyu’b

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was an Azdi Arab.315 Al-Naja’shi said: “He narrated on the authority of Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, peace be on him, and was trustworthy in his tradition and righteous in his religion. He has *Kita’b al-Sala’t* (the Book of Prayer).316”

227. Al-Fadl Bin Sina’n al-Nisa’bu’ri

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was the representative of the Imam.317

228. Al-Fadl Bin SAhl

Dhu’ al-Riya’satayn.318 Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.319 He was the mortal enemy of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He and his brother urged al-Ma’mu’n to kill the Imam, peace be on him.320 Concerning al-Fadl and his brother al-Hasan the poet has said:

When my wife saw me tying my mount after untying (it),

she said: Do the mounts depart after al-Fadl? So I said:

Yes, to al-Hasan b. SAhl.

229. Al-Qa’sim Bin Asba’t

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.321

230. Al-Qa'sim Bin Fudayl

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ibn Abu' 'Umayr reported on his authority.322

231. Al-Qa'sim Bin Yahya'

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.323 He has a book on the manners of Imam ('Ali) the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him.

232. Muhsin Bin Ahmed al-Qaysi

He was one of the retainers of Qays Ghayla'n and was among the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.324

233. Muhammad Bin Abu' Jarir al-Qummi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ahmed b. 'Ali al-Ju'fi reported on his authority.325

234. Muhammad Bin Abu' 'Abba'd

He was famous for listening to singing and drinking wine. He asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, about listening (to singing), and he, peace be on him, replied: "The people of al-Hija'z has an opinion of it, and it is in the field of the invalid and amusement. Have you not heard Allah, the Exalted, say: ***and when they pass by what is vain, they pass by nobly***.326"

235. Muhammad Bin Abu' 'Umayr al-Azdi

His *kunya* was Abu' Ahmed. He was one of the retainers of al-Muhallab b. Abu' Safra. He was originally from Baghdad and lived in it. He met Imam Abu' al-Hasan Musa', peace be on him, and heard from him some traditions in some of which the Imam gave him the *kunya* of Abu' Ahmed. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He was of great importance and had an exalted position with the Shi'ites and the Sunnis. Al-Ja'hiz has mentioned him in his book *al-Baya'n wa al-Tabbin*, saying: "He was one of the prominent Rafidites (i.e. the Shi'ites)." He was imprisoned during the days of (Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid. It was said that he (was imprisoned because he refused) to undertake the judiciary or to show (the authorities) the places of the Shi'ites and the followers of Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him.327 Al-Kashi narrated on the authority of al-Fadl b. Sha'dha'n, who said: "I entered Iraq and saw someone admonish his friend, saying: 'You have a family and they are in need of your earning. I think that you will be blind because of your long prostration in prayer.' When he said this (statement) many

times, he said to him: ‘Woe unto you! You have said that several times! If someone became blind out of prostration, then Ibn Abu’ ‘Umayr would be blind. What is your view of a man who prostrated after the dawn prayer and did not raise his head until the sun came near to descending (from its midday zenith)?’”

Al-Fadl said: “One day my father (shaykh) took me hand and took me to Ibn Abu’ ‘Umayr. We went to him in a room. There were shaykhs around him, and they magnified and honored him, so I (al-Fadl) asked: ‘Who is that (man)?’ ‘That is Ibn Abu’ ‘Umayr,’ replied me father. ‘Is he the righteous, worshipful man?’ I asked. ‘Yes,’ he replied.”

Al-Fadl narrated, saying: “Ha’ru’n (al-Rashid) ordered Ibn Abu’ ‘Umayr to be whipped one hundred and twenty times. It was al-Sindi b. Sha’hik who whipped him and imprisoned him, for he was a Shi‘ite. Ibn Abu’ ‘Umayr gave (al-Sindi) one hundred and twenty thousand dirhams, and he released him. ‘Was he rich?’ I asked. ‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘perhaps he gave him five hundred thousand dirhams.328’”

Muhammad b. Abu’ ‘Umayr wrote many books. Ibn Batta mentioned that he compiled ninety-four books of which are the following:

A. Kita’b al-Nawa’dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions). It is a big, good book.

B. Kita’b al-Istita’‘a wa al-Af‘a’l wa al-Radd ‘ala’ Ahl al-

Qadar wa al-Jabr (the Book of Capability, Actions, and

Answers to the Fatalists).

C. Kita’b al-Imama (the Book of the Imamate).

D. Kita’b al-Bida’’ (the Book of Change in an Earlier

Divine Ruling).

E. Kita’b al-Muta’a (the Book of Fixed-Term Marriage).

F. Musa’’ala lil-Imam al-Ridha’ (the Book of Questions by

Imam al-Ridha’).329

May Allah have mercy on Muhammad b. Abu’ ‘Umayr, for he was among the leading Shi‘ites and defended them.

236. Muhammad Bin Ahmed

b. Ghayla'n. He was from Ku'fa and was a retainer. He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.330

237. Muhammad Bin Isha'q al-Ku'fi

b. 'Amma'r al-Sayrafi. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.331 Al-Kulayni narrated on the authority of Muhammad b. Isha'q, who said: "I (i.e. Muhammad b. Isha'q) asked Abu' al-Hasan, the first: 'Do you not lead me to him from whom I will learn my religion?' 'This is me son 'Ali, he replied, 'my father took me by the hand and made me enter the grave of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and said: 'My little son, Allah, the Great and Almighty, fulfills his words.332 '"

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid regarded Muhammad b. Isha'q as one of the close companions of Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, among his trustworthy followers, and among his Shi'ites who had piety, knowledge, and jurisprudence.333

238. Muhammad Bin Isha'q

Shaykh al-Tu'si regarded him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.334 Al-Kashi reported on the authority of Yazid b. Isha'q (Muhammad Bin Isha'q's brother), the most exalted of the people in this matter, who said: "One time, my brother Muhammad disputed with me, and he was believing. When the speech between him and me took a long time, I said to him: 'If you leader (*sa'hib*) is in such a position about which you talk, then let him pray to Allah for me, that I may return to your creed.'"

He (Yazid b. Isha'q) said: [Muhammad said to me:] "So I went in to al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: 'May I be your ransom, I have a brother younger than me and he says: 'By your father's life.' I often debates with him, so he said to me one day: 'If your leader is in such a position which you have mentioned, then ask him to supplicate to Allah for me, that I may follow your creed.' I would like you to pray to Allah for him.'"

He (Muhammad b. Isha'q) said: "Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha'), peace be on him, turned toward the *qibla* and mentioned what Allah willed him to mention, and then he said: 'Take his hearing, his seeing, and the whole his heart until You return him to the True Religion.' He said that while he was raising his right hand."

He (Yazid b. Isha'q) said: "When he (Muhammad) returned, he told me about what had happened. By Allah, shortly after that, I believed in the True Religion.335"

239. Muhammad Bin Aslam

al-Tabari, al-Jabali. He was originally from Ku'fa. He traded with Tabrista'n. It is said: "He was an extremist with corrupt traditions." He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.336

240. Muhammad Bin Aslam al-Tu'si

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.337 He was one of those who narrated the tradition better known as *al-Silsila al-Dhahabiya* (the Golden Chain).

241. Muhammad Bin Isma"il Bin Buzaygh'

He was the retainer of Abu' Ja'far al-Mansu'r and was among the righteous, trustworthy Shi'ites.338 Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, said to him: "Surely, Allah is at the doors of the unjust. Allah enlightens proof for (some people) and makes them powerful in the country in order that He may, through them, repel (evil) from His friends and set right the affairs of the Muslims. The believer seeks refuge in them from tribulation, to them flee the possessors of needs from among our Shi'ites, and through them Allah drives away fear from the believer in the land of the oppressive. They are entrusted by Allah over His earth. It is they in whose desire there will be light on the Day of Resurrection, and their light shines towards the inhabitants of the heavens just as pearls shine towards the people of the earth. It is they through whose light the Day of Resurrection will be shinning. By Allah, they have been created for the Garden, and the Garden has been created for them. I congratulate them (on that). If any of you wishes, he will attain all of this."

Muhammad asked him, saying: "Through what, may Allah make me your ransom?"

He, peace be on him, replied: "He is with them, namely with the oppressive government. Therefore, he pleases us through pleasing the believers from among our Shi'ites, so be one of them, Muhammad.339"

Al-Husayn b. Kha'lid al-Sayrafi reported, saying: "We were with Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and we were a group (of men). Muhammad b. Isma"il b. Buzaygh was mentioned, and the Imam, peace be on him, said to his companions: 'I would like that there is the like of him among you.340 '"

He (i.e. Muhammad b. Isma"il) compiled a group of books of which are the following:

A. Kita'b Thawa'b al-Hajj (the Book of Reward of Pilgrimage).

B. Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of Pilgrimage).341

He asked Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him, to order one of his shirts to be brought to him, that he might use it as a shroud for him. The Imam sent him a shirt. Then Muhammad asked the Imam: "What shall I do with the shirt?" "Remove its buttons," replied the Imam.342"

242. Muhammad Bin Orma al-Qummi

His *Kunya* was Abu' Ja'far. The Qummis accused him of extremism and sent someone to kill him. When they saw that he prayed, they refrained from (killing) him. Ibn al-Ghada"iri said: "His tradition is pure; there is no corruption in it. I did not find any of the things ascribed to him make soul confuse except some pages on explaining the essence (*ba'tin*), which does not befit his traditions. I think that these (pages) were fabricated against him, and I have seen a letter written to al-Qumays by Abu' al-Hasan b. Muhammad, peace be on him, regarding his being innocent of defamation.343"

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.344 He (Muhammad b. Orma) wrote a large group of books, and his books are correct, except a book attributed to him on explaining the essence (*ba'tin*), for it is confused.345

243. Muhammad Bin Bahr

He was the brother of Mughlis. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.346

244. Muhammad Bin Judha"a al-Fa'risi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.347

245. Muhammad Bin Ja'far al-'Anbi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.348

246. Muhammad Bin Ja'far al-Muqna"i

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.349

247. Muhammad Bin Jumhu'r

Al-Naja'shi said: " The traditions of Muhammad b. Jumhu'r al-Qummi are weak and his creed is corrupt. Something was said concerning him and none knew how big they were except Allah. He reported on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has books of which are: *Kita'b al-Mala'him al-Kabir* (the Big Book of Bloody Fights), *Kita'b Nawa'dir al-Hajj* (the Book of Miscellaneous Traditions on Pilgrimage), *Kita'b Adab al-'Ilm* (the Book of Rules of Science).350"

Ibn al-Ghada"iri said: "He (Muhammad b. Jumhu'r) is an extremist, and his traditions are corrupt. He did not write his traditions. I have seen some of his poetry in which he has made lawful what Allah, the Great and Almighty, had made unlawful.351"

248. Muhammad Bin al-Husayn

b. Ziya'd al-Maythami al-Asadi. He was their (the Imams') retainer. His *kunya* is Abu' Ja'far. He is a trustworthy, prominent person. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.352

249. Muhammad Bin al-Husayn

b. Yazid. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and 'Ali b. Asba't reported on his authority.353

250. Muhammad Bin Hamza.

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.354

251. Muhammad Bin Kha'lid al-Barqi

Shaykh al-Tu'si regarded him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.355 His traditions are weak. He was a writer and had good knowledge of traditions and the sciences of the Arabs. He has books of which are: *Kita'b al-Tanzil wa al-Ta'bir* (the Book of Revelation and Expression), *Kita'b Yawm wa Layla* (the Book of one Day and Night), *Kita'b al-Tafsir* (the Book of Interpretation), *Kita'b Mecca wa al-Medina* (the Book of Mecca and Medina), *Kita'b Huru'b al-Aws wa al-Khazrajj* (the Book of the Fights of al-Aws and al-Khazrajj), *Kita'b fi 'Ilm al-Ba'ri* (the Book on the Knowledge of the Creator), and *Kita'b al-Khutab* (the Book of Orations).356

252. Muhammad Bin al-Khatib al-Ahwa'zi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.357

253. Muhammad Bin Ra'shid

He was a door to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.358

254. Muhammad Bin Zayd al-Ra'zimi

He was the servant of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.359

255. Muhammad Bin Zayd al-Tabari

He was originally from Ku'fa. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-

Ridha', peace be on him.[360] He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ahmed b. al-Muthanna' and Maru'k b. 'Ubayd reported on his authority.[361]

256. Muhammad Bin Sa'lim al-Qummi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[362]

257. Muhammad Bin Sulayma'n al-Daylami

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[363]

258. Muhammad Bin Samma"a al-Sayrafi

He was from Ku'fa. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[364] He was trustworthy and was one of the Shi'ite prominent figures. He has the following books:

A. Kita'b al-Wudu" (the Book of Ablution).

B. Kita'b al-Hayd (the Book of Regular Menstrual Bleeding).

C. Kita'b al-Sala't (the Book of Prayer).

D. Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of the Hajj).[365]

259. Muhammad Bin Sina'n al-Za'hiri

His *kunya* was Abu' Ja'far. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He is a very weak traditionalist. None relies on him and pays attention to the traditions which only he has mentioned. Muhammad b. 'Isa' reported, saying: "I was with Safwa'n b. Yahya' in a house in Kufa'. Muhammad b. Sina'n went in to us and Safwa'n said: 'Surely this (Muhammad) b. Sina'n was about to be confused more than one time. We related to him until he followed us.'" This is evidence for that he had confusion and then he became free from it. He compiled books of which are the following:

A. Kita'b al-Tara"if (the Book of Jokes).

B. Kita'b al-Azilla (the Book of Shade).

C. Kita'b al-Maka'sib (the Book of Earnings).

D. Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of Pilgrimage).

E. Kita'b al-Sayd wa al-Dhaba"ih (the Book of Hunting

and Slaughtering).

F. Kita'b al-Shira'" wa al-Bay' (the Book of Buying and Selling).

G. Kita'b al-Wasiya (the Book of Will).

H. Kita'b al-Nawa'dir (the Book of Miscellaneous

Traditions).

He died in the year 226 A. H.366 Al-Sayyid al-Khu"i regarded him as trustworthy and said: "He was one of the followers and among those who believed in Allah through following the Household of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. Therefore, he is praiseworthy. Though it has been established that he had some confusion (in his traditions), he removed it, and the Infallible (Imam), peace be on him, was content with him. For this reason Shaykh al-Tu'si regarded him as praiseworthy with good method.367"

260. Muhammad Bin Sahl al-Ash'ari

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and on the authority of a group (of traditionalists), and a group (of traditionalists) reported on his authority.368

261. Muhammad Bin Sahl al-Bujayli, al-Ra'zi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.369

262. Muhammad Bin Sahl

b. al-Yasa' al-Ash'ari, al-Qummi. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Imam Abu' Ja'far al-Jawa'd. He has a book.370

263. Muhammad Bin Sadaqa

al-'Anbari, al-Basri. His *kunya* is Abu' Ja'far. He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan Musa' and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on them. He Has a book on Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far, peace be on him.371

264. Muhammad Bin 'Abd Allah al-Saqil al-Azdi

Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.372

265. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Ash‘ari

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.373

266. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Saqil

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him.374

267. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah

b. ‘Amru’ b. Sa’lim al-Saffa’r. He has a big classified book like the book of al-Halabi. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.375

268. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah

b. ‘Isa’ al-Ash‘ari, al-Qummi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.376

269. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Khurasa’ni

He was the servant of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and reported on his authority.377

270. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Ta’hiri

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.378

271. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Tahu’ri

Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.379

272. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Qummi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu’ Nasr reported on his authority.380

273. Muhammad Bin ‘Abd Allah al-Mada”ini

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.381

274. Muhammad Bin ‘Ubayd

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and ‘Ali b. Sayf reported on his authority.382

275. Muhammad Bin ‘Ubayd Allah al-Hamada’ni

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him.383

276. Muhammad Bin ‘Ubayd Allah

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Abu’ Nasr reported on his authority.384

277. Muhammad Bin ‘Ubayda

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ibra’him b. Muhammad al-Hamada’ni reported on his authority.385

278. Muhammad Bin ‘Arafa

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.386

279. Muhammad Bin ‘Ali Bin Ja‘far

Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.387

280. Muhammad Bin ‘Ali

b. al-Husayn b. Zayd b. al-Husayn, peace be on him. He has a book which he narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.388

281. Muhammad Bin ‘Ali al-Hamada’ni

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ibra’him b. Ha’shim and a group (of traditionalists) reported on his authority.389

282. Muhammad Bin ‘Amma’r

b. al-Ash‘ath al-Hindi. Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’,

peace be on him.390

283. Muhammad Bin ‘Amma’ra

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Sa‘d b. Sa‘id reported on his authority.391

284. Muhammad Bin ‘Umar Bin Zayd

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ahmed b. al-Jahm reported on his authority.392

285. Muhammad Bin ‘Umar

b. Yazid, Bayya’’ al-Sa’biri (the Seller of Fine Cloth). Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.393

286. Muhammad Bin ‘Umar al-Sa’ba’ti

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Abu’ Nasr reported on his authority.394

287. Muhammad Bin ‘Umar al-Kana’si

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.395

288. Muhammad Bin ‘Umar al-Zayya’t

b. Sa‘d. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. His book is reliable.396

289. Muhammad Bin ‘Isa’ Bin Yaqtin

He was the retainer of Asad b. Khuzayma. His *kunya* is Abu’ Ja‘far. He is with great importance in the view of the Shi‘ites. He is trustworthy and prominent figure. He narrated many traditions and wrote good books.397 Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.398 He compiled a group of books of which are the following:

A. Kita’b al-Imama (the Book of the Imamate).

B. Kita’b al-Wa’dih al-Makkshu’f fi al-Radd ‘ala’ Ahl al-Waqf (the Book of the Clear, Open Answer to the Wa’qifites).

C. Kita'b al-Ma'rifa (the Book of Knowledge).

D. Kita'b Bu'd al-Isna'd (the Book of the Distant Chain of Authorities).

E. Kita'b Qurb al-Isna'd (the Book of the Close Chain of Authorities).

F. Kita'b al-Wasa'ya' (the Book of Wills).

G. Kita'b al-Lu'lu' (the Book of Pearls).

H. Kita'b al-Masa''il al-Muharrama (the Book of Unlawful Matters).

I. Kita'b al-Diya'' (the Book of Light).

J. Kita'b al-Dara''if (the Book of Jokes).

K. Kita'b al-Tajjmil wa al-Muru''a (the Book of Beautifying and Manhood).

L. Kita'b al-Fayya' wa al-Khums (the Book of Booty and One-Fifth).

M. Kita'b al-Rija'l (the Book of Men).

N. Kita'b al-Zaka't (the Book of Alms).

O. Kita'b Thawa'b al-A'ma'l (the Book of Reward of Deeds).

P. Kita'b al-Nawa'dir (the Book of Miscellaneous Traditions).399

290. Muhammad Bin 'Isa' al-Qummi

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Maru'k b. 'Ubayd reported on his authority.400

291. Muhammad Bin Fura't al-Ju'fi

He is a liar and deviated from the Truth. He lied to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and he (Imam al-Ridha') complained of him to Yu'nus, saying: "Yu'nus, do you not know that Muhammad b. Fura't lies to me?" "May Allah drive him away and make him miserable!" said Yu'nus. The Imam, peace be on him, said: "Allah has done that toward him. May Allah make him taste the heat of the iron as He made those before him who lied to us taste (the heat of the iron). Yu'nus, I said that (bout him) that you may warn my companions against him, order them to curse and renounce him, for Allah has renounced him.[401]"

'Ali b. Isma''il al-Maythami narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who said: "Muhammad b. Fura't hurt me; may Allah hurt him and let him taste the heat of the iron! He hurt me; may Allah hurt him! Abu' al-Khatta'b, may Allah curse him, did not hurt Muhammad b. Ja'far, peace be on him, as Muhammad b. Fura't hurt me. No Khata'bi lied to us as Muhammad b. Fura't did. By Allah, Allah makes him who lies to us taste the heat of the iron.[402]"

Shortly after this supplication of the Imam, Muhammad b. Fura't was killed by Ibra'him b. Shakkla.[403]

292. Muhammad Bin al-Farajj al-Rakhji

He is trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[404] He showed strong friendship toward the Imams of guidance, peace be on him, and had firm links with them. He exchanged letters with. Al-Kashi has mentioned the letters in his (Muhammad's) biography.

293. Muhammad Bin al-Fadl al-Azdi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[405]

294. Muhammad Bin al-Fadl Bin 'Umar

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[406]

295. Muhammad Bin al-Fudayl al-Sayrafi

He is accused of extremism. He has a book. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[407]

296. Muhammad Bin al-Fayd al-Mada"ini

He was the retainer of 'Umar b. al-Khatta'b. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[408]

297. Muhammad Bin al-Qa'sim Bin al-Fudayl

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ka'zim and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and a group (of traditionalists) reported on his authority.409

298. Muhammad Bin al-Qa'sim Bin al-Fudayl

b. Yasa'r. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and al-Barqi reported on his authority.410

299. Muhammad Bin al-Qa'sim al-Bushinja'ni

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.411

300. Muhammad Bin Ka'ab al-Qurti

It was he who saw Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, in sleep and he said to him: "Muhammad, are pleased with what you do toward my children in this word?" "If I leave them, then what shall I do?" asked Muhammad. "Without doubt, I will reward you in the final result," declared the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. "There was a plate of Sayha'ni dates before. I asked him to give me some dates, and he gave me a handful in which there was eighteen dates. I thought that I would live eighteen years. Then I forgot this dream. One day I saw a crowd of people. I asked them about that, and they said: 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' has come. I saw him sitting in that place and there was before him a plate of Sayha'ni dates. I asked him to give me some dates, and he gave me a handful in which there was eighteen dates, so I said to him: 'Increase me in dates.' 'If my grandfather had increased you, I would have increased you,' he said.412"

301. Muhammad Bin Kulayb al-Ash'ari

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.413

302. Muhammad Bin Mansu'r Bin al-Abrad al-Nakha'i

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.414

303. Muhammad Bin Mansu'r al-Ash'athi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.415

304. Muhammad Bin Mansu’r al-Ash‘ari

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.416

305. Muhammad Bin Mansu’r Bin Nasr al-Khaza”i

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.417

306. Muhammad Bin Mansu’r al-Ku’fi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Sa‘d reported on his authority.418

307. Muhammad Bin Yahya’ Bin Habib

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Yahya’ reported on his authority.419

308. Muhammad Bin Yahya al-Sa’ba’ti

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Safwa’n reported on his authority.420

309. Muhammad Bin Yazid al-Tabari

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him.421

310. Muhammad Bin Yunus Bin ‘Abd al-Rahma’n

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.422

311. Muhammad, the Retainer of al-Ridha’

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.423

312. Marzba’n

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Sa‘d b. Sa‘id reported on his

authority.[424]

313. Marzba'n Bin 'Umra'n al-Ash'ari al-Qummi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.[425]

314. Marwa'n Bin Yahya'

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.[426]

315. Murauwik Bin 'Ubayd

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and a group (of traditionalists) reported on his authority.[427]

316. Musa'fir

He was the retainer of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Imam al-Ridha' ordered him and said to him: "Follow Abu' Ja'far (i.e. Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him), for he is your leader (*sa'hib*).[428]"

317. Mu'a'wiya Bin Hakim Bin Mu'a'wiya

b. 'Amma'r al-Dihni. He is trustworthy and great. He was one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has books of which are the following:

A. Kita'b al-Tala'q (the Book of Divorce).

B. Kita'b al-Hayd (the Book of Regular Menstrual

Bleeding).

C. Kita'b al-Fara''d (the Book of Religious Duties).

D. Kita'b al-Nika'h (the Book of Marriage).

E. Kita'b al-Hudu'd (the Book of Islamic Punishments).

F. Kita'b al-Diya't (the Book of Blood money).

He has miscellaneous (traditions).[429]

318. Mu‘a’wiya Bin Sa‘id

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Sina’n reported on his authority.[430]

319. Mu‘a’wiya Bin Sa‘id

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[431] He has a book.[432]

320. Mu‘a’wiya Bin Yahya’

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[433]

321. Mu‘a’wiya al-Ja‘fari

He was one of those who narrated the text from Imam al-Ka’zim for the Imamate of his son Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[434]

322. Ma‘ru’f Bin Fayru’z al-Karkhi

His *kunya* is Abu’ Mahfu’z. It is said that his father’s name was Fayraza’n. His parents were Christians. He was from Behrya’n, one of the villages of Wa’sit. His father handed him over to a teacher, and the teacher ordered him: “Say: He is the Third of the Trinity.” Ma‘ru’f refused that and said: “He is One!” The teacher hit him severely, but he refused to say that Allah was the third of the Trinity. Then he escaped because of the teacher and became Muslim at the hand of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[435] He returned to his house and knocked at the door, and they asked: “Who is it at the door?” “Ma‘ru’f,” he replied. “Which religion have you adopted?” they asked. “The True Religion,” he answered. His parents as well as all his family became Muslims.[436] After he had become a Muslim, he became the chamberlain of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. The Shi‘ites crowded at the door of the Imam and they broke one of Maru’f’s ribs. He remained ill for several days. Then ordered his shirt to be given as alms, for he wanted to come out of the world naked as he entered it naked.[437]

May Allah have mercy on Ma‘ru’f, for he was one of those unique in knowledge and reverential fear, and attained the highest rank due to the blessing of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.

323. Mu‘ammar Bin Khalla’d al-Baghda’di

He is trustworthy. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. He has a book.[438]

324. Ma‘an Bin Kha’lid

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was trustworthy and had a book.[439]

325. Muqa’til Bin Muqa’til al-Balkhi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and added that he was a wicked Wa’qifite.[440] Yet al-Kashi mentioned a narration indicating that he was righteous and was not a Wa’qifite. Al-Husayn b. ‘Amr b. Yazid narrated, saying: “I came in to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and I had doubt about his Imamate. My companion on the road was a man called Muqa’til b. Muqa’til, and he went on (following) his Imam (i.e. the Imamate of al-Ridha’) in Ku’fa, so I said to him: ‘Why have you hastened?’ ‘I have concerning that (i.e. concerning the Imamate of al-Ridha’) a proof and knowledge,’ he replied.”

Al-Husayn (b. ‘Amr b. Yazid) said: “I asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him: ‘Have your father passed away?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘by Allah, I am in the position where Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, were. Who is happier than me in the subsistence of my father?’ Then he said: ‘Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says: ***And the foremost are the foremost, these are they who are drawn nigh*** (to Allah). Those who know the Imamate when the Imam appears.’ Then he said: ‘What has your brother done?’ ‘Who is it?’ I asked. ‘Muqa’til b. Muqa’til,’ he answered, ‘the one with flat face, long beard, bent nose.’

“He, peace be on him, added: ‘As for me, I have not seen him yet; nor has he come in to me, but he has believed (in my Imamate) and is truthful.’ Then he asked me to take care of him. Then I left the Imam, and suddenly there was Muqa’til before me, so I said to him: ‘I have good news for you. I will not tell you of it unless you praise Allah one hundred times.’ Then I told him about what the Imam, peace be on him, said.”

Imam al-Khu”i commented on this account, saying: “The account is clear that the man (i.e. Muqa’til b. Muqa’til) believed in the Imamate of al-Ridha’, peace be on him. On the assumption that he was a Wa’qifite, he retreated from the creed of the Wa’qifites.[441]”

326. Musa’ Bin Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ra’zi

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Ibra’him b. Hisha’m reported on his authority.[442]

327. Musa' Bin Jund

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[443]

328. Musa' Bin Ranjawayh al-Armani

He is a weak (traditionalist). He has a book. Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.[444]

329. Musa' Bin Salama

He was from Ku'fa. He has a book on Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Ahmed b. Muhammad narrated the book.[445]

330. Musa' Bin 'Isa' Bin 'Ubayd al-Yaqtini

Imam al-Ridha' sent him a gift of clothes, retainers, and money in order to make the pilgrimage with it on his behalf. Also he sent money to his brother Musa' b. 'Ubayd, Yunus b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n, that they might perform the hajj on his behalf.[446]

331. Musa' Bin al-Qa'sim al-Bujayli

b. Mu'a'wiya, b. Wahab. He is great and very trustworthy. Shaykh al-Tu'si regarded him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him.[447] He has books of which are the following:

A. Kita'b al-Wudu'' (the Book of Ablution).

B. Kita'b al-Sala't (the Book of Prayer).

C. Kita'b al-Zaka't (the Book of Alms).

D. Kita'b al-Siya'm (the Book of Fasting).

E. Kita'b al-Nika'h (the Book of Marriage).

F. Kita'b al-Tala'q (the Book of Divorce).

G. Kita'b al-Hajj (the Book of Pilgrimage).

H. Kita'b al-Hudu'd (the Book of Islamic Punishments).

I. Kita'b al-Diya't (the Book of Blood Money).

J. Kita’b al-Shaha’da’t (the Book of Testimonies).

K. Kita’b al-Ayma’n wa al-Nudhu’r (the Book of Oaths and

Vows).

L. Kita’b Akhla’q al-Mu’min (the Book of the Ethics of a

Believer).

M. Kita’b al-Ja’mi‘ (the Comprehensive Book).

N. Kita’b al-Dab (the Book of Literature).[448]

332. Musa’ Bin Mu‘ammar

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[449]

333. Musa’ Bin Mahra’n

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[450]

334. Muwaffaq Bin Ha’ru’n

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[451]

335. Muwaffaq, the Retainer of Imam al-Ridha’

Al-Wahid said in (his book) *al-Ta‘liqa*: “It seems that he (Muwaffaq) was one of his (Imam al-Ridha”s) retainers; rather he was among his close associates and keepers of his secrets.[452]”

336. Nasr Bin Qa’bu’s al-Lakhmi al-Qa’bu’si

He narrated on the authority of Imam Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, Abu’ Ibra’him, and Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on them. He had a position with them. He has a book.[453]

337. Nasr Bin Mughallis

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[454]

338. Al-Walid Bin Aba'n

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ahmed b. Muhammad reported on his authority.455

339. Al-Walid Bin Aba'n al-Dabi al-Ra'zi

Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.456

340. Ha'ru'n Bin 'Umar

Abu' Musa' al-Maja'shi'i. He was the companion of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has books of which is *Kita'b ma' nazala fi al-Qur'an fi 'Ali* (the Book of what has been revealed in the Qur'an concerning 'Ali, peace be on him).457

341. Hisha'm Bin Ibra'him al-'Abba'si

He is also nicknamed al-Mashriqi. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book. A group (of traditionalists) narrated the book.458

342. Herthama Bin A'yun

His *kunya* is Abu' Habib. He was among the servants of al-Ma'mu'n. He was a follower of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.459

343. Hisha'm Bin Ibra'him al-Ahmar

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.460

344. Hisha'm Bin Ibra'him al-'Abba'si

Al-Rayya'n narrated, saying: "One day I came in to (Hisha'm b. Ibra'him) al-'Abba'si. He ordered an inkwell and a sheet of paper to be quickly brought to him. I (i.e. Hisha'm b. Ibra'him) asked him: 'What is the matter with you?' 'I have heard something from al-Ridha', peace be on him,' he said, 'I want to write them lest I should forget them.' He wrote them. There was a short time between (saying) these words and his coming on Friday when it was hot. That was in Maru'. I asked him: 'Where have you come from?' 'From this,' he answered. 'From al-Ma'mu'n?' I asked him. 'No,' he replied. 'From al-Fadl b. SAhl?' I asked. 'No, from this,' he answered. 'Whom do you mean?' I asked. 'From 'Ali b. Musa',' he replied. 'Woe unto you! You have deserted (him),' 'what is your story?' 'Say nothing of him,' he said, 'when did his fathers sit on chairs and were installed as successors just as he has done?' 'Woe unto

you!' I said, 'ask Allah for forgiveness.' 'My slave girl so-and-so is more learned than him,' he said."

Al-Rayya'n hurried to go in to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He told him about the account of (Hisha'm b. Ibra'him) al-'Abba'si and asked him to permit him in order to assassinate him; yet the Imam, peace be on him, prevented him from that.461 He had talks with the Imam, and we will mention them in the researches of this book.

345. Al-Haythem Bin 'Abd Allah

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Zakariya reported on his authority.462

346. Al-Haythem Bin 'Abd Allah al-Rumma'ni

He was from Ku'fa. He narrated on the authority of Imam Musa', peace be on him, and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He has a book.463

347. Ya'sir

He was the retainer of Imam al-Ridha', and of Hamza b. al-Yasa'. He has (a book of) questions.464

348. Yahya' Bin Ibra'him

b. Abu' al-Bila'd. He is trustworthy. He and his father were reciters (of the Qur'an). He has a book.465

349. Yahya' Bin Ahmed

b. Qays b. Ghayla'n. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam Abu' al-Ridha', peace be on him.466

350. Yahya' Bin Bashsha'r

He went in to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, after the death of his father, and asked him some questions about the words of the Imam. Then he, peace be on him, said to him: "Yes, O Samma'." He (Yahya') said: "May I be your ransom, by Allah, I was nicknamed with this (name) when I was young and I am in the Book." The Imam, peace be on him, smiled at him.467

351. Yahya' Bin Jundub al-Zayya't

Al-Barqi numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.468

352. Yahya' Bin Sulayma'n al-Ka'tib

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.469

353. Yahya' Bin al-'Abba's al-Warra'q

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was unknown.470

354. Yahya' Bin 'Amru'

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.471

355. Yahya' Bin al-Muba'rak

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.472

356. Yahya' Bin Muhammad Bin Abu' Habib

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Muhammad b. 'Amru' b. Sa'id al-Zayya't reported on his authority.473

357. Yahya' Bin Musa' al-San'a'ni

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Abu' 'Umayr reported on his authority.474

358. Yahya' Bin Yahya' al-Tamimi

Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and added that he was no-Shi'ite (*'a'mi*).475

359. Yahya' Bin Yazid al-Ku'fi

His *Kunya* is Abu' Kha'lid. Shaykh al-Tu'si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.476

360. Yahya' al-San'a'ni

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and Ibn Abu' 'Umayr reported on his

authority.[477]

361. Yazid Bin ‘Umar

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[478]

362. Al-Yasa‘ Bin Hamza

He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and Muhammad b. Sandal reported on his authority.[479]

363. Ya‘qu’b Bin Sa‘id al-Kindi

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[480]

364. Ya‘qu’b Bin ‘Abd Allah Bin Jundub

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[481]

365. Ya‘qu’b Bin Yaqtin

Shaykh al-Tu’si numbered him as one of the companions of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.[482]

366. Yu’nus Bin ‘Abd al-Rahma’n

He was the retainer of ‘Ali b. Yaqtin and was among the leading Shi‘ites and one of their eminent men. He saw Imam al-Sa’diq, peace be on him, between al-Safa’ and al-Marwa’, but he narrated nothing on his authority. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ka’zim and Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on them. He was the agent of Imam al-Ridha’ and among his close companions. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz b. al-Muhtadi said to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him: “I am unable to meet you every time, so from whom shall I take the principle features of my religion?” “Take them from Yu’nus b. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n,” replied the Imam, peace be on him.[483]

The narrators said: “Imam al-Ridha’ guaranteed Yu’nus the Garden three times.[484]” He, peace be on him, said concerning him: “Yu’nus b. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n is like Sulayma’n (Solomon) in his time.[485]”

Yu’nus (b. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n) narrated, saying: “Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’ died and all those who believed in his Imamate had a lot of money, and this is why they said that he was the Imam who would return, and that they denied his death. (For example), Ziya’d al-Qandi had seventy thousand dinars; ‘Ali b. Abu’ Hamza had thirty thousand dinars.” He (Yu’nus b. ‘Abd al-Rahma’n) said: “I saw that and the truth manifested itself to me. I was fully aware of the affairs of Abu’ al-Hasan, peace be on him, so I spoke to

the people and summoned them (to follow) him." He said: "They (i.e. Ziya'd al-Qandi and 'Ali b. Abu' Hamza) sent for me and said to me: 'Do not summon (the people to follow) this (i.e. Abu' al-Hasan). If you want money, we will enrich you.' They guaranteed (me) ten thousand dinars." Yu'nus said: "So I said to them: 'We have been told on the authority of the Truthful (Imams), peace be on them, that they said: 'If innovations appear, then it is incumbent on scholar to show his knowledge. If he does not do this, the light of faith will be taken from him.' I will never leave struggle (*jiha'd*) and Allah's command. Accordingly, they opposed me and showed enmity toward me.[486]"

Many traditions have been reported from the Imams of guidance concerning praising and lauding, and that he was one of those who had abundant reverential fear and among the scholars of the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. Besides these accounts, there are others in which he has been dispraised. These accounts are either fabricated or they have been mentioned in order to decrease his importance during that time when the Shi'ites suffered from bitter kinds of tragedies and ordeals.

Yu'nus compiled a large group of books most of which is on jurisprudence and some of which is on interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. He, may Allah have mercy on him, died in Medina and was buried beside the grave of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, praised him, saying: "Look at what Allah has completed for Yu'nus: His grave is in Medina by (the grave of) Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family."

367. Yu'nus Bin Ya'qu'b al-Bujayli, al-Dihni

He is trustworthy. In his book *al-Risa'la al-'Adadiya*, al-Shaykh al-Mufid regarded him as one of the prominent jurists and leading persons from whom people took the lawful, the unlawful, religious opinions and precepts, whom none is able to impugn, and to whom there is no way to dispraise. He narrated on the authority of Imam al-Ka'zim and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on them.[487]

Yu'nus died in Medina, so Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, sent him scent for embalming, a shroud, and all the necessary things. Then he ordered his followers, those of his father, and of his grandfather to attend his funeral, and he said to them: "This (Yu'nus) was a follower of Abu' 'Abd Allah, peace be on him, and he lived in Iraq." And he said to them: "Be present at the (cemetery of) al-Baqi'. If the Medinans said to you that he was an Iraqi and that they would not bury him at the (cemetery of) al-Baqi', then say to them: 'This is a follower of Abu' 'Abd Allah, peace be on him, and he lived in Iraq. If you prevent us from burying him at the (cemetery of) al-Baqi', then we will prevent you from burying your followers at it.' He was buried at the (cemetery of) al-Baqi'.[488] Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, ordered his grave to be showered with water for a month or forty days.[489] May Allah have mercy on Yu'nus, for he was successful through his showing friendship and love toward the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them.

With him we will end our speech about some companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. It is

worth mentioning that the Imam's companions were a group of the eminent men of his time, and that they were a group of authors, narrators, and jurists, so they enriched the Imami jurisprudence through their recording the verdicts of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

1. Tahdhib al-Tahdhib.
2. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 29.
3. Akhba'r al-Diwal, p. 115.
4. Al-Barqi, Rija'l, p. 53.
5. Al-Murtada', al-Ama'li, vol. 1, p. 485. In (the book) A'ya'n al-Shi'a (vol. 6, p. 16), it has been mentioned: "The (poetry) lines which have been composed by Ibra'him were written on the back of a notebook and there was a signature at the bottom of them ('matu'q kha"if), and that he used them metaphorically for his praising him.
6. Regarding his explaining this poetry line, al-Sayyid al-Amin has said: "The deeds of the family of Abu' Ta'lib are an enough witness of their good origin."
7. Al-Sayyid al-Amin has commented on this poetry line, saying: "He (the poet) has used it metaphorically for the children of al-'Abba's that they had a modern one who undertook the caliphate, but he was not similar to their religion in his good deeds."
8. Ibra'him has not mentioned the names of the addressed ones; surely he means the family of Abu' Ta'lib and at their top is Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and that al-Ma'mu'n bestowed upon them when he gave them some gifts which were of their properties."
9. The one addressed in his words 'you have preferred' is al-Ridha' the great Imam, peace be on him, and his partner is al-Ma'mu'n.
10. Ibn Khullaka'n, Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 1, p. 25.
11. Ibid., p. 29.
12. Ibid.
13. Al-Murtada', Ama'li, vol. 1, p. 485.
14. Ibn Khulaka'n, Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 1, p. 29.
15. Ibid.
16. Al-Naja'shi, Rija'l.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 6, Chapter on the Excellence of the Visitation of Abu' al-Hasan, 'Ali b. Musa', peace be on him.
21. Ibid., vol. 4, Chapter on the Fasting of three Days in every Month.
22. Al-Naja'shi.
23. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
24. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 1, p. 91.
25. Al-Kashi.
26. Tanqih al-Maqa'l.
27. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
28. Al-Anma'ti is ascribed to anma't which is the plural of namat meaning a woolen garment with soft velvet put on the howdah.
29. Al-Naja'shi.
30. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
31. Al-Tu'si, al-Fihrast.
32. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
33. Al-Naja'shi.
34. Tanqih al-Maqa'l.
35. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 1, p. 152.

36. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
37. Al-Naja'shi.
38. Al-Barqi, Rija'l.
39. Al-Kashi.
40. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 1, p. 162.
41. Al-Naja'shi.
42. Ibid.
43. Tanqih al-Maqa'l, vol. 1, p. 39.
44. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 1, p. 152.
45. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 6, Chapter on Dowers and Wages.
46. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
47. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 1, Chapter on Dictating to those near to Death.
48. Al-Naja'shi.
49. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
50. In another account: "So I said: Praise belongs to Allah, the argument of Allah and inheritor of the knowledge of the prophets is intimate with me...."
51. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, pp. 237-239.
52. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
53. Taqrib al-Tahdhib. Tarjama fi Tahdhib al-Tahdhib.
54. Al-Kashi.
55. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
56. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 3, p. 9.
57. Al-Naja'shi.
58. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
59. Al-Naja'shi.
60. Al-Barqi, Rija'l.
61. Al-Kashi.
62. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
65. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 3 p. 133.
66. Al-Barqi.
67. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 3, p. 158.
68. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
69. Al-Kashi.
70. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 3, pp. 188-189.
71. Al-Naja'shi.
72. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. Al-Kashi.
76. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
77. Al-Kashi.
78. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
79. Al-Barqi, Rija'l.
80. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith.
81. Ibid.
82. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.

83. Ibid.
84. Al-Naja'shi.
85. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
86. Ibid.
87. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 4, p. 46.
88. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
89. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 4, p. 92.
90. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Abu' Da'wud, Rija'l.
97. Al-Naja'shi.
98. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 4, p. 304.
99. Ibid., p. 313.
100. Ibid., p. 315.
101. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid.
104. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 4, p. 367.
105. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
106. Ibid.
107. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 4, p. 382.
108. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
109. Al-Naja'shi.
110. Ibid.
111. Ibid.
112. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 5, p. 678.
113. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
114. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 5, p. 75.
115. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
116. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 5, p. 88.
117. Ibid., p. 93.
118. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
119. Al-Kashi, Rija'l.
120. Ibid.
121. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
122. Al-Naja'shi.
123. Al-Tahdhib, vol. 6, Chapter on the Excellence of the Visitation of Abu' al-Hasan Musa'.
124. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 5 p. 138.
125. Ibid., p. 151.
126. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
127. Ibid.
128. Ibid.
129. Ibid.
130. Al-Kashi.

131. Ibid.
132. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 5, p. 208.
133. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
134. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 5, p. 214.
135. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
136. Al-Kashi.
137. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
138. Al-Kashi.
139. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
140. Ibid.
141. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith.
142. Al-Barqi, Rija’l.
143. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
144. Ibid.
145. Al-Kashi.
146. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
147. Ibn Da’wud, Rija’l.
148. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 6, p. 117.
149. Al-Barqi, Rija’l.
150. Al-Barqi.
151. AL-Kashi.
152. Al-Naja’shi.
153. Al-Kashi.
154. Ibid.
155. Ibid.
156. Ibid.
157. Ibid.
158. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 6, p. 311.
159. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
160. Al-Naja’shi.
161. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 7, p. 90.
162. Al-Naja’shi.
163. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
164. Ibid.
165. Al-Naja’shi.
166. Al-Kashi.
167. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith.
168. Al-Tu’si, Rija’l.
169. Al-Kashi.
170. Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 7, p. 148.
171. Al-Ghadir, vol. 2, p. 273. ‘Abd al-Sa’hib al-Dujayli, Diwa’n Di’bil, pp. 22-24.
172. Ibid., pp. 371-372.
173. Al-Fihrast, p. 229.
174. Di‘bil, Divan, pp. 98-99.
175. Ibid., p. 101.
176. Qur’an, 5, 55.
177. Di‘bil, divan, p. 102.
178. Ibid., 107.

179. Ibid., pp. 99–100.
180. Ibid., p. 174.
181. Wasif and Ashna's were two Turkish young men.
182. Di'bil, Divan, pp. 129–130
183. Ibid., p. 209.
184. Ibid.
185. Abu' al–Farajj al–Asfaha'ni, al–Agha'ni, vol. 18, p. 29.
186. Ibid., p. 60.
187. Ibid.
188. Wafaya't al–A'ya'n, vol. 1, 180.
189. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith, vol. 7, p. 183.
190. Al–Naja'shi.
191. Furu'' al–Ka'fi, vol. 7, Chapter on Will.
192. Al–Naja'shi.
193. Al–Kashi.
194. Al–Naja'shi.
195. Al–Kashi.
196. Ibid.
197. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
198. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith, vol. 7, p. 272.
199. Al–Naja'shi.
200. Al–Kashi.
201. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
202. Al–Naja'shi.
203. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith.
204. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
205. Al–Naja'shi.
206. Al–Kashi.
207. Al–Tu'si, Fihrast.
208. Al–Naja'shi.
209. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
210. Al–Naja'shi.
211. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith, vol. 8, p. 242.
212. Ibid., p. 244.
213. Ibid., p. 262.
214. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
215. Ibid.
216. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith.
217. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
218. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith.
219. Ibid., vol. 8, p. 333.
220. Ibid.
221. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
222. Al–Barqi, Rija'l.
223. Al–Tu'si, Rija'l.
224. Ibid.
225. Ibid.
226. Mu'jam Rija'l al–Hadith.

227. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
228. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 9, pp. 128-133.
229. Al-Naja'shi.
230. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
231. Ibid.
232. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha'.
233. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
234. Al-Naja'shi.
235. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
236. Ibid.
237. Al-Naja'shi, Rija'l.
238. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith.
239. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
240. Ibid.
241. Ibid.
242. Al-Naja'shi.
243. Ibid.
244. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 10, p. 20.
245. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
246. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 10, p. 38.
247. Ibid.
248. Al-Naja'shi.
249. Al-Tu'si, al-Ghayba.
250. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
251. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 10, p. 81.
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283. Al-Zati: A kind of the black and the Indians
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286. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
287. Al-Naja'shi.
288. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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291. Al-Kashi.
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295. Al-Kashi.
296. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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302. Al-Kashi.
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311. Al-Naja'shi.
312. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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315. Ibid.
316. Al-Naja'shi.
317. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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320. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 13, p. 312.

321. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
322. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 14, p.38.
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333. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha'd.
334. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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373. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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381. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
382. Mu'jam Rija'l al-Hadith, vol. 16, p. 296.
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386. Al-Tu'si, Rija'l.
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419. Ibid., vol. 18, p. 37.
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Chapter 13: The Time of The Imam

The time of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was called the Golden Time. It was the most brilliant and wonderful of all the times in Islamic history. That is because building prospered; agriculture developed; the Islamic state dominated most regions of the world as well as Baghdad became the capital of Islamic world; rather the capital of the world, for it was the greatest city to which scholars and diplomats from everywhere in the world came in order to obtain an office in the state or to present the needs of their countries in the fields of administration, economy, and science.

We must mention the affairs of that time, for there is a close relationship between them and the research on the life of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

The Scientific Life

The scientific life in the time of Imam al-Ridha' bloomed, and its activities in all kinds of science grew. That was the most developed kind of civilization progress which the 'Abba'sid state reached in all

periods of its reign. We will briefly present some aspects of this scientific progress as follows:

The Satellite of Ibn al-Muqanna‘

Among the most marvelous inventions of that time was the satellite which was made by ‘Ata” al-Khurasa’ni, better known as Ibn al-Muqanna‘. That satellite appeared and the people saw it from a two-month distance, and then it disappeared from them, and concerning it Abu’ al-‘Ala” al-Ma‘arri has said:

Be watchful! The satellite whose head is masked

is error and enticement just as the satellite of al-Muqanna‘.[1]

The poet Abu’ al-Qa’sim Hibat Allah b. Sana” al-Mulk has referred to it in a poem, saying:

To you, the satellite of al-Muqanna‘ when rising is not

more charming than that of the turbaned one.[2]

However our references have not mentioned how that satellite was made and its apparatuses as well as they have not referred to the country where the satellite was made. More likely, it was made in Baghdad, the Capital of the ‘Abba’sid government in that time, any how, the making of that satellite is regarded as the greatest scientific achievement in those times.

Yet another example of the scientific achievements in those times was the usage of crystal in making ships. This has been mentioned by some historians.

The Institutes and Libraries

The ‘Abba’sid government established institutes and libraries in Baghdad, that Islamic and non-Islamic sciences might be studied therein. The Government founded wherein thirty marvelous schools; the most famous of them was al-Niza’miya.[3] Moreover it established therein public libraries the most important of which is:

The Depository of Wisdom

Ha’ru’n al-Rashid brought to it his personal library and added to it the books which were collected by his father al-Mahdi and his grandfather al-Mansu’r. Then al-Ma’mu’n asked the Emir of Siqliya for some philosophical and scientific books. He added these books to the Depository of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikma*) after he had received them as well as he brought to it may books form Khurasa’n. Wherever he heard of a book, he brought the book to it.[4]

SAhl b. Ha’ru’n b. Ra’hbu’n was a scribe in the Depository of Wisdom, and then he was appointed by al-

Ma'mu'n as a keeper of the philosophical books which were brought from the Island of Cyprus. When al-Ma'mu'n made peace with the leader of the Island, he asked him to send him the books which were collected by the Greeks in a house and which none came to know except them. So the leader of the Island gathered his retinues and men of opinion and counseled with them about carrying the books to al-Ma'mu'n, and they advised him not to carry them to him except one archbishop who said to him: "I think that you should be quick in sending the books to him, for if these sciences enter a state, they will corrupt it and sow division among its scholars; therefore, send them to al-Ma'mu'n." Al-Ma'mu'n became delighted at them and appointed SAhl as a keeper over them.[5] It is worth mentioning that Ghayla'n al-Fa'risi was the general keeper of the library and was scribe of al-Rashid and al-Ma'mu'n.

This library continued supplying researchers and scholars with various kinds of science. When Hulagu, the Mongol shedder of blood, occupied Baghdad, he destroyed the library, and hence Islam world lost its most important heritage.

The Translation of Books

Among the aspects of the development of the cultural and scientific life in that time was translating books from foreign languages into Arabic including medical, mathematical, astronomical books as well as philosophical and political sciences. In his book al-Fihrast, Ibn al-Nadim has mentioned many names of these books. Hanin b. Isha'q was the head of the Translation Department. Ibn al-Nadim narrated: "Al-Ma'mu'n exchanged letters with the Romanian King. He turned to him for help, wrote to him, and asked permission to send him what he chose of the old books stored in Rome. He (the Romanian King) responded to him after a refusal.

Accordingly, al-Ma'mu'n delegated for that a group of persons including al-Hajja'jj b. Matar, Ibn al-Batriq, Salam (the keeper of the House of Wisdom), and others. They chose books from what they found. When they brought them to al-Ma'mu'n, he ordered them to carry the books to the Depository of Wisdom.[6]"

Of course, the books translated into Arabic developed Arab and Islamic thought and, in addition, they contributed in improving sciences in Islamic world, for may students worked in studying and understanding them.

The Maps and Observatories

Among the aspects of the scientific progress of that time is that al-Ma'mu'n ordered a world map to be drawn and it was called al-Ma'mu'n's Map (*al-Sura al-Ma'mu'niya*), and it was the first world map to be drawn during the 'Abba'sid time, as well as he ordered an observatory to be established, and it was established at al-Shamma'siya, a district in Baghdad.[7]

The Dominating Sciences

As for the sciences which dominated that time, they were the sciences of the Qur'an, which are as follows:

1. The Interpretation of the Qur'an

This science means interpreting the verses of the Holy Qur'an, clarifying their meanings, distinguishing the abrogating verses from the abrogated, the unlimited verses from the limited, the general from the specific, and so on. The interpreters followed two ways in their interpretations:

A. Interpreting the Qur'an according to transmitted traditions, by this we mean interpreting the Holy Qur'an according to the traditions transmitted from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and the good Imams; this method was followed by most Shi'ite interpreters such as the Interpretation of al-Qummi, al-Burha'n, al-'Askari, and others. The argument of Shi'ites concerning this method of interpreting is that it is the Imams who were singled out for the knowledge of the Qur'an, and that it is they who were knowledgeable in interpreting it. Imam Abu' Ja'far al-Ba'qir, peace be on him, said: "None can claim that he has knowledge of the surface and deep meaning of the Qur'an except the testamentary trustees (i.e. the Imams).8"

Shaykh al-Tu'si, Shaykh of the Shi'ite Sect, said: "It is not permissible to interpret the Qur'an except with the authentic traditions transmitted from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and the Imams whose statement is an argument like that of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.9"

B. Interpreting the Qur'an according to opinion, by this we mean interpreting the Qur'an according to the approved, rational considerations. This method was followed by the interpreters from among the Mu'tazilities and the Ba'tiniya who did not take care of the traditions reported from the Imams of guidance, peace be on him, concerning the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, who interpreted the Qur'an according to their approved, rational considerations only.10 As for interpreting the Qur'an according to the surface meanings, it is not regarded as a method of interpretation, but it is not objected.

It is worth mentioning that the first school to be established in Islam for interpreting the Qur'an according to the transmitted traditions was at the time of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, for he was the first interpreter of the Qur'an, and under him studied 'Abd Allah b. 'Abba's, the scholar of the community, and other prominent companions (of the Prophet). Then, after him, the pure Imams began, through their lectures, interpreting the Qur'an, the causes of the revelation of the Qur'an, and the excellence of reciting its verses.

2. The Hadith (Tradition)

Among the sciences which dominated that time is the science of the hadith, by this we mean the

traditions transmitted from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, or from one of his testamentary trustees, the pure Imams, namely their words, their actions, their justifications, for they are part of the Sunna, and in the Sunna just as in the Holy Qur'an there is the general, the specific, the unlimited, the limited, and the like.

The Shi'ites were the first to write down the traditions, for the Imams of guidance urged their companions to do that. In this connection, Abu' Basir narrated, saying: "I went in to Imam Abu' 'Abd Allah al-Sa'diq, peace be on him, and he said: 'What has prevented you from writing down (our traditions)? You will not memorize (our traditions) unless you write (them). A group of the Basrans asked me about something, wrote them down, and departed.[11]'" A group of the companions of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, collected the authentic traditions in big, comprehensive books which are the first comprehensive books of the Imami Shi'ites and regarded as the foundation of writing down the four comprehensive books by the three Muslim Shaykhs.[12]

3. Science of Islamic Jurisprudence

Science of Islamic jurisprudence is the greatest of all Islamic sciences and most distinguished of the them, so it was widespread in that time and the rest of times. This honorable science is responsible for rendering knowledge of required, religious duties imposed on the bounded who are responsible before Allah for following and putting them into practice.

The Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on him, played an active role in establishing a jurisprudence school which included the eminent jurists and scholars such as Zara'ra, Muhammad b. Muslim, Ja'bir b. Yazid al-Ju'fi, Abu' Hanifa, and the like. These jurists and scholars recorded what they had heard from the pure Imams in their fundamentals which they are about four hundreds, and which were rectified and gathered in the four books to which the Imami jurists refer for concluding lawful precepts.

The Shi'ites are regarded as the first to record jurisprudence. In this regard Mustafa' 'Abd al-Razza'q said: "The Shi'ites were the quickest of the rest of the Muslims in inclining to writing down jurisprudence. It is rational that the Shi'ites were the quickest in clinging to recording the lawful rules because their belief in the infallibility or semi infallibility of their Imams urged them to write down their legal decisions, their formal and legal opinions.[13]"

4. Science of Fundamentals

Among the sciences which were studied in those times and the like was deriving religious decisions (*ijtiha'd*); this science was founded by the greatest Imam Abu' Ja'far Muhammad al-Ba'qir, peace be on him.[14]

5. Grammar

Grammar was among the sciences which played an important role during the ‘Abba’sid time, for some of its matters and researches were the object of heated argument at gatherings held in the palaces of the Caliphs; disputes and heated arguments concerning some of its matters took place among the leading grammarians in the presence of the ‘Abba’sid Caliph. A group of great figures specialized in this science; at their head were al-Kisa”i, al-Farra”, Sibawayh, and this science was established by Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, the pioneer of wisdom and knowledge in Islam.

6. Theology

As for theology, it was widespread in that time. The scholars and the theologians discussed important researches on this science in order to defend their beliefs. On the top of the theologians was Hisha’m b. al-Hakam, the student of Imam Ja‘far al-Sa’diq, peace be on him, who disproved the beliefs of his opponents and established with his definite proofs the creed of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on him, which Allah has chosen for His servants.

Some Sunni famous theologians were Wa’sil b. ‘Ata”, Abu’ al-Hudhayl al-‘Alla’f, Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ash‘ari, and Hujjat al-Isla’m al-Ghaza’li.

7. Medicine

Medicine was widespread during that time. Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, was at the head of the scientists in this science, and his dissertation in medicine is regarded as the most marvelous medical research, hence it has been called the Golden Dissertation (*al-Risa’la al-Dhahabiya*). The ‘Abba’sid kings encouraged people to study this science and spent a lot of money on the specialists in it such as Gabriel b. Bakhtishu’‘, the skillful doctor.

8. Chemistry

Chemistry was among the most important sciences which attained great care in that time. Ja’bir b. Hayya’n, the pride of the Arab east, was specialist in it; he received his researches from the greatest figure of Islamic thought, Imam Ja‘far al-Sa’diq, peace be on him, whom some western scholars called the thinking brain of humanity, for it was he who established this science.

9. Architecture and Civil Engineering

Architecture and civil engineering reached zenith in that time, for the architects were creative in their designing the palaces of the caliphs whether in Baghdad or in Sa’mra”. Those palaces were the largest building throughout history. An example of the marvelous architectural designs is the ponds which were made in Sa’mra”, which the poets adored, and which astonished the minds of the scholars, in addition to that there were wonderful paintings and the Hanging Gardens the like of which has not been made even

in this century when architecture and technology have reached top.

10. Astronomy

Astronomy was among the dominating sciences in that time. Al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abba'sid, was one of those who were specialists in it. These are some sciences which dominated that time, and which represented intellectual freedom and technology in the time of the Imam, peace be on him.

The Scientific Centers

1. Baghdad

Baghdad was one of the cities of knowledge in Islamic world, for it was, as we have mentioned before, the capital of the supreme authority and of knowledge; various kinds of culture dominated it; in it spread institutes, schools, the Depository of Wisdom, public and private libraries.

2. Yathrib

As for Yathrib (Medina), it was the most important scientific center in Islamic world, for the school of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, was established wherein, and it included the leading jurists and religious scholars who took care of recording the traditions of the Imams of guidance, peace be on them, especially as it concerns their traditions on jurisprudence, which is the most perfect system in Islam. The school of the next generation (*ta'bi'in*) was also established therein; it was the school which took great care of the jurisprudence which was narrated on the authority of the companions (of the Prophet).

3. Ku'fa

Ku'fa was more important than Yathrib, for in it was the greatest mosque (*al-ja'm' al-A'zam*) which was a public center for Islamic studies and, in addition, there were seminars including hundreds of students who studied under professors specialist in Islamic sciences such as jurisprudence, the interpretation of the Qur'an, the hadith (tradition), and Arabic. The school of Ku'fa objectively took care of the sciences of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha' reported, saying: "I met nine hundred shaykhs in this mosque (i.e. the mosque of Ku'fa) and all of them said: 'Ja'far b. Muhammad related to me (traditions).'[15]"

Important families of knowledge graduated from the mosque of Ku'fa. They are as follows: the family of Hayya'n al-Taghlubi, the family of A'yun, the children of 'Atiya, the house of the children of Darra'jj, and others.[16]

A grammar school was established in Ku'fa; one of its prominent teachers was al-Kisa''i, whom (Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid entrusted with teaching his two sons, al-Amin and al-Ma'mu'n.[17]

4. Basrah

As for Basrah, it was an important center of grammar. Abu' al-Aswad al-Du'ali, the student of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was the first to establish this school. This school competed with the school of Ku'fa (for Arabic Grammar). The Basran grammarians were called the men of logic in order to distinguish them from the Ku'fans grammarians. Among the leading grammarians of this school was Sibawayh, who compiled *Kita'b Sibawayh* (the Book of Sibawayh) in grammar, which is the ripest of Arabic books and the best of them in depth and originality. Daybu'r said: "If we look at the book of Sibawayh, we will find it a ripe work and great effort to the extent that the later authors said: 'The book must be the fruit of cooperating efforts of many scholars just like the Law (*qa'nu'n*) of Ibn Sina'.'[18]"

Basrah was not only an important center of grammar but also was a school of the science of interpreting the Holy Qur'an. Among the prominent scholars in this science was Abu' 'Amru' b. al-'Ala''. Besides Basrah was the school of prosody and linguistics. Among the specialists in these two sciences was al-Khalil b. Ahmed, the author of the book *al-'Ayn*, which is the first linguistic dictionary written in Arabic.[19]

These are some aspects of the cultural and scientific life of that time; generally speaking, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was the first pioneer of the scientific movement, for the scholars and the jurists gathered around him in order to study his pure sciences, as well as sessions were held in the 'Abba'sid palace including the great scholars whom al-Ma'mu'n summoned in order to test Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, but they went out of the palace and announced the Imam's excellence and mentioned with admiration his many scientific abilities.

The Economic Life

Islam takes great care of combating against poverty, for it regards it as a destructive disaster which should be driven away from the public life, and hence it has made it incumbent on Muslim rulers to develop economy, to increase individual income, and to spread welfare among people. Among the things which Islam takes care of is improving economy, so it has made it obligatory on Muslim rulers to spend the state money on the public interest through developing agriculture, establishing public projects and others through which the land is prosperous. It also prevents them from taking something from state treasury for themselves and their relatives. However, the 'Abba'sids turned aside from this creative policy; they seized the money of Allah and enslaved His servants, spent a lot of money on their desires and pleasures, building their palaces and songsters, so this policy led to critical crises and divided society into two classes:

The first class included the capitalists who controlled the wealth of the community, while they had no work except unemployment, amusement, and extravagance in the unlawful.

The second class included workers and farmers. This class was miserable, for poverty and deprivation spread among it. This division among the classes of society resulted in losing the balance of the

economic life, tranquillity in both political and social lives.[20]

We will briefly talk about the matters of the public economic life, unhappiness and deprivation which the citizens faced.

The Revenues of the State

As for the returns of the state during the time of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, they were plentiful, for examples only the incoming of land taxes was counted and it was four hundred million dirhams.[21] It is worth mentioning that money was not counted but weighed because it was abundant, so they said: "It (money) is six or seven thousand quintals of gold.[22]"

Unfortunately, this plentiful money was not spend on improving the life of the Muslims, helping the poor and the deprived; rather most this money was spent by kings, their ministers, their children, and their retinues on their pleasures and desires. They spent on their red nights countless money; as well as the singers, the mischievous, and the dissolute became extremely rich.

Extravagance and Wastefulness

The 'Abba'sid kings were so extravagant that they spent the money of the Muslims on their pleasures and desires, for example, al-Ma'mu'n faced financial straits when he was in Damascus, hence thirty million dirhams of the money of land taxes were carried to him, and he ordered twenty-four dirhams to be spent on his companions and the remainder of the money to be spent on his soldiers.[23]

Wasting the money of the Muslims was a dominating phenomenon with the 'Abba'sid kings, for example, al-Mahdi built a park and spent on it fifty million dirhams.[24] Al-Mutawakkil spent fifty million dirhams on his palace called al-Ma'hu'za, thirty million dirhams on his palace called al-'Aru's, and twenty-five million dirhams on the lobby (*bahu'*). Al-Sha'bishti said: "As al-Mutawakkil was among the men of taste and sociability, he devoted himself in an amazing manner to building sixteen magnificent palaces in Sa'marra" and spent on them an unbelievable amount of money.[25]" Yet a further example of his wastefulness is that he spent eighty-six million dirhams on the circumcision of his sons.

Al-Ma'mu'n takes Boura'n in Marriage

Another example of wasting the money of the Muslims is the abundant, astonishing amount which al-Ma'mu'n spent on his taking lady Boura'n in marriage; the like of what he spent on that marriage has not occurred since Allah created the earth.

Al-Ma'mu'n gave his wife one million dinars as a dowry. It is worth mentioning that the value of a dinar was equal to a camel. Al-Hasan b. Sahl, the father of lady Boura'n, stipulated that al-Ma'mu'n should marry his daughter in his village situated at Fam al-Sulh[26], and he responded to that. When he wanted to marry her, he traveled to Fam al-Sulh and spent one million dinars on the soldiers who were with him.

He took with him thirty thousand young boys and seven hundred slave-girls. As for the soldiers who were with him, they were four hundred thousand horsemen and three hundred thousand infantry soldiers. As for al-Hasan b. Sahl, he slaughtered thirty thousand sheep, a similar number of chicken, four hundred cows, and four hundred camels. The people called this invitation the Invitation of Islam, but this title is wrong, for such extravagance from the money of the Muslims does not belong to Islam. The expenditures of al-Ma'mu'n on this marriage were thirty-eight million dinars[27] apart from what he gave to her father, for he gave him ten millions dirhams from the land taxes of Fars (Iran) and the lands of al-Sulh.[28]

Anyhow, when al-Ma'mu'n married Boura'n, ambergris hazelnuts were scattered from the roof of the house of al-Hasan b. SAhl, but the people disdained them and abstained from them, so a person called out to them, saying: "Whoever has taken a hazelnut, let him break it, for he will find in it a piece of paper on which it has been written either one thousand dinars or ten silk garments or five garments or a retainer or a slave-girl." Those who obtained pieces of paper sent them to the Divan and received what was written on them.[29] Likewise, al-Ma'mu'n spent one million dirhams on the commanders of his army.[30] Congratulating al-Hasan b. SAhl, his daughter, and al-Ma'mu'n, al-Ba'hili said:

May Allah bless al-Hasan and Boura'n regarding the

marriage. O son of Ha'ru'n, you have gained, but whose

daughter is she? [31]

When the hour of wedding came, Boura'n was seated on a mat made of gold. Then al-Ma'mu'n came in to her and he was accompanied by his aunts and a group of the 'Abba'sid women, so al-Hasan b. SAhl scattered three hundred pearls over al-Ma'mu'n and his wife. The weight of each pearl was a weight (*mithqa'l*). None stretched out his hand to take them, so al-Ma'mu'n ordered his aunts to take them; he stretched out his hand to take one, and thus the 'Abbasid women hurried to take some. Accordingly, al-Ma'mu'n said: "May Allah kill Abu' Nu'a's! He described wine as if he was present at this gathering of ours; he said:

'Its small and big bubbles are like pearl pebbles on a 'ground of gold![32]"

Al-Ma'mu'n and al-Hasan b. SAhl spent on his marriage abundant money which was, without doubt, stolen from the Treasury of the Muslims, and which had to be spent, according to Allah's Law, on combating poverty and removing misery from the world of Islam.

It is worth mentioning that when Ha'ru'n al-Rashid married lady Zubayda, he made a banquet the like of which was not made in Islam. He ordered the gifts to be unlimited, hence gold wares full of silver, silver wares full of gold, pieces of musk and ambergris were offered (to the guests). This is the extravagance and wastefulness which Islam has forbidden in order to protect the economy of the community from collapse.

The Misery and Wretchedness of the Common People

During the time of al–Ma'mu'n and others, the overwhelming majority of Islamic society led a life of misery and deprivation, for it fell down under terrible poverty and wretchedness. Now let us listen to Abu' al–'Ata'hiya in order that he may tell us about the misery and wretchedness of the common people. Addressing the 'Abba'sid king, he said:

Who gives on my behalf successive pieces of advice to the

Imam.

Surely I see that the prices of the subjects are high.

And I see that the earnings are insignificant. And I see that

the necessity is widespread.

And I see that the worries of the time come and go.

And I see that the orphans are in the miserable, empty

houses.

They, hopeful male and female, yearn for you.

They complain (to you) of hard work with weak, loud

voices.

They hope for your relief out of what they have faced, that

they may see well–being.

The misfortunes of hunger enter into evening and upon

the morning (causing) hunger.

Who relieves the hungry stomachs and naked bodies?

I have reported to you conclusive news from the subjects.

This social poetry gives an account of the state which dominated the time of Abu' al–'Ata'hiya, for millions of Muslims were naked, weak, and hungry, while the treasuries of the 'Abba'sid kings were full of the money of the Muslims, but this money was not spent on the interest of the Muslims; rather it was spent on the pleasures of the kings and the ways through which they corrupted the life of the common people.

Now, let us listen to the following poetry lines in which Bashsha'r praises Yazid b. al-Muhallab, the governor of al-Mansu'r al-Dawa'niqi over Africa. He says:

The boys whose eldest is still young frequent to you out

of fear of tribulations.

Don't you see, and you are aware of me, that I am the

seeker of good whose steps are short?

The drought and the corrupt time have driven him; rather

a mad seller has stolen my sleep.

He walks through his own written skin; his dangerous meeting me terrifies me.

I am terrified by seeing him; he frightens me and I have no protector.

I am grateful (to you) for your favor. Is there anyone to change the harm which has befallen me?33

Have you seen how famine dominated the early 'Abba'sid ages? This poet seeks the aid of Yazid b. al-Muhallab in order to save him from poverty and misery. Hoping for Ya'qu'b b. Da'wud, he says:

O man who goes early in the morning for his need with the Caliph, who some times postpones it and sometimes accomplish it,

The doors to the needs have been closed, so send for (the one with) high rank, Ya'qu'b b. Da'wud.

Futayma said: Fast among us. So I said to her: If Ya'qu'b (b. Da'wud) desires, we will fast, O daughter of munificence.

If (Ya'qu'b) b. Da'wud gave me a relief, I would be free from need and would not return (to beg him).34

Have you seen this submissiveness and entreaty? All avenues of livelihood were closed before most people, and they suffered from famine and deprivation.

Heavy Taxes imposed on Inheritances

Another example of the oppression and tyranny of the 'Abba'sids is that they imposed heavy taxes on the inheritances of the dead. In his poetry lines, Ibn al-Mu'taz gives us an account of the condition of the people, their sufferings, oppression and tyranny which they faced. He says:

Woe unto him whose father dies rich, isn't this clear and

famous?

His prison is in the Abode of Tribulation, and it is said:

Who knows that you are his son?

So he says: My neighbors and those who know me. So

they pull out his mustache, to the extent that he perishes;

they go too far in boxing and pushing him; and their palms

of the hand rush to slap him.

He is still in the narrowest prison until he throws the sack

(of money) to them.[35]

The ‘Abba’sid kings went too far in oppression and tyranny, hence they plundered the properties of the people without any right. The historians said: “After the death of the possessors of wealth, many (‘Abba’sid) rulers tried (to say) that they had no inheritors in order to control their inheritances.[36]” This severe procedure clashes with the Islamic teachings which decide that what the dead leaves as inheritance is for his own inheritor, and that the ruler has no authority over it. Yes, he who dies and has no inheritor, his inheritance is moved to Muslims’ Public Treasury. Torture and confiscating the properties of the people was not confined to a special class of people; rather they included the mothers of the Caliphs, for example, al-Qa’hir, the ‘Abba’sid, tortured the mother of his brother al-Muqtadir. He hung her from her leg in order that she might bring out her properties, carry her endowments, and entrust selling them to (him). She refused (to do that), but al-Qa’hir forced her to do it after severe torture and punishment.[37]”

Cruelty in taking Land Taxes

The Muslims were subject to cruelty during taking land taxes from them, for the government employed over them terrorist collectors who did not respect Allah; nor did they fear the evil reckoning. They were more wicked than snakes, for they hung the fat person from one hand to the extent that he was about to die. Hence, in his poetry lines, Ibn al-Mu‘taz describes this abominable manner through which land taxes were taken:

Many times I saw the helpers take to prison and to the

Divan a noble man with a great mount.

That he might be stood in the inferno of the midday heat;

and his head was like a boiling pot.

They placed around his hand hemp ropes which cut off the limbs.

They hung him on the wall handles as if he was (iron) filings.

They slapped his back as the drum is slapped and installed him in front of the eyes of the gloaters and the bosom friends.

When he appealed for the help against the blaze of the sun, a jailer answered him with kicking; and a jailer poured oil on him, and after that he looked like a brown–red horse.

When the exertion lasted long and there was no escape for him from what they wanted, he said: Give me a permission to ask the merchants for a loan; otherwise, I will sell an immovable property.

But they annoyed him and appointed four (days), and he found no profit in the speech.

The dissolute helpers came to him and loaned him one for ten.

Then he paid what was against him and went out, while he had not craved after the nearness of relief.

The helpers came to him in order to ask him as if they were pampering him.

If he lagged, they took his turban, smashed his two jugular

veins and his head.

Now, all of that has vanished, and tyranny is

repressed by justice.[38]

Ibn al-Mu'taz describes the extreme cruelty which the collectors showed toward the people in order to take land taxes from them. They made them tired and tortured them. An example of their torturing them is as the historians say: "They hit them on the head with the iron whips[39] and the tips of reed were stabbed into their finer-nails.[40] As for al-Mansu'r (al-Dawa'niqi), he would hang the people from their legs in order that they might pay what was imposed upon them.[41]"

As for land taxes during the time of al-Mahdi, the 'Abba'sid, they were taken with extreme cruelty, for the people were tortured with various kinds of torture such as (employing) beasts of prey and wasps.[42]

As for (Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid, he was very cruel in taking land taxes. He punished the people severely and appointed over them collectors who had neither compassion nor mercy. For example, he appointed 'Abd Allah b. al-Haythem as governor for taking this tax, and he tortured the people with terrible kinds of painful torture, so Ibn 'Ayya'd came in to him. He saw his cruelty and torturing the people, so he said to him: "Raise (torture) from them! Surely, I heard Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, say: 'On the Day of Resurrection Allah will torture him who tortures the people in this world.' So he ordered torture to be raised from the people.[43]"

About the extreme cruelty toward the people upon whom land taxes were imposed, Abu' Yu'suf wrote to (Ha'ru'n) al-Rashid, saying: "I have been informed that the governor respects some of his retinues and uses the rest as means, while they are not pious nor righteous. He (the governor) seeks help through them and employs them in his works in order not to violate (men's) rights and sacredness, but they do not keep what they have been order to; nor do they treat the people with justice. Rather their only concern is to take something from land taxes or from the properties of the people. Then they take all of that, as I have been informed, by tyranny, oppression, and aggression.[44]"

He added, saying: "Likewise, I have been informed that they (land tax collectors) make men of land taxes stand in the sun, hang on them jars, and shackle them with that which prevent them from performing prayer, and this is (something) dreadful with Allah and ugly in Islam.[45]"

Through this cruel procedure the land tax collectors opposed the Islamic teachings which ordered them to treat people kindly and to refrain from cruelty. However, the 'Abba'sid kings turned aside from these teachings and went far away from them.

The Inheritance of the 'Abba'sid Kings

The treasuries of the 'Abba'sid kings were full of the abundant funds which were taken from the Muslim

nations by force and overcoming. The following is the list of the inheritances which some of their kings left behind:

1. The Inheritance of al-Mansu'r

After his death, al-Mansu'r al-Dawa'niqi left behind him fourteen million dinars and six hundred million dirhams.[46]

2. The Inheritance of al-Mahdi

Al-Mahdi left twenty-seven million dirhams in his treasuries.[47]

3. The Inheritance of al-Rashid

As for Ha'ru'n al-Rashid, he left behind him nine hundred million dirhams.[48]

The 'Abba'sid kings left behind them such funds while they had not gathered them; rather it was the Muslims who gathered them through enduring poverty, misery, and depravation. These are some aspects of the economic policy which was practiced throughout the 'Abba'sid reign. In short this policy was not based on sound foundations; nor did it match the Islamic economy, which aimed at refreshing the nations, spreading welfare among them, destroying misery and poverty. Like the Umayyad king, the 'Abba'sid one was the Shadow of Allah on earth, so he moved about in the abilities of the people according to his desires. Did (al-Mansu'r) al-Dawa'niqi not say: "Men, I am the Authority of Allah on His earth and rule you according to success and guidance from Him. I am His treasurer over war booty gained without fighting. I work in accordance with His desire, divide it (among you) according to His will, and give it (to you) according to permission from Him. Allah has made me as a lock for it. If He wills to unlock me, He unlocks me; and if He wills to lock me, He locks me![49]"?

Islam does not adopt this unjust policy, for the properties of the Muslims belong to them. They should be spent on their interests and to raise their economic and intellectual levels. As for the head of the state, he has no authority over them.

The Muslims hate the 'Abba'sid Government

The Muslims hated the 'Abba'sid government, were very indignant with it, and had wished that the Umayyad government would have return to them regardless of its cruelty and torture, for they (the Abba'sids) ruled the community with oppression and tyranny. 'Abd al-Rahma'n al-Afriqi said to al-Mansu'r al-Dawa'niqi: "Oppression has appeared in our country, so I have come to inform you (of it). Suddenly, (I have seen) oppression comes out of your country; I have seen evil deeds and widespread oppression. I think that oppression has occurred because the country is far from you. The more I approach you, the more dreadful the matter is!"

Al-Mansu'r was very displeased with these words of 'Abd al-Rahma'n al-Afriqi and ordered him to be

driven out.[50]

Al-Mansu'r asked b. Abu' Dhu'ayb: "Which a man am I?"

He answered him with the statement of the free one who does not submit to authority, saying: "By Allah, you are the most wicked man in my opinion! You have seized the property of Allah and His Apostle, the share of the near of kin, the orphans, the needy! You have destroyed the weak and followed the strong and taken hold of their properties![51]"

The policy of the 'Abba'sid kings was the same in oppression and tyranny. Ahmed b. Abu' Na'im says:

I do not thing that tyranny will terminate while over the

people is an Emir from the family of 'Abba's!

Because of this line poetry, al-Ma'mu'n banished him to al-Sind.[52] Abu' 'Ata'' al-Sindi says:

I wish that the tyranny of the Banu' of Marwa'n lasted for

us and wish that the justice of the Banu' of 'Abba's was in

the Fire![53]

Salim al-'Adawi urged the community to revolt against the 'Abba'sid government, saying:

Till when will we not see justice pleasing us and not see

helpers for those who undertake the truth?

We are clinging to the truth and undertaking it when the

tyrants are changeable.

O men, surely this is an illness for which there is no

medicine, and a blind leader who leads blind people!

Sudayf, the poet of the free, says:

We hope that our friendliness will return after the

alienation, the enmity, and the malice, and that the state

whose leaders (implement) among us laws like those of people worshipping idols will terminate.

This poetry spread and al-Mansu'r heard of it, so he ordered his governor 'Abd al-Samad to bury him

(Sudayf) alive, and he did.[54]

Dr. Ahmed Mahmu'd Subhi says: "However, that ideal of justice and equity for which the people waited from the 'Abba'sids was one of the imaginations, for the wildness of al-Mansu'r and al-Rashid, their greediness, the oppression of the sons of 'Ali b. 'Isa' and their playing with the properties of the Muslims remind us of al-Hajja'jj, Hisha'm, and Yu'suf b. 'Amru' al-Thaqafi. Displeasure dominated the people when Abu' 'Abd Allah better known as al-Saffa'h and al-Mansu'r started (their government) with going too far in shedding blood in a manner which had never been known before.[55]"

The Muslims were indignant with the 'Abba'sid government, for it did not achieve their aims and hopes. Rather it was busy with recklessness, violence and forcing the people to do what they hated.

Discords and Popular Revolts

Discords surged over Islamic world and popular revolts spread in it. Without doubt, these discords and revolts resulted from the evil 'Abba'sid policy, which did not take care of the interests of society and its ambitions aiming at achieving political and social justice among the people. The following is an example of the important revolts which broke out during the time of Imam al-Ridha':

The Revolt of Abu' al-Sara'ya'

As for the revolt of Abu' al-Sara'ya', it was among the most important revolts which broke out in that time. At this revolt the Muslims lost two hundred fighters. We will talk about some characteristics of this revolt as follows:

The Leader of the Revolt

As for the leader, designer, and planner of this revolt, he is the great 'Alawide, Muhammad b. Ibra'him, better known as al-Taba'taba"i.[56] This great, noble 'Alawide saw that the 'Alawides and the Muslims were liable to oppression, persecution, exemplary punishments, and exhaustion, so he got ready to announce his revolt in order to save them from the ruling 'Abba'sid band. The historians said that he was gentle and kind to the poor and the deprived. One day while he was walking in a street in Ku'fa, he saw an old woman following the loads of dates, picking up those falling dates and putting them into a ragged garment. He asked her about that and she answered him: "I am a woman with a husband who undertakes my provisions, and I have daughters who do nothing, so I follow these dates on the road. My children and I live on them."

When he heard these words, his strength collapsed, he burst into tears, turned to her and said to her warmly: "By Allah, you and the like of you will make me go out (with the sword) and my blood will be shed.[57]"

This mercy toward the poor moved him to announce his revolt, that he might save them from the

oppressive who plundered the properties of the community.

Accordingly, Muhammad began making arrangements through communicating with men of opinion and influence from among Arab leaders and Muslim great figures. He asked them to join him and to take part in resisting oppression and overthrowing the standing government, and hence he met the great Arab leader Nasr b. Shayth and presented the matter before him, and he began announcing his support to him and urging him to revolt against the government, saying to him: "Till when will you be submissive, your Shi'ites oppressed, and your right usurped? 58"

These words moved the sentiments and feelings of Muhammad and he hurried to revolt against the 'Abba'sid government. That was when he saw that the 'Abba'sids were different, their word was separated, and their unity was broken up because of the dreadful discord which took place between al-Amin and al-Ma'mu'n, and which split the government and made society think of a revolt against them to save itself from the persecutions of the 'Abba'sid government.

Abu' al-Sara'ya' joins the Revolt

The revolt increased in strength and firmness when Abu' al-Sara'ya', the experienced leader, joined it. Abu' al-Sara'ya' was an 'Alawide in opinion, so he felt burning desire for the 'Alawides who suffered from the persecutions of the 'Abba'sids. It is an act of good to talk about some affairs of this inspired leader.

He is al-Sari b. Mansu'r al-Shayba'ni. He was a brave revolutionist from among the 'Usa'mi commanders. He took part in many battles. When the discord took place between al-Amin and al-Ma'mu'n, he joined the army of Herthama b. 'Ayun along with two thousand fighters. Then he was given the title of Amir (i.e. commander). When al-Amin was killed, Herthama decreased the gifts and salaries of the army. This step displeased Abu' al-Sara'ya', and he decided to leave him. Abu' al-Sara'ya' asked Herthama for permission to make the pilgrimage, he permitted him and gave him twenty thousand dirhams. He took this sum of money and divided it among his followers, and with this he was able to make their hearts incline to him, and then he ordered them to follow him to 'Ayn al-Tamr. When they arrived at it, they captured its governor and took his belongings. They met another 'Abbasid governor and took his properties and divided them among themselves. When Herthama heard of this news, he lost his mind and sent an army to fight against Abu' al-Sara'ya'. When the two armies met, a violent battle occurred between them, hence the army of Herthama suffered heavy casualties and turned the back in flight. Then Abu' al-Sara'ya headed for al-Anba'r (a city in Iraq). When he arrived in it, he controlled the local administration, killed its governor Ibra'him al-Sharwari, and confiscated all his properties.

Abu' al-Sara'ya' meets Muhammad

Abu' al-Sara'ya' and his army continued their advance towards the 'Abba'sid centers. When they arrived

in a certain country, they killed its ‘Abba’sid governor. Then they reached al-Riqqa and therein they met the great leader Muhammad b. Ibra’him. They held talks and discussed the oppression of the ‘Abba’sids toward the Muslims. As a result they decided to put an end to the ‘Abba’sid government and to summon (the Muslims) to pledge allegiance to al-Ridha’ from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family.[59]

Muhammad entrusted the general military leadership to Abu’ al-Sara’ya’, gave him confidence, and entrusted him with all the affairs and plans of the revolt.

The Declaration of the Revolt

Abu’ al-Sara’ya’ declared the revolt against the ‘Abba’sid government; he took his army and advanced towards Naynawa’. Then he headed for the Holy Shrine of the Father of the free and master of martyrs, Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him. He visited the Pure Shrine for a long time. Then he recited the following poetry lines of al-Nimry, saying:

May my own soul be sacrificed for al-Husayn when he

left early in the morning for death running, not returning.

That day attacked with its sword the hump and shoulder of Islam.[60]

You hurried (to death) lest an urgent vengeance should befall the people.

Allah does not hasten when you hasten; your Lord is not heedless of what you see.

She (Fa’tima) is wronged and the Prophet, her father, turns (his) eye in all directions, (and he is) interested (in the tragedy).

Are there any brave men to rise for her through drawing their sharp swords and spears?

Then he said in a loud voice: “If there is anyone of the Zaydiya, let him rise!”

A group of the army rose and he delivered a long sermon in which he lauded the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, mentioned their laudable deeds and excellent merits, oppression and persecution caused to them by their opponents and enemies, and then he reminded them of the master of martyrs, Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him, saying: “People, suppose that you were not present with al-Husayn and did not help him, then what has prevented you from (helping) him whom you have met and followed, while he will tomorrow go out (in revolt) to avenge his blood, his right, the heritage of his fathers and to establish the religion of Allah? What has prevented you from helping and supporting him? From this direction of mine, I am heading for Ku’fa to carry out Allah’s command, to defend His religion, and to help the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*)? So if you intend to go, then follow me!”

The Zaydiya and others responded to him, so Abu' al-Sara'ya' and his army headed for Ku'fa.

As for Muhammad, he declared the revolt on the same day when Abu' al-Sara'ya' declared his revolt, and many people supported him. He impatiently waited for the arrival of Abu' al-Sara'ya. Many days passed to the extent that Muhammad's followers scattered from him and blamed him for seeking help from Abu' al-Sara'ya'. Muhammad was sad because of Abu' al-Sara'ya"s delay. While he was anxious and worried, Abu' al-Sara'ya' and his army reached them. So he became very pleased. He rose for him and embraced him. He stayed with him for some days, then they headed for Ku'fa. When they arrived in it, they were warmly received by its people who were delighted at their arrival and pledged allegiance to them.61

The army of Abu' al-Sara'ya' occupied Ku'fa and plundered the palace of al-Fadl b. 'Isa', the governor of Ku'fa, of all things available in it. As for Abu' al-Sara'ya', he was displeased with this behavior of his army, so he ordered it to refrain from taking anything and to return the looted things to their owners.

Al-Hasan b. SAhl, who was appointed by al-Ma'mu'n as a ruler over Iraq, dispatched three thousand horsemen under the leadership of Zuhayr b. al-Hasan in order to fight against Abu' al-Sara'ya'. When they arrived in Ku'fa, they met the army of Abu' al-Sara'ya' at a violent battle. As a result, they turned the back in flight, and the army of Abu' al-Sara'ya' took all their weapons.62 Abu' al-Sara'ya' gained a marvelous victory over the 'Abba'sids, hence fear and terror spread among them, most of them were sure that the revolt was successful, and that they would face a dreadful fate.

The Death of the Leader Muhammad

Unfortunately, Muhammad b. Ibra'him, the great leader, died. Most historical sources believed that he died a natural death, but some sources said that Abu' al-Sara'ya' put poison in food and gave it to him in order to assassinate him and get rid of him. More likely, he died a natural death, and Abu' al-Sara'ya' had no role in his death, for the revolt was at the beginning. It was not possible, any how, for Abu' al-Sara'ya' to assassinate him in those critical circumstances, for he was not sure of the success of the revolt.

Any how, Abu' al-Sara'ya' prepared Muhammad's pure corpse for burial. He ordered it to be washed and shrouded. Then the people carried it to the cemetery of al-Ghary in the darkness of night.63 They buried it there, and then they returned to Ku'fa. In the morning Abu' al-Sara'ya' gathered they people and announced the death of the great leader Muhammad b. Ibra'him and condoled them. The people wept in loud voices, so Abu' al-Sara'ya' turned to them and said: "Abu' 'Abd Allah has appointed Abu' al-Hasan 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah as his testamentary trustee. If you consent to him, then he is the consent; otherwise, choose (someone else) for yourselves."

The members of the army kept silent. So Muhammad b. Muhammad, an 'Alawide young man, addressed the 'Alawides, saying: "O family of 'Ali, surely the religion of Allah is not supported by failure,

and the hand of this man (i.e. Abu' al-Sara'ya') is not evil with us, for he has given vent to our anger and avenged (the blood of al-Husayn)."

Then he turned to 'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah and asked him: "What do you say, Abu' al-Hasan? For he advised us (to choose) you. Stretch out your hand, that we may pledge allegiance to you."

'Ali b. 'Ubayd Allah replied: "Surely, Abu' 'Abd Allah (i.e. Muhammad b. Ibra'him), may Allah have mercy on him, chose (me). He had confidence in himself, and he did his best to (accomplish) Allah's right. (As for me), I will not refuse his will neglect his command and leave this (matter). However, I fear that I may busy myself with it and leave other things which are more praiseworthy and better than it in the final result. So undertake leadership, may Allah have mercy upon you. We have entrusted you with leadership over us. You are the consent with us and confidence in ourselves."

Then he turned to Abu' al-Sara'ya' and asked him: "What do you see? Are you content with him?"

"My consent conforms with your consent and my view conforms with your view," replied Abu' al-Sara'ya'.

Muhammad b. Muhammad stretched out his hand, and the people pledged allegiance to him. In the meantime he began organizing the affairs of his government with firm resolution, and then he appointed governors over the Islamic cities conquered by Abu' al-Sara'ya' as follows:

1. He appointed Isma''il b. 'Ali as governor over Ku'fa.

2. He appointed Ibra'him b. Imam Musa' b. Ja'far as

governor over Yemen.

3. He appointed Zayd b. Musa' as governor over

Al-Ahwa'z.

4. He appointed al-'Abba's b. Muhammad as governor over

Basrah.

5. He appointed al-Hasan b. al-Hasan al-Aftas as governor

over Mecca.

6. He appointed Ja'far b. Muhammad b. Zayd as governor

over Wa'sit.

He also appointed Rouh b. al-Hajja'jj as commander over the police and entrusted the judiciary to 'Asim

b. ‘Amir.

Currency was minted in Ku’fa and it was written in it this holy verse: *Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks as if they were a firm and compact wall.*

The Muslims were tired of the ‘Abbasid government, so they happily responded to the ‘Alawide government, and the revolt quickly began to spread in Islamic world.

The ‘Abba’sids understood the danger which would threaten their lives and remove their authority. The ruler of Iraq, al-Hasan b. SAhl, was defeated, so he wrote to Ta’hir b. al-Husayn in order to join him in the fighting against Abu’ al-Sara’ya. But a letter was written to him in which were the following poetry lines:

Certainty uncovers the mask of doubt; and the sedate

opinion is your best scheming.

Act carefully before he will execute against you an affair

whose evil will excite a hidden illness.

Do you entrust Ta’hir with fighting the people while he has

adopted support for them and obedience to them?

He will cause to you difficulties which will result in a fierce war.

And he will send out the things hidden in his heart; when

the safeguarded things manifest, they will not disappear.

So take care of sureness, for its features have become

luminous, while doubts have become dark.

Then take what you want through a decisive opinion;

consider it carefully and leave that which does not occur.

When al-Hasan read these poetry lines, he changed his mind and wrote to Herthama b. A‘yun asking him to come quickly to him and delegated al-Sindi b. Sha’hik to meet him. There was an enmity and mutual alienation between al-Hasan and Herthama. When al-Sindi met him and handed him the letter. He read it and said: “We paved the way to the caliphate and cleared its sides for them, and then they took hold of the affairs and possessed alone the direction over us. When they face a certain attitude because of their bad direction and their losing the affairs, they want to set it right through us. No, by

Allah, we will not honor them until the Commander of the faithful (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) know their evil traces and ugly deeds."

Al-Sindi turned away from him and despaired of him. Then a letter came to him from al-Mansu'r b. al-Mahdi. When he read the letter, he responded and returned to Baghdad. When he arrived at al-Nahrwa'n, the people of Baghdad went out to receive him. At the head of them were the prominent figures and the commanders of the army. When they saw him, they dismounted. He stopped at his house. Al-Hasan b. SAhl ordered the records of the army to be brought to him. They were brought to him and he chose whomever he liked of men. The public Muslim treasuries were opened for him. So Herthama gathered an army and made arrangements to fight against Abu' al-Sara'ya'. When he completed his army, which was composed of thirty thousand fighters raging between horsemen and infantry soldiers, he took them and advanced towards Ku'fa. In the first place, he passed through al-Mada"in, defeated its governor and occupied it. Then he advanced towards Ku'fa and his army met the army of Abu' al-Sara'ya'. They clashed and terrible fights occurred between them. Many followers of Abu' al-Sara'ya' were killed and his military forces collapsed. Abu' al-Sara'ya was unable to protect Ku'fa, his Capital, so he left it for al-Qa'disiya (in Iraq), and then he left it for al-Su's, whose inhabitants closed the gates at his face. He asked them to open the gates and they did. Then a fight took place between the inhabitants of al-Su's and Abu' al-Sara'ya', who was forced to leave the city for Khurasa'n. He stopped in a village called Barqa'na'. The governor of Khurasa'n went to him and gave him security, and he responded to him. In the meantime the governor sent Abu' al-Sara'ya' to al-Hasan b. SAhl, who was then in al-Mada"in. When Abu' al-Sara'ya' arrived in al-Mada"in, al-Hasan b. SAhl ordered him to be killed, and he was killed. Then he ordered his head to be crucified at the eastern side of Baghdad as well as he ordered his body to be crucified at the western side of it.64 The period between Abu' al-Saraya"s revolt and his murder was ten months.65

With that this important revolt ended and about two hundred thousand fighters were killed during it. Without doubt this revolt and the like resulted from the bad 'Abba'sid policy which spared no effort to oppress the people and to force them to lead a life of abasement and enslavement.

Any how, the political life in the time of the Imam, peace be on him, was disorderly and ugly, for disorders spread and rebellions against the 'Abba'sid government dominated most regions of Islamic world.

Severe Punishments on the 'Alawides

The 'Abba'sids openly persecuted the 'Alawides, inflicted severe punishments on them, and killed them. As for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, he witnessed some of these severe punishments.

Al-Mansu'r al-Dawa'niqi was the first to bring about the discord between the 'Alawides and the 'Abba'sids.66 It was he who said: "I killed one thousand or more (persons) of the progeny of Fa'tima, and I left their master, protector, and Imam, Ja'far b. Muhammad.67"

He killed this number of the children of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, that he might make them provisions for him through offering them to Allah, the Exalted, and their grandfather, Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. It was he who left behind him the case of the heads of the 'Alawides, and attached to each head a piece of paper on which he wrote the name of the 'Alawide. The case contained the heads of old men, children, and youths.68

He said to Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him: "I will kill you and your family, that I may leave none of you on earth!69"

When Abu' al-Qa'sim al-Rassi escaped from al-Mansu'r and went to al-Sind, he said:

The tyrant is not satisfied with our blood which he sheds

every where, and he does not fall short of looking for (us).

Nothing will quench his thirst except that he will not see

on earth a son belongs to the daughter of the Prophet.70

Al-Sayyid Amir 'Ali said: "Shedding the blood of the children of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, is the worst page in the history of the 'Abba'sid state.71"

In the time of al-Ha'di, the 'Alawide family suffered from fear and terrorism, for he (al-Ha'di) terrified them, looked for them, stopped their livelihoods, and wrote to (the governors of) the distant regions in order to summon them.72 He was the leader at the Battle of Fakh, which was similar to the Battle of Karbala" in tragedies, for the number of the heads which were sent to him was more than one hundred. Children and women were captured. The captives along with the children were killed.73

In the time of al-Rashid, the 'Alawides suffered from severe and cruel oppression. In this regard al-Fakhri said: "He (i.e. al-Rashid) was not afraid of Allah and His acts with respect to the leading members of 'Ali, while they were the innocent children of the daughter of his Prophet.74 He swore (by Allah) that he would kill them and their followers. He said: 'Till when will I be patient toward the family of Abu' Ta'lib? By Allah, I will kill them and their followers.'75" He ordered his governor over Medina (Yathrib) to force the 'Alawides to guarantee each other.76 It was he who demolished the grave of the master of martyrs and sweet basil of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, Imam al-Husayn. He ordered the nabk in whose shade the visitors sat to be cut down. This was done by his governor over Ku'fa Musa' b. 'Isa' al-'Abba'si.77

The most dreadful sin which he committed was his assassinating the Imam of the Muslims and master of the Allah-fearing, Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him. That was after he had spent many years in his (al-Rashid's) prisons.

In his poem al-'Asma", Di'bil al-Khaza"i lamented for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and described

the sufferings of the ‘Alawides such as killing, prison, and torture at the hands of the ‘Abba’sids. He says:

We know that all the districts which belong to Dhi

Yama’n, Bakr, and Mudar took part in shedding their blood

just as the gamblers take part in gamble.

They killed them, took them as captives, burnt them, and

plundered them just as the invaders did toward the People

of Rome and Khazar.

I think that the Umayyads were excused when they had

done (what they did), but I think that the ‘Abba’sids have no excuse.[78]

Mansu’r al-Nimri says:

The family of the prophet and those who love them hide

themselves out of fear of killing.

The Christians and the Jews feel secure, while they (the

Prophet’s family) eternally belong to the community of

monotheism.

In his poem in which he laments for Yahya’, the immortal martyr, Ibn al-Ru’mi, a great poet, displays the sufferings of the ‘Alawides as follows:

O people, your harm has lasted (through your losing) the family of Allah’s Messenger. So fear (Allah) or hope for (Him).

Every time one of the pure (children) of the Prophet Muhammad is killed and stained (with his own) blood.

Through him, you sell the religion to evil Imams.[79] So, by Allah, the religion of Allah is about to be corrupt and confused.

Then he says:

O children of the Chosen One (the Prophet), until when do

the people kill your children?

Your tribulation will soon be dispelled.

Isn't there anyone who conforms to the right

of his Prophet and fears his Lord?[80]

In their many poems, the free poets have shown that the tyrannical rulers persecuted and oppressed the 'Alawides. We have mentioned many of their poems in our books on the Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, that the dear reader may refer to them. We will end this research with the following letter, which shows the sufferings of the 'Alawides.

The Letter of al-Khawa'rizmi

In his letter to the people of Nisha'bu'r, al-Khawa'rizmi demonstrated the ordeals and tribulations which befell the 'Alawides. We will narrate some of the letter as follows: "When they (i.e. the Umayyads) violated that sanctity and committed that dreadful sin, Allah became angry with them and removed the dominion from them, so He sent against them (Abu' Mujrim), not Abu' Muslim, and he looked, may Allah not look at him, at the firmness of the 'Alawides and at the leniency of the 'Abba'sids, so he left his reverential fear and followed his caprice, and sold his hereafter for his world through his killing 'Abd Allah b. Mu'a'wiya b. 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far b. Abu' Ta'lib, and empowered the tyrants of Khurasa'n, the Kurds of Asfaha'n, and the Kha'rijites of Sijsta'n over the family of Abu' Ta'lib.

He killed them everywhere, and sought them in every plain and mountain until Allah empowered over him the most lovable of people to Him, and he killed him as he killed the people in obeying him, and punished him as he punished the people in pledging allegiance to him; it does not benefit him that he has made Allah angry through his pleasure, and committed what He does not desire. Al-Dawa'niqi dominated the whole world, so he oppressed and wronged (the people) and treated (them) unjustly, hence his prisons were full of the members of the House of the Message (*Ahl Bayt al-Risa'la*), the source of goodness and purity.

He traced their absent and arrested their present until he killed 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Husayni in al-Sind at the hand of 'Umar b. Hisha'm al-Tha'labi; then what do you think of those who were close to him and easy for him to arrest? This is little in comparison with those of them Ha'ru'n killed, and with what Musa' had done toward them before him. You have come to know what al-Husayn b. 'Ali faced at the hand of Musa' at (the Battle of) Fakh; (what) 'Ali b. al-Aftas al-Husayni (faced) at the hand of Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid); (what) Ahmed b. 'Ali al-Zaydi and al-Qa'sim b. 'Ali al-Husayni (faced) in prison; (and what) Ghassa'n b. Ha'dir al-Khaza''i (faced) when he ordered him to be taken. Generally speaking, before his death, Ha'ru'n had reaped the Tree of Prophethood and uprooted the Plant of the Imamate; you, may Allah set you right, have a greater share in religion than al-A'mash, for they have cursed him; more than Shurayk, for the they have removed him (from the office); more than Hisha'm, for

they have frightened him; and more than ‘Ali b. Yaqtin, for they have accused him....”

After this part of his letter, al-Khawa’rizmi mentioned the Umayyads, and then he mentioned the ‘Abba’sids, saying: “And say about the ‘Abba’sids, for you, through praising Allah, will find a statement; pass through their wonders and you will see whatever you like.

“Their (the Imams’) war booties are collected and divided among the Daylami and the Turkish and they are carried to the Moroccan and the Forgha’ni, but when one of the Imams of guidance or one of the ‘Alawides from among the Household of the Chosen One (*al-Mustafa’*, i.e. the Prophet) dies, none follows his coffin or plasters his grave. However, if insignificant one of them (the ‘Abba’sids) dies, men of justice and judges follow his coffin. The leaders and the governors go to mosque for condolences on his behalf. They (the ‘Abba’sids) give security to him who is an atheist or sophisticate, and they do not oppose him who reads a philosophical or Ma’ni book. However, they kill him who is a Shi‘ite and shed the blood of him who names his son ‘Ali.

“If none of the Shi‘ites of the *Ahl al-Bayt* other than al-Mu‘lla’ b. Khanis, killed by Da’wud b. ‘Ali, was killed, and if none of them was imprisoned apart from Abu’ Tura’b al-Marwazi, then that would be a wound which never recovered, anger which never calmed, a crack which never closed, and an injure which never healed. It is sufficient for them that the poets of Quraysh in the pre-Islamic times composed poems in which they satirized the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and opposed the poems of the Muslims; yet their poems have been reported, and their stories have been recorded and transmitted by narrators like al-Wa’qidi, Wahab b. Munabbih al-Tamimi, al-Kalbi, al-Sharqi b. al-Qata’mi, al-Haythem b. ‘Adi, and Da’b b. al-Kin’ani. Some Shi‘ite poets spoke of the laudable deeds of the Revelation; rather they mentioned the miracles of the Prophets, may Allah bless him and his family; nevertheless their tongues were cut off and their divans were torn, as it was done toward ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Amma’r al-Barqi, as it was wanted toward al-Kumayt b. Zayd al-Asadi, as the grave of Mansu’r b. al-Zubrqa’n al-Nimri was dug up, and as it was schemed against Di‘bil b. ‘Ali al-Khaza’‘i. They (the ‘Abba’sids) associated with Marwa’n b. Abu’ Hafsa al-Yama’mi and ‘Ali b. al-Jahm al-Sha’mi for nothing except for their extremism in opposition (to the Imams), and their worthiness of the detest of the Lord, to the extent that Ha’ru’n b. al-Khayzara’n and Ja‘far, who relied on Satan not on the Merciful (Allah), did not give money to anyone except to those who cursed ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib and supported the creed of his opponents such as ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘ab al-Zubayri, Wahab b. Wahab al-Bakhtari, and the poet Marwa’n b. Abu’ Hafsa al-Amawi. During the days of Ja‘far, there were (persons) such as Bakka’r b. ‘Abd Allah al-Zubari, Abu’ al-Samt b. Abu’ al-Jawn al-Amawi, and Ibn Abu’ al-Shawa’rib al-‘Abshami.”

After this speech he (al-Khawa’rizmi) mentioned the Umayyads and their oppression toward the ‘Alawides, and then he continued his speech about the ‘Abba’sids, saying: “And this is not more amazing than the shouting of the poets of the ‘Abba’sids at their heads with the truth, even if they hated it. Giving details of him whom they (the ‘Abba’sids) disparaged and killed, Mansu’r b. al-Zubarqa’n said on Ha’ru’n’s carpet:

“‘The family of the prophet and those who love them hide

themselves out of fear of killing.

The Christians and the Jews feel secure, while they (the

Prophet’s family) eternally belong to the community of

monotheism.’

“Di‘bil, the creature of the ‘Abba’sids and their poet, said[81]: ‘Do you not see that I have gone and come for thirty years, and I am always in sorrow? I see that their booty is divided among other than them, and their hands are void of their booty.’

“‘Ali b. al-‘Abba’s al-Ru’mi, al-Mu‘tasim’s retainer, said: ‘I have sworn that none of you will be hit on the forehead. We will be patient toward you, O the Banu’ al-‘Abba’s, just as the brave one heavily armed is patient toward the sword. Every time one of the pure (children) of the Prophet Muhammad is killed and stained (with his own) blood.’

“Ibra’him b. al-‘Abba’s al-Sawli, who was the scribe of the people and their governor, said concerning al-Ridha’ when al-Ma’mu’n brought him near: ‘He bestows upon you through your properties, and you are given one percent.’

“And how does a group of people not revolt against them (the ‘Abba’sids), while they have killed their cousins, filled the houses of the Turks and the Daylamis with silver and gold, ask for the help of the Maghribi and the Fargha’ni; the black Nabatis have undertaken their ministries; the non-Arabs (*‘ajam*) and the *Timtimis*[82] have surrounded their leadership; nevertheless the family of Abu’ Ta’lib have been deprived of the inheritance of their mother and of the booty (*fayya’*) of their grandfather; the ‘Alawide feels appetite for a certain meal, but he is deprived of it; he asks the days for the appetite but he does not get it. The land tax (*khara’jj*) of Egypt and of al-Ahwa’z, the alms of the two sacred cities (Mecca and Medina) and of al-Hija’z are spent on Ibn Maryam al-Madini, Ibra’him al-Mousili, Ibn Ja’mi‘ al-Sahmi, Zalzal al-Da’rib, and Barsoma’ al-Za’mir. The feudal estates of Bakhtishiyu’‘ al-Nasra’ni, Ja’ri al-Turki, and al-Afshin al-Ashrawasani are enough to be the food of a country and sufficient to numerous communities.

“They claim that al-Mutawakkil spends the night with twelve thousand mistresses, while the Sayyid from among the Sayyids of the Household is chaste through a Negro or a Sindi woman; the choice of the fund of land tax is confined to the provisions of the Safa’‘ina, the dining tables of the Makha’tina, the foods of the Kalla’bin, the rites of the Qarra’din, Makha’riq, ‘Ilwiya the singer, Zarzar, and ‘Umar b. Ba’na al-MAhlabi, while they (the ‘Abba’sids) are miserly toward the Fa’timids through a meal or a drink. They (the ‘Abba’sids) spent it on a Danek (weight) of a meal; they buy the songstress for ten thousand dirhams and spend on her (an amount) sufficient to the provisions of an army.

“While the people to whom one-fifth (*khums*) is lawful, alms is unlawful, dignity and love is obligatory, beg out of distress and perish owing to poverty; they mortgage their swords, sell their garments, look at their booty (*fayya’*) with a satisfied eye, and are strong toward their time through weak souls. They have no guilt except that their grandfather is the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, their father is the testamentary trustee (*wasi*), their mother is Fa’tima, their grandmother is Khadija, their creed is faith, and their Imam (leader) is the Qur’an; yet their rights are spent on the woman housekeeper, the barmaid, the masseuse, and the dressmaker; and their one-fifth (*khumus*) is divided among the pecking of the blood roosters, monkeys, the heads of the games, and the she-camel of journey.

“What shall I say concerning the people who incited the wild animals and birds to attack the Muslim women, plowed the grave of al-Husayn, peace be on him, and banished his visitors from their regions? What shall I say in the description of the people who were the sperms of the drunk in the wombs of the songstresses? What shall I say concerning the household from whom prostitution stemmed, through whom effeminacy spread, and through whom sodomy was known? Ibra’him b. al-Mahdi was a singer; al-Mutawakkil was lowly and womanish; al-Mu‘tazz was feminine; Ibn Zubayda was an idiot masseur; al-Ma’mu’n killed his brother; al-Muntasir killed his father; Musa’ b. al-Mahdi poisoned his mother; and al-Mu‘tazid killed his uncle.”

After this paragraph al-Khawa’rizmi presented the tragedies which the Umayyads committed, and then he ended his letter with mentioning the defects of the ‘Abba’sids, saying: “These defects though big, many, ugly and horrid are small and few in comparison with the defects of the ‘Abba’sids, who built the city of the tyrannical and spent the funds of the Muslims on amusement centers and sins.[83]”

I (i.e. the author) think that there is no inclusive political document similar to this one, for it contains all qualities of the ‘Abba’sid kings and gives an account of their evil policy of which is the extreme cruelty towards the ‘Alawides and depriving them of their natural rights, to the extent that they could not bear poverty; the ‘Abba’sids spent enormous funds on lusts, the mischievous, the singers, and the dissolute, whereas the Household (of the Prophet) and their followers were unable to find a loaf of bread, a garment, and other life requirements.

Similarly, this document gives an account of affairs of great importance; there is no need to explain them, for their meanings are clear.

The Wa’qifities

Another example of the events which occurred in the time of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and annoyed him very much was that the creed of the Wa’qifities spread among the classes of the Shi‘ites. The Wa’qifities maintained that Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, peace be on him, was alive, did not die, and would never die, that he was raised to the heaven just as al-Masih b. Maryam was raised, and that he was the awaited one who would undertake (the office of the Imamate, *al-qa”im*) and fill the world with justice and fairness as it was filled with oppression and tyranny. They claimed that the one who was in the prison of

al-Sindi was not Imam Musa', peace be on him, rather the people imagined that he was in prison. It is necessary for us to give a brief account of this group of people.

1. The Cause for the Wa'qifites' doctrines

As for the reason for the Wa'qifites's doctrines, it is that when Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, was in the prison of Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid), he appointed some agents on his behalf in order to collect the legal rights which had come to him from his Shi'ites, so some agents gathered many funds, for example, Ziya'd b. Marwa'n al-Qandi collected seventy thousand dinars, and 'Ali b. Abu' Hamza gathered thirty thousand dinars. When the Imam died, they dined his death and bought country estates and houses for the money which they had. When Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, demanded them to give the money to him, they denied the death of his father and refused to hand it over to him.84

2. The Wa'qifites' doctrines spread

The Wa'qifites' doctrines were spread by the summoners who lavishly spread enormous properties in order to buy the minds and to misguide the people. In this connection Yunus b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n narrated, saying: "Abu' Ibra'him Musa', peace be on him, died and every one of his people had a lot of money; this is the reason for their doctrines and their denying his death as a sign of desire for the properties, for example, Ziya'd b. Marwa'n al-Qandi had seventy thousand dinars, and 'Ali b. Abu' Hamza had thirty thousand dinars. When I saw that, I realized the truth and knew the affair of Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him. I began speaking and summoning the people to him. So they sent for me and said: 'What makes you do this? If you want money, we will help you.' They guaranteed me ten thousand dinars and said: 'Refrain from (this matter).' However, I refused (that) and said to them: 'We have been told on the authority of the two truthful ones, peace be on them, who said: 'When heresies appear, then it is obligatory on (religious) scholars to manifest their own knowledge. If they do not do (that), they will be deprived of the light of faith.' Any how, I will not leave jiha'd according to Allah's command. Accordingly, they showed enmity toward me and harbored malice against me.85"

Through such deceiving ways, the Wa'qifites spread their doctrines, but shortly after that they were destroyed and their false claims were discovered.

The Imam condemns the Wa'qifites' doctrines

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, condemned the Wa'qifites for their creeds. One of his followers (Shi'ites) had written to him and asked him about them, and he, peace be on him, replied: "The Wa'qifite has deviated from the True Religion and persisted in his evil deed. If he dies for it, then his abode is hell; and evil is the resort.86"

A Shi'ite asked Imam al-Ridha' whether it was permissible for him to pay *zaka't* (alms) to the Wa'qifites, and he prevented him from that, saying: "They (the Wa'qifites) are unbelievers, polytheists, and hypocrites.87"

Muhammad b. Fudayl visited Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and told him about the conditions of the leaders of the Wa'qifites, saying: "May I be your ransom, I have left Ibn Abu' Hamza, Ibn Mahra'n, and Ibn Abu' Sa'id (who were some leaders of the Wa'qifites), while they are the most violent of people in showing enmity toward Allah, the Most High."

The Imam answered him: "He who goes astray does not harm you when you are rightly guided. They (the Wa'qifites) have accused Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, of lying; they accused so-and-so, so-and-so of lying; and they have accused Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him, of lying; and I follow my fathers' example."

"You said to Ibn Mahra'n: 'May Allah take away the light of your heart and enter poverty in your house,'" retorted Muhammad.

"How is he, and how are his brothers?" asked the Imam, peace be on him.

Muhammad told him about the acceptance of his supplication and about their being miserable and poor, saying: "They are in the worst condition; they are grieved in Baghdad."

The Imam, peace be on him, was severe in his attitude toward the Wa'qifites, who mutinied against the True Religion and to denied the Imam.

1. The Imam and al-Husayn Bin Mahra'n

As for al-Husayn b. Mahra'n, he was among the eminent figures of the Wa'qifites; and he wrote to Imam al-Ridha' with an accent showing his hypocrisy and unbelief, for he ordered and prohibited the Imam; he did not respect the position of the Imam; and through that he did not conform to high moral traits in addressing. Accordingly, the Imam wrote a letter and ordered his companions to copy it, lest Ibn Mahra'n (i.e. al-Husayn) should conceal it. The letter is as follows:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, may Allah make you and me well; your letter have come to me; in it you have mentioned the man who is accused of treason and deception; and you say: 'Beware of him.' And you have mentioned that through which he received me, and sent to me other than him, so you have advanced (many things) as arguments; and you have claimed an affair against him and wanted to enter upon the like of it…You say: 'He has worked for my affair through his reason and his stratagem, seeking it for his own soul and willing to make the hearts of the people incline to him, that the affair may be at his hand and work according to his own viewpoint; and he claims that I have obeyed him in what he has advised me; and now you have counseled me according to what is right with you through reason and stratagem after you (through other than you). The affair is not right except through the two affairs: Either you accept the affair as it is or you give the people what they have demanded and put an end (to their demand); otherwise the matter is crooked in our viewpoint; and the people will not hand over my property which is in their hands and take it along with them; therefore, the matter is not according to your reason and stratagem.

“And we will not do what you have granted through opinion and consultation, but the affair belongs to Allah, the Great and Almighty, the One, and there is no partner with Him. He does toward His servants whatever He desires; he whom Allah guides is not misguided by anyone; and he whom He misguides is not guided by anyone, and you will not find any saint to guide him.

“You said: ‘And work through their affair and practice stratagem therein; and how is the stratagem? And Allah says: *And they swear by Allah with the most energetic of their oaths: Allah will not raise up him who dies. Yea! it is a promise biding on Him, quite true, but most people do not know*, to these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *And that they may earn what they are going to earn* (*of evil*). If you answer them concerning what they have questioned, they will be righteous and hand over; and what I have ordered you belongs to me; you and they have denied after me; and my meeting has been lengthened for me; and that has not occurred through me except that I have hoped for righteousness according to the words of the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him: ‘Approach and question (me).’ He began rubbing his belly and saying: ‘I have not filled it with food, but I have filled it with knowledge. By Allah, I know whether a verse was sent down on the sea or a land or a plain or a mountain, and I know concerning whom it was revealed.’ Similarly, Abu’ ‘Abd Allah, peace be on him, said: ‘I complain to Allah of the people of Medina; I am among them just like a hair, for I do not move; they want me not to say the truth. By Allah I will always say the truth until I die.’ I say the truth in order to spare your blood and unify you as you had been before, that your secrets may be hidden with you and not spread among those other than you.

“And Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, already said: ‘A secret about which Allah secretly told Gabriel; and about which Gabriel secretly told Muhammad, and about which Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, secretly told ‘Ali, and about which ‘Ali secretly told whomever he wished.’”

Then he said: [Abu’ Ja‘far, peace be on him, said:] “Then you speak about it on the road, so I want, as you your leader (*sa’hib*), to explain you affair for you; lest you should place it in other than its place and ask about it other than its men, and hence your ruin occurs through your questioning them. How many a person claimed (the affair) for himself and he did not fall under (it). Then you said: ‘If that belongs to him, it is necessary for him to maintain it and not to turn from it to other than it.’ I said: ‘Because he practiced precautionary dissimulation, and refraining from (it) is better. If he speaks, then it is obligatory on him to answer everything about which he is questioned. And what you claimed and demanded has occurred. So the affair concerns other than you and it is incumbent on you to follow them regarding it; but you have put into (effect) that which is right according to your reason, your viewpoints, and your analogy. When you claimed that my order was incorrect, you regarded your order as correct.’

“If you say that your leader (*sa’hib*) was not such, then you have discarded the command of your Lord behind your backs. Accordingly, if I follow your caprices, then I will go astray and I am not among those who are rightly guided, and there will be no escape for you from that you will be like those who had been

before you, while you have been told that the laws (*sunan*) and the examples are tit for tat.

“The refraining from harm which you demanded in the first place and the answer in the end will not make well your chests; nor will it take away your doubts; nor there will be an escape from that which occurred through you; nor will it leave your hearts until Allah takes it away from you. If all people are able to love us, recognize our rights and submit to our command, they will do, but Allah does whatever He wills and guides to Him those who turn (to Him in repentance).

“I already answered you about many questions. Then you and those who asked such questions must carefully consider the answers. If there is no cure in the answers, then I already gave you something which was regarded as an argument and a lesson. The many questions (which are asked as a sign of) blame are reprehensible in our viewpoint, for the questioners want nothing except to examine (us) in order to find a way to vague errors and mischief; and he who wants to make (things) unclear, Allah makes them unclear to him and entrusts him with his own soul; you and your companions do not see that I have answered (your questions); therefore, that is up to me. If I will and determine, that is up to me, not up to what you and your companions say. You do not know so-and-so; rather there is no escape for us from that, for we are sure of it, while you are doubtful about it.88”

This is the end of this letter which the Imam sent to al-Husayn b. Mahra’n. It contains ambiguous matters as well as there is no logical coherence in its paragraphs. It is more likely that something necessary for logical coherence and clarity has been omitted from it.

Any how, this letter has expressed the hardships which the Imam and the community received from the Wa’qifites, whom the world deceived.

2. Al-Husayn Bin ‘Umar

He said: [I did my best with Yahya’ b. Akthem (the judge of Sa’mrra”); I debated with him, conversed with him, communicated with him, and asked him about the knowledge of Muhammad’s Household; yet I heard say:] “One day while I was circling the grave of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, I saw Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Ridha’, peace be on him, circling it, so I debated with him on some questions which I had, and he answered them. The I said to him: ‘By Allah, I want to ask you a question but I am ashamed of that, so he said to me: ‘I will answer you before you question me, you want to ask me about the Imam.’ So I replied: ‘By Allah, this is what I want,’ and he said: ‘I am he.’ Then I asked him: ‘Is there any sign?’ There was a rod in his hand, and the rod uttered and said: ‘Surely my master is the Imam of this time, and he is the argument.’89”

Al-Husayn b. ‘Umar b. Yazid narrated, saying: “I went to al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and I was then a Wa’qifite; my father had asked his father about seven questions, and he answered him about sixth of them and refrained from (answering) the seventh (question). So I said: ‘By Allah, I will ask him about what my father had asked his father in order to know whether he is able to answer as (his father did).’ Then I asked him, and he answered six questions just as his father did, and he refrained (from

answering) the seventh (question).

“My father had said to his father: ‘I will protest against you before Allah on the Day of Resurrection, for you have claimed that ‘Abd Allah is not an Imam, so he, peace be on him, put his hand on his neck, and then he said to him: ‘Yes, protest against me through that before Allah, the Great and Almighty. If there is any sin therein, then it is in my neck (i.e. I will shoulder the responsibility for it), and so on.’90”

3. Al-Washsha”

Al-Washsha” reported, saying: “When I was a Wa’qifite, I went to Khurasa’n; I carried a mask with me; there was with me a brocaded garment in one of the parcels, but I did not know where I had put it. When I arrived in Khurasa’n and stopped at one of its houses, a Medinan man came and said to me: ‘Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’ say to you: ‘Send me the brocaded garment which is with you.’ So I asked the man: ‘Who told Abu’ al-Hasan about my arrival and having a brocaded garment?’ He went to him and told him, and then he came back to me and said to me: [He (al-Ridha’) says to you:] ‘It is in the place so-and-so.’ I looked for it where he said, and then I sent it to him.91” This was the reason for his being rightly guided.

These are some believers whom Allah guided to faith, who withdrew from the Wa’qifites’ doctrines and adopted the Imamate of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.

The Problem of creating the Qur’an

Among the important event in the time of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, is the problem of creating the Qur’an, for the religious scholars extremely differed over it, and a group of them suffered from the displeasure and vengeance of the state along with the anger of the people.

This opinion occurred at the end of the Umayyad government; al-Ju‘d b. Dirham, the teacher of Marwa’n b. Muhammad, the last Umayyad caliph, was the first to originate it. He was the first to speak about it; he already wrote and explained its chapters, and then he announced it in Damascus. However the authorities there summoned him, but he left it for Kufa. Al-Jahm b. Safwa’n, to whom the Jahmi sect belonged, learned from him.92 In this respect Ibn al-Athir said: “Surely, Hisha’m b. ‘Abd al-Malik ordered al-Ju‘d to be captured and to be sent to Kha’lid al-Qasri, the governor of Iraq, in order to kill him. Kha’lid imprisoned him and did not kill him. When Hisha’m heard of that, he wrote to him, blamed him, and commanded him to kill him. Hence Kha’lid ordered al-Ju‘d to be brought in chains out of prison. After he had performed the prayer of ‘Id al-Addha’, he said at the end of his sermon: ‘Go and sacrifice (animals), may Allah accept (that) from you, for, today, I will sacrifice al-Ju‘d, who says: ‘Allah did not speak to Musa’; nor did Allah take Ibra’him as a bosom friend.’ Allah is far above what al-Ju‘d says.’ Then he descended (from the pulpit) and killed him.93”

This idea remained hidden until the time of Ha’ru’n al-Rashid. When the Mu‘tazilites appeared, they

announced that the Qur'an was created. Bishr al-Marisi was the most important person in summoning the people to this idea. He wrote many books on it. When Ha'ru'n heard of him, he said: "By Allah, if I find him, I will kill him." When Bishr hear of that, he hid himself throughout the government of Ha'ru'n.94

When al-Ma'mu'n undertook the government, he said that the Qur'an was created, forced the people to believe in this idea, and subjected them to vengeance and torture when they opposed it. Accordingly, this movement became active, and the idea grew and spread widely.

This matter is regarded as the most important event in the time of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him; the philosophers from among the Mu'tazilites and others presented it and explained its sides. It is worth mentioning that this idea belongs to the psychological branches and researches. Had it not been for that the chapter would be diffuse and the book become too long, we would speak about it in detail.95

Fabricating Lies against the Imams

Fabricating traditions and lies against the Imams, peace be on them, was famous in the time of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and other times. Some people fabricated traditions and ascribed them to the Imams in order to degrade their rank and decrease their importance. Among the fabricated traditions is that which narrated by Abu' al-Salt, who asked Imam al-Ridha', saying: "O Son of Allah's Apostle, what do the people narrate on your authority?"

"What is it?" asked the Imam.

"They say that the people are your slaves," replied Abu' al-Salt.

The Imam denied that and renounced it, saying: "O Allah, the Creator of the heavens and earth, Knower of the things unseen and seen, You bear witness that I have never said that; nor have I heard any of my fathers say it. You know that this community has practiced injustices toward us; this is one of them."

Then he turned to Abu' al-Salt and asked him: "'Abd al-Sala'm (i.e. Abu' al-Salt), if all people were our slaves, as they say, then to whom should we sell them? 'Abd al-Sala'm, do you deny our authority, made obligatory by Allah, as the others do?"

Al-'Alla'ma al-Sayyid Ha'shim Ma'ru'f al-Husayni commented on this narration, saying: "The Imam criticized the questioner for that accusation through which their enemies wanted to defame them; he regarded it as one of the injustices which the community practiced toward them, for ascribing that to them means that they broke the laws of Islam and the texts of the Qur'an, which demonstrates that there is no difference between a person and other except through reverential fear (*taqqwa'*)96"

With this matter we will end our talk about the time of Imam al-Ridha'. I (the author) have mentioned a detailed research about this time in my book *Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far*, peace be on him, so I do not want to mention it again.

1. Al-A‘la’m, vol. 5, p. 29.
2. Ibn Khullaka’n, Wafaya’t al-A‘ya’n, vol. 2, p. 426.
3. Rihlat Ibn Jubayr, p. 208.
4. Haya’t al-Imam Muhammad al-Jawa’d, p. 197.
5. Tamhid Li Ta’rikh al-Falsafa, p. 47.
6. Ibn al-Nadim, al-Fihrast, p. 339.
7. ‘Asr al-Ma’mu’n, vol. 1, p. 375.
8. Al-Tibya’n, vol. 1, p. 4.
9. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ba’qir, vol. 1, p. 181.
10. Ibid.
11. Haya’t al-Imam al-Muhammad al-Jawa’d, p. 194.
12. Muqaddamat al-Muqni‘ wa al-Hida’ya, p. 10.
13. Tamhid Li Ta’rikh al-Falsafa al-Isla’miya, pp. 202-203.
14. Haya’t al-Imam al-Muhammad al-Jawa’d, p. 195.
15. Haya’t al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, vol. 1, p. 82.
16. Ta’rikh al-Isla’m, vol. 2, p. 338.
17. Haya’t al-Imam Muhammad al-Jawa’d, p. 191.
18. Ta’rikh al-Falsafa fi al-Isla’m, p. 39.
19. Haya’t al-Imam Muhammad al-Jawa’d, p. 192.
20. Al-Ida’ra al-Isla’miya fi ‘Aiz al-‘Arab, p. 82.
21. Al-Muqaddamat, pp. 179-180.
22. Haya’t al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far.
23. Ibn al-Athir, Ta’rikh, vol. 6, p. 433.
24. Mu’jam al-Bulda’n, vol. 3, p. 175.
25. Al-Dira’ya’t, p. 364.
26. Fam al-Sulh, a district north of Wa’sit. It had a river called Fam al-Sulh, which took water from the Tigris on the eastern side. Mu‘jam al-Bulda’n, vol. 5, p. 177.
27. Al-Muwafaqa’t, p. 98.
28. Nisa’’ al-Khulafa’’, p. 68.
29. Al-Tabari, Ta’rikh.
30. Tazyin al-Aswa’q, vol. 3, p. 117.
31. Al-Hada’’iq al-Wardiya, vol. 2, p. 220.
32. Hida’rat al-Isla’m.
33. Bashsha’r, Divan, vol. 3, p. 190.
34. Ibid., p. 59.
35. Al-Hida’ra al-Isla’miya, vol. 1, p. 199.
36. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 200.
37. Ibid., p. 234.
38. Ibid., pp. 132-133.
39. Ahmed b. Yahya’, Dhikr al-Mu‘tazila, p. 92.
40. Ibn al-Athir, Ta’rikh, vol. 8, pp. 181-182.
41. Al-Maha’sin wa al-Masa’wi’, p. 339.
42. Al-Wizara’’ wa al-Kitta’b, p. 142.
43. Al-Ya‘qu’bi, Ta’rikh, vol. 3, p. 146.
44. Al-Khara’jj, p. 116.
45. Ibid., 118.
46. Al-Mas‘u’di, Muru’jj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 318. Al-Bid’ wa al-Ta’rikh, vol. 6, p. 92. ‘Umara’’ al-Shi‘r al-‘Arab fi al-‘Asr al-‘Abba’si, p. 35.

47. Al-Zubayr, p. 23.
48. ‘Asr al-Ma’mu’n.
49. Al-Tabari, Ta’rikh.
50. Ta’rikh Baghdad, vol. 10, p. 215.
51. Al-Imama wa al-Siya’sa, vol. 1, p. 145.
52. Niha’yat al-Irab
53. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’, p. 108.
54. Ibn Rashiq, al-‘Umda, vol. 1, p. 75.
55. Nazariyat al-Imama, p. 381.
56. He was given this name because there was a stutter in his tongue when he was a child. It was his father who had given him this name. Ibn Khaldu’n, vol. 4, p. 8.
57. Maqa’til al-Ta’libiyyin, p. 539
58. Ibid., 519.
59. Haya’t al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, vol. 2, pp. 400-401, quoted from Ibn Khaldu’n’s Ta’rikh, vol. 7, p. 243.
60. The poet has likened Islam to a camel.
61. Maqa’til al-Ta’libiyyin, p. 533.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Haya’t al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, vol. 2, pp. 403-406, quoted from the book Maqa’til al-Ta’libiyyin and the like.
65. Al-Tabari, Ta’rikh, vol. 10, p. 231. Ibn al-Athir, Ta’rikh, vol. 5, p. 177.
66. Al-Siyu’ti, Ta’rikh al-Khulafa’’, p. 261. Al-Mas‘u’di, Muru’jj al-Dhahab, vol. 4, p. 222.
67. Al-Adab fi Zil al-Tashayyu‘, p. 68.
68. Al-Tabari, Ta’rikh, vol. 10, p. 446.
69. Al-Mana’qib, vol. 10, p. 446.
70. Al-Maqrizi, al-Niza’‘ wa al-Takha’sum, p. 51.
71. Mukhtasar Ta’rikh al-‘Arab, p. 18.
72. Al-Ya‘qu’bi, Ta’rikh, vol. 3, p. 136.
73. Haya’t al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far.
74. Al-Ada’b al-Sulta’niya, p. 20.
75. Abu’ al-Farajj al-Asfaha’ni, al-Agha’ni, vol. 5, p. 225.
76. Al-Wila’t wa al-Quda’t, p. 198.
77. Al-Shaykh al-Tu’si, al-Ama’li, p. 330.
78. Di‘bil, Divan.
79. By the evil Imams the poet means the ‘Abba’sid kings.
80. Maqa’til al-Ta’libiyyin, p. 646.
81. Di‘bil al-Khaza’‘i was not the creature of the ‘Abba’sis; rather he was the creature of the members of the House (Ahl al-Bayt), peace be on them, and their poet. For them, he faced difficulties and persecutions.
82. The Timtimis are those who speak Arabic incorrectly.
83. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’, pp. 100-106, quoted from al-Khawa’rizmi’s Letters.
84. Biha’r al-Anwa’r, vol. 2, p. 308.
85. Ibid., vol. 12, p. 308.
86. Haya’t al-Imam al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, vol. 2, p. 207.
87. Biha’r al-Anwa’r, vol. 2, p. 909.
88. Al-Kashi, Mu‘jam Rija’l al-Hadith, vol. 6, pp. 104-107.
89. Usu’l al-Ka’fi, vol. 1, p. 353.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 354.
92. Sarh al-‘Uyua’n, p. 159.

93. ‘Asr al-Ma’mu’n, vol. 1, p. 395.
94. Al-Nuju’m al-Za’hira, vol. 1, p. 147.
95. Haya’t al-Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, vol. 2, p. 213.
96. Sirat al-A’Imma al-Ithna’ ‘Ashar, vol. 2, p. 359.

Chapter 14: In The Time Of Al-Rashid, Al-Amin, And Al-Ma’mun

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, was a contemporary of three ‘Abba’sid kings: Al-Rashid, al-Amin, and al-Ma’mu’n. In the time of al-Rashid, the Imam’s soul was full of deep sadness and bitter sorrow, for Ha’ru’n al-Rashid took severe measures against the ‘Alawides in general and against his (the Imam’s) father, Imam al-Ka’zim, peace be on him. We talked about these measures in the previous chapters of this book. Now, we will briefly speak about these kings and their attitudes toward Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him.

Ha’ru’n al-Rashid

He is the most famous ‘Abba’sid king; his name is widespread; his reputation is widely known in the east and the west; the world responded to him; the kingdom was brilliant to him; Baghdad, the bide of the east, was his capital; his rule and power extended to most regions of the world; it was he who said to clouds: “You rain in my kingdom!” The kings of the world yielded to him and became small before his power. Now, we will speak about some characteristics of his personality as follows:

A. Cruelty

As for cruelty, it was among his elements and characteristics. Al-Amir Shakib said: “He (Ha’ru’n al-Rashid) was as tyrannical and blood-thirsty just as the tyrannical kings of the east were.1”

An example of his severe cruelty is that he destroyed the ‘Alawides, punished them severely, and wreaked upon them painful torture which they had never faced except in the time of his grandfather, the tyrannical shedder of blood, Mansu’r al-Dawa’niqi. We have demonstrated the tragedies they faced in his time.

B. Malice

Yet another element of al-Rashid’s personality is that he bore malice against those who had noble lineage and brilliant figures who enjoyed a remarkable rank in the social circles. For example, he bore malice against the master of the Muslims, Imam Musa’ b. Ja‘far, so he ordered him to be placed in a

dark prison, and to be given poison to drink. That was because the Imam occupied a notable position in the souls of the Muslims. Similarly, he bore a grudge against those whose reputation was widely known and whose excellence was spread among the people. He distressed the Bara'mika, killed their eminent figures, abased them, and confiscated their properties; that was because of their rank with the people, for example, the poets spoke constantly about their names, announced their generosity and munificence. He was so angry with them that he punished them severely. As a result, malice was one of the qualities of Ha'ru'n's personality and the most prominent one of his elements.

C. Meanness

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid had nothing of reverential fear and faith; he was ignoble and clinging to his lusts and pleasures. The following are some examples of his meanness:

A. His Drinking Wine

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid was alcoholic. Perhaps he himself undertook giving wine to his drinking companions. His sister 'Aliya made good wine and sent it to him. We have mentioned his alcoholism in detail in our book *Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far* (the Life of Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far), peace be on him.

B. His Fondness of Singing

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid grew up among the songstresses, for there was a large number of female musicians and songstresses, for example, there was in his palace three hundred beautiful women who played musical instruments and sang.[2] He classified the singers into threes categories: The first category consists of Ibra'him al-Mousli, Ibn Ja'mi', and Zalzal al-Da'rib. As for Zalzal, he played on the lute; as for (Ibra'him) al-Mousli and Ibn Ja'mi', they were singers. The second category is composed of Isha'q, Salim b. Sala'm, and 'Amru' al-Ghazza'l. The third category includes the owners of the stringed instruments and the mandolins.[3]

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid fell in love with three songstresses from among his female-slaves; they are Gha'dir, Ma'rida, and Hayla'na. Concerning them he composed poetry of which are the following lines:

The three young ladies have possessed my rein and

occupied the dearest place in my heart.

Why do all people obey me and I obey them, while

they disobey me?

That is (nothing) except the power of love through which

they overcame those who were powerful than me.[4]

We have presented in detail this quality of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid's life in our book *Haya't al-Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far* (the Life of Imam Musa' Bin Ja'far).

C. His Playing Game at Dice

Another example of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid's meanness and his paying no attention to the unlawful is that he played game at dice (*nard*), which is a kind of gambling. One day he played game at dice with Ibra'him al-Mousli. He bet him on the robe of honor which he (Ibra'him) wore. He beat Ibra'him, so he (Ibra'him) stood up and took off his garments, but Ha'ru'n al-Rashid refused to wear them and said to him:

"Woe upon you! I wear your garments?"

"Yes, by Allah," replied Ibra'him, "if you want to treat (me) with justice; if you do not treat (me) with justice, then you are powerful and able."

"Woe upon you! Shall I pay a ransom on your behalf?"

"Yes," he answered.

"What is the ransom?" asked al-Rashid.

"You suggest, O Commander of the faithful," replied Ibra'him, "for you are more appropriate for power."

"I will give all the garments I am wearing," al-Rashid retorted.

"Then order them (to be given to me)," demanded Ibra'him.

As a result Ha'ru'n al-Rashid called for garments other than those he was wearing, and then he took off the garments he was wearing and gave them to Ibra'him.[5] He played chess when he traveled by the Tigris.[6]

These are some acts which have been transmitted regarding Ha'ru'n al-Rashid, and they clearly show that he was mean and did not cling to the teachings of the True Religion.

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid went too far in practicing pleasures; his palace was a theater for all kinds of prostitution and dissoluteness; it was rarely void of dancing and singing parties and drinking wine; therefore, his government did not represent Islam.

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid's Attitude toward Imam al-Ridha'

When Ha'ru'n al-Rashid assassinated Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him, he sent a band of his security forces to spy upon the affairs of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and to inform him of his tendencies and inclinations.

The Imam, peace be on him, understood that, so he intended to get rid of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid. He went to market while the detectives were following him. He, peace be on him, bought a rooster, a dog, and a ewe. The detectives informed Ha'ru'n al-Rashid of that. When he (Ha'ru'n al-Rashid) came to know of that, he became free from worry and fear of the Imam and knew that he was not ready to establish any movement against him, and then he ordered his detectives to return to Baghdad.

As for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, he busied himself with spreading the laws of Allah and the teachings of Islam and explaining the sides of the Imamate. Accordingly, some eminent figures of his Shi'ites feared that Ha'ru'n al-Rashid would subject him to a reprehensible deed. They felt that the Imam was not afraid of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid after buying the rooster, the dog, and the ewe.[7] Some of those who feared for the Imam and warned him against the attack of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid are as follows:

1. Safwa'n Bin Yahya'

Safwa'n said: "When Abu' Ibra'him, peace be on him, passed way and Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha' spoke (about the Imamate), we feared for him, so it was said to him: 'Surely you have manifested a great affair, and we have feared for you from this tyrannical (i.e. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid).' 'Let him do his best,' he, peace be on him, said, 'for he has no way against me.'[8]"

2. Muhammad Bin Sina'n

Muhammad b. Sina'n said: "I said to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha' (peace be on him) during the days of Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid): 'Surely, you have made yourself famous through this affair (i.e. manifesting the Imamate) and your sitting in the assembly of your father, while the sword of Ha'ru'n is dripping blood (i.e. the blood of the Household of the Prophet and their followers.)'

"Hence he, peace be on him, said: 'I have been encouraged by the words of Allah's Messenger (may Allah bless him and his family), who said: 'If Abu' JAhl takes a hair from my head, then bear witness that I am not a prophet.' For this reason I say to you: 'If Ha'ru'n takes a hair from my head, then bear witness that I am not an Imam.'[9]"

'Isa' Bin Ja'far informs Ha'ru'n al-Rashid of the Imam

When Ha'ru'n al-Rashid left al-Riqqa and headed for Mecca, 'Isa' b. Ja'far approached and said to him: "I want to remind you of the oath you made concerning the family of Abu' Ta'lib; you swore (by Allah) that if anyone after Musa' claimed the Imamate for himself, you would strike off his head. This is 'Ali, his son, claim this matter (i.e. the Imamate) for himself, and it is said regarding him just as it is said regarding his father."

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid paid no attention to his statement; he looked at him with anger and asked him: "What do you see? Do you want me to kill them all?"

Musa' b. 'Umra'n was at the meeting, so he hastened to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and told him about the matter, and he, peace be on him, said: "I do not worry; they can do nothing toward me![10]"

Yahya' informs Ha'ru'n al-Rashid of the Imam

Yahya' al-Barmaki was among those who informed Ha'ru'n al-Rashid of the Imam; he said to him: "This is 'Ali al-Ridha' b. Musa' has advanced and claimed the affair (i.e. the Imamate) for himself."

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid paid no attention to him and said to him: "What we had done toward his father is sufficient to us.[11]"

All the attempts which were woven against the Imam failed.

The Imam's Supplication against the Bara'mika

The Bara'mika played a dangerous role in subjecting the Imam to tragedies, for they made Ha'ru'n al-Rashid, the tyrannical, bear malice against him. As for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, he was fully aware (of their plots), hence he invoked Allah against them. Muhammad b. al-Fudayl narrated, saying: "In the year when Ha'ru'n al-Rashid assaulted the Bara'mika and a tribulation befell them, Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha' was standing at 'Arafa and supplicating (Allah); then he bowed his head. He was asked about that, and he answered: 'I was invoking Allah, the Exalted, against the Bara'mika regarding what they did toward my father, so Allah has accepted my supplication against them on this day.' Shortly after that, Ha'ru'n al-Rashid attacked with violence Ja'far and Yahya', and their conditions changed.[12]"

Al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'' reported on the authority of Musa'fir, saying: "I was with Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, at Mina'. Yahya' b. Kha'lid al-Barmaki along with a group of people from among the family of Barmak passed. So he, peace be on him, said: 'Those (people) are miserable; they do not know what will befall them in this year.'"

The Imam added, saying: "I wonder at this! Ha'ru'n and I are like this." He placed his two fingers together.

Musa'fir said: "By Allah, we did not understand the meaning of his statement until we buried him beside him (Ha'ru'n al-Rashid).[13]"

Allah accepted the supplication of His friend (al-Ridha'). He severely punished the Bara'mika, removed their blessings, and destroyed their eminent figures. That is because Ha'ru'n al-Rashid attacked them with violence. He killed Ja'far and halved him and put each part in a sensitive place in Baghdad. Moreover, he imprisoned Yahya' along with his own children and confiscated their movable and immovable properties.

The Imam's House is attacked

Ha'ru'n al-Rashid sent al-Julu'di to war against Muhammad b. Ja'far b. Muhammad, who revolted against him. He ordered him to attack the 'Alawides' house and to plunder their womenfolk of their garments and jewels and not to leave them wearing anything except a garment for each of them.

Al-Julu'di attacked the house of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so the Imam stood up and gathered the 'Alawide ladies from among the daughters of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, in one house, and then he stood up at the door of the house. Al-Julu'di said to the Imam:

"There is no escape from that; I should enter the house and plunder them (of their garments and jewels) just as Ha'ru'n al-Rashid ordered me."

"I will give (their garments and jewels), retorted the Imam, "I swear (by Allah) that I will take all the things they are wearing."

The Imam went on convincing al-Julu'di, and he became calm. Then the Imam entered the house and gathered the garments and ornaments of the 'Alawide ladies, to the extent that he gathered their earrings, their anklets, and their buttons. Then he handed over all these things to al-Julu'di, who handed them over to the tyrannical one of Baghdad (i.e. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid).[14]"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was very displeased with this flagrant aggression against his household. This means that Ha'ru'n al-Rashid did not respect the dignity of the Imam nor the dignity of the daughters of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. Besides he behaved toward them just as Yazid's soldiers did toward the family of al-Husayn the sweet basil of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and the master of the youths of the Garden, peace be on him after murdering him. That was (at Karbala") when they pushed each other like vicious dogs in order to loot the garments and ornaments of the 'Alawide ladies.

Any how, I (i.e. the author) think that Ha'ru'n al-Rashid did not take any other measure toward Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. It is worth mentioning that the Imam's soul was full of deep sadness because of the misfortunes which befell his father Imam Musa', peace be on him, at the hand of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid, who placed him in a dark prison for many years, tortured him, and then assassinated him. Moreover, he was so displeased with the 'Alawides that he punished them severely and killed them everywhere. As a result he paid no attention to their genealogical links and closeness to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who asked his community to treat his Household kindly and to feel pity for them.

Sufya'n's Letter to Ha'ru'n

It is an act of goodness to end our talk about Ha'ru'n al-Rashid with this valuable letter which Sufya'n

al–Thawri (or Sufya'n b. 'Ayniya) sent to him, for it discloses many sides of his life. He had written a letter to Sufya'n asking him to show affection toward him and to communicate with him, and he answered him through the following:

"From the servant who will die, to the servant who is deceived by hopes and who is deprived of the sweetness of faith and the pleasure of reciting the Qur'an.

"Now then, I am writing to inform you that I have severed your robe and cut off your love, and that you have appointed me as a witness against you through your confession against your own soul in your letter, for you attacked the Muslim public treasury, spent it on other than its right and used it up on other than its precept; yet you are not content with what you have done; you are far from me when you wrote to me to make me bear witness against you. As for me and my brothers who were present during the recitation of your letter, we have borne witness against you, and tomorrow we will give the witness before Allah, the Just Judge

"O Ha'ru'n, you attacked the Muslim public treasury without their satisfaction. Are the people with reconciled hearts, the workers in charge with it, the *muja'hidin* in the way of Allah, and the tramps satisfied with your action? Are those who know the Qur'an by heart and men of knowledge content with your action? Are the orphans and the widows satisfied with your action? Or are some creatures from your subjects content with it? Therefore, O Ha'ru'n, wrap yourself in your own loincloth and prepare an answer for the question and a gown for the trial; know that you will stand before Allah, the Just Judge, so fear Allah regarding your own soul, for you have been deprived of the sweetness of knowledge, asceticism, the pleasure of reciting the Qur'an, sitting with the good; you are pleased with yourself when you have become unjust and an Imam for the unjust.

"O Ha'ru'n, you have sat on the throne, worn the silk, lowered curtains before your door, and likened yourself, through the argument, to the Lord of the worlds, and then you have sat your oppressive soldiers in front of your door and curtain; while they wrong the people and do not treat (them) with justice. They drink wine, punish the drinker, commit adultery, and kill the killer. Are these precepts not against you and them before they judge the people through them? What shall you do, O Ha'ru'n, tomorrow when the caller calls on the part of Allah: 'Muster the oppressive and their helpers,' so you will stop before Allah and your hands will be shackled to your neck, which nothing untie except your justice and fairness; the wrongdoers are around you, and you are their Imam and driver to the Fire? I can see that you are seized by the neck and taken to the driving, while you see your good deeds in the balance of other than you, and the evil deeds of other than you are in your scale (added) to your evil deeds, a trial (added) to a trial, and oppression (added) to oppression. Therefore, fear Allah, O Ha'ru'n, regarding your subjects, and keep Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, concerning his community; know that this authority will reach other than you just as it has reached you; in this manner the world does toward its inhabitants one by one, so some of them have supplied themselves with useful provisions, and some of them have lost his (life) in this world and the next. Beware, and then beware of

writing to me after this (letter), for I will not answer you! Greetings."

Then he (Sufya'n) sent the letter without stamping and folding.[15] This letter gives an account of that Ha'ru'n al-Rashid illegally spent the properties of the Muslims as well as it gives an account of Sufya'n's firm faith, personality, and self-denial. With this letter we will end our speech about the government of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid.

The Government of Al-Amin

Al-Amin undertook the Islamic leadership after the death of his father. According to the unanimous resolution of the historians, he was unqualified to this high office, for he was distinguished by mean inclinations of which are the following:

1. His Absorbing in Pleasures

After assuming the caliphate, al-Amin devoted himself to amusement and glee; he entrusted the affairs of the state to al-Fadl b. al-Rabi', who moved about in the affairs of the state according to his desires and tendencies.[16] He was serious about seeking entertainers[17] as well as he busied himself with the boys and the dancing of women.[18]

2. His Hating Knowledge

Among the qualities of al-Amin is that he detested knowledge and hated scholars. He was unlettered.[19]

If al-Amin had such a quality, then how did Ha'ru'n entrust him with the affairs of the Muslims and appoint him as a ruler over the greatest empire in the world? He entrusted him with the caliphate in response to the feelings of Mrs. Zubayda and the rest of the 'Abba'sid family whose inclinations were for him.

3. His Weak Opinion

Al-Amin had no wise opinion, for experiences did not teach him; nor did the days educate him. He was given the wide kingdom while he did nothing well. Al-Mas'u'di has described him, saying: "He (al-Amin) had ugly behavior and weak opinion. He followed his caprice, neglected his affairs, relied on other than him during great misfortunes, and had confidence in those who were not loyal to him.[20]"

Al-Kutubi also described him, saying: "The ugly things were easy to him, so he followed his caprice and did not reflect on anything of his final result. He was the most miserly of the people (in giving) food. He did not worry where he sat or with whom he drank.[21]"

Concerning him al-Fakhri said: "I have found nothing good in al-Amin's behavior in order to mention it.[22]"

4. Concealing himself from Subjects

Another example of his inclinations is that he turned away from people as a sign of pride toward them as well as he hid himself from his subjects and the inhabitants of his kingdom, so Isma'il b. Sabih, who was preferred to him, hastened to him and said to him: "O Commander of the faithful, the souls of your commanders, your soldiers, and your subjects in general have become malicious; their viewpoints (toward you) have become bad; and they regard as great what they see because of concealing yourself from them, so sit in front of them for an hour and let them come in to you; surely this will calm them and renew their hopes."

Al-Amin responded to this advice and sat in his royal court. The poets went in to him and praised him through their poems, but he did not understand their words. When the people departed, he boarded *al-Harra'qa* and went to al-Shamma'siya. As for the horses, they stood in ranks and there were men on their backs; they stood on both banks of the Tigris; the kitchen wares and stored things of the palace were carried along with him.

As for *al-Harra'qa* which he boarded, it was a small ship like the lion. The people had never seen a view more splendid and beautiful than that view. Abu' Nu'a's was with him on the ship. He had a drink with him and described that ship, saying:

Allah has prepared for al-Amin mounts which He had not

prepared for the Possessor of the mihrab (Sulayma'n b.Da'wud).

When his riders travel by land, he travels on the water riding a jungle lion.

A lion stretching out its arms, running, with wide mouth

and showing its teeth.

He does not suffer it with the bridle nor with the whip; nor

has he placed his own foot in the stirrup.

The people wonder when they see you riding the image of

a lion passing like clouds.

They become calm when they see you riding it, then how

(is their condition) when they see you riding al-'Iqa'b (the

Eagle)23, with chest, beak, and wings, passing through the

waves, going ahead of the birds in the sky in coming and

going when they hasten it?

May Allah bless al-Amin and maintain for him the vitality

of youth!

He is a king of whom praise falls short and a lucky

Ha'shmi![24]

These are some trends and qualities of al-Amin; they give an account of an insignificant man who devoted himself to his pleasures and lusts, and paid no attention to the affairs of the Islamic state.

His deposing Al-Ma'mu'n

Al-Amin assumed the caliphate on the day when his father al-Rashid died; he received the ring of the caliphate, the gown, and the (iron) bar which the 'Abba'sid kings had received before him.

Shortly after that, the relationships between al-Amin and Al-Ma'mu'n become corrupt, for the retinues who were around them played an important role in creating the crises between them; they exchanged letters which carried insults and curses for each other; and there was in them no summons to cordiality and good will. Accordingly, al-Amin officially removed his brother al-Ma'mu'n from the office of regency and entrusted it to his son Musa', who was still a baby in the cradle, and called him *al-Na'tiq bi al-Haqq* (the one who says the truth). Then he sent someone to the Holy Ka'ba to bring him the document of regency which was hung on it and in which al-Rashid had appointed al-Ma'mu'n as a successor (after al-Amin). When it was brought to him, he tore it up and did not fulfill it. The historians said that this procedure occurred according to the viewpoints of al-Fadl b. al-Rabi' and Bakr b. al-Mu'tamir. Concerning his breaking regency and his pledging allegiance to his son, a blind man from Baghdad said:

The cheat of the minister, the act of the Imam, and the

opinion of the adviser have lost the caliphate.

That is (nothing) except the way of vainglory, and the way

of vainglory is the most wicked of all ways.

The Caliph's deeds are wonderful, but the minister's deeds

are more wonderful than them.

The most wonderful of this and that is that we pledge

allegiance to the young child from among us, to him who

does not rub his nose well and does not remove the

fire stone from his own shoulder.

And that is (nothing) except a tyrannical, seductive one who desires to abolish the brilliant Book.

Were it not for the change of the time, would these two

(qualities) concern moral lessons or thinking?

However, they are discords like mountains therein he was

promoted by the action of the ignoble one.[25]

Al-Rashid is Responsible for these Events

It was Ha'ru'n al-Rashid who created the enmity and discord between his two sons, for he appointed al-Amin as a king after him and nominated al-Ma'mu'n as a successor after al-Amin; concerning that he wrote promises and covenants, made (some people) bear witness to that, and then he ordered the document of regency to be hung on the Ka'ba; whilst he was fully aware of the violent enmity between the two brothers. As a result sorrowful events occurred and resulted in killing ten thousand people and destroying Baghdad. In this connection a poet expressed his deep regret toward al-Rashid's procedure, saying:

I say out of the grief in my own soul and the increasing tears of my eye: Firmly prepare yourself for terror; you will meet that which will prevent you from sleeping.

Surely if you stay long, you will see an affair which will

prolong for you depression and sleeplessness.

The opinion of the well-mannered king regarding dividing

the caliphate and country is the most evil one.

If he had followed the opinion with knowledge, his black

partings would have turned white.

Through the opinion he desired to put an end to the

differences between his two sons and to make them show

affection toward each other.

But he indifferently exited enmity (between them) and

made dispersion inherit their friendliness.

He lighted between them a fierce war and made it easy for

them to avoid leadership.

So woe be to the subjects shortly after that, for he (al-Rashid) has given to them as gift intense distress, clothed them in an endless tribulation and made them accompany

declination and corruption.

Copious seas will flow out of their blood; they will not see

their exhaustion.

So the sin of that is always against him, whether that is

right or wrong![26]

Destructive Battles

When al-Amin officially removed his brother from succession and informed him of that, he summoned ‘Ali b. ‘Isa’, gave him a gold shackle, and said to him: “Shackle al-Ma’mu’n and do not kill him until you bring him to me.” He gave him two million dinars in addition to furniture, horses and mules. When the news concerning the procedures which al-Amin took against his brother came from Baghdad, al-Ma’mu’n deposed his brother. He appointed himself as a general ruler over Islamic world; deprived al-Amin of land tax; removed his name from the embroidery, the dirham, and the dinar; mutinied against him; summoned Ta’hir b. al-Husayn and Harthema b. A‘yun to war against him; and supplied them with an army.

The two armies met in al-Ray and a terrible battle took place between them, at which rivers of blood flowed. Finally al-Ma’mu’n’s Army gained a victory over al-Amin’s Army; the commander-in-chief of his armed forces was killed; and all his provisions and weapons were looted. Then Ta’hir b. al-Husayn wrote to al-Fadl b. SAhl, al-Ma’mu’n’s minister, to tell him about this marvelous victory and to congratulate him on it. He has mentioned in his letter: “I am writing to you while the head of ‘Ali b. ‘Isa’ is on my lap; his ring is in my hand; and praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.”

So al-Fadl hastened to al-Ma’mu’n, gave him good news of this victory, and congratulate him on the caliphate. As for al-Ma’mu’n, he became sure of the victory, hence he sent gifts and properties to Ta’hir, thanked him very much for that, named him *Dha’ al-Yaminayn wa Sa’hib Khayr al-Yadayn* (the possessor of the two right hands and owner of the best hands), and ordered him to head for Iraq in order

to occupy Baghdad and to but an end to his (al-Ma'mu'n's) brother.

When al-Fadl b. al-Rabi', al-Amin's minister, came to know of the defeat of the army and murder of 'Ali b. 'Isa b. Maha'n, he became perplexed and was sure of the fatal blow which befell them; concerning that the poet says:

I wonder at the people who hope for a success in an affair

through which affairs are not completed.

And how is complete that which they have concluded and

sought while dissoluteness is in the foundation of their

building?

The seductive Satan whose promises are delusive have

invited them to error.

He achieves through them (his goals) and play with them

just as wine plays with him who drinks it.

They have treacherously schemed against the Truth and

al-Ma'mu'n; the fallacious are never successful!

He (al-Ma'mu'n) is just, excellent, and kind to us; the

hearts show love for him.

The final results of the affairs are surely for him; the

Shari'a and the Zabu'r bear witness to that.27

This poetry gives an account of the victory of al-Ma'mu'n. It shows that he wined the caliphate; that the authority did not go well with al-Amin, for the foundation of those who supported him was standing on licentiousness and oppression; that error and temptation moved them; and that al-Ma'mu'n was victorious, for he was just and highborn, and made the hearts of the people incline to him.

Baghdad is besieged

Al-Ma'mu'n's Army, headed by Ta'hir b. al-Husayn, went in a hurry to Baghdad, and it could blockade it. As for al-Amin, he was sure of defeat, so he wrote to Ta'hir and asked him for security for his own soul,

his family, and his supporters. He promised to hand over the caliphate to his brother al-Ma'mu'n. However, Ta'hir said: "He (al-Amin) has been besieged; his wing has been broken; and his sinful followers have been defeated. No, by Him in whose hand is my soul, (I will not leave him) until he puts his hand in my hand and yields to me." He did not responded to anything of what he (al-Amin) wanted.

Accordingly, Baghdad remained besieged for a long time to the extent that the features of civilization wherein were destroyed; poverty and misery dominated all its inhabitants; the mischievous and deviants assassinated the innocent, looted properties, and followed women. So a group of the good people headed by SAhl b. Sala'ma resisted them with their own weapons and drove them away from Baghdad.

Any how, Baghdad suffered heavy casualties, lost its embellishment and radiance; bereavement, sadness, and mourning spread all over its districts. Hence a group of poets lamented over it; among them is al-A'ma', who says in his poem:

I weep for burning and demolishing houses, looting

seeds and provisions, manifesting veiled women

bareheaded; they went out without veil or loincloths.

You could see them bewildered, not knowing where to go,

fleeing just like fleeing antelopes.

Baghdad seemed as if it was not the best view and place of

amusement which the eye of a viewer and of a beholder

had seen.

Yes such was it, but the decree of the fates took away its

beauty and dispersed its unity.

What had befallen the people before them befell them, so

they have become conversations reported by those in deserts and cities.

O Baghdad! O house of the kings and place of obtaining

various kinds of wishes! O place of pulpits!

O garden of the world! O place of seeking riches and of

creating funds through the stores!

Explain to us, where are those as far as I knew that they

lived in the flourishing meadow of livelihood?

And where are those kings who walked in processions in

the morning and were as beautiful as the bright stars?

The whole poem is pain and anguish for the destruction which included both properties and souls in Baghdad. Another poet describes the condition of Baghdad and the destruction occurred wherein, saying:

Who envied you, O Baghdad? Were you not the delight of

the eye for a time?

Were not there in you people whose neighborhoods and

houses were one of the ornaments?

The time shouted to them through separation and they

perished. What a kind of pain of separation have you found through them?[28]

Another poet mourned for Baghdad and the tragedies which befell its inhabitants, saying:

My eye wept for Baghdad when it lost the freshness of the

elegant life.

Worries have taken the place of our delight and distress

replaced our plenty.

The eye of an envier befell us and annihilated our

people with the catapult.

So some people were forcibly burnt by fire, and a female

weeper wailed over a drowned one.

A female crier calling out: O my friends! A female sayer

saying: O my brother!

A woman with intensely white and deep black eyes,

coquetry, limbs perfumed with musk called out to the

compassionate one but there was none compassionate, for

the compassionate one was lost along with the gentle one.

And people took their goods out of the shadow of a

world, but it was sold at every market.

And an emigrant with a distant house placed without a head in the middle of the road.

He was among their dead, so they did not know to which

party he belonged.

There was no son to stay with his father, and the friend

escaped from the friend.[29]

This poem shows that Baghdad led a life of chaos, for murder spread; there was no security; and fear dominated it.

Al-Amin is murdered

Al-Ma'mu'n's Army besieged al-Amin; yet he was absorbed in amusement and glee. The historians narrated: "Al-Amin was fishing along with a group of his servants. He was in love with one of them called Kawther. Kawther went out in order to look at the army which surrounded the palace, and he was wounded in the face. Al-Amin came to him, washed the blood off his face, and said:

They have struck the delight of my eye, and because of

me they have struck him! May Allah punish the people

who have burnt him![30]

News about his defeated army and his besieged palace successively came to him; still he paid not attention to all of that and went on, along with Kawther, catching fish and putting them into a large basin, and said: "Kawther has caught three fish, and I have caught nothing except two fish."

In spite of that critical situation, he went on amusing himself. Any how, the vanguards of al-Ma'mu'n's Army attacked him, beheaded him, and sent his head to Ta'hir b. al-Husayn, who installed it on a spear, and recited these words of Him, the Exalted: ***O Allah, Master of the Kingdom, You give the kingdom to whomever You please and take away the kingdom from whomever you please***.[31]

A poet satirized him, saying:

If a king occupies himself with amusement, then decide

against his kingdom through woe and destruction.

Do you not see that the sun descends in the Balance

when it leaves early in the morning; and it is the

sign of amusement and glee.

Ta'hir sent al-Amin's head to al-Ma'mu'n in Khurasa'n. When al-Ma'mu'n saw the head, he became sad and felt sorry for him; however, al-Fadl said to him: "Praise belongs to Allah for this great favor, for Muhammad (i.e. al-Amin) wished to see you in this state in which you have seen him."

Then al-Ma'mu'n ordered the head of his brother to be installed on a piece of wood in the door yard. Then he gave salaries to the soldiers and ordered them to curse the head. Each soldier took his salary and cursed it. A non-Arab soldier took his salary, and it was said to him: "Curse this head." "May Allah curse him and his parents," he retorted. It was said to him: "You have cursed the Commander of the faithful (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n)." Al-Ma'mu'n heard him, but he overlooked him. Then he ordered the head of his brother to be brought down and to be returned to Iraq, so it was buried along with the body.32

With this tragedy al-Amin's life ended, and it gives an account of that al-Ma'mu'n was cruel toward his brother and had no mercy on him, and that he was merciless because he craved for the kingdom.

As for al-Amin, he did not face Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. Perhaps, the reason for that is that he was busy warring against his brother al-Ma'mu'n.

The Government of al-Ma'mu'n

Before we speak about the affairs of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, during the time of al-Ma'mu'n, it is necessary to give a brief account of al-Ma'mu'n as follows:

His Mother

As for al-Ma'mu'n's mother, she was a female slave; she was one of the servants in al-Rashid's palace; al-Rashid had entrusted her with cooking food. The historians said that she was the ugliest and dirtiest female slave in al-Rashid's kitchen. Some sources said: "Mrs. Zubayda played chess with Ha'ru'n al-Rashid and beat him, so she asked him to have a sexual intercourse with the ugliest slave-wife in the kitchen, who was Mara'jil. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid refused that and gave her the land tax of Egypt and Iraq in order to exempt him from that, but she refused and did not accept it. Then he yielded to her decision and had a sexual intercourse with Mara'jil, and she born him al-Ma'mu'n.33"

Al-Ma'mu'n was born in the year 170 A. H. when al-Rashid became a caliph. When al-Rashid was given good news of him, he named him al-Ma'mu'n as a sign of good omen.[34] Al-Ma'mu'n's mother died during her confinement, so al-Fadl b. SAhl took care of bringing him up.

Those who harbored malice against al-Ma'mu'n used his mother and his incapability of undertaking the caliphate as means to satirize and slander him. His brother al-Amin said to him:

If men vie with each other for their excellence, then you

stop, for you cannot vie (with them).

Your Lord has given to you what you desired, but you

meet that which is contrary to your caprice with Mara'jil.

You ascend the pulpits every day hoping for that which

you cannot attain after me.[35]

During the days of the discord he reviled him because of his mother and wrote to him:

O son of her who was sold by auction for the smallest

price among the people at the market.

Every place of the stitch of a needle in you has a sperm

from someone else.

So al-Ma'mu'n answered him, saying:

The mothers of men are mere containers and depositories, and the female-slaves have qualified ones.

Many an Arab woman does not beget, and non-Arab one

often begets in the female-slave's quarters.[36]

Praising al-Amin and dispraising al-Ma'mu'n's mother, al-Raqqa'shi says: "He was not born by a slave-wife well-known at the market of the traders.[37]"

Al-Ma'mu'n had no defect on the side of his mother, for Islam has demolished all these fanatical, pre-Islamic instincts and regarded all human races as equal; therefore none has an excellence over the others except through reverential fear.

Al-Ma'mu'n's Qualities

As for al-Ma'mu'n's psychological qualities and trends, they are as follows:

Treachery

As for treachery, it was among al-Ma'mu'n's characteristics and one of his elements. For example, he appointed Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as his successor, but when his political ambitions terminated, he betrayed him through giving him fatal poison to drink; we will explain that in the chapters that follow. Similarly, he betrayed a group of the eminent figures of his time of whom he was cautious; who are as follows:

1. 'Abd Allah Bin Musa' al-Ha'di

He criticized al-Ma'mu'n and shouted at him when he had a drink with him. Al-Ma'mu'n was displeased with 'Abd Allah, so he imprisoned him in his house and ordered some guards to sit at his door. Then he pardoned him and ordered the guards to leave his door. 'Abd Allah was fond of hunting, so al-Ma'mu'n put poison in a francolin and gave it to a servant of his in order to give it to him to eat. That was when 'Abd Allah was at Musa' Aba'd. When he felt poison, he said to his companions: "This is the last thing which he (al-Ma'mu'n) gave me to eat.[38]"

2. Isha'q Bin Musa' al-Ha'di

When al-Ma'mu'n was in Khurasa'n, Isha'q headed some units of the army and occupied some areas of it, so al-Ma'mu'n secretly sent his son and one of his servants, and they killed him; then his son took the servant and whipped him to death.[39]

3. Hamid Bin 'Abd al-Hamid al-Tu'si

Al-Ma'mu'n invited him (Hamid) to have a meal. Ahmed b. Abu' Kha'lid al-Ahwal was with him; he was one of those who harbored malice against Hamid and among his enemies. When it was time (for them) to have the meal, al-Ma'mu'n sat Ahmed beside him. Hamid was displeased with that, and he said to al-Ma'mu'n: "O Commander of the faithful, may Allah not make me die until he make me see that the world is easy to you, that you may see which of us is more useful to you."

Ahmed seized the opportunity and said to al-Ma'mu'n: "O Commander of the faithful, he hopes that corruption and discord will dominate your kingdom."

As for al-Ma'mu'n, he became angry, left the food and did not finish it, and concealed that in his heart. When he wanted to marry Boura'n, he said to Hamid: "O Abu' Gha'nim, I have permitted you to make a pilgrimage." Hamid happily departed and ordered his baggage to be prepared. As he was fond of having sexual intercourse, Gabriel b. Bakhtishu'' went in to him and said to him: "O Abu' Gha'nim, be in a hurry.

I hope that you will bring with you some slave-wives while they are pregnant." Then he gave him (poison) to drink. 'Abd Allah al-Tayfu'ri was at the meeting; he had knowledge of medicine. When he saw the drink, he understood the matter and said to Gabriel: "Abu' Gha'nim has become weak because of this (drink)."

Al-Tayfu'ri meant that he understood the assassination which had been schemed against Abu' Gha'nim. Abu' Gha'nim had the drink (of poison) and it immediately acted on him. Al-Tayfu'ri began treating him and he got well a little bit, but he (al-Ma'mu'n) gave him poison to drink again and put an end to him.40

4. Al-Fadl Bin Sahl

Al-Fadl b. SAhl was the minister and adviser of al-Ma'mu'n. As al-Ma'mu'n was afraid of him, he secretly sent someone to assassinate him in the bath-house. We will explain this matter in the researches that follow.

These are some persons whom al-Ma'mu'n assassinated; therefore, he followed the example of Mu'a'wiya, who was the first king to open the door to assassination and treachery in the time of Islam.

Cruelty

Another example of al-Ma'mu'n's qualities is that he was cruel and merciless, for he ordered his brother to be killed and his head to be brought to him. If he had had a tendency of mercy, he would have pardoned his brother, who asked him for pardon and security and was ready to hand over the authority to him. Yet another example of his cruelty is that when he had assassinated Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, he treated the 'Alawides with cruelty and severity. That was when he ordered his executioners to kill and punish them severely everywhere.41

Slyness

The Islamic diplomacy in the 'Abba'sid time did not witness any person slyer than al-Ma'mu'n or more knowledgeable than him in political affairs. He was a first-class politician, for he, through his deception, was able to overcome most terrible events which befell him and were about to fold his life and authority. Through an excellent skill he was able to put an end to his brother al-Amin, who was strongly supported by the 'Abba'sid family and the high military commanders. He was also able to suppress the great revolt of Abu' al-Sara'ya', the inspired leader. It is worth mentioning that this revolt widely spread and included most Islamic regions when the revolutionists dominated them. The motto of the revolt was 'the summons to al-Ridha' from the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family.' Al-Ma'mu'n forced Imam al-Ridha' peace be on him, who was the only leader of the 'Alawide family and high authority of Islamic world to leave Medina' for Khurasa'n.

Then he forced him to accept regency and ordered all the organs of his government to announce the outstanding merits of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and of the rest of the

pure Imams. Moreover he ordered the currency to be minted in the name of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. In this manner he made the revolutionists and the military forces who adopted the authority of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on him believe that he had 'Alawide beliefs, and that he was earnest in handing over the caliphate to the 'Alawides, to the extent that they thought that there was no need to continue the revolt and to shed blood. Meanwhile he was able to discover the Shi'ite elements whom his fathers were unable to discover. In this manner he suppressed those revolts. I (i.e. the author) think that this is one of the most marvelous, political schemes which the world has ever known throughout the stages of history.

Inclination to Amusement

Al-Ma'mu'n extremely inclined to amusement. The following are examples of his inclination to amusement:

A. His Playing Chess

Chess was the most lovable game to al-Ma'mu'n. He was fond of it, so he described it through the following poetry lines:

A square, red ground (made) from skin between two

thousand (persons) described by generosity.

They discuss war, so they occupy (places) like it

without striving therein to shed blood.

This attacks this, and that attacks this, and the eye of

war does not sleep.

So look at the horses which have surged at a battle

between two armies without a drum nor a flag.[42]

This poetry contains an exact description of chess. I (i.e. the author) think that al-Ma'mu'n was the first to describe it in detail, and that he took this game from his father Ha'ru'n al-Rashid, who was the most skillful person in chess. It is worth mentioning that Ha'ru'n gave chess pieces to the King of France, and that the pieces are still available in the Museums of France.[43]

B. His Fondness of Music

Al-Ma'mu'n was fond of singing and music. The historians said that al-Ma'mu'n extremely admired Abu' Isha'q al-Mousli, who was the greatest musician and singer in Arab world, and concerning whom he

said: “When he sings, my increasing Satanic temptations go away from me.44”

Al-Ma’mu’n enlivened his nights through singing, dancing, and playing on the lute. He imitated his father Ha’ru’n al-Rashid, who did not mention the name of Allah in his palace; rather his nights were red.

C. His Drinking Wine

Al-Ma’mu’n was alcoholic; he drank wine by day and night, paying no attention to the sin which resulted from this unlawful thing.

With this quality we will end our speech about al-Ma’mu’n’s qualities and tendencies.

Al-Ma’mu’n receives valuable Gifts

The chiefs and the noble sent valuable gifts to al-Ma’mu’n in order to seek nearness to him. The following are some of them:

1. Ahmed b. Yusuf: He sent him a basket made of gold and there was in it an Indian lute equal to is its length and width, and he wrote on it: “This is the day on which the slaves have habituated themselves to sending valuable gifts to their masters; and I have said:

There is a right against the slave and he, without doubt,

does it, even if the master is great and his favors are

grand.

Do you not see that we give as gift to Allah His property,

and He accepts it though He is in no need of it.

If (things) were given as gift to the great one according to

his rank, then the sea and its coast would someday fall

short of him.

However, we give as gift to him whom we magnify

though we do not have that which is similar to him.45”

2. Abu’ Dalaf al-Qa’sim b. ‘Isa’ al-‘Ijjli: He sent him on the day of a festival a hundred loads of saffron in silk bags. Wild, gray she-asses carried them. The gifts came while al-Ma’mu’n was along with his wife. He was told about the gifts, and he hurried to look at them. When he saw them, he admired them. Then he asked whether the asses were males or females. It was said to him that they were females, so he

became pleased with that and said: “I know that the man is so sane that he sends (gifts) on nothing except on she-asses.[46]”

The King of India: He sent him a group of gifts; among them were a cup (made of) ruby and a letter in which he mentioned: “We ask you, O brother, to show favor (toward us) through accepting them and to apologize us for negligence.[47]”

These are some persons who sent gifts to al-Ma’mu’n in order to seek nearness to him and to crave for some jobs from him.

His affecting Shiism

Some historians and researchers believed that al-Ma’mu’n adopted the Shi‘ite doctrine; they depended on the following:

Who taught him Shiism?

Before his retinues and companions, al-Ma’mu’n declared that he embraced the Shi‘ite creed; this has been mentioned in the following tradition: Sufya’n b. Naza’r narrated, saying: [On day I was with al-Ma’mu’n and he asked his companions:]

“Did you know him who taught me Shiism?”

“No, by Allah, we did not know him,” they all replied.

“Al-Rashid did,” he retorted.

“How did that occur whilst al-Rashid killed the *Ahl al-Bayt?”* they asked.

“He killed them for the kingdom,” he answered, “for the kingdom is barren. One year I made a pilgrimage along with him. When he arrived in Medina, he walked toward his visitors and said to them:

“‘If those from Mecca, Medina, the *Muha’jireen* (migrants), the *Ansa’r* (supporters), the Ha’shimites, and the rest of the tribes of Quraysh visit me, they should mention their ancestry.’ The chamberlains obeyed that. When a man wanted to visit him, he introduced himself to the chamberlains. When the man visited him (al-Rashid), he gave him as a gift according to his rank and lineage; his gift ranging from two hundred to five thousand dinars.”

Al-Ma’mu’n said: “While I was standing, al-Fadl b. al-Rabi‘ came in and said: ‘O Commander of the faithful, there is a man who claims that he is Musa’ b. Ja‘far b. Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib.’

“So al-Rashid walked toward his sons and the rest of his commanders and said to them: ‘Keep your

own souls.' Then he said to al-Fadl: 'Give him permission to enter and do not (let him stop at any place) except at my own carpet.'"

Al-Ma'mu'n said: "Then an old man with a yellow face came; worship exhausted him; he was like an old (water) skin; prostration wounded his face and his nose. When al-Rashid saw him dismounting, he shouted: 'No, by Allah, (he will not dismount) except on my own carpet.' So the chamberlains prevented him from dismounting; and all the people looked at him with honor, admiration, and magnification. The Imam arrived at the carpet; he was surrounded by the chamberlains and the commanders. He dismounted, and al-Rashid rose for him, received him, accompanied him to the end of the carpet, kissed his face and his eyes, took him by the hand, accompanied him to the beginning of the assembly, sat with him, talked with him, asked him about his conditions, and then he asked him:

"'O Abu' al-Hasan, what about your family? Are all of them boys?' 'No, most of them are followers and retainers,' answered the Imam, 'As for my children, they are more than thirty.'" Then he mentioned the number of the males and of the females.

Then Ha'ru'n (al-Rashid) turned to him and asked him: "Why do you not marry your womenfolk to their cousins and their qualified ones?"

"The hand falls short of that," replied the Imam.

"What about your land?" asked Ha'ru'n.

"It sometimes produces and sometimes does not produce," answer the Imam.

"Are you in debt?" asked Ha'ru'n.

"Yes," replied the Imam.

"How much is it?" asked Ha'ru'n.

"Ten thousand dinars," answered the Imam.

"O cousin," retorted Ha'ru'n, "I will give you a sum of money in order to marry the males to the females, pay your debt, and reform your lands."

The Imam thanked him for that and said to him: "You have tightened the bonds of kin, O cousin, and Allah has thanked this beautiful intention; the blood relationship is contiguous; kinship is close; the ancestry is one; al-'Abba's is the uncle of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and full brother of his father, the uncle of 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, and full brother of his father; may Allah not make you far from doing that; for He has made you open-handed, made your element honorable, and made your origin high."

"I will do that with pleasure," promised Ha'ru'n.

Then the Imam advised him to show kindness to the poor in general, saying: “O Commander of the faithful, surely Allah has made it incumbent on the rulers to refresh the poor of the community, to pay (the debts) on behalf of the debtors, to settle (the debts) on behalf of the over burdened, to clothe the naked, and to treat the worried with kindness, for you are appropriate for doing that.”

“I will do that, Abu’ al-Hasan,” promised Ha’ru’n.

Then the Imam, peace be on him, rose and Ha’ru’n al-Rashid rose for him, kissed his eyes and his face, and then he turned to his sons and said to them: “ ‘Abd Allah, Muhammad, and Ibra’him, go before your uncle and master; take hold of the stirrup (of his mount); set right his garments on him; and accompany him to his house.”

The Imam departed; on the same road, he delighted al-Ma’mu’n and gave him good news of the succession, saying to him: “If you undertake this authority, then treat my children with kindness.”

The Imam went to his house escorted by Ha’ru’n’s sons. Then al-Ma’mu’n returned to his house. When the sitting-place became void of the people, he turned to his father and asked him: “O Commander of the faithful, who was the man whom you honored, magnified, for whom you rose from your sitting-place and received, whom you sat in front of the sitting-place and you sat beside, and whose stirrup you ordered us to set right?”

“This is the Imam of the people, the proof of Allah over His creatures, and His vicegerent over His servants,” replied Ha’ru’n.

Al-Ma’mu’n admired this statement, so he asked his father: “O Commander of the faithful, are not all these qualities yours and fulfilled in your person?”

“I am the Imam of the masses by force and through oppression,” answered Ha’ru’n, “as for Musa’ b. Ja‘far, he is the Imam in truth. By Allah, my little son, his more worthy of being the successor of Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, as the caliph than I am and anyone else among the people. By Allah, if you yourself attempt to take such caliphate from me, I shall take it away from you even if that means gouging your eyes, for power is blind!”

When Ha’ru’n al-Rashid intended to leave Medina for Baghdad, he ordered a parcel of two hundred dinars (to be prepared), and then he said to al-Fadl b. al-Rabi‘: “Take it and go to Musa’ b. Ja‘far and say to him: The Commander of the faithful say to you: ‘We are in financial straits; and our gifts will come to you in the near future.’”

Al-Ma’mu’n stood up and said to his father: “You give five thousand dinars or less than it to the children of the *Muha’jireen* (migrants), of the *Ansa’r* (supporters), and those whose ancestry you do not know; however you give two hundred dinars to Musa’ b. Ja‘far, whom you honored and magnified. This is the least gift you have given to any of the people.”

Ha'ru'n scold al-Ma'mu'n and said to him: "Keep silent! May you have no mother! If I gave this (i.e. Musa' b. Ja'far) what I had guaranteed, I would not be safe from him, for he will tomorrow strike my face with one hundred thousand swords from among his Shi'ites and followers; the poverty of this (man) and his household is more useful to me and you than lending a helping hand to them."

Ha'ru'n expressed his fear of the Imam, peace be on him, so he decided to wage an economic warfare against him lest he should be able to revolt against him. Makha'riq, the singer, was in the session. He felt pain, so he opposed Ha'ru'n and said to him: "O Commander of the faithful, when I enter Medina, its inhabitants ask me for something. If I leave it and do not divide anything among them, they do not realize the favor of the Commander of the faithful toward me, and my rank with him."

So Ha'ru'n order ten thousand dinars to be given to Makha'riq, but he said to him: "O Commander of the faithful, this (sum of money) is for the people of Medina. I am in debt, and I want to pay it."

So Ha'ru'n ordered ten thousand dinars to be given to him. Then he said to him: "I want to join my daughters in marriage." So he ordered ten thousand dinars to be given to him. Then he said to him: "There is no escape from giving me a land producing for me, my family, and my daughters." So he gave him a productive land whose revenues amounted ten thousand dinars a year, and he ordered it to be given to him quickly. Then Makha'riq quickly went to the house of Imam (Musa') al-Ka'zim, peace be on him. When he arrived at it, he asked for permission to visit the Imam. He was given permission, and he said to him: "I have understood why this tyrannical (i.e. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid) treated you in such a manner and what he ordered to be given to you. I tricked him for you, and I took from him three gifts amounting thirty thousand dinars, and a land producing ten thousand dinars a year. By Allah, master, I am in no need of any of that. I did not take it but for you; I bear witness that this productive land belongs to you; and I have brought you the money."

The Imam, peace be on him, thanked Makha'riq for that and said to him: "May Allah bless you concerning your property and reward you well. I will never take even a dirham of it or a thing of the land. I have accepted your gift and kindness, so depart on the right path and do not consult me concerning that.[48]"

This narration gives an account of the following:

1. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid honored Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, whilst he had never honored anyone before him, for he (Ha'ru'n) dominated most regions of the earth and his name spread in the east and the west.

2. He admitted that Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, was the proof of Allah over His creatures, that he was the Imam of the community, leader of its temporal and spiritual authority, and that Ha'ru'n was the leader of the community by force and through oppression, not through merit.

3. He gave an enormous amount of money to Makha'riq, the singer, whilst he deprived the children of

the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, of their legal rights.

Returning Fadak to the ‘Alawides

Among the matters depended by those who believed that al-Ma’mu’n was a Shi‘ite is returning to the ‘Alawides Fadak, which the previous government confiscated in order to spread poverty and deprivation among them, and to impose an economic siege on them lest they should oppose those rulers. As a result al-Ma’mu’n returned Fadak to them and raised the economic straits from them. Accordingly, Di‘bil al-Khaza’‘i, the poet of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, praised him for this noble deed, which he offered to the ‘Alawides, saying:

The face of the time has become smiling when al-cMa’mu’n returned Fadak to the Hashimites.

Many researches have regarded this step as a proof of that al-Ma’mu’n was a Shi‘ite.

His Praising Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the Faithful

Al-Ma’mu’n lauded Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, the pioneer of fairness and justice in Islam. He wrote to all regions that ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, was the best of the creatures after Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.[49] Al-Sawli has reported his poetry lines concerning the excellence of Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. The following are some of them:

Repentance is not accepted from a repenter but through

love for Ibn Abu’ Ta’lib,

The brother of Allah’s Messenger, successor of the rightly

guided one; brother is superior to bosom friend and

companion.

If they someday gather together regarding excellence,

brother surpasses the desire of the desirous.

Advance the guide (*al-ha’di*) in his excellence so that you

will be safe from blamer and captious criticizer.

Another example of his poetry lines through which he refuted those who criticized him for his being close to the children of the Prophet is the following:

Many a seducer bites (the tips of his fingers) in rage

against me when I bring near the children of the

testamentary trustee.

So I have said: Have you not given knowledge,

distinguished the misguided from the guided, come to

know of my argumentation through the seven oft-repeated

verses, intellectual concepts, and firm traditions?

Through which quality and meaning do you prefer

unbelievers to ‘Ali?

‘Ali is the greatest and best of the *thaqalayn* (men and

jinn) in right except the right of the Prophet.[50]

The following lines are another example of his poetry which he composed regarding the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them:

If the opponent turns aside (from the Shi‘ite), then I stand

by the Shi‘ite.

I am among the family of the Prophet of guidance, the

best Prophet from among the children of Gha’lib.

Love for them is an obligatory religious duty which we

should perform just as we perform an obligatory pilgrimage.[51]

This poetry clearly shows that he was a follower of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, and that he preferred them to others.

Al-Sawli has narrated the following poetry lines al-Ma’mu’n composed concerning Imam ‘Ali, peace be on him:

Mother shows love for the testamentary trustee Abu’ al-

Hasan, and that is with me among the wonders of this

time.

The successor of the best of men, and the first to help

Allah's Messenger secretly and openly.

Had it not been for him, the Ha'shimites would not have

seized an authority, and they would in the course of time

have perished and been despised.

So he has appointed the 'Abba'sids as governors and has

not singled out other than them (for authority).

So 'Abd Allah made clear guidance in Basrah, and 'Ubayd

Allah bestowed lavishly on Yemen.

And he divided the works of the caliphate among them, so

he is still connected to this thankfulness and hostage to

(it).[52]

This poetry gives an account of that Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, rendered a service to the 'Abba'sid family when he appointed 'Abd Allah b. al–'Abba's as a governor over Basrah, and he was his minister and special adviser. Similarly he appointed 'Ubay Allah b. al–'Abba's as a ruler over Yemen; however the 'Abba'sid family renounced this favor and treated the children of the Imam with murder and severe punishment and committed toward them crimes which even the Umayyad family had not committed. In this book we have given many examples of their persecuting the 'Alawides. It goes without saying that the 'Abba'sids did not regard them as the children of the Prophet and his trust among his family, on the contrary they killed them everywhere.

The following two poetry lines has been ascribed to al–Ma'mu'n:

If you want the Muraji'i to die before the time of his death,

then mention before him the name of 'Ali and call down

blessing upon the Prophet and his Household.

Ibra'him b. al–Mahdi, better known as b. Shakkla, answered him, saying:

If the Shi'ite maunders regarding an statement and you

want him to reveal what is in himself, then call down

blessing upon the Prophet and his two companions, his

two helpers and his two neighbors by his grave.53

Al–Sawli has mentioned that it was written on one of the columns of the mosque of Basrah: “May Allah have mercy on ‘Ali; surely he was pious(*taqiya’*).”

Hafs Abu’ ‘Amr al–Khatta’bi, who was one–eyed, would sit beside that column. He erased the writing, and one of the neighbors of the mosque wrote to al–Ma’mu’n and told him about al–Khatta’bi’s erasing the writing, so he was displeased with him and ordered him to be brought before him. When al–Khatta’bi was brought before al–Ma’mu’n, he asked him: “Why have you removed the name of the Commander of the faithful from the column?”

“What was on it?” asked al–Khatta’bi.

“‘May Allah have mercy on ‘Ali; surely he was pious (*taqiya’*),’ was on it.” replied al–Ma’mu’n.

“It was written on it,” retorted al–Khatta’bi, “‘May Allah have mercy on ‘Ali; surely he was a prophet (*nabiya’*)’”

“You have told a lie,” said al–Ma’mu’n, “rather the *qa’f* was sounder than your sound eye. Had it not been for that I increase your hypocrisy before the general populace (*‘a’mma*), I would punish you.” Then he ordered him to be driven out.54

His Disparaging Mu‘a’wiya

Those who thought that al–Ma’mu’n was a Shi‘ite indicated that he ordered Mu‘a’wiya b. Hind to be cursed and disparaged all over Islamic world, for he ordered the caller to call: “There shall be no pardon for anyone guilty of praising Mu‘a’wiya or preferring him to any companion of Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.55”

This cannot be as a proof of that al–Mu’mu’n was a Shi‘ite, for Mu‘a’wiya was discovered; his realty appeared; all circles have agreed on dispraising him; he was the mortal enemy of Islam; he was the leader of the events and committed grave sins.

His Proving the Imamate of Imam ‘Ali

The most important thing which those who believed that al–Ma’mu’n was a Shi‘ite gave as a proof of that he was a Shi‘ite is that he held scientific sessions and gave firm proofs of that ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was an Imam, that he was the first Muslim leader after the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, that he was more entitled to his rank and worthier of his office than the

rest of the people.

Among the most marvelous and important sessions which al-Ma'mu'n held in his palace is that which attended by the forty traditionalists and theologians, whom Yahya' b. Akkthem had chosen from among the scholars of Baghdad, who spared no effort to prove that the caliphs were better than Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. However, al-Ma'mu'n refuted their proofs through his decisive indications, which showed his skill and abundant knowledge of theological researches. We will mention the full text of this marvelous debate because it is of great importance; it is as follows:

Al-Ma'mu'n

When the scholars appeared before al-Ma'mu'n, he turned to them, greeted them, and said to them: "On this day of mine I want to place an argument between Allah and me, so he who suffers from retention of urine or wants to relieve his nature, then let him go and relieve his nature; be delighted; take off your sandals and your cloaks."

They carried out al-Ma'mu'n's order, then he turned to them and said: "O People, I have summoned you in order to advance you as an argument before Allah, the Exalted, so fear Allah; consider your own souls and your Imam (leader); let not my majesty and my place prevent you from saying the truth wherever it be and returning falsehood to him who brings it; fear for your own souls from the Fire; seek nearness to Allah, the Most High, through His good pleasure and preferring obedience to Him, for everyone who seeks nearness to a creature through an act of disobedience to the Creator, Allah empowers him over him; therefore debate with me with your all intellects.

"I claim that 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib is the best of all creatures after Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. If I am right, then regard me statement as right; if I am wrong, then answer me quickly. If you want me to question you, I will question you; if you want to question me, then question me."

In this speech there is no crookedness or deviation from logic, for its owner seeks plain truth.

The Traditionalists

"Rather, it is we who will question you," retorted the traditionalists.

Al-Ma'mu'n undertook the matter and guided them to the way to debates, saying: "Give (me your proofs) and entrust one of you with your speech. When he speaks and one of you has an addition, then let him add it to his speech; if he brings a shortcoming, then show him rightness."

The First Proof

A traditionalist mentioned a proof of that Abu' Bakr was the best of the community after Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, saying: "We claim that Abu' Bakr is the best of the

people after Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, for a tradition, upon which there is unanimous agreement, has been transmitted from Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who said: 'Follow those who will come after me: Abu' Bakr and 'Umar.' As the Prophet of mercy ordered (us) to follow them, we have come to know that he ordered us to follow none except the best of men."

Al-Ma'mu'n's Answer

He objectively discussed the traditions fabricated against the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, saying: "The traditions are numerous; there is no escape from that either they are all right or they are all false or some of them are right or some of them are false; if they are all right, then they are all false, for they contradict each other; if they are all false, then the religion is false and (Islamic) law is dead. As these two possibilities are untrue, the third (possibility) is true, namely some traditions are right and some are false. If (the matter) is such, then there is no escape form (giving) a proof of which of them is right, that we may believe in it and reject the opposite of; therefore, if the evidence for a tradition is right in itself, then it is necessary for one to belive in it and to put it into effect.

"As for this tradition of yours, it is one of the traditions whose proofs are false in themselves, for Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, is the wisest of the wise, the most entitled of the creatures to truthfulness, and the farthest of men from ordering the impossible and making the people embrace the opposite, for this means that these two men (i.e. Abu' Bakr and 'Umar) are harmonious with each other in all sides, (namely) they are one in number, quality, form, and body; it is impossible that two (persons) are equal in meaning in all sides.

"If they are different, then how is it permissible to follow them? This is an order (to perform) that which is unbearable, for if you follow one (of them), you will oppose the other; the evidence for that they are different is that Abu' Bakr had ordered the apostates to be taken as prisoners, while 'Umar regarded them as free; 'Umar ordered Kha'lid to be removed (from the office) because he had killed Ma'lik b. Nuwayra, whereas Abu' Bakr prevented him from doing that; 'Umar prohibited the two *Muta'as*, while Abu' Bakr had adopted them; 'Umar established the Divan of Gifts, whereas Abu' Bakr had not adopted it; Abu' Bakr had appointed ('Umar) as successor (after him), whilst 'Umar did not do that; there are numerous examples of this (matter)."

Al-Ma'mu'n's answer is very trustworthy, for he refuted the tradition and established that it was one of the fabricated traditions.

The Second Proof

Through a tradition attributed to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, another traditionalist indicated that the two Shaykhs (i.e. Abu' Bakr and 'Umar) were better than Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, saying: "Surely, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'If I

had to take a bosom friend, I would have taken Abu' Bakr as a bosom friend."

Al-Ma'mu'n's Answer

Al-Ma'mu'n disproved this tradition, saying: "This is impossible, for your traditions show that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, asked his companions to associate as brothers with each other, and that he delayed 'Ali, peace be on him. When he ('Ali) asked him about that, he replied: 'I have delayed you (for nothing) except for my own soul.' Therefore, if one tradition is established, the other is null and void."

Al-Ma'mu'n's discussion about the tradition is objective; there is no partiality therein; rather it was based on a decisive proof.

The Third Proof

Another traditionalist said: "Surely 'Ali, peace be on him, said on the pulpit: 'The best of this community after the Prophet are Abu' Bakr and 'Umar.'"

Al-Ma'mu'n discussed this tradition, saying: "This is impossible, for if the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, had come to know that they were the best (of the community), he had not appointed 'Amru' b. al-'Ass as a commander over them one time and Usa'ma b. Zayd another time; among the things which refute this tradition is the statement of 'Ali when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, passed way: 'I am more worthy for being near to the Prophet (than they are), but I feared that the people would become apostates'; these words of him, peace be on him: 'How are they better than me? I have worshipped Allah before and after them.'" In this manner al-Ma'mu'n disproved the tradition and showed that it was fabricated.

The Fourth Proof

Another traditionalist said: "Surely Abu' Bakr closed his door and said: 'Is there anyone to accept my resignation and I will render my resignation to him?' So he ('Ali), peace be on him, said to him: 'Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has advanced you, then who can delay you?'"

Al-Ma'mu'n's Answer to the Tradition

He disproved the tradition, saying: "This (tradition) is untrue, for 'Ali, peace be on him, did not pledge allegiance to Abu' Bakr; you have narrated that he did make homage until Fa'tima, peace be on her, died, and that she asked ('Ali) to bury her at night lest they (Abu' Bakr and 'Umar) should witness her coffin.

"Another proof is that if the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, appointed him (Abu' Bakr) as a caliph, then why did he resign and say to the Ansa'r: 'I have chosen for you these two men: Abu'

‘Ubayda and ‘Umar’?”

The Fifth Proof

Another traditionalist said: “‘Amru’ b. al-‘Ass asked: ‘O Prophet of Allah, which woman is the most lovable to you?’ “Ai’sha,’ he replied. ‘Amru’ asked again: ‘Which man is the most lovable to you?’ ‘Her father (i.e. Abu’ Bakr),’ he answered.”

Al-Ma’mu’n’s Answer

He refuted this tradition, saying: “This (tradition) is false, for you have narrated that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, placed before him a grilled bird and said: ‘O Allah, bring me the most lovable creature to you,’ and it was ‘Ali (who came to him). Then which of your traditions do you accept?”

The Muslims have unanimously agreed that ‘Ali was the most lovable of the creatures to Allah and the nearest of them to Him.

The Sixth Proof

Another traditionalist said: “‘Ali said: ‘If one prefers me to Abu’ Bakr and ‘Umar, I will administer the punishment of the liar to him.”

Al-Ma’mu’n’s Answer

He answered this tradition ascribed to Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, saying: “How is it permissible for ‘Ali to administer such a punishment to him against whom there is no punishment? Therefore, he broke the punishments prescribed by Allah and opposed His orders. He who prefers ‘Ali to Abu’ Bakr and ‘Umar is not a liar, for you have narrated on the authority of your Imam (Abu’ Bakr), who said: ‘I have become a caliph over you but I am not the best of you.’ So which of the two men is more truthful in your viewpoint Abu’ Bakr against himself or ‘Ali against Abu’ Bakr, though the tradition contradicts itself? There is no escape from that he is either truthful or a liar. If he is truthful, then how did he come to know that? Through a revelation (whereas) the revelation has ceased? Or through conjecture (while) the conjecturer is perplexed? Or through thinking (whereas) thinking (*nazar*) is a research? And if he was untruthful, then it is impossible for a liar to undertake the authority and precepts of the Muslims and to administer the prescribed punishments to them.”

The Seventh Proof

Another traditionalist said: “The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘Abu’ Bakr and ‘Umar will be the masters of the old men of the Garden.’”

Al-Ma'mu'n's Answer

He said: "This tradition is impossible, for there will be no old men in the Garden; it is narrated that Ashhamiya visited the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and he said to her: 'No old woman will enter the Garden.' She wept, so the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said to her: [Allah, the Most High says:] '*Surely We have made them to grow into a* (*new*) *growth. Then We have made them virgins, loving, equals in age*.[56]' If you claim that Abu' Bakr will be a young man when he enters the Garden, then you have narrated that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said concerning al-Hasan and al-Husayn: 'Surely they are the masters of the youths of the haven from among the first and the last; their father is better than them.'"

Al-Ma'mu'n's answer to the tradition is logical and not based on doctrinal caprices and trends.

The Eighth Proof

Another traditionalist said: "The Prophet said: 'If I had not been appointed (as a prophet) among you, then 'Umar would have been appointed.'"

Al-Ma'mu'n's Answer

Disproving this tradition, al-Ma'mu'n said: "This (tradition) is impossible, for Allah, the Exalted, says (to the Prophet): ***Surely We have revealed to you as We revealed to Nuh and the prophets after him***.[57] And He, the Most High, said: ***And when We made a covenant with the prophets and with you, and with Nuh and Ibrahim and Musa and Isa, son of Maryam***.[58] Therefore, is it permissible for Allah to appoint as a prophet him with whom He had not made a covenant and to delay him with whom He had made a covenant for Prophethood?"

Al-Ma'mu'n's answer to the tradition is based on intellect and logic, and nothing therein deviates from them.

The Ninth Proof

Another traditionalist advanced an argument, saying: "The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, looked at 'Umar on the Day of 'Arafa, smiled (at him) and said: 'Surely Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, boasts of His creatures in general and of 'Umar in particular.'"

Al-Ma'mu'n's Answer

Disproving this tradition, al-Ma'mu'n said: "This is impossible, for Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, does not boast of 'Umar and leaves His Prophet; therefore, 'Umar is among the elite and the Prophet is among the populace.

“This tradition is not more wonderful than your tradition which says that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘I entered the Garden and suddenly I heard the beat of two sandals; (I came to know that) Bila’l, Abu’ Bakr’s retainer, had entered the Garden before me.’ For this reason you have said: ‘Abu’ Bakr’s retainer is better than the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, for the early is better than the late.’”

The Tenth Proof

Another traditionalist said: “The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘If the punishment came down, none would be safe from it except ‘Umar b. al-Khatta’b.’”

Al-Ma’mu’n’s Answer

He said: “This tradition also opposes the Book, for Allah, the Exalted, says to His Prophet: ***But Allah was not going to chastise them while you were among them***.[59] So you have regarded ‘Umar as an equal to the Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.”

The Eleventh Proof

Another traditionalist said: “The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, bore witness that ‘Umar would enter the Garden before ten of his companions.”

Al-Ma’mu’n’s Answer

He said: “If ‘Umar was as you have said, he would not say to Hudhayfa: ‘I adjure you before Allah, am I among the hypocrites?’ If the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, had said to him: ‘You are among the inhabitants of the Garden,’ and he did not believe him and Hudhayfa confirmed him, then he believed Hudhayfa and did not believe the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and this is (something) opposes Islam; if he had believed the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, then why did he ask Hudhayfa? These traditions contradict each other.”

The Twelfth Proof

Another traditionalist said: “The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘I was placed in the scale of a balance and my community was placed in the other scale, and I outweighed it; then Abu’ Bakr was put in my place, and he outweighed it; then ‘Umar (was put in his place), and he outweighed it; then the balance was raised.’”

Al-Ma’mu’n’s Answer

He confuted this tradition, saying: “This (tradition) is impossible, for either their bodies or their deeds were placed in the balance. If their bodies (were placed in the balance), then every human being knows

that their bodies do not outweigh the bodies of the community; if their deeds (were placed in the balance), then they have not been (weighed) yet. Just imagine how much more is that which has not been (weighed) yet?"

Then al-Ma'mu'n turned to the traditionalists and asked them: "Tell me: Through which thing do the people claim that they are superior to each other?"

"They claim that they are superior to one another through good deeds," replied a traditionalist.

Commenting on this statement, al-Ma'mu'n said: "Tell me about him who was more excellent than his companion during the time of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family: did the less excellent (*mafdu'l*) do after the death of the Messenger more than the most excellent (*al-fa'dil*) did in the time of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family? Would he be equal to him? If you say 'yes', then I will make you find in this time of ours him who is the best of them in jiha'd, hajj, fasting, prayer, and alms."

"You are right," they all replied, "the most excellent (*fa'dil*) in our time is not equal to the most excellent in the time of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family."

So al-Ma'mu'n said to them: "Carefully consider what your Imams, from whom you have taken your doctrines, have narrated concerning the outstanding merits of 'Ali, peace be on him, and compare them with what it has been mentioned concerning the ten (persons) for whom they have borne witness that they will enter the Garden. If they ('Ali's outstanding merits) were part of numerous parts, then you are right; if they (your Imams) have narrated concerning 'Ali's excellences more (than they have narrated concerning the excellences of the ten persons), then take what your Imams have narrated and do not exceed (it)."

The traditionalists were perplexed, not knowing what to answer, for al-Ma'mu'n had closed before them all avenues of argument. Then al-Ma'mu'n turned to them and asked: "Why have you kept silent?"

"We have fully searched out (the matter)," they replied. That is because they had nothing to advance as an argument.

"I am going to question you," said al-Ma'mu'n, "tell me: which work was the best when Allah appointed His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family?"

"Priority in belief in Islam," they all answered, "for Allah, the Exalted, says: ***And the foremost are the foremost, these are they who are drawn nigh* (*to Allah*).**[60]"

"So did you know that there was anyone earlier than 'Ali (in belief) in Islam?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

"He (Ali) was earlier but he was still young; there was no religious, obligatory duty on him. As for Abu' Bakr, he became a Muslim when he was an old man, and there was a religious, obligatory duty on him, so there is a difference between these two states," they answered.

Al-Ma'mu'n answered, saying: "Tell me about the Islam of 'Ali: Was it through an inspiration by Allah, the Exalted, or through the summons of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family? If you say that it was through an inspiration, then you have preferred him to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, for the Prophet had not been inspired; rather Gabriel came to him from Allah; he summoned him to Him and informed him of Him.

"If you say (that 'Ali became Muslim) through the summons of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, then did he summoned him (to Islam) of his own accord or through the order of Allah, the Most High? If you say (that he summoned him to it) of his own accord, then this opposes the words through which Allah has described His Prophet, saying: ***Say: I do not ask you for any reward for it; nor am I of those who affect*** 61, and through these words of Him, the Exalted: ***Nor does he speak out of desire. It is not naught but revelation that is revealed***.62 If he (summoned him) on behalf of Allah, then Allah had ordered His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to summon 'Ali (to Islam) from among the boys of the people and preferred him to them. Therefore, he (the Prophet) summoned him ('Ali to Islam) because he was trustworthy and Allah, the Exalted, supported him.

"Yet there is another quality. Tell me: Is it permissible for the Wise (Allah) to impose upon His creatures unbearable religious duties? If you say 'yes', then you are unbelievers; if you say 'no', then how is it permissible for Him to order His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to summon him who does not accept what he is ordered (to perform) because of his boyhood, minority, and his being weak to accept (Islam).

"Still there is another reason. Did you know that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, summoned any boy from among the boys of his family or other than them, and he was equal to 'Ali? So, if you claim that he had not summoned any other than him, then this is an excellence for 'Ali over the boys of the people."

Then al-Ma'mu'n turned to the traditionalists and asked them: "Which work is after the precedence to faith?"

"Jihad in the path of Allah," they all answered.

As a result al-Ma'mu'n continued establishing argument against them concerning that Imam 'Ali was the most excellent one, saying: Do you think that any of the ten (persons) had any act during jihad as 'Ali had throughout the attitudes of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family? (For example, at the Battle of) Badr more than sixty polytheists were killed; 'Ali killed more than twenty, and the rest of the people killed forty."

"Abu' Bakr was directing it (the battle) along with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, in his canopy," a traditionalist replied.

"You have brought a wonder through this," retorted al-Ma'mu'n, "was he (Abu' Bakr) directing it with the

Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, or without him? Did he make him as a partner? Was the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, in need of Abu' Bakr's opinion? Which of these three (viewpoints) is the most lovable to you?"

"I seek refuge in Allah," replied the traditionalist, "I do not claim that he (Abu' Bakr) directed it without the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, or he (the Prophet) made him as a partner or the Prophet was in need of him."

"Then what is the excellence (of his being) in the canopy?" asked al-Ma'mu'n, "if the excellence of Abu' Bakr came through absenting himself from the battle, then all those who absented themselves (from it) must be more excellent than the muja'hideen, while Allah, the Great and Almighty, says: ***The holders back from among the believers, not having any injury, and those who strive hard in Allah's way with their property and their persons are not equal; Allah has made the strivers with their property and their persons to excel the holders back a*** (***high***) ***degree, and to each*** (***class***) ***Allah has promised good; and Allah shall grant to the strivers above the holders back a mighty reward***.63"

Then al-Ma'mu'n addressed Isha'q b. Hamma'd b. Zayd, a leading traditionalist, saying: "Recite the Sura *Hal Ata'*."

Isha'q recited the Sura. When he reached these words of Him, the Exalted: ***And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive****....*, al-Ma'mu'n asked him: "Concerning whom these verses have been revealed?"

"Concerning 'Ali," answered the traditionalist.

"Have you heard that 'Ali, peace be on him, had said: '***We only feed you for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks***,' when he had given food to the poor, the orphan, and the captive?"

"No," replied the traditionalist, "surely Allah, the Most High, had known 'Ali's inner self and intention, so He has manifested that in His Book, that His creatures may recognize his ('Ali's) affairs."

"Did you come to know that Allah has described the Garden with a thing other than the (***transparent***) ***glasses made of siliver*** (***qawa'rir***) as it is in this verse?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

"No," came the answer.

"Therefore, this is another excellence," retorted al-Ma'mu'n, "What did Allah mean by the (***transparent***) ***glass made of siliver*** (***qawa'rir***)?"

"I do not know," was the answer.

“He meant that they were *made of silver* because of their clearness,” commented al-Ma’mu’n, “what in them is seen just as what outside them is seen; this is like these words of him (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family: ‘O Isha’q, your longing for the (transparent) glasses made of siliver (*qawa’rir*)’ (must be) gentle, by this he meant the women who were as transparent as glasses made of siliver; (this is) like these words of him, may Allah bless him and his family: ‘I rode the horse of Abu’ Tallha and found it a sea,’ namely, it was like a sea because of its abundant running; and like these words of Him, the Exalted: ***And death will come to him from every quarter, but he shall not die; and there shall be vehement chastisement before him*** 64, which mean that as if death came to him (from every quarter); and if it came to him from one quarter, he would die.”

“O Isha’q, are you not among those who bear witness that the ten (persons) are in the Garden?” asked al-Ma’mu’n.

“Yes,” came the answer.

“If one says: ‘I do not know whether this tradition is right or wrong,’ do you regard him as an unbeliever?” asked al-Ma’mu’n.

“No,” was the answer.

“If one says: ‘I do not know whether this sura (belongs) to the Qur’an or not,’ do you regard him as an unbeliever?” asked al-Ma’mu’n.

“Yes,” came the answer.

“O Isha’q,” said al-Ma’mu’n, “tell me about the tradition of the grilled bird: Is it authentic in your view?”

“Yes,” was the answer.

“By Allah, your obstinacy has appeared,” retorted al-Ma’mu’n, “either this (i.e. ‘Ali) is as the Prophet summoned him or he is rejected, or Allah had known the most excellent (*al-fa’dil*) of His creatures, but the less excellent (*al-mafdu’l*) was more lovable to Him, or you claim that Allah does not distinguish the most excellent (*al-fa’dil*) from the less excellent (*al-mafdu’l*)*;* therefore, which of these three (views) is the most lovable to you?”

Isha’q became perplexed, did not find any answer, and remained thinking until he found a way to defend his viewpoint, saying: “O Commander of the faithful, surely Allah, the Exalted, says concerning Abu’ Bakr: “***He is the second of the two, when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion: Grieve not, surely Allah is with us.***65 So Allah ascribed him to the companionship of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.”

“Glory belongs to Allah!” exclaimed al-Ma’mu’n, “how little your knowledge of the language and the Book is! The unbeliever may be the companion of the believer. Therefore, which excellence is in this

(companionship)? Have you not heard these words of Him, the Most High: ***His companion said to him while disputing with him: Do you disbelieve in Him Who created you from dust, then from a small life-germ, then He made you a perfect man?*** 66 He made him a companion for him; and al-Hazali composed poetry, saying:

I left early in the morning and my wild companion

(which) was under the cloak was aware of the east.

"And al-Azdi has said:

I summoned the wild animal regarding it and my

companion has pure legs and body.

"Therefore, he regarded his own horse as his companion. As for these words of Him: ***surely Allah is with us*****,** Allah is with the pious and the sinful. Have you not heard these words of Him, the Most High: ***Nowhere is there a secret counsel between three persons but He is the fourth of them; nor (between) five but He is the sixth of them; nor less than that nor more but He is with them wherever they are***.67 As regarding these words of Him: *Grieve not*, tell me about the grief of Abu' Bakr: Was it obedience or disobedience? If you claim that it was obedience, then you have regarded the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, as one who prohibits obedience, and this opposes the attribute of the Wise (Allah); and if you claim that it was disobedience, then the disobedient have no excellence. Tell me about these words of Him, the Exalted: ***Allah send down His tranquillity upon him.*** Upon whom (did He send tranquillity)?"

"He sent down tranquillity upon Abu' Bakr," replied Isha'q, "for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was free from the quality of tranquillity."

Then al-Ma'mu'n demanded: "Tell me about these words of Him, the Exalted: ***Certainly Allah helped you in many battlefields and on the Battle of Hunayn, when your great numbers made you vain, but they availed you nothing and the earth became strait to you notwithstanding its spaciousness, then you turned back retreating. Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His Apostle and upon the believers***.68 Do you know the believers whom Allah has meant in this verse?"

"No," was the answer.

Then al-Ma'mu'n explained the meaning of this sacred verse, saying: "Surely the people turned their backs in flight at the Battle of Hunayn, so none stayed with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, except seven Ha'shimites: 'Ali, peace be on him, was striking (the polytheists) with his sword; al-'Abba's took hold of the bridle of the mule of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and five persons were surrounding the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, lest he should be wounded by the weapon of the unbelievers until Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, granted His Apostle, may Allah

bless him and his family, a victory. The believers whom Allah meant in this verse were ‘Ali and the Ha’shimites who were present. So who was more excellent he who was with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and the tranquillity was sent down upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and upon him or he who was in the cave with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and was not entitled to sending it upon him? O Isha’q, who is more excellent he who was in the cave with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, or he who slept on his bed and protected him with his own soul until the determined emigration went well with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family?

“Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, ordered His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to order ‘Ali to sleep on his bed and to protect him with his own soul. So he ordered ‘Ali to do that, and he said: ‘Will you be safe, O Allah’s Prophet?’ ‘Yes,’ he said. ‘I listen and obey,’ he retorted. Then he (‘Ali) wore the Prophet’s garment, and slept on his bed. As for the polytheists, they surrounded him; they were sure that it was the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who was on bed. They had unanimously agreed that each man from each Qurayshi tribe should strike him one time, lest the Ha’shimites should demand his blood. As for ‘Ali, peace be on him, he heard of the order of the people which would destroy his own soul, but he was not as impatient as Abu’ Bakr was in the cave while he was with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. ‘Ali was still alone with patience and fore-thought, so Allah sent His angels to protect him from the polytheists of Quraysh. When he entered upon morning, he got up. The people looked at him and asked: ‘Where is Muhammad?’ ‘I do not know,’ he answered. ‘Then you have deceived us,’ they retorted. Then he followed the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. Therefore, ‘Ali was still the most excellent due to his (brave) attitudes; he increased himself nothing except good until Allah, the Exalted, took him to Himself while he was praiseworthy and forgiven.”

“O Isha’q, do you not narrate the tradition of authority (*hadith al-wila’ya*)?” asked al-Ma’mu’n.

“Yes,” came the answer.

“Narrate it,” ordered al-Ma’mu’n.

He narrated it to al-Ma’mu’n, and he asked him: “Do you not see that it (the tradition) has made obligatory his right against Abu’ Bakr and ‘Umar whereas it has not made obligatory their rights against him?”

“The people say that the Prophet said this tradition concerning Zayd b. Ha’ritha,” answered Isha’q.

Denying this answer, al-Ma’mu’n asked: “Where did the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, say it?”

“He said it at Ghadir Khum,” replied Isha’q, “after he had finished the Farewell Pilgrimage.”

Al-Ma’mu’n hastened to disprove that, asking: “When was Zayd b. Ha’ritha killed? Was he not killed

before Ghadir Khum?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Tell me: If you came to know that your own son became fifteen years of age and said: 'My master is the master of my cousin, O people accept (him),' would you hate that?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

"Yes," came the answer.

Denying these words of Isha'q, al-Ma'mu'n asked: "Do you deem your son far above what you do not deem the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, far above?"

Then al-Ma'mu'n turned to him in order to establish an argument against him, saying: "Do you narrate the statement of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to 'Ali: 'Your position with me is as Ha'ru'n had with Musa'.'?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Did you not know that Ha'ru'n was the brother of Musa' on side of his father and mother?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

"Yes," came the answer.

"So did 'Ali have such a position?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

"No," was the answer.

"Ha'ru'n was a prophet," retorted al-Ma'mu'n, "but 'Ali was not a prophet, so the third position is nothing except the succession (*khila'fa*). The hypocrites said: 'He (the Prophet) was displeased with him ('Ali); he appointed him as a successor in order to soothe him.' This is just as Allah has given an account of Musa' when he said to Ha'ru'n: *Take my place among my people, and act well and do not follow the way of the mischief-makers*.[69]"

Commenting on these words of al-Ma'mu'n, Isha'q said: "Surely Musa' appointed Ha'ru'n as successor among his people while he was alive, and then he went to the appointed place and time of his Lord; surely the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, appointed 'Ali when he went out to make campaigns (*ghazawa't*)."

Al-Ma'mu'n answered him, saying: "Tell me about Musa': Was there with him any of his companions when he appointed Ha'ru'n as successor and went to the appointed place and time of his Lord, the Great and Almighty?"

"Yes," answered Isha'q.

“Did he not appoint him as a successor over them all?”

“Yes,” came the answer.

“So such was ‘Ali,” explained al-Ma’mu’n, “when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, went out to make campaigns, he appointed him as a successor over the weak, the women, and the boys, for most of his people were along with him; he appointed him as a successor over them all; the proof of that he appointed him as a successor over them all during his lifetime, his absence, and after his death is this statement of him, may Allah bless him and his family: ‘ ‘Ali’s position with me is as Ha’ru’n had with Musa’, except that there will be no prophet after me.’ According to this statement, he was also the helper of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, for Musa’ supplicated Allah, the Exalted, and said in his supplication: ***And give to me an aider from my family, Ha’ru’n, my brother. Strengthen my back by him, and associate him*** (***with me***) ***in my affair***.[70] Therefore, if ‘Ali had a position with the Prophet as Ha’ru’n had with Musa’, then he was his aider just as Ha’ru’n was the aider of Musa’ and was his successor just as Ha’ru’n was the successor of Musa’.”

Al-Ma’mu’n debates with Theologians

After al-Ma’mu’n had debated with the traditionalists and overcome them through discussing the traditions which they produced as evidence in support of their beliefs, he turned to the theologians and asked them:

“Shall I question you or you question me?”

“Rather we shall question you,” they replied.

A theologian turned to al-Ma’mu’n and asked him: “Wasn’t the Imamate of ‘Ali, peace be on him, (decided) by Allah, the Great and Almighty? Was it reported from Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, by him who reported the religious duties such as the four-*rak’a* noon prayer, one dirham per five dirhams, and the hajj to Mecca?”

“Yes,” replied al-Ma’mu’n.

“Why have the people not differed over all religious duties and differed over the Imamate of ‘Ali only?”

“Because they do not compete and desire for the religious duties as they do for the succession (*khila’fa*),” answered al-Ma’mu’n.

Another theologian asked: “Have you not denied that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, ordered the people to elect a man from among them in order to take his place as a sign of mercy and gentleness toward them, without that he himself did not appoint anyone as a successor lest his successor should be disobeyed, so the punishment would befall them?”

Al-Ma'mu'n replied: "I have denied that, for Allah, the Exalted, is more merciful to His creatures than the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and He already sent His Prophet to them and knew that there were obedient and disobedient among them; still that did not prevent Him, the Most High, from sending him.

"Yet there is another reason: If he (the Prophet) had ordered them to elect a man from among them, then either he would have ordered them all or some of them. If he had ordered them all, who would have been the elected one? And if he had ordered some of them, then there would have been a sign for this meaning. If you say that (the sign) is the jurists, then there is no escape from specifying the jurist and his qualities."

Another theologian said: "It has been narrated that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'If the Muslims regard something as good, then Allah regards it as good; and if they regard something as ugly, then Allah regards it as ugly."

Al-Ma'mu'n disproved this corrupt statement which requires correction (*taswib*) which is generally regarded as void, and which is that when Allah decrees a certain event, some people rectify Him and others accuse Him of mistake; and this is the answer of al-Ma'mu'n: "There is no escape from that this statement either concerns all the believers or some of them. If it concerns all (the believers), then this is impossible, for it is not possible for the whole (believers) to be in agreement; and if it concerns some of them, then each (sect) narrates something good concerning its leader (*sa'hib*) just as the narration of the Shi'ites concerning 'Ali and the narration of the Hashawiya concerning other than him, so when do you establish what you want regarding the Imamate?"

Another theologian asked: "So is it permissible for you to claim that the companions of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, were mistaken?"

Al-Ma'mu'n answered him, saying: "How do we claim that they were mistaken and were in agreement on error while they knew neither a religious duty nor a tradition (*sunna*), for you have claimed that the Imamate is not a religious duty from Allah nor a tradition from the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family? So how is the Imamate wrong while it is neither a religious duty nor a tradition in your viewpoint?"

Another theologian said to al-Ma'mu'n: "You claim that the Imamate belongs to 'Ali and not to other than him, then produce evidence in support of what you claim."

"I do not claim that," explained al-Ma'mu'n, "but I acknowledge that; the claimer is he who claims that appointment, deposition, and choice belong to him. As for evidence, it is entrusted to his partners, for they are opponents, or it must be produced by other than them, and the others are not available, so how is evidence produced in support of this (matter)?"

Another theologian asked: "What had 'Ali, peace be on him, to do after the death of Allah's Apostle, may

Allah bless him and his family?"

"He had done it," replied al-Ma'mu'n. (i.e. 'Ali had done what was obligatory on him).

"Was it not obligatory on 'Ali to tell the people that he was an Imam?" asked the theologian.

Al-Ma'mu'n retorted: "Surely the Imamate does not occur through an act from him concerning himself; nor does it occur through an act from the people concerning him such as choice or preference or the like; rather it occurs through an act from Allah concerning him just as He said to Ibra'him: *Surely I will make you an Imam of men*.[71] And just as He, the Most high, said to Da'wud: *O Da'wud We have made you a ruler in the land*.[72] And just as He, the Great and Almighty, said to the angels: *I am going to place in the earth a vicegerent* (*khalifa*).[73]

"Therefore the Imam becomes an Imam on the part of Allah, the Exalted, and through His choosing him through good deed in beginning, nobility in ancestry, purity in childhood, and infallibility in the future. If the Imamate occurs through an act from him concerning himself, then he who performs such an act is worthy of it; if he performs an act opposite to it and resigns, then he is a vicegerent (*khalifa*) on the part of his deeds."

Another theologian asked al-Ma'mu'n, saying: "Why have you regarded the Imamate as obligatory for 'Ali after the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family?"

Al-Ma'mu'n answered: "Because he was faithful when a child just as the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family was; he renounced the error of his people and refrained from polytheism just as the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, did, for polytheism is oppression, and the oppressive cannot be an Imam; he ('Ali) was not among those who worshipped the idols according to the unanimous resolution (of the Muslims). He who becomes a polytheist takes the place of the enemies of Allah, the Exalted, so the decision concerning him ('Ali) is the witness to him through that on which the community has unanimously agreed until another unanimous resolution like it comes, and for it is not permissible for one convicted even one time to be a ruler; if the ruler is convicted one time, then there is no difference between him and the convicted."

Another theologian asked al-Ma'mu'n: "Why did 'Ali, peace be on him, not war against Abu' Bakr and 'Umar just as he did against Mu'a'wiya?"

"The matter is impossible," replied al-Ma'mu'n, "for the 'why' (*lima*) is requirement, and 'did not do' is denying, and there is no cause for denying; rather the cause is for positiveness; it is obligatory to think about the authority of 'Ali, peace be on him, was it (decided) by Allah or by other than Him? If it is correct that it (was decided) by Allah, then doubt of His direction is unbelief because of these words of Him, the Most High: *But no! by your Lord! they do not believe* (*in reality*) *until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any straitness in their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission*.[74] So the deeds of a doer are a link

clinging to him; therefore, if his undertaking (the authority) was from Allah, the Exalted, then his deeds from Him, and it is obligatory on the people to be content and submissive. And Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, left a warring against the polytheists on the Day of al-Hudaybiya, on the day when the polytheists prevented his animals for immolation (*haddyahu'*) from (going to) the House (i.e. the Ka'ba). However, when he found helpers and became strong, he warred (against them) just as Allah, the Most High, has said concerning the first (attitude): ***So turn away with kindly forgiveness***.[75] Then He, the Great and Almighty, said: ***Then slay the polytheists wherever you find them, and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush***.[76]"

Another theologian asked him, saying: "If you claim that the Imamate of 'Ali, peace be on him, (was decided) by Allah, the Exalted, and obedience to him was obligatory, then why it was not permissible for the prophets, peace be on them, to leave delivering (their messages) and summoning (men to their Lord), while it was permissible for 'Ali to leave what he was ordered to do such as summoning the people to obey him?"

Al-Ma'mu'n answered: "We do not claim that 'Ali, peace be on him, was ordered to deliver (a message) in order to be a messenger, but he was placed as an Emblem between Allah and His creatures, so he who followed him was obedient, and he who opposed him was disobedient. If he ('Ali) had found helpers through whom he would be strong, he would have waged jihad (against those who deprived him of authority); if he had not found helpers, then the people would have been blamed, not him, for they had been ordered to obey him in all circumstances; he had not been ordered to wage jihad against them except through a force; he was of the same rank with the House (i.e. the Ka'ba), to which it is obligatory on men to make a pilgrimage; if they make a pilgrimage (to it), then they will fulfill what is against them; and if they do not do, they will be blamed, not the House."

Another theologian asked al-Ma'mu'n: "If it is obligatory that there is no escape from that there should be an Imam to whom obedience is due through compulsion, then how is it obligatory through compulsion that he was 'Ali apart from other than him?"

He disproved this vague error, saying: "Surely Allah, the Most High, does not impose (something) unknown; the imposed (i.e. the Imamate and other religious duties) is not impossible, while the unknown is impossible, for Allah, the Exalted does not impose (something) unknown, and the imposed is not impossible; therefore, there is no escape from that the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, had to demonstrate divine command in order to put an end to the excuse between Allah and His servants. For example, if Allah, the Most High, imposed on the people fasting a month and they did not know which month it was, and the month was not marked with a mark, and it was obligatory on them to find that out through their intellects in order to find what Allah, the Exalted, had willed, then they would be in no need of the Messenger who would explain (it) to them, and of the Imam who would convey to them the tradition of the Messenger."

Another theologian questioned al-Ma'mu'n, saying: "Where did you make it obligatory that 'Ali was adult

when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, summoned him (to faith)? The people claim that he was a boy when he was summoned to (faith), that it was not permissible for him to perform (the religious) precepts, and that he was not an adult."

He replied: "Surely it cannot be thought that in that time he was among those for whom the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, sent in order to summon (them to faith). If he was so, then it would possible that he was responsible and strong enough to perform the religious duties."

The Traditionalists and the Theologians keeps silent

The traditionalists and the theologians kept silent, for al-Ma'mu'n confuted them, established argument against them, and produced evidence in support of the Imamate of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and then he asked them the following questions:

"Has the community not narrated unanimously that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: 'He who fabricates lies against me, then let him occupy his place in the Fire.'?"

"Yes, O Commander of the faithful," they replied.

Then al-Ma'mu'n presented another Prophetic tradition before them, saying: "Any they have narrated on his authority that he said: 'He who disobeys Allah through an act of disobedience, whether small or great, then he adopts it as religion and follows it with insistence is immortal among the layers of the Hellfire.'"

The traditionalists and the theologians confirmed and admitted the tradition, so al-Ma'mu'n said to them: "Tell me about a man whom the community chooses: Is it permissible to call him the successor (*khalifa*) of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and (appointed) by Allah, the Great and Almighty, whereas the Messenger had not appointed him as a successor? If you say 'yes', then you have stubbornly contended. And if you say 'no', then it is obligatory that so-and-so is not the successor of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family."

After a talk took place between him and the traditionalists and the theologians concerning this matter, al-Ma'mu'n began preaching to them, saying: "Fear Allah; consider your own souls carefully; leave imitation; avoid vague errors. By Allah, Allah does not accept (any deed) except from a servant who does not do (anything) except through that which he understands and does not enter (anything) except concerning that which he regards as true. Suspicion is doubt, and clinging to doubt is unbelief in Allah, the Most High, and its owner (i.e. the doubter) is in the Fire."

After this rebuke, al-Ma'mu'n turned to them and asked: "Tell me about the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family: Had he appointed (anyone) as a successor before he died or not?"

"He had not appointed (anyone) as a successor," they all replied.

“Was his leaving that (i.e. the succession) guidance or error?” asked al-Ma’mu’n.

“Yes, it was guidance,” they answered.

So al-Ma’mu’n produced evidence in refuting their beliefs, saying: “Isn’t it incumbent on the people to follow guidance, to leave falsehood and to avoid error?”

“They have done that (i.e. they have followed guidance),” they replied.

Then al-Ma’mu’n established wonderful argument and proof against their false statement, saying: “Why did the people appoint (Abu’ Bakr) as a successor after him (i.e. the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family) while he left it (i.e. the succession)? So leaving his practice is error, and it is impossible that guidance is the opposite of guidance. And if leaving succession is guidance, then why did Abu’ Bakr appoint (someone) as a successor, while the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, did not do that? And why did ‘Umar regard the authority after him as a consultative council among the Muslims in contrast with his companion (i.e. Abu’ Bakr)? That is because you have claimed that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, did not appoint (anyone) as a successor, whereas Abu’ Bakr appointed (someone) as a successor, and ‘Umar did not leave appointing (someone) as a successor just as Abu’ Bakr did, and he brought a third meaning, which is the consultative council which he nominated in order to appoint the successor after him. So tell me which of that do you regard as right? If you regard the practice of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, as right, they you have regarded the practice of Abu’ Bakr as wrong, and such is (my) view concerning the rest of the statements. Then tell me: Which is better according to your claim leaving the succession which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, did or the succession which a sect did?”

“Tell me: Is it permissible that leaving it (the succession) by the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, is guidance and doing it by other than him is guidance? Is there any guidance the opposite of guidance? So where was then the error?

“Tell me: Has anyone become a ruler through being chosen by the companions since the death of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, up to this day? If you say ‘no’, then you have made it obligatory that all the people have made error after the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

“If you say ‘yes’, then you have accused the community of lying, and your statement has disproved the existence which cannot be refuted. Then tell me about these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *Say: To whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth*?77 Is this true or false?”

“Yes, it is true,” they replied.

“Isn’t that which apart from Allah belongs to Allah if He has created and possessed it?”

“Yes,” was the answer.

Accordingly, al-Ma'mu'n became exited and said: "So this disproves your obligatory choosing a successor, your making obedience to him obligatory, and your calling him the successor of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. It is you who appoint him as a successor, remove him (from office) when you become angry with him and he works in contrast with your love, and you murder him when he refuses to resign."

After this speech, he spoke to the people with violence. Then he turned to the *'qibbla* (the direction to Mecca), raised his hands, and said: "O Allah I have guided them! O Allah I have explained to them everything obligatory on me!

"O Allah, I believe in seeking nearness to You through preferring 'Ali, peace be on him, to the creatures after Your Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, just as Your Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has ordered us (to do).78"

The people kept silent; they did not find any way to defend their beliefs. Most al-Ma'mu'n's indications concerning the Imamate of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, were based on logic and proof. I (i.e. the author) think that the Imamate of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, is as clear as the sun, for it has been made obligatory by his talent and geniuses, his strong clinging to Allah, his asceticism, and his renouncing the world. All these qualities made him worthier of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, than other than him. None of the companions or the relatives of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, had such creative qualities of knowledge, honesty, honor, and the like from among the noble qualities and great tendencies; and through this sense he was more entitled than the rest of the people to the office and rank of the Prophet. As for his relationship to the Prophet, it does not make him preferable to the rest of the Muslims, for it is incorrect to give relationship as proof of his right to undertake the caliphate.

Any how, al-Ma'mu'n gave all proofs of the Imamate of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, in order to seek nearness to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and to find favor with him; this has been demonstrated by Isha'q b. Hamma'd, who said: "Al-Ma'mu'n preferred Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, to all companions (of the Prophet) in order to seek nearness to Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', peace be on him, who himself would say to his trustworthy companions: 'Do not be deceived by his (al-Ma'mu'n's) statement. By Allah, none will kill me except him, but it is necessary for me to be patient until the moment of death comes.'79"

His Entrusting the Imam with Regency

Yet another proof depended by those who believed that al-Ma'mu'n was a Shi'ite is that he entrusted regency to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, that he subjected to danger the caliphate the 'Abba'sids undertook and hand it over to the 'Alawides.

These are the most important proofs given by those who say that al-Ma'mu'n was a Shi'ite and had

‘Alawide thought and opinion.

His Shiism is false

Through abundant consideration and research, I (i.e. the author) have come to know that al-Ma’mu’n was not a Shi‘ite; nor did he show love for the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them. He took the previous measures for political considerations, not for summoning the people to adopt the Shi‘ite doctrines, and this can be proved through the following:

1. Al-Ma’mu’n belonged to the ‘Abba’sid family, who is famous for showing detest and enmity toward the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them. This family begot none except tyrannical persons who wreaked their wrath upon the family and the children of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. They killed them, made them homeless, and punished them severely. They committed crimes toward them, to the extent that even the Umayyad family did not commit them. Rather the Umayyad family thought famous for violent enmity toward the children of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family did not treat them as the ‘Abba’sid did; the Umayyads had excellences better than those of the ‘Abba’sids. In this book we have explained that the ‘Abba’sids persecuted the ‘Alawides.

Any how, it is very unlikely that al-Ma’mu’n turned away from the line of his fathers, that he changed their program and behavior overnight, that he became an ‘Alawide, that he showed love for the opponents of his fathers and subjected his state to danger.

2. As for his disparaging Mu‘a’wiya and the rulers before him, and preferring Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, to them, it was not earnest; rather it was formal and for political purposes, for al-Taghlubi, a contemporary of al-Ma’mu’n, has narrated: “Al-Ma’mu’n said: ‘And they have thought that it is not permissible to prefer ‘Ali except through disparaging the predecessors; I seek sanctuary in Allah from disparaging (anyone) even al-Hajja’jj b. Yusuf, so just imagine how much more are the good predecessors?80”

He refused to disparage al-Hajja’jj b. Yusuf, the criminal terrorist, who drowned Iraq in the blood of the innocent.

The following poetry lines which confirm that have been ascribed to him:

Love for ‘Ali after the Prophet has become my religion in

which I believe and because of which I shall not make an

apology tomorrow.

I shall not curse (Abu’ Bakr) al-Sidiq nor ‘Umar.

Then Ibn ‘Affa’n, who was unjustly killed, is in the

Gardens along with the righteous.

Yet I shall curse neither al-Zubayr nor Talha when a sayer

treacherously says.

And I shall not curse ‘A’isha, the mother; we shall disown

him who fabricates lies against her.[81]

Yet there are other examples and proofs which indicate that his Shiism was false, and that he had not any relationship with the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them.

3. He assassinated Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, after he had achieved his political aims; he was not satisfied with that, so he ordered his governor over Egypt to wash the pulpits on which he delivered speeches concerning the regency of Imam al-Ridha’[82], peace be on him; this procedure shows that he had harbored malice against the Imam.

The ‘Alawide family fully understood that the friendship al-Ma’mu’n showed toward them was false, formal, and unreal. The narrators said that al-Ma’mu’n wrote to ‘Abd Allah, Imam al-Ridha”s brother, to grant him security and to guarantee him regency after him just as he did toward his brother Imam al-Ridha’. It has been mentioned in his letter: “I do not think that any of the family of Abu’ Ta’lib will fear me after what I had done toward al-Ridha’.”

So ‘Abd Allah answered him in a letter and disclosed therein al-Ma’mu’n’s intentions as follows:

“I have received your letter and understood it. You want to deceive me with regard to my own soul just as the hunter does, and you want to trick me with the trick of the assassin intending to shed my blood.

“I have wondered at regency and my undertaking it after you. You think that I have not been informed of what you had done toward al-Ridha’; how have you come to know that I crave after kingdom? Do you think that (I crave after) the kingdom whose bloom and sweetness have deceived you? By Allah, if I was thrown into a flaming fire while I was alive, it would be more lovable to me than undertaking an authority over the Muslims or drinking unlawful drink during intense, deadly thirst.

“Or (do you think that I crave after) the poisoned grapes through which you had killed al-Ridha’? Or do you think that hiding has tired me, and my chess has become strait out of it? By Allah, for that reason I have become tired of life and detested the world. If my religion permitted me to put my hand in yours in order to take your purpose from me, I would do that. However, Allah has made it prohibited for me to risk my blood. Would that you were able, without sacrificing my soul for you, to kill me, and I met Allah, the Great and Almighty, (stained) with my own blood, and I met Him while killed and wronged, so I would get rid of this world.

“Know that I am one who seeks salvation for his own soul; I have done my best concerning that which makes Allah pleased with me and concerning a work through which I seek nearness to Him; I have found no opinion to guide me to any of that, so I have returned to the Qur’an in which is guidance and cure; I run over it sura by sura, and verse by verse, but I have found nothing closer to one than martyrdom in seeking His good pleasure.

“I ran over it again considering which kind of jihad was the best and for which class (of people), so I have found Him, the Great and Almighty, say: *Fight those of the unbelievers who are near to you and let them find in you hardness*.[83] I asked myself: ‘Which kind of the unbelievers is more harmful to Islam and nearer to my place, so I have found that none is more harmful to Islam than you, for the unbelievers have shown their unbelief, and the people have understood their affair, recognized them, and are careful of them. You have deceived the Muslims through (showing) Islam and hiding unbelief; you have killed (people) through doubt and punished them through accusation; you have illegally taken the property of Allah, openly drunk unlawful wine, spent the property of Allah on the amusers, given it to the singers, and deprived the Muslims of it; therefore, you have cheated (them) through (adopting) Islam; you have encompassed Islamic regions just as the Muslims have done; you have decided for the polytheist through Islam, disobeyed Allah and His Messenger just as the stubborn opponent has done.

“As a result if the time makes me happy and Allah helps me against you through the supporters of the truth, I will sacrifice my own soul for struggling against you with a struggle which He accepts from me, but if He gave you a respite and delayed you in order to punish you through what you deserved in your return (to Him) or the days chose me before that, then sufficient unto me would be my efforts and my intention which Allah, the Great and Almighty, had known. Greetings!”

This letter displays al-Ma’mu’n’s falseness, deception, and unreal friendship toward the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them.

As for the last paragraphs of the letter, they have added al-Ma’mu’n to the caravan of the unbelievers against whom jihad is obligatory, and whom should be toppled. They have also demonstrated that al-Ma’mu’n used a certain policy to kill the people out of doubt and punished them due to accusation, and that he was sinful, for he drank wine and spent the properties of the Muslims on amusement centers, singers, the mischievous, and the dissolute.

This letter was a thunderous outcry in the face of al-Ma’mu’n, the criminal, and it is among the brilliant pages on resisting oppression and tyranny.

It is worth mentioning that another part of this letter or of another letter was sent to al-Ma’mu’n by this great Sayyid. It is as follows: “Let me avenge myself on you and your fathers, who regarded our blood as lawful, took our right, openly declared concerning our affair, and of whom we are cautious; you are the subtlest of them in stratagem toward us through your satisfying us and concealing the ordeals we have received (through you); you have deceived us one by one, but jihad is lovable to me just as it is

lovable to everyone you have wronged. I have sharpened my own sword, installed my own spearhead, and chosen my own horse.

"I do not know which enemy is the most harmful to Islam, but I have come to know that Allah's Book contains all things; I have read it and found in it: *O you who believe, fight those of the unbelievers who are near to you and let them find in you hardness*."

Yet another paragraph of this letter is the following: "I had reflected (on you) and suddenly (found) that you were the most harmful enemy to Islam and the Muslims. For the unbelievers have turned aside from it and opposed it, so the people have become cautious of them and warred against them, but you have apparently entered it, so the people have refrained (from fighting against you), and you have begun destroying its handles one by one; therefore you are the most harmful enemy to Islam.84"

These paragraphs give an account of some sides of the 'Abba'sid policy which was based on wronging the 'Alawides and punishing them severely. Similarly, they give an account of this great Sayyid, the son of Imam Musa', peace be on him, who was eager for waging jihad against the government of al-Ma'mu'n, the mortal enemy of Islam, for he 'demolished its handles one by one,' as it has been mentioned in the letter.

4. Having assassinated Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, al-Ma'mu'n destroyed the 'Alawides. He ordered his intelligence and his security forces to pursue and uproot them, and they assassinated a group of the children of Imam Musa', peace be on him. He used poison as a weapon in order to put an end to the progeny of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. For example, he assassinated with poison the great, noble 'Alawide Ibra'him, the son of Imam Musa', peace be on him. When Ibra'him died, Ibn al-Samma'k buried him and composed, saying:

Al-Imam al-Murtada' has died of poison, and the time has

concealed his excellence and knowledge.

He unjustly died at al-Zawra'' just as his forefather was

unjustly killed at Karbela''.

So the yellow sun is mourning for him, and the sad moon

is striking his own face.85

Surely his assassinating the 'Alawides and pursuing them, to the extent that they escaped out of fear of him and hid themselves in the countries and the cities, disproves his summons to Shiism and indicates that he had no relationship with friendship to the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, namely, he was like his fathers, who were the mortal enemy of the children of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

The Reasons for his Pretending Shiism

It is necessary for us to pause in order to discuss the reasons for al-Ma'mu'n's showing friendship toward the members of the House *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, and for his announcing his Shiism in the official gatherings. I (i.e. the author) think that he pretended Shiism for the following reasons:

A. He was in disagreement with his 'Abba'sid family, who inclined to his brother al-Amin, whose mother was Mrs. Zubayda, who belonged to the 'Abba'sid family and spent generously on the 'Abba'sids. As for the mother of al-Ma'mu'n, she was Mara'jil, who was among the female-slaves in the palace. The 'Abba'sids disdained al-Ma'mu'n because of his mother, and he intended to abase them through his showing friendship to the 'Alawides and his designating Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as a successor after him.

B. Through his pretending Shiism, al-Ma'mu'n intended to please the commanders of his army, who showed tendencies and friendship to the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them.

C. Al-Ma'mu'n intended to display sympathy with the 'Alawides and to announce the outstanding merits of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, that he might attract the feelings of the pious people whose sentiments and hearts were full of love and friendship toward the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, so he was able to use them as a weapon during his war against his brother, al-Amin.

D. He pretended Shiism and entrusted the office to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, in order to suppress the violent, Shi'ite revolt headed by the great Sayyids from among the children of Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on him. It is worth mentioning that this revolt extended to most regions of Islamic world and was about to put an end to the 'Abba'sid government, but with unique slyness al-Ma'mu'n was able to suppress it; that was when he appointed Imam al-Ridha' as a successor after him, for the latter was the master and leader of the 'Alawides, and large part of this community believed in his Imamate.

As a result, al-Ma'mu'n was able to suppress and uproot the revolt through his artificial sympathy with the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, his designating Imam al-Ridha' as his successor, and minting the currency in his name.

D. He pretended Shiism because he wanted to discover the Shi'ites and to make the authorities know their names and places, for they were hidden groups. It is worth mentioning that the previous 'Abba'sid governments were unable to know of them, their secret activities, and their groups. Accordingly, through his kindness to the 'Alawides, his disparaging the caliphs, and his dispraising Mu'a'wiya, and the like, al-Ma'mu'n intended to discover the Shi'ites, that his security forces and his police might pursue them; this can be indicated by some official documents issued by him. These are some reasons for al-Ma'mu'n's showing love for the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them.

His Policy

During the days of his rule, al-Ma'mu'n followed the policy of Mu'a'wiya b. Hind. The historians mentioned that he was asked to follow the policy of Abu' Bakr and 'Umar, but he refused to accept it. As a result he insisted on following the policy of Mu'a'wiya, the wicked pagan, who took money and spent it according to his desires. Al-Ma'mu'n said: "There is no escape for me from (following) this (i.e. Mu'a'wiya's policy).86" Any how, he followed Mu'a'wiya's example, so he intended to kill the innocent through giving them poison to drink, and in this manner he was able to put an end to them just as Mu'a'wiya did toward his opponents when he said: "Surely Allah has soldiers (made) of honey." Cunning and deception were the most prominent of his qualities just as they were of Mu'a'wiya's.

1. Haya't al-Imam al-Ridha', p. 119.
2. Al-Tamaddun al-Isla'mi, vol. 5, p. 118.
3. Al-Ta'jj, pp. 40-42.
4. Tazyeen al-Aswa'q. Fawa't al-Wafaya't, vol. 4, p. 225.
5. Abu' al-Farajj al-Asfaha'ni, al-Agha'ni, vol. 5, pp. 69-70.
6. Ibid., vol. 9, p. 64.
7. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 32.
8. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q2/97.
9. Ibid.
10. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 226.
11. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 59.
12. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 225.
13. Ibid. Biha'r al-Anwa'r.
14. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 161. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 49, p. 166.
15. Haya't al-Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, vol. 2, pp. 55-57, quoted from al-Dimyari's Haya't al-Hayawa'n, vol. 2, p. 188.
16. Haya't al-Imam Muhammad al-Jawa'd, p. 284.
17. Ma'a'thir al-Ana'qa fi Ma'a'lim al-Khila'fa, vol. 1, p. 285. Roudat al-A'ya'n, p. 99, it has been mentioned wherein that he (al-Amin) bought 'Arabiya, the songstress, for one hundred thousand dinars.
18. Al-Siyu'ti, Ta'rikh al-Khulafa'', p. 134. Mukhtasar Ta'rikh al-Diwal, p. 134.
19. Al-Maqrizi, al-Silu'k li Ma'rifat Diwal al-Mulu'k, vol. 1, p. 16.
20. Al-Tanbih wa al-Ishra'f, p. 302.
21. 'Uyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 212.
22. Al-Ada'b al-Sulta'niya, p. 212.
23. Al-'Iqa'b was one of the ships which were prepared for al-Amin.
24. Ibn Manzu'r, Abu' Nu'a's, pp. 103-104.
25. Al-Mas'u'di, Muru'jj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 309.
26. Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, the Events of the Year 186 A. H.
27. Al-Mas'u'di, Muru'jj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 310.
28. Ibid., p. 316.
29. Ibid., p. 317.
30. Roudat al-A'ya'n fi Akhba'r Masha'hir al-Zama'n, photographed, available at al-Sayyid al-Hakim Library, serial no. 3902, p. 103.
31. 'Uyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 211.
32. Al-Mas'u'di, Muru'jj al-Dhahab, pp. 225-226.
33. Al-Dimyari, Haya't al-Hayawa'n, vol. 1, p. 72.

34. ‘Asr al-Ma’mu’n, vol. 1, p. 210.
35. Al-Dimyari, Haya’t al-Hayawa’n, vol. 1, p. 72.
36. ‘Asr al-Ma’mu’n, vol. 1, p. 210.
37. Al-Ada’b al-Sulta’niya, p. 212.
38. Asma’’ al-Mughta’lin, p. 200.
39. Ibid., p. 199.
40. Ibid.
41. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’.
42. Al-Mustatraf, vol. 2, p. 306.
43. Haya’t al-Imam Muhammad al-Jawa’d, p. 233.
44. Jack C. Rislar, Arab Civilization, p. 108.
45. Subh al-A‘sha’, vol. 2, p. 420.
46. Al-Tuhaf wa al-Hada’ya’, p. 105.
47. Ibid.
48. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, pp. 88-93.
49. Tadhkirat al-Khawa’s, p. 366.
50. Al-Bayqahi, al-Maha’sin wa al-Masa’wi’, vol. 1, p. 105.
51. Tadhkirat al-Khawa’s, p. 367.
52. Ibid., 366.
53. Al-Mas‘u’di, Muru’jj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 329.
54. Tadhkirat al-Khawa’s, p. 367.
55. Al-Mas‘u’di, Muru’jj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 361.
56. Qur’an, 56, 35-37.
57. Ibid., 4, 163.
58. Ibid., 33, 7.
59. Ibid., 8, 33.
60. Ibid., 56, 10-11.
61. Ibid., 38, 86.
62. Ibid., 53, 3-4.
63. Ibid., 4, 95.
64. Ibid., 14, 17.
65. Ibid., 9, 40.
66. Ibid., 18, 37.
67. Ibid., 58, 7.
68. Ibid., 9, 25-26.
69. Ibid., 7, 142.
70. Ibid., 20, 29-32.
71. Ibid., 2, 124.
72. Ibid., 38, 26.
73. Ibid., 2, 30.
74. Ibid., 4, 65.
75. Ibid., 15, 85.
76. Ibid., 9, 5.
77. Ibid., 6, 12.
78. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, pp. 184-199. Biha’r al-Anwa’r.
79. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 185.
80. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’, quoted from ‘As al-Ma’mu’n, vol. 1, p. 369.
81. Al-Bida’ya wa al-Niha’ya, vol. 10, p. 277.

82. Al-Kindi, al-Wila't wa al-Quda't.
83. Qur'an, 9, 123.
84. Maqa'til al-Ta'libiyyin, pp. 630-631.
85. Haya't al-Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, vol. 2, p. 48, quoted from Mukhtasar Akhba'r al-Khulafa".
86. Haya't al-Imam al-Ridha', p. 181, quoted from al-Maha'sin wa al-Masa'wi' by al-Bayqahi, p. 295.

Chapter 15: Imam Al-Ridha' And Regency

We are in front of an important historical event which busied the public opinion and stunned all political circles. The event is that al-Ma'mu'n appointed Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as a heir apparent after him; it indicates that the succession would be taken from the 'Abba'sids and handed over to their opponents, the 'Alawides; it astonished the people and they asked each other: "How has the 'Abba'sid policy changed into this line opposing the political line which the 'Abba'sids have followed since the beginning of their reign?" They asked one another such a question because the 'Abba'sids were famous for persecuting and uprooting the 'Alawides; in other words, the 'Abba'sids destroyed the 'Alawides, buried them while they were alive, threw their children into the Tigris, and used against them all kinds of genocide.

The people and history have known that al-Ma'mu'n belonged to this ('Abba'sid) family, who wronged the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them; therefore, it was not possible for him to follow behavior other than that of his fore-fathers or to deviate from their anti-'Alawides trend. Al-Ma'mu'n was fed on showing detest and enmity toward the 'Alawides, for his grandfather al-Mansu'r and his father al-Rashid followed all ways to put an end to them; they employed all their economic and political organs to degrade their importance and dignity and to remove them from the political arena in the world of Arabs and Islam.

The 'Abba'sids were the opponents of the 'Alawides, but why did al-Ma'mu'n create such a sudden change (in his policy) and turn away from the plan and method of his fathers? Why did he appoint Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as a successor after him? Similarly, why did Imam al-Ridha' agree to undertake regency while he was fully aware of the deviation of al-Ma'mu'n and of his harboring malice against the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them? We will answer these questions as follows:

Al-Ma'mu'n's Motives

It is necessary for us to pause in order to consider the reasons and motives which urged al-Ma'mu'n to appoint Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as a successor after him:

1. Al-Ma'mu'n had no strong position in Islamic state, for the 'Abba'sid family disdained him because of

his mother Mara'jil, who was among the slave-wives in the palace, because of his strong relationship with al-Fadl b. SAhl and his entrusting all his affairs to him, while he was originally from Persia. Moreover, his brother al-Amin hated him, intended to do evil deeds toward him, and schemed against him, for he competed with him for the authority. Accordingly, al-Ma'mu'n wanted to reinforce his position, to strengthen his influence, and to overcome those who harbored malice against him. As a result, he vested the office in Imam 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on him, the greatest personality in Islamic world and son of Imam al-Sa'diq, who was the first to supply Islamic world with thoughts and knowledge. Moreover large part of the Muslims believed in his Imamate and showed friendship to him. For this reason al-Ma'mu'n took the initiative and designated him as his successor over this important office in Islamic world.

2. Al-Ma'mu'n undertook the leadership of Islamic state while he was fully aware of that Islamic society harbored hate and detest against the 'Abba'sid family, who oppressed the Muslims, appropriated their affairs, wreaked all kinds of oppression and tyranny upon the 'Alawides, the summoners to social justice. So the Muslims wished for the return of the Umayyad reign though it was famous for cruelty and torture. In this connection, the poet says:

Would that the tyranny of the Marwa'nis returned to us,

and would that the just of the 'Abba'sids was in the fire.

Another poet says:

I do not think that tyranny will come to an end while over

the community is an 'Abba'sid governor.

Al-Ma'mu'n intended to open a new page for the citizens and to conceal the policy of his fore-fathers, so he appointed Imam al-Ridha' the hope of Islamic community, peace be on him as a successor after him.

4. Most al-Ma'mu'n's Army, officers and soldiers, were from among the Shi'ites who adopted the Imamate of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so he wanted to win their affection and loyalty.

5. Surely the revolt against the 'Abba'sid government broke out and extended to most Islamic regions, and the motto of the revolutionaries was: "The summons to al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family." The revolutionists responded to this allegiance al-Ma'mu'n pledged to the Imam. In the meantime, he gave the Imam the nickname of al-Ridha' (i.e. the consent), that, through that, he might attract the feelings of the revolutionaries, and they pledged allegiance to him, and he got rid of the danger which encircled his state and was about to wrap up its banner and fold up its principal features. This was the plan of al-Ma'mu'n, who was among the first-class diplomatic corps, so he was able to overcome the events surrounding him and to save his

government from the deadliest danger encircling it.

5. Through his nominating Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, for succession, al-Ma'mu'n was able to give a religious quality to his government in order to indicate that it was not oppressive like that of his fathers, that mutiny against him was illegal, and that it was obligatory on the Muslims to war against those who revolted against him.

6. Among the aims which al-Ma'mu'n achieved through this pledge of allegiance (to the Imam) is that he was able to know the Shi'ite elements and to recognize their identities. It is worth mentioning that the places of the Shi'ites were very secret, that the Shi'ites worked in secret and in hiding-places. However, after this pledge of allegiance (to the Imam), their affair appeared, and the authorities were able to discover them.

7. Al-Ma'mu'n pledged allegiance (to Imam al-Ridha') in order to indicate that the Imam, peace be on him, was not among those who renounced the world; rather he was among those who loved it through his accepting this pledge of allegiance. However, the Imam was fully aware of al-Ma'mu'n's objectives which he disproved when he stipulated that he would not appoint nor remove nor take part in government.

These are some motives which urged al-Ma'mu'n to appoint Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as a successor after him.[1] Now, we will return to talk about regency, the attitude of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, toward it, and some matters concerning it; that is as follows:

Al-Fadl's Letter to the Imam

Al-Fadl b. SAhl sent a letter to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, in which he asked him to come to Khurasa'n in order to receive the caliphate from al-Ma'mu'n; this is the text of the letter:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

To 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', son of Allah's Apostle, the chosen one, who has become rightly guided by his guidance, followed his practice, kept the religion of Allah, and stored the revelation of Allah.
From his friend, al-Fadl b. SAhl, who sacrificed himself for returning his right to him, and connecting his night to his day concerning it. Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you, O rightly guided one. Verily I praise on your behalf Allah, other than Whom there is no god, and ask Him to bless Muhammad, His servant.

Now then, surely I hope that Allah has helped you and

permitted you to return your right from him who has

deemed you as weak, that He may magnify His favors

toward you, make you the inheriting Imam, make your

enemies and those who have turned away from you see

from you what they feared.

Verily, this letter of mine is out of a determination from

the Commander of the faithful, the servant of Allah, Imam

al–Ma'mu'n and from me for returning your right to

you, confirming your right before you, handing it over

to you, for which I ask Allah who has become aware of it,

that you will inform me of that through which I will be the

happiest of all people, among the successful with

Allah, among those who accomplish the right of Allah's

Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and his deeds, among those who help you with it, that I may reach both good through showing friendship to you and your state.

When my letter reaches you, my I be your ransom, and it

is possible for you not to place it off your hand, so that

you may come to the Commander of the faithful (i.e. al–

Ma'mu'n), who regards you as a partner in his authority,

a mediator in his ancestry, and the most appropriate of the

people for that which is under his hand. I have done that

while I am surrounded by Allah's choice, protected by His

angels, safeguarded by Him, and Allah is a guarantor for

you through all that which gathers good benefit for you,

and set right the community through you. *Allah is*

sufficient for us and most excellent is the Protector.

Peace, Allah's mercy and blessings be upon you.[2]

This letter, sent by the highest ranking official in the 'Abba'sid government, contains the following:

1. Giving noble nicknames and exalted qualities to the Imam, peace be on him, as follows: (the one who) kept the religion of Allah, and (the one who) stored the revelation of Allah. Of course, it is the Shi'ites who have given these nicknames to their Imams.

2. Informing the Imam, peace be on him, of that the caliphate would be returned to him, that Allah, the Exalted, decreed to return this usurped right to its people and leaders, the Household of the Prophet, whose master was Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

3. This letter was not written by al-Fadl only; rather it was written by him and al-Ma'mu'n, who had decided to abdicate the caliphate and to hand it over to the Imam.

4. This letter shows that al-Fadl asked the Imam to leave Medina (Yathrib) for Khurasa'n at once in order to undertake the leadership of the rule.

The Attitude of the Imam

Our sources have not shown the Imam's answer to this letter, but it is certain that the Imam vigorously refused to responded to it, for he was aware of al-Ma'mu'n's intentions and al-Fadl's unreal letter to him. It is worth mentioning that the political motives schemed behind the scenes urged al-Fadl and al-Ma'mu'n to write it.

Al-Ma'mu'n sends Messengers to the Imam

Al-Ma'mu'n sent an official delegation in order to ask the Imam to leave Medina (Yathrib) for Khurasa'n. As for the person who headed the delegation, he was al-Raja'' b. Abu' al-Dahha'k; it is said that he was 'Isa' b. Yazid, better known as al-Julu'di. Al-Sayyid al-Amin has regarded that as unlikely, and he said: "Surely al-Julu'di was among the (military) commanders of al-Rashid and was an opponent of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so it was not wise for al-Ma'mu'n to send him to the Imam in order to ask him to leave (Medina for Khurasa'n).[3]"

Al-Ma'mu'n ordered the head of the delegation to bring the Imam, peace be on him, through the road leading to Basrah, al-Ahwa'z, and Fars, and not to bring him through the road leading to Ku'fa and Qum.[4] Also al-Ma'mu'n wrote to Imam al-Ridha' and asked him not to come through the road leading to the mountain and Qum, and to come through the road leading to Basrah, al-Ahwa'z, and Fars.[5]

The reason for al-Ma'mu'n's insistence and concern is very clear; it is that he did not want the Imam to come through Ku'fa and Qum, for both cities were among the Shi'ite centers, and their inhabitants were from among those who showed friendship to the Imam and believed in his Imamate. So if the Imam had

passed through them, he would have been magnified and honored; this would have reinforced his position and subjected the ‘Abba’sid state to danger. As for the Imam’s passing through Basrah, it did not benefit him, for its inhabitants inclined to ‘Uthma’n and showed friendship to the ‘Abba’sids. This step indicates the false plan of al-Ma’mu’n, who claimed that he would abdicate the caliphate and hand it over to the ‘Alawides.

The Imam says Farewell to the Grave of the Prophet

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, did not find any escape from responding to al-Ma’mu’n, so he went to the grave of his grandfather, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, and said the final farewell to it, for he came to know that he would not visit it again. Muhawwil al-Sijista’ni has narrated, saying: “When the post regarding sending Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, on a journey to Khurasa’n came, I was in Medina. He entered the mosque in order to say farewell to the grave of his grandfather, Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. He said farewell to it several times. He wept and wailed loudly, so I walked towards him, greeted him, and he returned the greetings. Then I congratulated him on that which he would reach, but he, peace be on him, said: ‘Leave me, for I am going to leave neighboring my grandfather, may Allah bless him and his family, so I will die strange and buried beside Ha’ru’n (al-Rashid).”

Muhawwil al-Sijista’ni said: “So I went out following the road of the Imam until he died at Tu’s and buried beside Ha’ru’n.[6]”

The Imam orders his family to weep over him

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, came to know that he would not return to his family and homeland. So he gathered the members of his family, divided twelve thousand dinars among them, made them know that he would never return to them, ordered them to weep and wail for him while he could hear that, and then he said the final farewell to them.[7]

The Imam appoints his Son al-Jawa’d

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, appointed his son al-Jawa’d as a successor after him, while he was seven years old or more than that. He made him enter the mosque of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and place his hand on the edge of the holy grave; he made him cling to it, ask his grandfather, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, to protect him; then he said to him: “I have ordered all my agents and my servants to listen to you and obey you.” Then the Imam told his companions that his son would be the successor after him.[8]

To the Sacred House of Allah

The Imam had gone to the Sacred House of Allah to say the final farewell to it before he headed for Khurasa'n. Most his family accompanied him, among them was his son Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him. When he arrived the Sacred House, he greeted it, circumambulated it, performed prayers in the Standing-place of Ibra'him, ran, and circumambulated it along with his son al-Jawa'd. When al-Jawa'd arrived at the Stone of Isma''il, he sat by it for a long time. So Muwaffaq al-Kha'dim asked him to stand up, but he refused and looked sad and sorrowful. So Muwaffaq hurried towards the Imam and told him about the state of his son. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, hastened to his son and asked him to stand up, and he wept, sighed, and said: "O Father, how can I stand while you are saying the final farewell to the House with a farewell after which there will be no return?"

Imam al-Jawa'd, peace be on him, saw sadness appear on the face of his father, so he concluded that his father was in the last part of his life. That happened, for Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, did not return to the Holy Houses and died poisoned through the hand of al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abba'sid.

To Khurasa'n

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, left the Sacred House of Allah for Khurasa'n, and he was extremely honored and magnified at every district or in every city through which he passed, for the Muslims hurried to receive him cordially, to get the blessing of kissing his hands, to ask him to stop at them, and to serve him. They asked him about the precepts of their religion, and he, peace be on him, answered them about that.

In Nisa'bu'r

The caravan of the Imam covered the desert, was earnest in waking, and did not pay attention to anything until it arrived in Nisa'bu'r.[9] The Imam was received there with a unique popular reception, for Nisa'bu'r did not witness such a reception throughout its history. At the head of those who received him were the scholars, the virtuous, and the traditionalists who have narrated on his authority al-Hadith al-Dhahabi which we will mention.

The Imam, peace be on him, stopped at the district of al-Gharbi or al-Farawi, in the house of a person whom the people of Nisa'bu'r called Bisanda, a Persian word means satisfactory, for the Imam was satisfied with him apart from the rest of the people and stopped at his house. Then the Imam planted an almond in that house, and it grew and became a tree and bore fruit in a year. When the people came to know of the tree, they began curing themselves with its fruit. So he who was inflected by a certain malady got the blessing through eating some of its fruit, and he recovered through the bless of the great Imam. A person cut some of its branches, and he became blind. Ibn Hamda'n cut down that tree, and he became blind.[10]

There was a public bath-house in Nisa'bu'r. The Imam entered it, washed himself, and performed a prayer on its top, so the inhabitants of Nisa'bu'r began getting the bless of that public bath-house. They washed themselves wherein, drank from it seeking bless, prayed on its top, and asked Allah, the Great and Almighty, to accomplish their needs, and they were accomplished for them out of the bless of the great Imam.[11]

Al-Hadith al-Dhahabi

The scholars and the traditionalists surrounded the Imam, peace be on him, who was on the (back) of a gray mule wearing his turban. At the head of the scholars were Yahya' b. Yahya', Isha'q b. Ra'hawayh, Muhammad b. Ra'fi', Ahmed b. Harb, and others.[12] When the people saw him, and he was in that appearance which gave an account of the appearance of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, they said loudly, "There is no god but Allah," and exclaimed, "Allah is great!" They displayed sadness for the Imam and wept for him. That area became noisy out of weeping, so the scholars and the Huffa'z (memorizers of the Qur'an) called out: "O people, listen, understand, and do not harm Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, regarding his family!"

Then the Imam, peace be on him, delivered to the scholars this holy tradition, saying: "I heard my father Musa' b. Ja'far say: I heard my father Ja'far b. Muhammad say: I heard my father Muhammad b. 'Ali say: I heard my father 'Ali b. al-Husayn say: I heard my father al-Husayn b. 'Ali say: I hard my father the Commander of the faithful 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib say: I heard the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, say (on behalf of Allah): 'There is no god but Allah is My stronghold, so he who enters My stronghold is safe from My chastisement.'"

When the Imam passed, he called out to the people of Nisa'bu'r, saying: "But according to its conditions, and I am among its conditions.[13]"

Surely the statement, 'there is no god but Allah,' is one of the strongholds of Allah, the Most High, but according to conditions among which is professing the Imamate of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, who is one of the testamentary trustees of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.

More than twenty thousand scholars and memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffa'z*) has written this holy tradition.[14] As for the chain of authorities of this tradition, it is the greatest and most wonderful of all chains of authorities. Ahmed b. Hanbal says: "If this chain of authorities was recited before a mad person, he would recover from his madness.[15]" A Sa'ma'ni ruler ordered this tradition to be written in gold and to be buried along with him.[16]

To Tu's

The caravan of the Imam, peace be on him, left Nisa'bu'r and covered the desert until it arrived at Sana'ba'd where there was a mountain from which cooking-pots were made. The Imam leaned on the

mountain and said: “O Allah, benefit (the people) through it, bless that which is placed in it, and that which is made from it.” Then he ordered some cooking-pots for him to be made from it. They were made for him, and he said: “My food will not be cooked (in anything) except in them.”

The house of Hamid b. Quhtuba al-Ta”i was at Sana’ba’d, where the grave of Ha’ru’n al-Rashid is. The Imam went to it and reached the grave of Ha’ru’n. So he drew a line with his own hand and said to those around him: “This is my earth, and I will be buried in it. Allah will make my Shi‘ites and those who love me visit me. If any of them visits me and greets me, Allah will forgive him (his sins) and have mercy on him through our intercession, the *Ahl al-Bayt*.” Then he turned to the *qibbla*, performed some *rak‘as*, and supplicated with some supplications. Having finished his prayers, he performed a long prostration. I (i.e. Hamid al-Ta”i) counted that he said, “glory belongs to Allah,” five hundred times.[17] Then the Imam, peace be on him, gave some of his clothes to Hamid, who, in turn, gave them to a slave-wife of his. She took them, and then she quickly came back and said: “I have found a piece of cloth in the shirt of Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’).” Then she handed it to Hamid, and he at once gave it to the Imam, peace be on him, and asked him: “What is in it, O son of Allah’s Messenger?”

“This is a supplication,” the Imam, peace be on him, replied, “he who carries it in his own pocket, (all evil deeds) will be driven away from him, and it will be an amulet against the accursed Satan and the ruler.”

Hamid asked the Imam to dictate it to him, and he recited it to him. It reads as follows: “In the name of Allah, I seek protection in the Merciful (Allah) from you if you are pious or not pious. I have clung to Allah, the All-hearing, the All-seeing, against your ear and your eye. You have no power over me; nor over my ear and my eye; nor over my hair; nor over my skin and my flesh; nor over my blood; nor over my brain; nor over my nerves; nor over my bones; nor over my family; nor over my wealth; nor over what my Lord has provided me. I have been covered over between me and you with the cover of Prophethood through which the prophets of Allah covered themselves from the power of the Pharaohs. Gabriel is on my right hand; Michael is on my left hand; Seraphiel is behind me; Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is before me; Allah is aware of what withholds you and Satan from me.

“O Allah, let not his ignorance overcome your slowness if he incites and makes little of me! O Allah, I have sought refuge in You! O Allah, I have sought refuge in You! O Allah, I have sought refuge in You![18]”

Al-Ma’mu’n receives the Imam

Al-Ma’mu’n ordered the Imam to be received with an official reception, so the armed forces and the rest of the people went out to receive him. Al-Ma’mu’n was at the head of those who received him. There were along with him al-Fadl b. SAhl, the rest of his ministers and advisers. Al-Ma’mu’n shook hand with the Imam, welcomed him warmly, appointed for him a splendid house supplied with servants and all the necessary requirements, and took great care of him.

Al-Ma'mu'n asks the Imam to undertake the Caliphate

Al-Ma'mu'n officially abdicated the caliphate and asked the Imam, peace be on him, to undertake it, saying: "O son of Allah's Messenger, I have realized your excellence, your knowledge, your asceticism, your piety, and your acts of worship; therefore, I see that you are more appropriate for the caliphate than me."

The Imam answered him: "Through renouncing the world I hope for the salvation from the evil of the world; through refraining from the unlawful I wish for wining good final results; through humbleness in the world I hope for exaltedness with Allah."

"I have seen that I must remove myself from the caliphate and entrusted it to you," retorted al-Ma'mu'n.

However, the Imam was fully aware of the intentions of al-Ma'mu'n, who spared no effort to achieve his political objectives. How did al-Ma'mu'n abdicate the caliphate while for it he killed his brother al-Amin; destroyed Baghdad; spread bereavement, sadness, and mourning among the regions of Islamic world? How did he hand it over to the Imam in spite of all these evil deeds?

The Imam gave a decisive answer which enraged al-Ma'mu'n, saying to him: "If this caliphate belongs to you, then it is not permissible for you to take off the garment in which Allah has clothed you and to give it to other than you. If the caliphate does not belong to you, then it is not permissible for you to give me that which does not belong to you."

The Imam silenced al-Ma'mu'n and closed before him all avenues of argument, so the latter threatened the former, saying: "There is no escape for you from accepting this matter."

"I will never do that willingly," retorted the Imam.

Dhu al-Riya'satayn[19] admired this attitude of them and began saying: "How fantastic, I have seen al-Ma'mu'n, the Commander of the faithful, entrusting the matter of the caliphate to al-Ridha', and I have seen al-Ridha' saying to him: 'I have no ability or power for that.' I have never seen the caliphate more abandoned than that."

The Imam, peace be on him, was aware of this false purpose, for al-Ma'mu'n belonged to the 'Abba'sid family, who harbored malice against the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, killed them during the brightness of day and darkness of night, and spared no effort to eliminate them from the face of earth. As for al-Ma'mu'n, he was the wickedest of them, for he killed the master of the 'Alawides, Imam al-Ridha', and killed other than him from among the pure 'Alawides. So how did the Imam trust him?

Al-Ma'mu'n's claimed Justifications

As for al-Ma'mu'n's claimed justifications during his asking the Imam, peace be on him, to undertake the caliphate, they are as follows:

1. He summoned al-Fadl b. SAhl and his brother al-Hasan b. SAhl. When the were before him, he told them that he would entrust the caliphate to the Imam. So al-Hasan exaggerated that before him and explained to him its disadvantages. However, al-Ma'mu'n said: "I had promised Allah that if I overcame the deposed one (i.e. al-Amin), I would have handed over the caliphate to the most meritorious (*afdal*) of the family of Abu' Ta'lib. I do not know anyone more meritorious than this man on the face of the earth.[20]"

This means that al-Ma'mu'n had promised Allah that if he put an end to his brother and overcame him he would have handed over the caliphate to the most meritorious of the family of Abu' Ta'lib, and the most meritorious of them in his time was Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. But this did not happen according to the events that followed.

2. Through his handing over the caliphate to the 'Alawides, he tried to reward Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, for his favors toward the 'Abba'sids, for the latter appointed 'Abd Allah b. 'Abba's as a minister and entrusted him with the Emirate of Basrah. Similarly, he entrusted 'Ubayd Allah b. al-'Abba's with the Province of Yemen, and other favors he did toward them. So al-Ma'mu'n wanted, through what he did, to reward the Imam regarding his children.[21]

3. He did that in order to seek obedience to Allah, His good pleasure, good for the community, and the interests of the Muslims.[22]

These are some justifications which al-Ma'mu'n advanced as pretext for handing over the caliphate to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

His false Justifications

These justifications were unreal. If al-Ma'mu'n had been truthful to them, he would not have prevented the Imam from passing through Ku'fa when he came from Medina (Yathrib), for he feared that the people would receive him in this city, which was among the centers of the Shi'ites in Islamic world; likewise, he would not have prevented him from passing through Qum, for the same reason. Moreover 'Abd Allah b. Abu' SAhl al-Nobakhti, an astrologer, told him that it was not good for him to pledge allegiance to Imam al-Ridha' when he appointed him as a successor after him; yet al-Ma'mu'n insisted on pledging allegiance to the Imam during that time.[23] This demonstrates that he was a liar regarding this matter.

Al-Ma'mu'n asks the Imam to undertake Regency

Through all ways and means, al-Ma'mu'n tried to convince the Imam, peace be on him, to accept the caliphate or at least the regency after him, but he refused him vigorously. He went on convincing the Imam for more than two months, but all his attempts came to nothing, for the Imam insisted on refusing him and refraining from undertaking any state office.

Al-Ma'mu'n forces the Imam

All the diplomatic ways which al-Ma'mu'n followed to convince the Imam, peace be on him, to accept regency came to an end, so he thought that he had to follow another way which was threatening the Imam. He sent for the Imam. When he was in his presence, a conversation took place between them, so the Imam said to him: "By Allah, I have never told a lie since my Lord, the Great and Almighty, has created me. I have not renounced the world for the world, and I definitely know what you want."

"What do I want?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

The Imam asked him for security if he said the truth frankly, saying: "The Imam (i.e. the leader) must be truthful, mustn't he?"

"I have given you security," replied al-Ma'mu'n.

The Imam explained the motives which urged al-Ma'mu'n to vest regency in him, saying: "Through that you want the people to say: 'Surely 'Ali b. Musa' (al-Ridha') has not renounced the world; rather it is the world which has renounced him. Do you not see that he has accepted regency and craved for the caliphate?'"

Al-Ma'mu'n became angry, so he shouted at the Imam, saying: "You always face me with what I hate! You have felt safe from my power! I swear by Allah, you should accept regency or I will force you to (accept) it! You should do that; otherwise, I will strike off your head![24]"

The Imam, peace be on him, pleaded to Allah and supplicated Him, saying: "O Allah, You have prohibited me from throwing my own soul into destruction; I have been forced; I am about to be killed by 'Abd Allah al-Ma'mu'n if I do not accept regency! I have been forced just as Yusuf and Danya'l, peace be on them, had been forced by the tyrant of their time to accept authority! O Allah, there is no covenant except Your covenant; nor have I a friend except You! So give me success to establish Your religion and to enliven the Sunna of Your Prophet, Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family! Verily, You are the Master, and You are the Helper! You are the best Master, and You are the best Helper![25]"

Any how, the Imam accepted regency while he was weeping and sad.[26] Pain and worries dominated him.

The Conditions of the Imam

The Imam mentioned before al-Ma'mu'n some conditions which showed that he was dissatisfied with regency and that he was forced to accept this office. These conditions are as follows:

1. He would not appoint anyone as a governor.

2. He would not dismiss anyone.

3. He would not abolish any rite.

4. He would be a distant adviser in the affairs of the state.[27]

Yet al-Ma'mu'n accepted these conditions which clashed with his objectives and exposed his intentions.

The Textual Document of Regency

The regency between the Imam, peace be on him, and al-Ma'mu'n was not confined to speech; rather it was written on an official document signed by the Imam and al-Ma'mu'n, witnessed by high-ranking statesmen, and transmitted by a group of historical sources. Ibn al-Jawzi came to know of the document and said: "My uncle bought it (the document) for two hundred dinars and brought it to Sayf al-Dawla Sadaqa b. Mansu'r, and there were in it scripts of a group of writers such as 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abba's and the Moroccan Minister (*al-Wazir al-Maghribi*).[28]" Similarly, 'Ali b. Isa' al-Arbali came to know of it and has mentioned its text in his book entitled *Kashf al-Ghumma*, and that was in the year 670 A. H.[29] I (i.e. the author) will narrate its text as follows:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

"This letter has been written by the servant of Allah (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) b. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid, the Commander of the faithful, to 'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far.

"Now then: So surely, Allah, the Great and Almighty, has chosen Islam as religion and chosen from among his servants messengers showing the way to Him and guiding to Him, the first of them gives good news of the last of them and the last of them testifies the first of them, until the Prophethood of Allah reached Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, after a cessation of the (mission of the) apostles, extinction of knowledge, a cessation of revelation, and approach to the Hour. So Allah has ended the prophets through him, made him a witness to them, and dominator over them, and He sent down to him His Holy Book *falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it*, *a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One* through which He has made lawful and unlawful, promised and threatened, cautioned and warned; through which He has ordered and prohibited, that the firm argument over His creatures may be His*, that he who would be perish might perish by clear proof, and he who would live might live by clear proof, and most surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing*.

“So he (the Prophet) delivered on behalf of Allah His message and summoned (men) to His path through what He had ordered him of wisdom, good exhortation, reasoning in the best way, then through jihad and hardness, until Allah took him to Himself and chose for him that which is with Him. So when the Prophethood came to an end, and Allah ended through Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, the revelation and the message, He has made the religion continue and regulated the authority of the Muslims through the caliphate, its completion and exaltedness, and undertaking it with respect to Allah through obedience through which the duties and punishments imposed by Allah, Islamic laws are carried out, and jihad is waged against His enemy.

“So it is obligatory on the vicegerents of Allah to obey Him concerning what He has entrusted to them and attracted their attention regarding His religion and His servants, and it is obligatory on the Muslims to obey their caliphs and to help them in establishing the right and justice of Allah, the security of the way, sparing blood, settling hostility, and reuniting; otherwise, the cord of the Muslims disorders; they become disordered; their beliefs become different; their religion is defeated; their enemy becomes powerful; they are different in opinion; and they lose this world and the next.

“So it is incumbent upon him whom Allah has appointed as a vicegerent on His earth and entrusted him with His creatures to do his best for Allah, to prefer that in which there is the good pleasure of Allah and obedience to him, to follow that for which Allah will make him stand and about which He will question him, to rule with the truth and do with justice in what Allah has placed him and vested him with, for Allah, the Great and Almighty, says to His prophet Da’wud: ***O Da’wud, surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow desire, lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allah;*** (***as for***) ***those who go astray from the path of Allah, they shall surely have a severe punishment because they forget the day of reckoning***. And (for) Allah, the Great and Almighty, said: ***So by your Lord, We shall ask them all about what they were doing***. And (for) we have heard that ‘Umar b. al-Khatta’b said: “If a goat got lost on the bank of the Euphrates, I would fear that Allah would ask me about it.’

“By Allah, surely the one who will be asked about his own soul and informed of his work regarding what is between him and Allah will be brought before a great affair and tremendous danger; therefore, just imagine how much more is (the situation) of him who is responsible for taking care of a community? And reliance is on Allah; to Him is the flight, desire for success and protection, directing and guiding to that through which argument is established, good pleasure and mercy from Allah are won.

“And the best of the community in reflecting on his own soul and the loyalist of them to Allah regarding His religion and His servants from among His creatures on His earth is he who works according to obedience to Allah, His Book, and the Sunna (practices) of His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, during the period of his days and after it, strains his own opinion regarding him to whom he has entrusted his reign, whom he has chosen for the Imamate over the Muslims and taking care of them after him, and appoints for them him who is a great figure and a place of flight in order to bring them into

harmony, to reunite them, to spare their blood, to give them security, with Allah's permission, from their division, their being corrupt by enmity, and their difference, and to raise the insinuation and trickery of Satan from them. For Allah, the Great and Almighty, has regarded regency after the caliphate as part of completing and perfecting Islam, exalting and setting right its followers, and He has inspired succession in His vicegerents through His emphasizing on him whom they choose for Him after them, who through whom blessing is great and well-being is inclusive, and Allah, through that, has invalidated the deception of men of dissension, hostility, slander, difference, and any lying in wait for discord.

"He (al-Ma'mu'n) has been the Commander of the faithful since the caliphate reached him, so he has tried its ugly taste, its burdensome undertaking, its hard provisions, clinging to obedience to Allah which is obligatory on him who undertakes it (the caliphate), and fear of Him concerning what He has burdened with it. So he has tired his body, kept his eye awake, elaborated his thinking on that through which the religion is glorified, the polytheists are suppressed, the community is set right, justice is spread, the Book and the Sunna are established; and he has deprived himself of ease, gentleness, and happy life. He is aware of that about which Allah will ask him; he likes to meet Allah while he is loyal to Him regarding His religion, His servants, choosing for succession after him and taking care of the community the best one (of men) in religion, piety, and knowledge, and the most hoped of them for assuming the command and right of Allah, whispering (to Him) through seeking refuge (in Him) concerning that, asking Him for inspiration in which there is His good pleasure and obedience to Him by day and night, reflecting on seeking and requesting him through the members of his household from among the children of 'Abd Allah b. al-'Abba's and 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, confining himself to his knowledge of him whose condition and doctrine he has come to know, sparing no effort and power to ask about him whose affair is unknown to him, till he examined their affairs through knowledge, tried their stories through seeing, regarded their conditions as innocent through observing, and discovered that which is with them through questioning.

"So his (al-Ma'mu'n's) choosing him (al-Ridha') was after asking Allah for the best and exerting himself in accomplishing His right toward His servants and His earth concerning the two houses in general. That is because he (al-Ma'mu'n) has seen his (the Imam's) brilliant excellence, his plain knowledge, his manifest piety, his pure asceticism, his renouncing the world, and his being safe from the people. He has clearly come to know that reports, tongues, and words have unanimously agreed upon him. Besides, he still knows his excellence when young and adult, hence he has appointed him as his successor after him, having confidence in asking Allah for the best regarding that, for Allah has come to know that his act is as preferring for him and the religion, taking care of Islam and the Muslims, seeking safety, and establishing argument and salvation on the day when men will stand for the Lord of the worlds.

"The Commander of the faithful had summoned his sons, the members of his house, his personal entourage (*kha'ssa*), his commanders, and his servants, and they with pleasure have pledged allegiance (to al-Ridha'). They are aware of that the Commander of the faithful has preferred the obedience to Allah to his own desire regarding his children and other than them from among those who are more interlaced than him in womb relationships and closer (than him) in kinship.

“He (al-Ma’mu’n) has named him al-Ridha’ (consent), for the Commander of the faithful is satisfied with him; therefore, O group of the household of the Commander of the faithful and those who are in the guarded city from among his commanders, his soldiers, and the Muslims in general, pledge allegiance to the Commander of the faithful and after him to al-Ridha’, ‘Ali b. Musa’ in His name, His blessing, His good decree for His religion, and His servants, with a pledge of allegiance for which you stretch out your hands and at which you are delighted. You are aware of what the Commander of the faithful has intended through it (the pledge of allegiance), preferring through it the obedience to Allah, taking care of himself and you, giving thanks to Allah for what He has inspired in the Commander of the faithful through it regarding accomplishing His right in taking care of you, his clinging to directing you and setting you right, hoping for the advantage of that through reuniting you, sparing your blood, bringing you together, closing your frontiers, strengthening your religion, defeating your enemy, setting right your affairs; and hasten to obedience to Allah and to the Commander of the faithful, for it is security; if you hurry to him and praise Allah for him, you will know that good luck is through him, Allah willing.30”

This document has ended and was dated on Monday on the eighth of the month of Ramada’n, in the year 201 A. H.

Al-Ma’mu’n asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, to write the document of regency with his own sacred hand, and he, peace be on him, wrote the following:

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, praise belongs to Allah, the Doer of what He intends, there is no repeller of His decision; nor is there any repeller of His decree, who knows the stealthy looks and that which the breasts conceal, and His blessings be upon His Prophet, the last of the prophets, and his family, the good, the Pure.

“I say, and I am ‘Ali b. Musa’ b. Ja‘far, that the Commander of the faithful, may Allah support him with rightness and give him success for right guidance, has come to know of our right of which other than him has failed to know, so he has tightened the womb links which have been cut, made safe the souls which have become frightened; rather he has enlivened them while they were already destroyed, made them rich while they were poor, seeking the good pleasure of the Lord of the world, wanting no reward from other than Him, and Allah will reward the grateful and He does not waste the reward of the doers of good.

“And that he has entrusted his regency and the great authority to me if I remain (alive) after him, so he who unties the knot of the command of Allah through tying it and breaks a handle whose fastening is more lovable to Allah, then surely Allah will make lawful his sacredness if he through that reproaches the Imam and violates the sacredness of Islam, according to this the former (i.e. Imam ‘Ali) did, was patient toward the random matters, and did not object the resolutions, for he feared that the religion would be scattered, the cord of the Muslims would be disordered, the affairs of the pre-Islamic paganism age was close (to him), an opportunity might be seized, and calamity might quickly be created.

“And I have appointed Allah (as witness) over my own soul if He makes me take care of the authority over the Muslims and vests me with His vicegerency to work among them (men) in general and the children of al-‘Abba’s b. ‘Abd al-Muttalib in particular, through obedience to Him and to His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, that I will not shed forbidden blood; nor will I make lawful pudenda nor property except that which is shed by the punishments prescribed by Allah and made lawful by the religious duties issued from Him, and that I will do my best and power to choose the most qualified persons, and through that I have placed against my own soul a certain promise about which Allah will ask me, for He, the Great and Almighty, says: *And fulfill the promise; surely* (*every*) *promise shall be questioned about*.

“And if I originated or changed or altered, I would be worthy of being changed and liable to severe punishment, and I seek refuge in Allah from His wrath, desire for success in obeying Him, coming between me and disobeying Him, (giving) well-being to me and to the Muslims.

“*Al-ja’mi‘a* 31 and *al-jafr* 32 indicate the opposite of that, and I do not know what will be down toward me and you, *surely the judgment is Allah’s; He relates the truth and He is the best of the deciders*, but I have obeyed the order of the Commander of the faithful, preferred his good pleasure, and Allah protects me and him; I have called Allah to bear witness to my own soul through that, *and Allah is enough for a witness*.

“I have written (the document of regency) in my own handwriting in the presence of the Commander of the faithful, may Allah prolong his life, al-Fadl b. SAhl, SAhl b. al-Fadl, Yahya’ b. Akkthem, Bishr b. al-Mu‘tamir, and Hamma’d b. al-Nu‘ma’n, in the month of Ramada’n, in the year 201 (A. H.).”

Al-Fadl b. SAhl, the minister of al-Ma’mu’n, wrote the following: “The Commander of the faithful, may Allah prolong his life, has decreed reading the meaning of this letter outwardly and inwardly in the Holy Shrine of our master, Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, between the theological center (*rouda*) and the Pulpit in the presence of the elite from among the Banu’ Ha’shim, the rest of the friends and the soldiers, and he asks Allah to make the Commander of the faithful and all Muslims know through it the argument over all Muslims and to invalidate the vague errors which have hindered the viewpoints of the ignorant: *On no account will Allah leave the believers in the condition which you are in*.”

Al-Fadl b. SAhl wrote (this document) in the appointed date.

Yahya’ b. Akkthem has written the following: “Yahya’ b. Akkthem has testified to the content of this page outwardly and inwardly, and he has written in his own handwriting the (appointed) date.”

Hamma’d b. al-Nu‘ma’n has written the following: “Hamma’d b. al-Nu‘ma’n has testified to the content (of this document) outwardly and inwardly.”

Bishr b. al-Mu‘tamir has written the following: “Bishr b. al-Mu‘tamir has testified to the like of that and written in his own handwriting the (appointed) date.33”

It is necessary for us to pause in order to consider the document of al-Ma'mu'n, what Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has written, and what al-Fadl b. SAhl has testified, and that is as follows:

The Contents of the Document of Regency

The document of regency signed by al-Ma'mu'n and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, contains the following:

Firstly, praising Islam and Allah's great Book, which is a perfect system and an inclusive institution for making man happy and righteous.

Secondly, lauding the great Prophet, the greatest summoner to Allah, hoister of torch of monotheism and intellectual renaissance on earth.

Thirdly, clarifying the succession after the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, for through it the religion is established, the authority over the Muslims is regulated, and it is the shadow of Allah on earth.

Fourth, it is obligatory on the Muslims to obey the caliphs, for disobedience to them causes disadvantages to Islamic world.

Fifth, the caliphs undertake important responsibilities of which are preferring obedience to Allah to all things, ruling over men with fairness and justice, and other important responsibilities which the document has inclusively shown.

Sixth, among the most important responsibilities of the caliphs is that they designate successors after them, that the designation should be based on perfect choice and exact test regarding him whom they appoint after them, and that the choice should not be subject to partiality and desires, for such an action leads the community to disadvantages.

Seventh, al-Ma'mu'n did his best to choose the successor after him, so he did not find in the 'Abba'sid and the 'Alawide families anyone more meritorious than Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, because he had noble qualities of which are the following:

A. Brilliant excellence,

B. Useful knowledge,

C. Pure asceticism in the world,

D. And refraining from all things made unlawful by Allah,

the Most High.

It is these noble qualities which urged al-Ma'mu'n to elect the Imam and to nominate him for regency

after him.

The Contents of what the Imam has written

As for the contents of what Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, has written concerning regency, they are as follows:

Firstly, praising al-Ma'mu'n's relationships with the 'Alawides, for he refreshed them through such relationships after they had faced tyranny and oppression through the 'Abba'sid rulers, who spared no effort to eliminate the 'Alawides from the face of earth; it is worth mentioning that the 'Abba'sids buried the 'Alawides while they were alive, killed them everywhere, threw their babies into the Tigris, and wreaked other tragedies upon them.

Secondly, through these word of him, "if he through that reproaches the Imam," Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, referred to his grandfather, Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, the gate of the city of the knowledge of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and the pioneer of his wisdom, whom the people removed from his office which the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, entrusted to him on the Day of Ghadir Khum, and accordingly the community suffered from terrible kinds of tragedies and calamities, for the caliphate was undertaken by some criminals such as Mu'a'wiya, Yazid, al-Walid, al-Mansu'r, and other than them from among the Imams of oppression and tyranny who spared no effort to oppress the people and to force them to yield to what they hated.

Similarly, through these words of him, "and was patient toward the random matters," he referred to the words of 'Umar b. al-Khatta'b, who described the pledge of allegiance to Abu' Bakr as, "a random matter (*falta*) from whose evil Allah has protected the Muslims." So Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was patient toward this random matter, which he has mentioned in his saying: "and there is pricking (*qadha'*) in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throat." That is because he feared that the word of Islam would collapse, and the unity of the Muslims would crack, for the Muslims were still close to the pre-Islamic paganism age, and the enemy forces lied in wait for attacking Islam if any division occurred in it; therefore, it is this matter which prompted Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, to be patient toward those who took his legacy.

Thirdly, the Imam promised before Allah and the Muslims that he would rule the Muslims with a policy based on pure justice, that he would return to the people the practices of his grandfather the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and that he would choose for the organ of government qualified and righteous persons who feared Allah, the Exalted, and sought the next world. If the Imam had undertaken the caliphate over the Muslims, he would have achieved all these great goals.

Fourth, the Imam, peace be on him, predicted that he would not assume the caliphate; nor would the community lead a life of ease and comfort during his rule, for he had read *al-ja'mi'a* and *al-jafr,* which were among the deposits of the Prophethood, in which was the knowledge of what was and what would

be until the Day of Resurrection, which showed that he would not undertake the caliphate, and that al-Ma'mu'n would deceive him through regency.

The Contents of al-Fadl's writing

As for what al-Fadl b. SAhl wrote in the document of regency, it refers to that al-Ma'mu'n ordered this document to be read in the mosque of the Prophet between the theological center and the Pulpit, and in the presence of the Ha'shimite notables, the armed forces, and the rest of the people, for reading the document in such a place would emphasize regency and disprove the views of the ignorant and of the partial.

These are some contents of the document and its supplements. They are plain; there is no confusion or ambiguity in them.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Imam

Al-Ma'mu'n held a general popular festival attended by the ministers, the high-ranking statesmen, the commanders of the armed forces, and the rest of the people; at their head were the 'Alawides and the 'Abba'sids; the festival was held on Tuesday, the second day of the blessed month of Ramada'n34, in the year 201.35

Al-Ma'mu'n was seated and he had had two great cushions placed for Imam al-Ridha', so that he would have the same kind of seat and covers. He seated al-Ridha', peace be on him, on them; he was dressed in green and wearing a turban and a sword. Then al-Ma'mu'n ordered his son, al-'Abba's, to be the first of the people to make the pledge of allegiance to him36, and then the people pledged allegiance to him.

The Way of the Pledge of Allegiance

As for the way the people followed to pledge allegiance to the Imam, peace be on him, it was unique, with which the Umayyad and the 'Abba'sid kings were not familiar, for he, peace be on him, moved his hand and hit his own face with the back of it and their faces with the palm.

"Stretch out your hand for the pledge of allegiance," al-Ma'mu'n demanded.

"The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, used to make the pledge in this way when the people pledge allegiance to him," retorted al-Ridha', peace be on him.37

Perhaps the Imam depended on these words of Him, the Exalted: ***"The hand of Allah is above their hands."*** So it was not permissible for one who made the pledge of allegiance to place his own hand above the hand of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, or above the hand of the Imam,

peace be on him.

The Imam predicts that this Matter will not be achieved

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was dressed in the robes of honor and attended that meeting. Orators and poets rose and began to mention his great merit and summoned the people to pledge allegiance to him. The Imam, peace be on him, looked at one of his close associates, who was feeling happy about what had happened. He signaled him to come closer. He went closer to him, and he said so that no one else could hear: "Do not occupy your heart with this matter and do not be happy about it. It is something which will not be achieved.38"

The matter was as the Imam, peace be on him, had said, for this pledge of allegiance to him was not achieved, and al-Ma'mu'n broke his promise when he gave him poison to drink and assassinated him.

Al-Ma'mu'n delivers a Speech

When the ceremonies of the pledge of allegiance to the Imam were over, al-Ma'mu'n rose, ascended the pulpit, and addressed the people, saying: "O people, you have come to know about the pledge of allegiance to 'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him. By Allah, if I recited these names before the deaf and the dumb, they would recover with the permission of Allah, the Great and Almighty.39"

Imam al-Ridha' delivers a Speech

After the pledge of allegiance to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, had terminated, al-Ma'mu'n asked him to ascend the pulpit and address the people, so he went up on the pulpit. He praise and glorified Allah, and then he said: "O People, we have a right due to us from you through the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, and you also have a right due to you from us through him. If you carry out your duty to us, then it is necessary for us to carry out our duty to you."

The Imam did not mention anything other than these words40 in which he has expressed his right due to him from the people, for he is the grandson of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, who was faithful to their religion and their world, and took them out of the life of error and estrangement, so if they had carried out his right and installed him as a caliph, then it would have been obligatory on him to establish in their regions justice in all its senses and concepts.

Al-'Abba's delivers a Speech

Al-'Abba's, the orator, delivered an eloquent, wonderful speech and ended it with this poetry line:

There is no escape for the people from having a sun and

a moon, so you are a sun, and this is that moon.[41]

Persons abstain from pledging Allegiance to the Imam

Some persons abstained from pledging allegiance to the Imam, for they harbored malice against him, hated him, and were indignant with al-Ma'mu'n because of his appointing the Imam as a successor after him. They are as follows:

1. 'Isa' al-Julu'di.

2. 'Ali Bin 'Umra'n.

3. Abu' Yunus.[42]

Al-Ma'mu'n ordered them to be arrested and imprisoned.

Al-Ma'mu'n orders them to be executed

He ordered these three persons to be taken out of the prison. When they stood before him and saw Imam al-Ridha' sitting beside him, they became so angry that 'Ali b. 'Umra'n addressed al-Ma'mu'n, saying: "I seek refuge for you, O Commander of the faithful, with Allah from taking out this authority, which Allah has vested in you and with which He has singled you out, and placing it in the hands of your enemies and those whom your forefathers had killed and made homeless in the land."

"O Son of the adulteress," shouted al-Ma'mu'n at him, "why have you insisted on that?"

Then he ordered his head to be struck off. Then Abu' Yunus was brought before him. When he saw the Imam sitting beside al-Ma'mu'n and enjoying honor and magnification, he became displeased and addressed al-Ma'mu'n, saying: "O Commander of the faithful, by Allah, this (one) who is sitting beside you worships an idol apart from Allah."

As a result al-Ma'mu'n ordered him to be executed, and he was executed. Then 'Isa' al-Julu'di was brought into his presence. It is worth mentioning that he was the mortal enemy of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. It was he whom Ha'ru'n al-Rashid had sent to Medina (Yathrib) in order to loot and confiscate the garments and jewels of the granddaughters of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. Accordingly, he went to the house of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, intended to break into it and to loot the garments of the 'Alawide ladies. The Imam refused that, but al-Julu'di paid no attention to him. So the Imam began entreating him and promising him that he would go in and bring him what he wanted. Al-Julu'di yield to the words of the Imam, who went in, gathered the garments and jewels of the 'Alawide ladies, and gave them to him. He took them and went away. As for the Imam, he asked al-Ma'mu'n to pardon al-Julu'di, but he refused him vigorously, saying: "O my master, it is this (person) who had looted (the garments and jewels) of the granddaughters of

Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family!”

Al-Julu’di looked at the Imam when he was speaking to al-Ma’mu’n and entreating him in order to pardon him, but the stupid one (i.e. al-Julu’di) thought that the Imam intended to avenge himself upon him because of what he had done toward him, so he said to al-Ma’mu’n: “O Commander of the faithful, I ask you through Allah and my service to al-Rashid not to accept the statement of this (i.e. the Imam) concerning me.”

Al-Ma’mu’n turned to Imam al-Ridha’ and said to him: “O Abu’ al-Hasan, he has asked me for pardon, and we regard his oath as true.”

Then he addressed al-Julu’di, saying: “No, by Allah, I will not accept his statement concerning you.”

Then he turned to the police men and said to them: “Let him join his friend!” So he was advanced and his head was struck off.43

Important Decrees

Al-Ma’mu’n issued some important decrees on the occasion of appointing Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, as a successor. They are as follows:

1. Giving salaries to the soldiers for one full year.

2. Abandoning the black uniform of the ‘Abba’sids44, and dressing in green. I (i.e. the author) think that the inhabitants of the Garden will be dressed in green, for Allah, the Most High, says: “And they shall wear green robes of fine silk and thick silk.45”

3. Striking dirhams and dinars with the name of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. Al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qa’dir Ahmed al-Yusuf has mentioned some examples of that currency as follows:

The Dinar

It has been written in the center of its face: “There is no god but Allah, the One without associate with Him.” It has been written in the girth: “In the name of Allah, this dinar was struck in Samarqand in the year 202.” And it has been written in the circle: “Allah’s is the command before and after, and on that day the believers shall rejoice at Allah’s help.”

It has been written in the center of the back: “Allah, Muhammad is Allah’s Messenger, al-Ma’mu’n is the vicegerent of Allah, of what the Emir al-Ridha’, the regent over the Muslims, ‘Ali b. Musa’ b. ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib has commanded.”

And it has been written in the circle of the center of the back: “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; He has sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions,

though the polytheists may be averse.”

The Dirham

‘Abd al-Qa’dir has moved the shape of the dirham from Berlin Museum numbered 1295. The formula of the writing in the center of the face is: “There is no god but Allah, the One without an associate with Him.” in the year 203.

The writing in the circle is: “Allah’s is the command before and after, and on that day the believers shall rejoice at Allah’s help.”

The writing in the back is: “Allah, Muhammad is Allah’s Messenger, al-Ma’mu’n is the vicegerent of Allah, of what al-Ridha’ has commanded.”

The writing in the circle is: “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; He has sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse.”

Another shape of the dirham available in the British Museum in London, number 289 is as follows:

The writing in the center of the face is: “There is no god but Allah, the One without an associate with Him.”

The writing in the girth is : “the year 2”

The writing in the circle is: “Allah’s is the command before and after.”

The writhing in the center of the back is: “It was commanded by the Emir of the Muslims, ‘Ali b. Musa’...‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib...Dhu al-Riya’satayn.”

The writing in the circle is: “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.”

These dots show that some letters have been erased, for they have copied in this manner in the world catalogs. This writing has been erased because the currency is very old and used very much. There are examples of the dirhams which were struck in the year 704 A. H., the same as the currency of the Imam, and it has been written in them what had been written in the original currency.[46]

The Imam marries al-Ma’mu’n’s Daughter

Al-Ma’mu’n asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, to marry the Princess, Mrs. Umm Habib[47]; the Imam accepted that and married her. Al-Ma’mu’n intended to seek nearness to the Imam, that the relationships between them might be strong. Some traditionalists think that al-Ma’mu’n married his daughter to the Imam in order to spy on his behavior and activities. This step suits al-Ma’mu’n, who is

famous for deception and trickery.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Imam in all Cities

Al-Ma'mu'n ordered all his governors over all Islamic cities and regions to take from all citizens the pledge of allegiance to Imam al-Ridha' regarding regency. The following are some cities where the pledge of allegiance to him was taken:

1. Medina (Yathrib)

All popular classes in Medina (Yathrib) happily received the news of regency of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. The governor of Medina, 'Abd al-Jabba'r al-Masa'hiqi, hurried to the mosque of the Prophet in order to take from the inhabitants of the city the pledge of allegiance (to the Imam). That was after al-Ma'mu'n's command concerning that. He ascended the pulpit and addressed the people, saying: "O People, this is the matter for which you have wished, the justice for which you have waited, and the good for which you have hoped. This is 'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, the peace of Allah be upon them.[48]"

The pledge of allegiance to Imam al-Ridha' was the most important and valuable hope for which the Muslim community waited, for it impatiently waited for the return of the rule to the Imam, that he might establish pure justice among it, spread security and welfare among its regions, and save it from the oppression and tyranny of the 'Abba'sids.

2. Egypt

Al-Ma'mu'n wrote to his governor over Egypt, al-Sari, and ordered him to take from the Egyptians the pledge of allegiance to his successor Imam al-Ridha'. The letter came to al-Sari in the month of Muhrrah, in the year 202. So al-Sari started taking the pledge of allegiance to the Imam, peace be on him. But Ibra'him b. al-Mahdi, the leader of the singers in Baghdad, spoiled this pledge of allegiance, for he wrote to the prominent soldiers and their commanders in Egypt and ordered them to depose al-Ma'mu'n and his heir apparent and to revolt against al-Sari. So some of them responded to him, among them were al-Ha'rith b. Zar'a b. Mahzam at al-Fista't, 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Wazir al-Jarawi at the bottom of the land, Sala'ma b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Azdi al-Taha'wi at al-Sa'id, Sulayma'n b. Gha'lib b. Gabriel, and 'Abd al-'Aziz b. 'Abd al-Rahma'n b. 'Abd al-Jabba'r al-Azdi. As a result they revolted against al-Sari, summoned the people to pledge allegiance to Ibra'him, and appointed 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Azdi as a governor over Egypt. So al-Sari warred against them, captured 'Abd al-'Aziz and a group of his family. He killed some of them, sent some of them along with 'Abd al-'Aziz's daughter to al-Ma'mu'n, and he ordered them to be killed. The rest went to al-Harawri in order to protect them.[49] In this manner the revolt was suppressed, and the people pledged allegiance to the Imam.

3. Mecca

Al-Ma'mu'n sent 'Isa' al-Julu'di to Mecca in order to take from its people the pledge of allegiance to the Imam, and in Mecca was Ibra'him, the brother of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. 'Isa' al-Julu'di summoned the Meccans to pledge allegiance to the Imam, peace be on him, and to dress in green. So they responded to him with happiness and thankfulness, invoking (Allah) for al-Ma'mu'n for accomplishing their wish and hope through this pledge of allegiance.50

4. Ku'fa

The overwhelming majority in Ku'fa received the news of the pledge of allegiance to the Imam with happiness and delight. Al-Ma'mu'n entrusted al-'Abba's, the son of Imam Musa', peace be on him, with taking from the Ku'fans the pledge of allegiance (to the Imam). Ibra'him b. 'Abd al-Hamid gave him one hundred thousand dirhams and said to him: "Fight on behalf of your brother, for the Ku'fans respond to you for that, and I am along with you." Al-'Abba's undertook this task, so a large group of them responded to him. A group of people said to him: "If you summon (us) to al-Ma'mu'n and then after him to your brother, then we are in no need of your summons; and if you summon (us) to your brother or to some of the members of your household or to yourself, then we will respond to you." So al-'Abba's said to them: "I summon (you) to al-Ma'mu'n in the first place, and then after him to my brother, al-Ridha'.51"

These people abstained from pledging allegiance to the Imam, condemned those who pledged allegiance to him, and summoned them to break the pledge of allegiance. When Ibra'him b. al-Mahdi came to know about the desertion of the Ku'fans, he ordered his army residing at the Nile and under the leadership of Sa'id and Abu' al-Bit to occupy Ku'fa and suppress the mutiny. The armies of Ibra'him marched and arrived at al-Qantara near Dir al-A'war. There they were hindered by a military force headed by the 'Alawide, 'Ali b. Muhammad b. Ja'far and Abu' 'Abd Allah, the brother of the great leader Abu' al-Sara'ya', so it met them, and finally the armies of Ibra'him b. al-Mahdi won a victory (over it).

Then the armies of Ibra'him advanced towards Ku'fa; they were dressed in black; their motto was: "O Mansu'r there is no obedience to al-Ma'mu'n." The Ku'fans cowered and were unable to war against them, so they sent a delegation to the commander-in-chief of the army of Ibra'him in order to give security to al-'Abba's and his group, and he responded to them for that and made it a condition on them that al-'Abba's and his companions should leave Ku'fa. Then the delegation came back to al-'Abba's, who had no knowledge of that, and said to him: "Surely all your followers are mobs; you will see that the people will face war, loot, and murder; therefore, leave us; we are in no need of you.52"

Accordingly, al-'Abba's left Ku'fa while he was sad and sorrowful. He came to know that the Ku'fans would not protect him; nor would they fulfill their promise and covenant toward him. Then the armies of Ibra'him entered Ku'fa, but no clashes took place between them and those who pledged allegiance to the Imam as a heir apparent.

These are some of the regions where the pledge of allegiance to the Imam was taken as a heir apparent.

Persons criticize the Imam

Some Shi'ites criticized the Imam for his accepting the succession after al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abba'sid. They are as follows:

1. Muhammad Bin 'Arafa

Muhammad b. 'Arafa came to the Imam and asked him: "O son of Allah's Messenger, what has made you accept regency?"

"That which made my grandfather the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, accept the consultative council," replied the Imam.[53]

Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was forced to take part in the consultative committee which 'Umar b. al-Khatta'b chose in order to elect the caliph after him. The Imam announced his sadness and sorrow because of his joining the members of the consultative council, saying: "But good heavens! What had I to do with this consultation? Where was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these ones?" Imam al-Ridha' was forced to accept regency just as his grandfather was forced to accept the consultative committee.

2. A Man

A man criticized him for his accepting regency, saying: "May Allah set you right, how have you become the successor of al-Ma'mu'n?"

Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, denied his accepting the succession after al-Ma'mu'n. Then he asked the man: "Who is better the Prophet or the testamentary trustee?"

"No, the Prophet," replied the man.

"Who is better the Muslim or the polytheist?"

"No, rather the Muslim," answered the man.

Then the Imam, peace be on him, stated a decisive argument, saying: "The Chief of Egypt was a polytheist, and Yusuf was a prophet. Al-Ma'mu'n is a Muslim, and I am a testamentary trustee. Yusuf asked the Chief to vest him with an office, to the extent that he said to him: *Place me* (*in authority*) *over the treasures of the land, surely I am a good keeper, knowing well*. As for al-Ma'mu'n, he has forced me to be his successor.[54]"

3. Al-Rayya'n Bin al-Salt

Al-Rayya'n Bin al-Salt visited Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: "O son of Allah's Apostle, surely the people say: 'Verily, you have accepted regency though you show asceticism in the world.'"

So the Imam answered him: "Allah was already aware of that I hated that. So when I had to choose between that and murder, I preferred acceptance to murder. Woe upon them! Surely Yusuf was a prophet and messenger, but when necessity pushed him to undertake the treasures of al-'Aziz (the Chief of Egypt), he said to him: *Place me* (*in authority*) *over the treasures of the land, surely I am a good keeper, knowing well*. Similarly, necessity pushed me to accept that (i.e. regency), though I was forced and was about to be destroyed. I have accepted this matter and will leave it. So I complain to Allah, and it is He Whom we ask for help.[55]"

The Imam vigorously expressed his hate and detest toward this office, but he was forced to accept it.

4. A Kha'rijite

A Kha'rijite angrily walked towards the Imam and asked him: "Tell me about your entering into (negotiations) with this tyrant (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) while you regard them as unbelievers and you are the grandson of Allah's Messenger, so what made you do that?"

The Imam replied: "Who are more unbelieving in your viewpoint they or the Chief of Egypt and the inhabitants of his kingdom? Don't they, any how, claim that they are monotheists and those were polytheists and did not profess Allah? Wasn't Yusuf b. Ya'qu'b a prophet and son of a prophet; yet he demanded the Chief, who was an unbeliever, and said to him: *Place me* (*in authority*) *over the treasures of the land, surely I am a good keeper, knowing well*, and took the place of the Pharaohs? As for me, I am one of the children of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. He (al-Ma'mu'n) forced me to accept this matter. What have I denied and you have become indignant with me?"

The Kha'rijite began saying: "I witness that you are the son of Allah's Apostle, and that you are truthful.[56]"

Through his conversations with those who were indignant with him, the Imam, peace be on him, has shown that he was forced to accept being a heir apparent. That is because he had to chose between killing and accepting regency, so he accepted regency in order to save his own soul from the destruction which would cause no advantage to Islam.

The Indignant with al-Ma'mu'n

The anti *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on them, forces were indignant with al-Ma'mu'n because of his designating Imam al-Ridha' as a heir apparent; they regarded this procedure as taking the caliphate

from the ‘Abba’sid family who enjoyed its shadow.

The ‘Abba’sid family was the most indignant with al-Ma’mu’n, for they regarded that as a danger against their kingdom and the end of their lives. They were so angry with him that they took the following measures:

Deposing al-Ma’mu’n

The ‘Abba’sids refused al-Ma’mu’n’s pledge of allegiance to the Imam, regarded it as abolished, made public their mutiny against al-Ma’mu’n before the people, asked them to reject the pledge of allegiance to him and to his heir apparent. So many people responded to them. Accordingly, they stated that they were not responsible for the pledge of allegiance to al-Ma’mu’n.

The Pledge of Allegiance to Ibra’him Bin Shakkla

The ‘Abba’sids intended to pledge allegiance to their leader Ibra’him b. Shakkla[57], the Shaykh of the singers and the musicians in Baghdad. They summoned the people to accept him as a caliph and called him al-Murdi (the satisfactory one).[58] The aware and the intellectual circles made fun of him and disdained him, for he was reckless and free from all values and traditions; concerning him Di‘bil al-Khaza’‘i, a revolutionary and social poet, has composed:

Ibn Shakkla cried in Iraq and (among) its people, so those

blind and foolish hurried to him.

If Ibra’him (Ibn Shakkla) undertakes it (the caliphate),

then, after him, Makha’riq and Zalzal will be appropriate

for it.

How do, and that does not occur, the dissolute inherit the

caliphate one by one?

Di‘bil al-Khaza’‘i mocked the caliphate which was undertaken by this dissolute person. He has shown that if the caliphate had been suitable for him, then it would have been suitable for his equal singers such as Zalzal, and Makha’riq. It is an act of mockery that Ibra’him assumed the caliphate and undertook the affairs of the Muslims. The historians have said: “Ibra’him was the mortal enemy of the family of ‘Ali, peace be on him. When he had heard that regency was entrusted to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, he became so angry that he composed these poetry lines:

“So may the ‘Abba’sids not be rewarded well, according to my claim, nor may they be delighted with my

kindness.

They quickly came to me; and the barren time has brought

them clear news.

It has untied the bands of the properties from them and

put them round the heads of the ‘Alawides.

So they (the bands) have clamored when they have been

put round the heads which will demand the

Prophet’s legacy.[59]”

In his time the central budget became bankrupt, and the soldiers gathered around his court asking him for their salaries, so his messenger came out for them and said to them: “He has no money.” A joker demanded and said: “In stead of money, let the Caliph comes out and sing three songs for the people on this side and three songs for the people on that side.[60]”

Di‘bil has composed a poem regarding this funny view, saying:

O soldiers, do not be hopeless; take your salaries

and do not be displeased.

He will sing you a song the

beardless and the bearded enjoy.

Your leader’s songs, neither enter the bag nor

tie it.

In this manner the caliph, who plays on the lute,

provides his soldiers with the means of subsistence.

He has stamped the record of your salaries and corrected

the determination; therefore do not be displeased.

The pledge of allegiance to Ibra’him is an ill omen, during it the people will be killed or subjected to famine.[61]

Al-Ma'mu'n's Letter to the 'Abba'sids

Al-Ma'mu'n and his 'Abba'sid relatives exchanged letters of cursing and slandering. Al-Ma'mu'n sent the 'Abba'sids a letter which says62:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

"Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds; Allah has blessed Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, in spite of the unwilling, now then:

"Al-Ma'mu'n has come to know of your letter, your scheming your affair, and your churning your butter. He has towered over the hearts of your young and your old. He is aware of you when you come to (him) and turn away (from him) and of what your letter had reached before you wrote it regarding coaxing falsehood, turning away the eminent figures of the truth from their places, your abandoning the Book of Allah and the traditions, and all that which has been brought by the truthful one Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, to the extent that you look like the bygone communities which had been destroyed (by Allah) through causing (the land) to sink down, drowning, the winds, the outcry, thunderbolts, and stoning.

"*Do they not then reflect on the Qur'an or are there locks on the hearts?* By Him who is closer to the jugular vein than al-Ma'mu'n, were it not for that someone said, 'al-Ma'mu'n has left answer due to feebleness,' I would not answer you, because of your bad manners, your insignificant importance, your weak intellects, and your silly viewpoints in which you take refuge. So let a listener listen, and let those present tell those absent."

This part of al-Ma'mu'n's letter contains the following:

1. Al-Ma'mu'n started his letter with calling down blessing upon Muhammad and his family, and then he said, 'in spite of the unwilling,' by which he meant the 'Abba'sids, who spared no effort to eliminate the name of the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and to remove their intellectual and spiritual qualities from the world of Islam.

2. He was aware of the hidden things in the souls of the 'Abba'sids and came to know of their intentions. He came to know of them when they came to him and turned away from him. He was aware of them when they supported falsehood, abandoned right, left the Book of Allah and what was brought by the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

3. He answered their letter not as a result of taking care of them; rather he feared that it would be said that he was unable to answer them. Now, let us return to read the second part of al-Ma'mu'n's letter.

"Now then, Allah, the Exalted, sent Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, after a cessation of the (mission of the) apostles, while Quraysh were (taking care of) themselves and their properties; they

did not think that there was anyone to compete with them (for exaltedness) or vie with them (for glory). So our Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was trusted and among the middle of them in house and the least of them in wealth. So Khadija, daughter of Khwaylid, was the first to belive in him and to help him through her own wealth. Then the Commander of the faithful ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib believed in him while he was seven years old, did not associate anything with Allah even a flicker of an eye; nor did he worship an idol; nor did he swallow down usury; nor was he similar to those ignorant in their ignorance. As for the uncles of Allah’s Messenger, they were either a mean Muslim or a stubborn unbeliever except Hamza, for he did not refrain from Islam; nor did Islam refrain from him until he passed away while he was fully aware of his Lord.

“As for Abu’ Ta’lib, he looked after him (the Prophet), brought him up, defended him, and protected him. When Allah took Abu’ Ta’lib to Himself, the people hurried and agreed on murdering him (the Prophet), so he immigrated to the people ***who made their abode in the city and in the faith, love those who have fled to them, and not find in their hearts a need of what they are given, and prefer*** (***them***) ***to themselves though poverty may afflict them, and whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones***.”

This part displays the mission of the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family; it shows that the Prophet was sent to an arrogant group of people who thought that there was none to compete with him for exaltedness and glory, and that, at the dawn of the brilliant mission, none believed in him except Umm al-Mu’minin (the mother of the believers) Lady Khadija, who appropriated all her wealth for his message, and after her believed in him Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, the peace of Allah be upon him, who was seven years old, did not prostrate for any idol and did not worship it; rather he worshipped Allah, the Most High, due to faith in Him and sincerity to Him.

As for the uncles of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, one of them was Abu’ Lahab, who was a spiteful, errant polytheist; among them was the hero of Islam, lion of Allah, the martyr Hamza, throw whom Allah exalted Islam, and who bravely defended Allah’s Messenger until he died as a martyr.

The best uncle of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, is Abu’ Ta’lib, who believed in Islam, adopted its goals and doctrines, stood beside the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, protected him, and drove away from him the scheming of the enemies. When this great figure died, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, lost the one who protected and defended him; in the mean time, Quraysh hurried to kill him, so he immigrated to Medina (Yathrib), took it as a quarter for his summons and a capital for his government, for therein he found the choice who were ready to sacrifice their own souls for him. Now, let us return to another part of this letter:

“None of the *Muha’jirin* (Emigrants) supported Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, as ‘Ali did, for he helped him, protected him through his own soul, and slept on his bed. Then he was still clinging to the parts of the frontiers. He clashed with the heroes, did not recoil from any equal, and did not turn the back in flight from any army. He was calm. He ordered the whole (people), but none ordered

him. He was the most violent of all the people in pressure against the polytheists, the greatest of them in waging jiha'd for Allah, the most learned of them in the religion of Allah, the best of them in reading the Book of Allah, the most knowledgeable of them in the lawful and the unlawful.

"It is he who is the leader of the authority (*wila'ya*) in the hadith of Ghadir Khum and concerned by these words of him (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family: 'Your position with me is as Ha'ru'n had with Musa', except that there will be no prophet after me.' He was leader of the Day of al-Ta"if, and the most lovable of all creatures to Allah, the Exalted, and to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. It was he who opened the gate (of Khaybar) and closed the gates of the mosque. It was he who carried the standard on the Day of Khaybar, killed 'Amru' b. 'Abdu' Wu'd, and was the brother of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, when he made the Muslims associate with each other as brothers.

"He was inaccessible and generous. It was he concerning whom the verse (was revealed): *And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive*.63 He was the husband of Fa'tima, the Leader of the women of the world and of the Garden, and son-in-law of Khadija. He was the cousin of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who brought him up and maintained him. He was the son of Abu' Ta'lib (and similar to him) in his support and jiha'd, and he was the soul of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, on the Day of al-Muba'hala (the contest of prayer).

"It was he whom Abu' Bakr and 'Umar had consulted before they did any affair. They carried out what he regarded as right and did not carry out what he regarded as wrong. He was the only Ha'shimite who took part in the Consultative Council. By my life! If his companions had been able to drive him away from him, just as al-'Abba's (may Allah be pleased with him) did, and they had found a way to that, they would have done.

"As for your preferring al-'Abba's to him ('Ali), surely Allah, the Most High, says: *What! do you make* (*one who undertakes*) *the giving of drink to the pilgrims and the guarding of the Sacred Mosque like him who believes in Allah and the latter day and strives hard in Allah's way?* 64

"By Allah if a man of your men or other than him had a quality of the Commanders of the faithful's laudable qualities, excellences, and the verses interpreted in the Qur'an, then you would regard him as worthy of the caliphate and preferred him to the companions of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, through that quality. Then the affairs would promote him until he undertook the affairs of the Muslims, so he did not take care of any of the Ha'shimites except 'Abd Allah b. 'Abba's as a sign of magnifying his right and tightening the bonds of his blood relatives and confidence in him, so it was one of his affairs through which Allah will forgive him."

This part displays some excellences of Imam Abu' al-Husayn, the pioneer of wisdom and knowledge in the world of Islam, of which is that he defended the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family,

supported him, protected him with his own soul and blood, spent the night on his bed when Quraysh decided to kill him, may Allah bless him and his family, clashed with the heroes, struck off their heads as a sign of defense for Islam; therefore, he was the most violent of all the people in pressure against the polytheists and the unbelievers. So how great his advantages for Islam are!

Among his excellences is that he was the most learned and knowledgeable of the people in the precepts of the religion and the law of the master of the messengers, that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, entrusted the authority to him, appointed him as his successor after him on the Day of Ghadir Khum, and said his famous statement regarding him: "Whoever I am the master (*mawla'*) of, this man, 'Ali is his master. O Allah, befriend whoever befriends him, be hostile to whoever opposes him, support whoever supports him and desert whoever deserts him." The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, praised him again when he said to him: "Your position with me is as Ha'ru'n had with Musa', except that there will be no prophet after me."

Another example of his exalted position and his great importance with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, is that he (the Prophet) ordered all the doors facing his great mosque to be closed; he did not exclude in any of them except that of 'Ali, for it remained open and was not closed. Among his virtues is that he carried the standard on the Day of Khaybar, for it was he who conquered the stronghold of Khaybar and put an end to the Jews, and killed 'Amru' b. 'Abd wud, of whom the Muslims were afraid and whom none of them fought against except the hero and protector of Islam, Imam 'Ali, peace be on him.

Another example of the good traits of the Commander of the faithful is that when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, made the Muslims associate with each other as brothers, 'Ali was alone, so the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, associated with him as his brother and said to him: "O 'Ali, you are my brother in this world and the next."

Another example of his excellences is that this holy verse was revealed concerning him, his two sons, and his wife, the Leader of the women of the world: ***And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive***.

Another example of his virtues is that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, married him to the Leader of the women of the Muslims and part of him, Fa'tima al-Zahra'', peace be on her, for there was no man equal to her except 'Ali.

Yet another example of his great traits is that he was the soul of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, as it is indicated by the Verse of al-Muba'hala, for he, the peace of Allah be upon him, through his talents and genius, had a personality similar to that of the noble Messenger, who filled the world with light.

As Imam 'Ali had an exalted character and a great rank, Abu' Bakr and 'Umar consulted him when they intended to carry out a certain affair; of course, they consulted him regarding the precepts of the religion.

In this part of al-Ma'mu'n's letter is that if any of the Muslims had had excellences like those of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, then he would have been worthy of undertaking the caliphate and authority over the Muslims. Now, let us listen to another part of this letter, which says:

"Then we (the 'Abba'sids) and they (the Umayyads) were like one hand just as you claim until Allah, the Exalted, decided the authority for us, so we terrified them (the 'Alawides), straitened them, and killed them more than the killing of the Umayyads toward them. Woe unto you! Surely the Umayyads killed anyone (from among the 'Alawides) who unsheathed a sword, while we, the 'Abba'sids, have killed *en masse*; so, ask the great souls of the Ha'shimtes what sin they committed. Ask those who were thrown into the Tigris and the Euphrates, and those who were buried in Baghdad and Ku'fa while they were alive. How far! ***So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it***.65"

This part of the letter gives an account of the 'Abba'sid rulers who committed tragedies toward the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, for they spared no effort to wrong them and to eliminate them. In this connection al-Mansu'r al-Dawa'niqi said to Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him: "I will kill you and your family to the extent that I will leave none of you.66"

And al-Mansu'r said: "I have killed more than one thousand (persons) from among the progeny of Fa'tima, and I have left their master and protector, Ja'far b. Muhammad.67"

And Isma''il al-Diba'jj said when he escaped from al-Mansu'r:

The tyrant is not satisfied with our blood which he sheds

every where, and he does not fall short of looking for (us).

Nothing will quench his thirst except that he will not see

on earth a son belongs to the daughter of the Prophet.68

Al-Ma'mu'n has shown terrible kinds of tragedies which the 'Abba'sids wreaked upon the 'Alawides, and of which are the following:

A. Destroying all the 'Alawides.

B. Throwing them into the Tigris and the Euphrates while they were still alive to the extent that they died of drowning.

C. Burying them in Baghdad and Ku'fa while they were still alive.

The children of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, suffered from other persecutions through the 'Abba'sids. Now, let us listen to another part of this letter:

“As for what you have mentioned regarding the deposed one (al-Amin) and the confusion concerning him, by my life, none other than you had confused him, for it was you who had made easy to him breaking (the pledge of allegiance), adorned for him treason, and said to him: ‘What could your brother do? He is an exiled man. You have properties and men. We will send for him, and he will be brought.’ So you had told lies and schemed (against him), and you have forgotten these words of Him, the Exalted: ***And he who has been oppressed, Allah will most certainly aid him***.[69]”

In this part of his letter, al-Ma’mu’n has mentioned that some events happened between him and his brother al-Amin, and that the events were created by the ‘Abba’sids, for it was they who made al-Amin love deposing al-Ma’mu’n and subduing him. In other words the events happened not as a result of al-Amin’s view and planning. This is another part of this letter:

“As for what you have mentioned regarding al-Ma’mu’n’s reflection on the pledge of allegiance to Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, al-Ma’mu’n did not pledge allegiance to him but he was discerning concerning his affair and was aware that none on the face of the earth was clearer than him in excellence, more manifest than him in chastity, more pious than him in piety, more ascetic than him in asceticism in the world, freer than him in soul, more satisfactory than him with the personal entourage (*kha’ssa*) and the populace (*‘a’mma*), and stronger than him in Allah’s Selfness, and that the pledge of allegiance to him was surely agreeing with the good pleasure of the Lord, the Great and Almighty. I did my best for Allah and paid no attention to the blame of a blamer.

“By my life! If the pledge of allegiance stems from partiality, then al-‘Abba’s, my son, and the rest of my children will be the most lovable to my own heart and the most beautiful in my own eye, but I willed an affair and Allah willed an affair, so my affair did not precede Allah’s.”

This part gives an account of that al-Ma’mu’n pledged allegiance to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, during regency, and that it was not because of partiality, sentiments, and desires; rather it was on account of diligence, scrutiny, and consideration about the affairs of the Muslims. That is because the great Imam was endowed with exalted qualities of which are the following:

A. Surely the Imam was the most meritorious of all people on the face of the earth.

B. He was the most chaste person.

C. He refrained from the things made unlawful by Allah.

D. All the Muslims magnified him and preferred him to

other than him.

E. He, peace be on him, did not fear the censure of any

censurer regarding Allah.

It is these qualities which urged al-Ma'mu'n to designate the Imam as his heir apparent. Now, let us listen to another part of this letter:

"As for what you have mentioned regarding the alienation which has touched you during my rule, by my life, it has not occurred but from you through your helping (al-Amin) against me and your inclination to him. But when I killed him, you scattered like slaves, so you sometimes followed Ibn Abu' Kha'lid; sometimes you followed A'ra'bi; and sometimes you followed Ibn Shakkla. Then all of you drew a sword against me. Were it not for that my trait was pardon and my nature was forgiveness, I would not leave any of you on the face of earth, for all your blood is lawful."

Al-Ma'mu'n has expressed the estrangement and deprivation which befell the 'Abba'sids during his time, for they were the reason for that when they helped and supported al-Amin. However, when he was killed, they joined all those who mutinied against his government such as Ibra'him b. Shakkla and the like, so through that they filled al-Ma'mu'n's heart with malice against them. Had it not been for that his quality was forgiveness, as he said, then he would not have left any 'Abba'sid on the face of earth. And this is another part of his letter, which says:

"As for what you have asked about the pledge of allegiance to al-'Abba's, my son, *will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse?* Woe unto you! Surely al-'Abba's is still a young man; his reason is not acquainted (with life affairs); he is not given time (to stay) alone; experiences have not strengthened him; the women direct him; and the slave-wives maintain him. Then he has not understood the religion yet; he does not distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful; (he has nothing) except knowledge which subjects do not put into effect and through which no proof is established. If he was qualified; experiences strengthened him; he understood the religion, attained the high degree of the Emir of justice in asceticism in the world and turned away his soul from it, he would have with me nothing except what a man from 'Akk and Himyar had; therefore, do not mention this statement frequently, for my tongue is still restrained from affairs and stories which I hate (to mention), and for your souls will be broken when they are revealed. It is worth mentioning that Allah will someday reach His order and manifest His decree.

"If you refuse (all things) except removing the cover and revealing the defects, then al-Rashid informed me on the authority of his forefathers and of what he found in the book of the state and other than it that the 'Abba'sids would come to an end after the seventh son of al-'Abba's and the blessing upon them would be confined to his own lifetime, so if it (the blessing) said farewell (to you), then you would say farewell to it. And if you lost my person, then seek a stronghold for your own souls. And how far! You will have (nothing) except the sword. Al-Hasani, the revolutionary, the wild or al-Sufya'ni, the forced, will reap you with a reap, and al-Qa''im al-Mahdi will not spare your blood except through its right."

This part of the letter shows the reasons which prevented al-Ma'mu'n from designating his son, al-'Abba's, as a heir apparent as follows: Al-'Abba's did not have the qualifications which should be available in the heir apparent such as knowledge, excellence, piety, and the like. He was still a boy

whom days did not educate and experience did not strengthen. He had neither knowledge nor culture. Rather, he was a youth whose affairs were directed by the women and the salve-wives, so how was it right for al-Ma'mu'n to nominate him for this important office?

After this al-Ma'mu'n added that al-Rashid told him about what he found in the book of the state; he told him that the 'Abba'sid state would come to an end after the seventh 'Abba'sid king, and that the 'Abba'sids would not rule after him.

As for al-Rashid, he made a mistake, for the 'Abba'sid state continued after their seventh king and then it came to an end by Hulagu the Tatarian, who struck off the heads of the 'Abba'sids, removed their kingdom and authority. Now, let us listen to another part of this letter, which says:

"I pledged allegiance to 'Ali b. Musa' because he himself was worthy of the caliphate and because I chose him; I did that because I wanted to spare your blood and to defend you through continuing love between us and them; I have followed this way in order to honor the family of Abu' Ta'lib and to aid them with a little of *al-fayya"* (war booty gained without fighting)."

Al-Ma'mu'n has said that his pledge of allegiance to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was for the interest of the 'Abba'sids, for, through this pledge of allegiance, he was able to spare their blood. Perhaps the reason for that is that many revolts broke out in Islamic world and summoned the people to pledge allegiance to al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, that he might establish political and social justice in the quarters of the homeland. When he brought him and appointed him as his successor, those revolts terminated. If they had continued, they would have destroyed the 'Abba'sid rule and put an end to the 'Abba'sids.

Now, let us return to another part of this letter, in which al-Ma'mu'n says: "And if you claim that I have intended to achieve a result and an advantage for them (the 'Alawides), then surely I always reflect on you, take care of you, your progeny, and your children after you, while you are inattentive, heedless, straying, in a gulf (of ignorance) blindly wandering on; you do not know what is wanted toward you, of the indignation you have cast as a shadow over him, and the extortion of the blessing. The concern of one of you is that he enters into evening while he is mounted and enters upon morning while he is drunk. You boast of acts of disobedience and rejoice at them. Your gods are the lutes. You are womanish and stupid. None of you thinks of setting right livelihood, continuing blessing, doing a noble deed, *the day on which property will not avail nor sons, except him who comes to Allah with a heart free* (*from evil*).

"You have neglected prayers, followed desires, and busied (yourselves) with pleasures, so you will meet perdition. By Allah, perhaps, I think of your affairs, so I find none of the communities deserved punishment until it befell them out of a defect, except that I have found the defect itself in you along with many defects which, as I think, Iblis has not discovered; nor has he ordered (men) to put them into practice, while in His Holy Book, Allah has given an account of the people of (the Prophet) Sa'lih that

there *was among them nine persons whom made mischief in the land*; yet you have followed them inwardly and outwardly as a sign of making little of the hereafter and little certitude in the reckoning; therefore, which of you has an opinion which may be followed or useful reflection? So may your faces be distorted and your cheeks be covered with dust!"

Al-Ma'mu'n has described his own family with the ugliest qualities by which none is distinguished except low men and the deviants of regions. He has pictured them with a picture which is detested by the least of people in feelings.

Now, let us listen to another part of this letter, in which he says: "And as for what you have mentioned about the fault regarding Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha'), may Allah enlighten his face, so, by my life, it is in my viewpoint for renaissance and independence through which I hope that I will pass *al-Sira't* 70, security and salvation from the fear on the Day of the Greatest Fear, and I do not think that I have a deed better than that except that I must return the like of it (the caliphate) to the like of him (al-Ridha'). How can I obtain that (deed)? And how can you win that happiness?"

Al-Ma'mu'n has refuted the viewpoints of his own family, who criticized him for his making an unforgivable mistake through appointing Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, as a heir apparent. So he answered them that he took such a step for the renaissance and independence of the community, for he had nominated for the leadership of the community the best man on the face of earth, that he might establish the truth, spread justice, and return dignity to Islam.

This is another part of this letter, in which he says: "As for your statement that I have discredited the views of your forefathers and insights of your ancestors, then this is the statement of the Qurayshi polytheists, who have said: *We have found our fathers on a course, and surely we are guided by their footsteps*.71 Woe unto you! Surely the religion is not taken (from anyone) except from the prophets; therefore, understand (what I say to you), and I do not see that you understand (it)."

Through this statement, al-Ma'mu'n has disproved the viewpoints of his own family, who claimed that he had discredited the viewpoints of his forefathers and spoiled the insights of his ancestors, and that was through his showing kindness to the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. It is worth mentioning that this silly logic was followed by the Qurayshi polytheists, who have said: *We have found our fathers on a course, and surely we are guided by their footsteps*.

Now, let us listen to the last part of this letter, in which he says: "As for your reviling because of my following the policy of the Magians toward you, then nothing has made you believe in that except haughtiness even if apes and pigs govern over you. By my life, they had been Magians, and they have become Muslim just as our fathers and mothers in the past. So they are the Magians who have become Muslim, and you are the Muslims who have become apostates. Therefore a Magian who becomes a Muslim is better than a Muslim who becomes an apostate. For they prevent each other from doing evil and enjoin (men) to do good; seek nearness to good; refrain from evil; defend the sacredness of the

Muslims; rejoice at evil which befalls polytheism and polytheists; give good news to one another of good which includes Islam and Muslims, *so of them is he who accomplished his vow, and of them is he who yet awaits, and they have not changed in the least*.72

“You are either one who plays with his own soul or stupid or a singer or one who plays on the tambourine or one who plays on the flute. By Allah, if the Umayyads, whom you killed yesterday, were raised from the dead and it was said to them, “Do not disdain the defects through which you disparage them,” they would increase nothing to what you have adopted inwardly and outwardly as a craft and manners.

“You become impatient when evil touches you and deprive (others) of good when it touches you. You do not disdain (offenses) and do not hope (for good deeds) except out of fear. How do you disdain (offenses) while you spend the night mounted, enter upon morning admiring your own sins as if you had earned a praiseworthy deed, your goal is your stomach and your pudenda, pay no attention to murdering one thousand sent prophets or angels brought nigh in order to attain your own desires, love him who adorns act of disobedience for you or helps you with ill-deed, are cleaned by the drunken woman, are patted by the unknown one, and your conditions are scattered? You must refrain from (doing) evil deeds and atrocities or the sword will be raised above your heads, and there is no strength save in Allah; my reliance is on Him, and He is sufficient unto me.73”

This letter has terminated, and in the last part of it, al-Ma’mu’n has mentioned the defects and atrocities of his own family. I (the author) think that there is no Arab family has been stained with such atrocities, which al-Ma’mu’n has mentioned, and which led this family to an endless level of meanness.

1. Al-Sayyid Ja‘far Murtada’ has objectively and inclusively mentioned the objectives which motivated al-Ma’mu’n to appoint Imam al-Ridha’ as successor after him. He has mentioned eleven objectives in his book Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’ (the Life of Imam al-Ridha’).
2. Haya’t al-Imam al-Ridha’, pp. 442-443, quoted from the book al-Taddwin by ‘Abd al-Kareem al-Ra’fi‘i al-Sha’fi‘i.
3. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/121.
4. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 149.
5. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a. Biha’r al-Anwa’r.
6. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/122.
7. A‘ya’n al-Shi‘a 4/Q2/123. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 95.
8. Al-Durr al-Nazim.
9. Regarding Nisa’bu’r, Ya’qu’t al-Hamawi (in his book titled Mu‘jam al-Bulda’n, vol. 5, pp. 331-332) has said: “Nisa’bu’r is a great city with important excellences. It is the origin of the virtuous and source of the scholars. I have never seen the like of it in the country which I have circled.” Abu’ al-‘Abba’s al-Zawzani, better known as al-Ma’mu’ni has praised it, saying:
There is no (land) like Nisa’bu’r; (it is) a good land and a Forgiving Lord!
Dispraising its inhabitants, al-Mura’di has said:
Do not stop at Nisa’bu’r while you are a stranger
Unless your robe is connected to an authority;
Otherwise neither courtesy avails; nor does ancestry benefits; nor is man’s sacredness respected.
Many learned scholars graduated from it; among them was al-Ha’fiz Imam Abu’ ‘Ali al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Zayd b. Da’wud b. Yazid al- Nisa’bu’ri, al-Sa’’igh.

10. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 133.
11. Ibid., p. 135.
12. Ibn al-Jawzi, al-Muntazam, vol. 10, p. 67 (photographed and available in al-Sayyid al-Hakim Library).
13. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 135. The scholars have taken great care of this tradition, so they have mentioned numerous chain of authorities for it and regarded it as one of the authentic traditions.
14. Akhba’r al-Diwal, p. 115.
15. Al-Sawa’‘iq al-Muhriqa.
16. Akhba’r al-Diwal, p. 115.
17. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 136-137.
18. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 138.
19. Dhu al-Riya’satayn means the man with two offices. This nickname was given to al-Fadl b. SAhl, who was in charge of the military and civil administration.
20. Maqa’til al-Ta’libiyyin, pp. 562-563.
21. Al-Ada’b al-Sulta’niya, p. 219.
22. Al-Ma’mu’n has declared than in the document of regency which we will mention.
23. Farajj al-Mahmu’m, p. 142. Ta’rikh al-Hukama’’, pp. 222-223.
24. Al-Sadu’q, Ama’li, p. 43. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 140.
25. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 1, p. 19.
26. Yana’bi‘ al-Mawadda, p. 284.
27. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 140.
28. Mir’a’t al-Zama’n, vol. 5, p. 148 (photographed).
29. Kashf al-Ghumma.
30. Subh al-A‘sha’, vol. 9, pp. 362-366.
31. (The document called) al-ja’mi‘a is a scroll seventy yards long which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, dictated from his own mouth and ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib wrote in his own hand writing.
32. Al-jafr or the white case is a vessel in which are the Torah of Musa’, the Gospels of ‘Isa’, the Psalms of Da’wud and the other Books of Allah.
33. Subh al-A‘sha’, vol. 9, pp. 392-393.
34. ‘Uyu’n al-Tawa’rikh, vol. 3, p. 221.
35. Sir al-Silsila al-‘Alawiya, p. 38. Mir’a’t al-Zama’n, vol. 6, p. 40. Al-Quda’‘i.
36. Biha’r al-Anwa’r.
37. Maqa’til al-Ta’libiyyin.
38. Al-Fusu’l al-Muhimma, p. 238.
39. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, p. 147.
40. Ibid.
41. Tadhkirat al-Khawa’s, p. 364.
42. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’.
43. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 161-162.
44. In a tradition it has been mentioned that Gabriel came down to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and was dressed in black, so he asked him: “O Gabriel, what about this black uniform?” “It is the uniform of children of your uncle al-‘Abba’ss,” replied Gabriel, “O Muhammad, your children will face destruction from the children of your uncle al-‘Abba’ss.” This has been mentioned in Wasa’’il al-Shi‘a, vol. 3, p. 279.
45. Qur’an, 18, 31.
46. Al-Imam ‘Ali al-Ridha’ Wali ‘Ahd al-Ma’mu’n, pp. 62-65.
47. Abu’ al-Farajj al-Asfaha’n has mentioned: “Imam al-Ridha’ married Umm al-Fadl, al-Ma’mu’n’s daughter.” This is incorrect; the correct is that the Imam married Umm Habib.
48. Al-‘Aqqd al-Farid, vol. 5, p. 226.
49. Al-Wila’t wa Kitta’b al-Quda’t, p. 168.

50. Al-Ya'qu'bi, Ta'rikh, vol. 3, p. 277.
51. Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh.
52. Ibid.
53. Wasa''il al-Shi'a, vol. 12, p. 148.
54. Ibid., p. 146.
55. Ibid., p. 147.
56. Ibid., pp. 149-150.
57. Shakkla was the mother of Ibra'him and was a black female-slave. As for Ibra'him, he was so strong with a great body that he was called al-Tinnin (the dragon), Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 1, p. 20.
58. Al-Ya'qu'bi, Ta'rikh.
59. Al-Wila't wa Kitta'b al-Quda't, p. 168.
60. Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 1, p. 21.
61. 'Asr al-Ma'mu'n, vol. 3, pp. 255-256.
62. It was in reply to their letters which they had sent to al-Ma'mu'n and asked him to answer it, so he has answered them through this letter which has abstracted them from every noble quality.
63. Qur'an, 76, 8.
64. Ibid., 9, 19.
65. Ibid., 99, 7-8.
66. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 3, p. 357. Al-Biha'r, vol. 47, p. 178.
67. Al-Adab fi Zil al-Tashayya', p. 68.
68. Al-Maqqrizi, al-Niza'' wa al-Takha'sum, p. 51.
69. Qur'an, 22, 60.
70. Al-Sira't is a path or a road or a kind of bridge which only the righteous can cross on the road to Paradise.
71. Qur'an, 43, 22.
72. Ibid., 33, 23.
73. Al-Biha'r (modern edition), vol. 49, pp. 208-214. Haya't al-Imam al-Ridha', pp. 453-460, I (the author) have quoted the letter from it.

Chapter 16: The Affairs Of The Imam In Khurasan

It is necessary for us to pause in order to talk about some affairs of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, when he resided in Khurasa'n; his affairs there are as follows:

Poets visit the Imam

A group of the eminent Arab poets in that time visited Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, blessed him, and congratulated him on his undertaking regency. Among them was the great poet, Di'bil al-Khaza''i, who revolted against oppression and tyranny, expressed the sufferings of the oppressed and the deprived. One of them was the inspired poet, Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's al-Sawli, the unique poet and proser of the time.[1] And among them was the great poet Razin b. 'Ali, the brother of Di'bil al-Khaza''i.

Before they traveled to Khurasa'n, Di'bil had said to Ibra'him: "I want to accompany you to Khurasa'n."

"How nice a companion and accompanied one your are!" exclaimed Ibra'him, "surely we have followed the precondition of Bashsha'r."

"What is his precondition?" asked Di'bil.

He has said his statement:

The best brother whom I fraternize is he whose baggage I

carry, and who carries my baggage when I ask him to carry them.

When a time turns away from him, I have confidence in

him; and when the time turns away from me, he has

confidence in me.

His property belongs to me and I do not fear his

miserliness; my property belongs to him, and he does not

fear my miserliness throughout the time.[2]

During their journey, they were robbed, so they were forced to ride donkeys carrying thorns, so Ibra'him composed, saying:

They have been loaded thorns instead of pottery; they are

drunk not because of wine; rather because of intense

weakness.

He asked Razin to complete this (poetry line), and he said:

So if you, in spite of that, come to playing and amusement,

then your state concerning it is equal and will not persist

in decrease.

Then he said to Di'bil: "Complete this (poetry line), O Abu' 'Ali." And he said:

If that has passed, so be witty and hasten to play and

amuse (our selves), for surely I am going to sell my

sandals.[3]

Then the caravan of these eminent figures began covering the desert paying no attention to anything until it arrived in Khurasa'n. Shortly after their arrival there, they hurried to meet the Imam, peace be on him, so Di'bil recited to him his poem called al-Ta''iya, which we will mention, and Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's composed before him a poem of which the historians have narrated nothing except this line:

The deaths of the children of the Prophet Muhammad

have removed the pains of the heart after endurance.

As for the Imam, he warmly received them, honored and magnified them.

The Imam awards a Prize to Di'bil

The Imam gave to Di'bil a parcel in which there was ten thousands of the dirhams struck with his name.[4] It is worth mentioning that the dirhams had not been placed in the hand of anyone before Di'bil, so Di'bil refused to take them and said: "No, by Allah, I have not wanted this (money); nor have I gone out for it. I have come to have the honor of him and to look at his face." Then he asked the servant of the Imam to ask the Imam in order to give him one of his garments, so the Imam gave him a silk garment[5] along with dirhams and said to him: "Take this parcel, for you will be in need of it."

Di'bil departed until he arrived at Qum and there a talk about the Imam's garment was announced, so the Qummis hurried to Di'bil and asked him to sell them the garment for thirty thousand dirhams.[6] He refused that and left the Qummis, but a group of them followed him and said to him:

"You must take the money or you better know."

"By Allah, surely I will not give it to you on my on accord," retorted Di'bil, "nor will it benefit you when you take it by force, for it is wanted only for Allah, the Great and Almighty, and it is forbidden for you to wear it."

Then he swore by Allah that he would not sell it to them unless they gave him a piece of it, that it might be placed in his shroud. So they gave him one sleeve, and it was placed in his shrouds.[7] The narrators have mentioned: "The most lovable slave-wife to Di'bil became ill. So he bandaged her with what he had of the garment of the Imam, peace be on him, and she got well.[8]"

As for the dirhams, Di'bil sold each one to the Qummis for ten dirhams, so his share amounted one hundred thousand dirhams.[9]

The Imam awards a Prize to Ibra'him

The Imam, peace be on him, gave Ibra'him al-Sawli ten thousands of the dirhams struck with his holy name. Ibra'him did not sell them; rather they remained with him.[10] So he spent some of them, and the rest remained with him until he died.

The Immortal Poem of Di'bil

The poem which Di'bil recited to the Imam, peace be on him, is regarded as one of the masterpieces of Arab literature and among the sources of Islamic legacy. It is the most famous of Di'bil's poems. It had a strong impression on the Imam, so he wept and fainted three times.[11] That is because Di'bil has mentioned in it the painful tragedies which befell the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them. Di'bil wore a garment and wrote the poem. He performed the ritual consecration wearing the garment, and then he ordered it to be placed in his own shrouds.[12]

Di'bil's poem widely spread in that time. Al-Ma'mu'n heard of it, admired it, asked Di'bil to recite it to him, and said to him: "It won't do you any harm; I have given you security from all things. It had been narrated to me, but I want to hear it from your own mouth." So he recited it, and al-Ma'mu'n wept to the extent that his beard became wet out of his tears.[13]

A joke has been narrated about this excellent poem; the joke is as follows: When Di'bil and his companions departed Maru', some highwaymen attacked them and took all that which they had. It happened that a highwayman robbed Di'bil and recited a line of his poem which he had recited to the Imam, and the line is as follows:

I see that their *fayya'* [14] is divided among other than them,

and their hands is void of their *fayya'* .

So Di'bil asked the highwayman: "Whose poetry line is this?"

"It belongs to a man called Di'bil from Khaza''a," replied the highwayman.

"I am Di'bil!" was the answer.

Then Di'bil recited the poem, so the highwayman became astonished, called to the rest of the highwaymen, and asked them to return what they had taken from Di'bil and his companions as a sign of honor for the poet of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and they returned it to them.[15]

As this poem is of great importance, some eminent figures have explained it. They are as follows:

1. Al-Sayyid Ni'mat Allah al-Jaza''iry.

2. Kama'l al-Din Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Shira'zi.

3. Al-Hajj Mirza 'Ali al-Tabrizi.[16]

The Text of the Poem

The late 'Abd al-Sa'hib al-Dujayli has reported the text of the poem in the Divan of Di'bil from a group of handwritten and printed sources; we have reported it from him; the text of the poem is as follows:

The doves whose utterance and speeches are not

understood answer each other through sounds and sighs.

They tell through breaths about the secret of souls captives

to past love and another coming.

So they will make happy or help (the lovers) until the

kinds of darkness are dispersed and defeated by dawn.

Peace be on the courtyards void of wild cows; (I am) a sad

adorer yearning for the courtyards.

As far as I know that their familiar places were green

because of the perfumed, white (ones) and the ashamed

(ones).

Nights helped friendliness against abandonment, but after

me they approached one another out of estrangement.

Then they looked through their unveiled eyes and covered

their cheeks with their hands.

And then everyday I have, in my eye, drunkenness for

which my heart spends the night drunk.

How many a regret excited by my standing at Mahsar and

'Arafa't[17] on the Day of Gathering.

Do you not see what the days have brought upon the

people through nullifying (the Imamate), long separation,

the states of the reckless[18], and those who sought light

through them in the dark?

Just imagine how much more is he who has come to seek

nearness to Allah through fasting, prayers, showing love

for the children of the Prophet and his family, hating the

Banu' of al-Zarqa'' and al-'Abala't [19], Hind[20], what Sumayya[21]

had done, her son who showed unbelief and dissoluteness

in Islam?

It was they who broke the covenant of the Book, religious

duties and clear verses therein through falsehood and

vague errors.[22]

And that is a mere trial which has exposed them through

a summons of error from among ugly things.

Legacy without nearness (to the Prophet), authority

without guidance, and government without consultative

council are among the rightly-guided ones.[23]

(These) misfortunes have made us see the greenness of the

horizon red and made sweet water tastes salt.

Nothing made easy those creeds among them except the

homage of the random errors.[24]

The Companions of the Shelter (*saqifa*) did not attain an

authority because of legacy; rather due to the affair of

(their) origin.25

If they had entrusted the reins of the caliphate to the

testamentary trustee26, then they would have been regulated by him who was protected from stumbles.

(He) was the brother of the last of the messengers27, the one

purified of uncleanness, and the one who killed the

heroes at the battles.

If they deny (that), then to him bear witness al–

Ghadir, Badr, and Uhd whose elevations are high28,

Verses of the Qur'an are recited concerning his

excellence, his giving food during famines29,

and his outstanding qualities he attained out of his preceding laudable deeds which none before him had performed.

(These) laudable deeds were not attained by trickery; nor

were they obtained by anything except by the sharp edge

of the spear.

Gabriel, the trusted one, whispered to him while you

devoted yourselves (to serving) both al–'Izza' and Mana't.30

At 'Arafa't I wept over the traces of the house, and I shed

the tears of my eyes (for them).

The traces of the deserted houses untied the handles of

patience and exited my longing.

Schools of verses (of the Qur'an) are without recitation,

and the place of inspiration is (like) courtyards without

people.31

To the family of Allah's Messenger belong (the houses) at al-Khif part of Mina', al-Rukn, al-Ta'rif, and al-Jamara't [32]

The houses belong to 'Ali, al-Husayn, Ja'far, Hamza, and al-Sajja'd the one with calluses (*Dhu' al-Thafana't*) [33];

The houses belong to 'Abd Allah and al-Fadl his full brother to whom Allah's Messenger whispered in privacy;

The houses among which the inspiration of Allah came

down to Ahmed (Muhammad), who has been mentioned in

the verses, belong to the people through whose guidance (men) have become rightly guided and felt secure from their slip of stumbles.

The houses were (confined to) prayer, reverential fear,

fasting, purity, and good deeds.

Gabriel, the trusted one, stopped at the houses carrying from Allah greetings and mercy;

The houses (were the place) of inspiration of Allah, the place of His knowledge, and the path of guidance through clear ways.

The houses have been effaced by the tyranny of

every opponent, not by days and years.

O inheritors of the knowledge of the Prophet, upon

you be peace with lasting perfumes.

Stop in order to ask the house whose inhabitants hastened:

When was your knowledge of fasting and prayers? Where

are those whom the loneliness of remoteness has wronged

(and made them like) branches separating in the horizons?

They are the people of the legacy of the Prophet when

they are ascribed; they are the best masters and protectors.

They are feeders during famine and every attitude; they

have become honorable through favor and blessings.[34]

As for people, they are either envier or liar or spiteful

harboring malice or one who is unable to avenge the blood

of his dead.

When they (the Qurayshi hypocrites and the people of the

Book) remember their dead at (the battles of) Badr,

Khaybar, and Hunayn, they shed tears. [35]

So how could they show love for the Prophet and his family while they split open their bowels?[36]

They were gentle to him through their statements but they

had hearts containing spites.[37]

So if it (the caliphate) is not undertaken except through

nearness to Muhammad, then Ha'shim is worthier (of it)

than those of bad lineage.

May Allah water the grave in Medina (with) His rain, for

therein has rested the Security through blessings.

The Prophet of guidance upon whom his King has called

down blessings and given to him as gift His repose.

Allah calls down blessings upon him as long as the sun

rises and the night stars appear.

O Fa'tima, if you imagined al-Husayn, who was thrown to

the ground and died thirsty by the Euphrates, then you, O

Fa'tima, would strike your cheeks beside him and make

the tears of your eye flow on your cheeks.

O Fa'tima, arise, O daughter of the good, and mourn for

the stars of the heavens in a deserted land.

Graves are in Kufa'n (i.e. Ku'fa); others are in Tiba; others

are in Fakh; blessings are called down upon them.[38]

Other (graves) are in the land of al-Jawza'n; a lonely grave is at Ba'khamra'.[39]

And a grave is in Baghdad; (it) belongs to a pure soul

which the Merciful (Allah) has included in the Gardens.[40]

As for the painful misfortunes which have deeply hurt me

through the essence of qualities, (they are) the graves by the River Euphrates in the land of Kerbala", where they (al-Husayn and his companions) stopped at the late night.

They died thirsty by the Euphrates, so would that I died

for them before the time of my death.

During my remembering them, I complain to Allah of pain which waters me with the cup of abasement and atrocities.

I fear that if I visit them, I will be exited by their death

(which took place) between the valley and the date-palms.

The events of time have divided them; just as you see that

they have a district with houses covered (with dust).

Except that in Medina is a group of them, throughout the

time, rawboned because of hardships.

None visits them except some visitors from among

hyenas, eagles, and vultures.

They are forever asleep in graves standing in various

districts of the earth.

In al-Hija'z and (among) its people were courageous ones from among them chosen as leaders.

Hard droughts kept away from neighboring them[41],

and the pebble of the pebbles did not warm them.

(They were) hot, so comets did not visit them; and (their)

faces shone by the curtains in the dark.

If they (people) brought horses running very quickly (and

carrying) spears, they (the Prophet's Household) were the pokers of the embers of death and hardships.

If they prided themselves (upon their lineage), they brought Muhammad, Gabriel, the Furqa'n (Qur'an), and the Suras.

And they numbered 'Ali, possessor of laudable deeds and

exaltedness, Fa'tima al-Zahra'' the best daughter, Hamza

possessor of guidance and piety, and Ja'far, who flies in

the Gardens.

Those, not the product of Hind and her party Sumayya

from among the foolish and the dirty.

Taym and 'Adi will be asked about them and their

homage which was the greatest sin.[42]

It was they who prevented the forefathers from taking

their own right, and it was they who left the children

hostage to separation.[43]

It was they who took it (the caliphate) from the

testamentary trustee of Muhammad, so their pledge of

allegiance was treacherous.[44]

Stop your blaming me for (my showing love for) the Household of the Prophet; they are my lovers and I have confidence in them as long as they live.

I have chosen them as a guide to my own affairs, for

they are, any how, the most excellent choice.

I have sincerely shown love for my masters and willingly

submitted my own soul to them.

Therefore, O my Lord, increase me in the insight of my

sureness and add, O my Lord, my love for them to my

good deeds.

I will weep over them as long as a rider makes a pilgrimage to (the House of) Allah and as long as a dove coos in the trees.

I will sacrifice my own soul for you; (your) middle-aged and youths release captives and collect blood-money (for the people).

When death limits the steps of the horses, you release

them (and use) sharp spears and swords.

I love those far because of their love for you, and for you I abandon my family and my daughters.[45]

I conceal my love toward you out of fear of him who is

hostile, stubborn to the men of the truth and disobedient

to (them).

O my eye, weep over them and shed abundant tears;

it is time for you to shed tears.

Certainly the days have surrounded me with their own evil, and surely I hope for security after my death.[46]

Do you not see that I have gone and come for thirty years,

and I am always in sorrows?

I see that their *fayya'* is divided among other than them,

and their hands are void of their *fayya'*.[47]

So how can I be cured of an intense sorrow, and the

intense sorrow is the Umayyads, the men of dissoluteness

and (bad) results?

The family of Allah's Messenger are thin-bodied, while

the family of Ziya'd are big-necked!

Ziya'd's daughters are protected in the palaces whereas the

family of Allah's Messenger are in the deserts!

I will weep for them as long as the sun shines on earth and the caller of good calls (men) to prayer;

(I will weep for them) as long as the sun shines and sets; and I will weep for them at night and in the early morning.

The houses of Allah's Messenger have become a desert,

and the family of Ziya'd live in palaces.

The throats of the family of Allah's Messenger are bled,

and the family of Ziya'd are at ease.

The womenfolk of Allah's Messenger are taken as

captives, and Ziya'd's womenfolk (are respected).

When one of them is killed, they stretch out for the killers

palms of the hand and prevent them from taking blood money.[48]

Had it not for him whom I expect today or tomorrow, I

would be out of breath due to the sorrows for them.

Certainly an Imam will appear and rise in the name of

Allah and the blessings.[49]

He will distinguish among us everything right and wrong,

reward for favors and vengeance.

I will intensely withhold myself from arguing with them;

enough for me is what I find of the moral lessons.

So, O my soul, renounce (the world); then O my soul, be delighted, for it is not far all that which will come;

Do not be impatient of the period of tyranny; surely I can see that my strength shows signs of separating (from the world).

So if the Most Gracious (Allah) brings near that period of mine and delays my life span for prolonging my life, then I will avenge (myself upon them), will not leave any calamity for myself, make my sword and spear quench their thirst with their blood.

For surely I hope for from the Most Gracious (Allah), through showing love for them an uninterrupted life in Paradise.

May Allah give shelter to this creature; surely He is permanent in glances toward every people.

If I say something good, they deny it with something evil and cover the realities with vague errors.

I try to remove the sun from its place and to make solid stones hear.

So they are either a knower who does not make use of (my statement) or a stubborn one who inclines to (his) caprices and lusts.

I am negligent of them when I die of a pang frequenting in my chest and in (my) epiglottis.

Although my own ribs are wide, they have become narrow because of the intense sighs they have contained.[50]

This ode called al-'Assma" has terminated. As for the Imam, he was satisfied with it and supplicated for Di'bil in order to be successful on the Day of the Greatest Fear.

The Imam was strongly moved by the poetry lines in which Di'bil lamented for Imam al-Husayn, peace be on him. He wept bitter tears and fainted more than one time, for the tragedy of Karbela" had melted his heart, and he would say: "Surely the affair of al-Husayn has made our eyes sleepless, our tears flow, and abased our dear one. O land of grief and tribulation (*karb wa bala"*), you have made us inherit grief and tribulation until the Day of Resurrection! So the weepers should weep for al-Husayn, for weeping for him erases great sins.[51]"

The sadness of the Imam became intense and his sorrow doubled when the month of Muharram came, and he said: "None saw my father, the blessings of Allah be upon him, smile when the month of Muharram came, and the tragedy would overcome him until ten days of it passed. When the tenth day came, then that day was the day of his calamity, his sadness, and his weeping, and he would say: 'This is the day on which al-Husayn was killed.'[52]"

And he, peace be on him, said: "Surely the people who lived before Islam prohibited fighting in the month of Muharram, while therein (shedding) our blood was regarded as lawful, our sacredness was violated, our progeny and our womenfolk were taken as captives, fires were set to our tents, and our baggage were taken. They (the Umayyads) did not conform to the sacredness of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, with respect to our affair.[53]"

Al-Rayya'n b. Shabib has narrated, saying: "I visited al-Ridha' on the first day (of the month) of Muharram, and he said to me: 'O son of Shabib, are you fasting?' 'No,' I replied."

Then the Imam began making him aware of the sacredness of that day, saying: "This is the day on which Zakariya' supplicated his Lord and said: 'O Lord, give me from You a good progeny, surely You hear supplication!' So Allah responded to him. He ordered the angels, and they said to Zakariya' while he was standing and praying in the mihrab: 'Surely Allah has given good news to you of Yahya'.' So he who fasts in this month and supplicates Allah, the Great and Almighty, He responds to him just as He had responded to Zakariya'.

"O son of Shabib, surely the people who lived before Islam prohibited wrongdoing and fighting in the month of Muharram because of its sacredness, but this community has not come to know of the sacredness of its month nor the sacredness of its Prophet. In this month they killed his progeny, took his womenfolk as captives, and took his baggage, so may Allah never forgive them that.

"O son of Shabib, if you weep for a thing, then weep for al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, for he was slaughtered just as a ram is slaughtered, and along with him was killed eighteen men from among his

Household, of whom there is no like on earth; the seven havens and the earth wept for murdering him; four thousand angels came down to earth in order to support him but they found that he had been killed, so they (will remain) by his grave while they are shaggy and covered with dust until the Qa"im, peace be on him, rises; they will be with him, among his supporters and Shi'ites; their slogan will be: 'Let us avenge the blood of al-Husayn![54]"

The Tragedy of Karbela" has immortalized sadness and sorrow for the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, for they and their Shi'ites are in constant sadness; they do not forget the tragedies which befell the grandson of the Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, on the day of 'Ashu'ra" when the sacredness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was violated. On that day, immortal in the world of sadness, the army of b. Marja'na paid no attention to the sacredness of Allah and of His Messenger through murdering the grandson of Allah's Apostle in that terrible manner.

After this let us return to the affairs of the Imam in Khurasa'n:

The Imam spends all what he has

The Imam spent all what he had on the poor and the miserable in Khurasa'n, so al-Fadl b. SAhl censured him for that, saying: "Surely this is (a kind of) damage!"

So the Imam answered him with a strong argument, saying: "Rather it is a profit; do not regard as damage that which results in reward and generosity.[55]"

It is not an act of damage when the Imam spent all what he had on the poor and the deprived in order to save them from poverty and misery; rather the damage was the enormous properties which the 'Abba'sid kings spent on their desires and their red nights, while they spent nothing on the poor from among the Muslims.

The Imam's Sermon on Allah's Oneness

This sermon is regarded as one of the excellent sermons of the Imams from among the *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on him, and among the marvelous sermons which have been transmitted from them regarding the matters of Allah's Unity. If Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, had had no legacy except this sermon, then it would have been a sufficient proof of his Imamate and his reaching an exalted rank of knowledge and excellence which none has ever reached except the infallible Imams, peace be on him. As this sermon is of great importance, his Eminence, the late Yahya' b. Muhammad 'Ali has explained it and mentioned in the introduction to it: "Surely the famous sermon which has been mentioned regarding Allah's Oneness belongs to His Excellence, Holy Presence, Purified Yard, the eighth of the Imams of the religion, the Imam of mankind, 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', the greeting and praise be on him. That is because it is a deep see containing advantages and perceptions, including the techniques of science and kinds of knowledge which nothing can gather except it, and so on.[56]"

As for composing this sermon is that when al-Ma'mu'n desired to install the Imam as his successor, the Ha'shimites (the 'Abba'sids) envied the Imam and said to al-Ma'mu'n: "Do you want to appoint an ignorant man who has no insight to direct the caliphate? Therefore send for him. He will come to us and you will decide how his ignorance decides you against him." So he sent for him and he came. The Ha'shimites said to him: "O Abu' al-Hasan, ascend the pulpit and display for us a sigh whereby we may worship Allah." So he ascended the pulpit and sat for a long time, his head bowed in silence. Then he trembled a great trembling and stood up straight, praised and lauded Allah, and asked His blessing for His Prophet and his Household. Then he said: "The first element in the worship of Allah is knowledge of Him, the root of knowledge of Him is to profess His Oneness, and the correct way to profess the Oneness of Allah is to negate attributes from Him. For the powers of reason testify that every attribute and everything possessing an attribute is created. Everything possessing an attribute testifies that it has a Creator which is neither attribute nor possesses an attribute. Every attribute and everything possessing an attribute testify to connection (between the attribute and that to which it is attributed). Connection testifies to temporality. And temporality testifies that it accepts not the Beginningless, which accepts not the temporal.

"So it is not Allah whose Essence is known through comparison. It is not His Oneness that is professed by someone who attempts to fathom Him. It is not His reality that is attained by someone who strikes a similitude for Him. It is not He who is confirmed by him who professes an end for Him. It is not He to whom refers he who points to Him. It is not He who is meant by him who compares Him (to something). It is not to Him that he who divides Him into parts humbles himself. And it is not He who is desired by him who conceives of Him in his imagination.

"Everything that can be known in itself is fashioned. All that stands apart from Him is an effect. Allah is inferred from what He fashions, the knowledge of Him is made fast by the powers of reason, and the argument for Him is established by (man's) primordial nature.

"Allah's creating of the creatures is a veil between Him and them. His separation from them is that He is disengaged from their localization. That He is their origin is proof for them that He has no origin, for none that has an origin can originate others. That He has created them possessing means (of accomplishing things) is proof that He has no means, for means are witness to the poverty of those who use them.

"So His names are an expression, His acts are (a way) to make (Him) understand, and His Essence is reality. His inmost center separates Him from creation, and His otherness limits what is other than He. Therefore ignorant of Allah is he who asks for Him to be described! Transgressing against Him is he who seeks to encompass Him. Mistaken is he who imagines to have fathomed Him! Whoso says 'how?' has compared Him (to something). Whoso says 'why?' has professed for Him a cause. Whoso says 'when?' has determined Him in time. Whoso says 'in what?' has enclosed Him. Whoso says 'to what?' has professed for Him a limit. Whoso says 'until what?' has given Him an end. Whoso gives Him an end has associated an end with Him. Whoso associates an end with Him has divided Him. Whoso divides Him

has described Him. Whoso describes Him has deviated from the straight path concerning Him.

“Allah does not change with the changes undergone by creation, just as He does not become limited by delimiting that which is limited. He is One, not according to the explanation offered by number; Outward, not according to the explanation of being immediate (to the senses); Manifest, not through the appearance of a vision (of Him); Inward, not through separation; Apart, not through distance; Near, not through approach; Subtle, not through corporealization; Existent, not after non-existence; Active, not through coercion; Determining, not through the activity of thought; Directing, not through movement; Desiring, not through resolution; Willing, not through directing attention; Grasping, not through touch; Hearing, not through means; and Seeing, not through organs.

“Times accompany Him not, places enclose Him not, slumber sizes Him not, attributes delimit Him not, and instruments are of no use to Him. His being precedes times, His existence non-existence and His beginninglessness beginning.

“By His giving sense to the sense organs it is known that He has no sense organs. By His giving substance to substances it is known that He has no substance. By His causing opposition among things it is known that He has no opposite. By His causing affiliation among affairs it is known that He has no affiliate. He opposed darkness to light, obscurity to clarity, moisture to solidity, and heat to cold. He joins together those things which are hostile to one another and separates those which are near. They prove (the existence of) their Separator by their separation and their Joiner by their junction. That is (the meaning of) these words of Him, the Great and Almighty: *And of everything created We two kinds; haply you will remember*.[57]

“So through them He separated ‘before’ and ‘after’ that it might be known that He has no before and after. They testify with their temperaments that He who gave them temperaments has no temperament. They prove by their disparity that He who made them disparate has no disparity. They announce through their subjection to time that He who subjected them to time is not subject to it Himself.

“He veiled some of them from others so that it might be known that there is no veil between Him and them other than them. His is the meaning of lordship when there was none over whom He was Lord, the reality of godhood when there was nothing for whom He was God, the meaning of Knower when there was nothing to be known, the meaning of Creator when there was nothing created and the import of hearing when there was nothing to be heard. It is not because He created that He deserves the meaning (of the term) ‘Creator’ and not because He brought the creatures into being that the meaning of ‘making’ is derived.

“How (should it not be so)? For *mudh* (*‘ever since’*) conceals Him not, *qad* (‘already’) brings Him not near, *la‘alla* (‘perhaps’) veils Him not, *mata’* (‘when’) limits Him not in time, *hin* (‘at the time of’) contains Him not, and *ma‘a* (‘with’) brings Him not into association. Instruments limit only themselves and means allude only unto their own like. Their activities are found only in things. *Mudh* withholds things from being

eternal, *qad* shields them from beginninglessness, and *law la'* ('if only') wards off perfection. Things become separate and prove (the existence of) their Separator. They become distinguish and prove their Distinguisher. Through them their Maker manifests Himself to the powers of reason. Through (these powers) He becomes veiled to sight, to them imaginations appeal for a decision, in them is substantiated (only) other than Him, from them is suspended the proof and through them He makes known to them the acknowledgment.

"Confirmation of Allah is made fast by the powers of reason, and faith in Him reaches perfection through acknowledgment. There is no religiosity except after knowledge, no knowledge except through sincerity, and no sincerity along with comparison. There is no negation of comparison if there is affirmation of attributes.

"So nothing in creation is found in its Creator. All that is possible in it is impossible in its Maker. Movement and stillness do not affect Him. How should that which He effects (in others) have effect upon Him, or that which He has originated recur for Him? Then His Essence would be disparate, His inmost center divided, His signification prevented from eternity. How would the Creator have a meaning different from the created?

"If something from behind limited Him, then something in front would limit Him. If perfection were seeking Him, imperfection would be upon Him. How should that which does not transcend temporality be worthy of (the Name) 'Beginningless'? How should that which does not transcend being produced produce the things (of the world)? There then would have arisen in Him a sign of having been made and He would become a proof after having been the proven.

"There is no argument in absurd opinions (such as the above), no answer when it (absurdity) is asked about, no glorification of Him in its meaning. Nor is there any ill in distinguishing Him from creation, unless it be that the Eternal accepts not to be made two, nor the Beginningless to have a beginning.

"There is no god but Allah, the All-high, the Tremendous. They have cried lies who ascribe equals to Allah! They have gone astray into far error and suffered a manifest loss! And Allah bless Muhammad, the Prophet, and his Household, the good, the pure.[58]"

This great sermon contains vague philosophical and theological researches; it shows the scientific abilities of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him; it clearly indicates that the 'Abba'sids were mistaken when they though that the Imam was incapable of discussing scientific researches. It is certain that most of those who listened to the sermon of the Imam did not understand these philosophical matters, which the Imam, peace be on him, has presented, and which has dealt with the most important matters of Allah's Oneness.

The Sermon which the Imam has written to al-Ma'mu'n

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, to write him a sermon in order to recite it to the people when he led them in prayer, so he, peace be on him, wrote him the following great sermon:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

"Praise belongs to Allah, Who from nothing was, nor from making a thing He sought help, nor from a thing He created (the creatures), nor from it He formed the things; rather He said to it, "Be," and it is.

"And I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, Who is unique and without partners, far above resisting rivals, vying with opposites, taking consorts and children. I also bear witness that Muhammad is His chosen servant and his distinguished, trusted one. He sent him with the detailed Qur'an, His connected revelation, and His pure Distinguisher (*Furqa'n*), so he gave good news of His reward and warned against His punishment, may Allah bless him and his family.

"I recommend you, O servants of Allah, to fear Allah, Who knows your secret and open (deeds), and knows what you hide, so surely Allah will not leave you wandering without an aim; nor did He create you in vain; nor will He enable you to guidance. Beware! Beware, servants of Allah! For Allah has made you cautious of (retribution from) Himself, so do not subject (yourselves) to regret, calling for wrath, and arriving at the torture of the Hellfire, *surely the torture thereof is a lasting evil, surely it is an evil abode and* (*evil*) *place to stay;* it does not go out; eyes do not sleep; souls neither die nor live; (they are) in chains and shackles, (subjected to) punishments and exemplary punishments, *so oft as their skins are thoroughly burned, We will change them for other skins, that they may taste the chastisement; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise; a fire, the smoke of which shall encompass them about*, so their call shall not be heard, their supplication shall not be responded, and there shall be no mercy upon their weeping. So flee, O servants of Allah, to Allah through these perishing souls, in the successive outcry, in the bygone days, before death befalls you, usurps your souls from you, distresses you in your hearts and be between you and the return. How far! So there will be no way to the return and no arrival to the residence. May Allah protect you and me through what He has protected His righteous friends, guide you and me to what He has guided His good servants.[59]"

This sermon summons men to do good, to refrain from the unlawful, and to renounce the world; it warns them against Allah's punishment and chastisement.

Al-Ma'mu'n asks the Imam for good Poetry

Al-Ma'mu'n asked the Imam, peace be on him, to recite to him the best poetry lines which he had narrated on clemency. So he, peace be on him, said: "These are the best lines which I have narrated:

"'If I am tried by the ignorance of those inferior to me,

“‘then I prevent myself from returning in kind through ignorance.

“‘If those like me are similar to me in intellect,

“‘then I escape due to my clemency, that I may be far

“‘above the like.

“‘If I am inferior to him in excellence and intellect,

“‘then I recognize his right of superiority and

excellence.’”

Al-Ma’mu’n admired these poetry lines and asked: “Who composed them?”

“One of our boys,” replied the Imam.

“Recite to me the best poetry you have narrated regarding silence toward the ignorant,” demanded al-Ma’mu’n.

So he, peace be on him, recited these lines:

“‘The friend may abandon me and turn aside (from me),

“‘so I make him see that there are reasons for his

“‘abandonment.

“‘I see that if I admonish him, I will urge him, so I see

“‘that leaving admonition is an admonition toward him.

“‘If I am tried by an ignorant one showing clemency and

“‘finding impossible things as correct, then I keep silent.

“‘Perhaps silence is an answer to the answer.’”

Al-Ma’mu’n was astonished and asked: “How good this (poetry) is ! Who composed it?”

“One of our youths,” answered the Imam.

Then al-Ma’mu’n said: “Recite to me the best (poetry) you have narrated concerning attracting enemy, that he may be a friend.”

So the Imam recited to him these lines:

“‘I make peace with the possessor of malice, so I

“‘overcome and deafen him because of the favor of

“‘endurance from me.

“‘He who does not repel the evil deeds of his enemy

“‘through his kindness (to him) does not take graciousness

“‘from a lofty place.

“‘I see that nothing destroys old malice

quicker than immediate friendliness.’”

So al-Ma’mu’n said: “How good this (poetry) is! Who composed it?”

“One of our young men,” replied the Imam

“Recite to me the best (poetry) you have narrated regarding keeping things secret,” demanded al-Ma’mu’n.

So the Imam recited to him the following:

“‘Surely I forget secret lest I should announce it. O he

“‘who wants secret to be kept, I forget it lest it should

“‘come to my mind and my heart reveals it to him who

“‘has colic in his bowels.

“‘So he who does not reveal secret and it comes to his

mind is about to be unable to keep it.’”

As a result al-Ma’mu’n admired the marvelous poems which the Imam had memorized.

The Imam’s Letter to his Son al-Jawa’d

Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, sent from Khurasa’n a letter to his son al-Jawa’d mentioning in it:

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

“May my soul be sacrificed for you, I have heard that when you ride, the retainers make you go out of

the small door of the garden; this is a sign of miserliness in them lest anyone should attain good from you. So I ask you though my right against you that you should go out and come in through the big door, and if you ride, Allah willing, let gold and siliver be with you. When someone asks you for something, you give him. When one of your uncles asks you to give him, then do not give him less than fifty dinars; as for more than this amount, that is up to you. When one of your aunts asks you to give her, then do not give her less than fifty dinars; as for more than this amount, that is up to you. And when one of Quraysh asks you (to give him), then do not give him less than twenty-five dinars; as for more than this amount, that is up to you. Surely I want Allah to give you success, so fear Allah. Give and do not fear miserliness from the Possessor of the Throne.[60]"

Have you ever seen such an angelic soul clinging to kindness to men in general? Generosity was one of the qualities of the Imam, so he urged his son to tighten the bonds of kin and to show kindness to the miserable.

This letter gives an account of a kind of exalted education practiced by the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, who brought up their children to cleave to honor and virtue, planted in their own souls high noble moral traits and good qualities, that they might be an example of good and a good model of the community.

The letter of Praise and Condition

This letter has been ascribed to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him; it flows with praising al-Fadl b. SAhl and lauding his great efforts in establishing the kingdom of al-Ma'mu'n, defeating his opponents such as his brother al-Amin, Abu' al-Sara'ya', and others. He spared no effort to suppress those violent revolts. So al-Ma'mu'n rewarded him for that through giving him great wealth and enormous properties; likewise, he gave the like of that to his brother al-Husayn b. SAhl as a prize to them for their loyalty to him. The letter says:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

"Now then, praise belongs to Allah, the Originator, the Exalter, the Powerful, the Dominator, the Watcher over His servants, the Feeder over His creatures, toward whose dominion all things are humble, before whose might all things are lowly, through whose power all things are submissive, before whose force and tremendousness all things are humble, whose knowledge encompasses all things and counts their number, so no great thing makes Him tired, no small thing is distant from Him; beholders' eyes attain Him not; describers' description encompasses Him not; His are creation, command, the loftiest attribute in the heavens and the earth; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

"And praise belongs to Allah, Who has legislated Islam as religion, preferred it, magnified it, honored it, ennobled it, made it the valuable religion other than which is no (religion) accepted, the straight path to which he who clings does not go astray, from which he who turns away is not rightly guided, placed

therein the light and the proof, cure and explanation, sent with it him whom He chose from among His angels to him whom He distinguished from among His messengers in the bygone communities, and the past centuries until His message reached Muhammad, the chosen one, may Allah bless him and his family, so He sealed through Him the prophets, made him follow the tracks of the messengers, sent him as mercy for people, bringer of good news to those believers who believed (in his message) and warner to those unbelievers who denied (it), *that His is the conclusive argument, and that he who would perish might perish by clear proof; and most surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing*.

"And praise belongs to Allah, Who has made his Household inherit the legacies of the prophethood, deposited in them knowledge and wisdom, made them the source of the Imamate and the caliphate, made their authority (over Muslims) obligatory, and ennobled their rank, so He ordered His Messenger to ask his community to show love for them, for He says: *Say I demand not, of you any reward for it* (*the toil of preaching*) *except the love of my relations*.[61] And that through which He has described them such as keeping off from them every kind of uncleanness and His purifying them in these words of Him: *Verily Allah intends to keep off from you every kind of uncleanness and to purify you, people of the House, with a thorough purification*.[62]

"Then surely al-Ma'mu'n has been kind to Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, with respect to his family, and tightened the bonds of his Household. So he has returned friendliness to them, brought them together, reconciled them, put an end to the division among them; and Allah through him has driven away enmities and spites from them. So through his felicity, his protection, his blessing, his devotion, and his gifts their hands have become one, their word is inclusive, and their desires are harmonious. He has kept the rights for their owners, put the legacies in their places, rewarded with the kindness of the good doers, safeguarded those who have been stricken by tribulation, brought near (those far) and sent far (those close) because of the religion. Then he has singled out him whose efforts have given priority to him (over others) with preference, giving precedence (over others), and honoring. Such (a person) is Dhu' al-Riya'satayn al-Fadl b. SAhl, for he (al-Ma'mu'n) has seen that he (al-Fadl) supports him, undertakes his right, speaks of his argument, heads his chiefs, leads his horses, directs his wars, governs his subjects, summons (them) to him, rewards him who responds to obedience to him, opposes him who opposes him, helps him only, cures the malady of hearts and intentions. Neither paucity of wealth nor lack of men prevents him from that; greediness does not make him partial; and no fear turns him aside from his intention and his insight. Rather, when the terrified terrify (him), and when threateners, menacers, many dissenters and opponents from among the *muja'hidin* and the deceivers threaten him, he is the most resolute of them, the most steadfast of them, the most powerful of them in scheming, the best of them in direction, the strongest (of them) in establishing the right of al-Ma'mu'n and in summoning (men) to him, to the extent that he has broken the teeth of the errant, blunted the edge (of their sword), clipped their finer-nails (lit. wings), reaped their thorn (i.e. killed them), struck them down (just as he struck down) those unbelievers who broke his covenant, flagged in his command, made little of his right, felt safe from his influence and his courage; in addition to the (other) works of Dhu' al-Riya'satayn toward all kinds of the communities from among the polytheists; (for example) through him

Allah has increased the boundaries of the country of the Muslims; you have heard of their news, regarding which the letters have been read on your pulpits, which the people have transmitted to you (and) to other than you. As Dhu' al-Riya'satayn strove earnestly for the Commander of the faithful, undertook his right, sacrificed for him his own soul and the soul of his brother Abu' Muhammad al-Hasan b. SAhl, whose nature is blessed and whose policy is praiseworthy, he (the Commander of the faithful) thanked him to the extent that he surpassed the first and triumphed over the successful.

"The Commander of the faithful has rewarded him to the extent that he has attained properties, country estates and jewels, though this reward does not equal one of his days and attitudes. Yet, he (al-Fadl) has left this reward out of renouncing it, disdaining it, securing it for the Muslims, casting away the world, making little of it, preferring the hereafter (to it), and competing (with others) for it (the hereafter).

"And he has asked the Commander of the faithful about abdicating and renouncing (the office of ministry). So he and we have regarded that as great because of our knowledge of what Allah, the Great and Almighty, has put in his place in which he is of might for the religion and authority, strength for setting the Muslims right, waging jiha'd against the polytheists, and what Allah has shown through him of his truthful intention, his blessed soul, his correct direction, his strong view point, his successful request, his helping (him) with the truth and guidance, kindness and reverential fear. So when the Commander of the faithful has become confident of him, we have (also) become confident of him according to the view of the religion and that in which is his righteousness; we have given him his demand, which is equal to his rank; we have written to him a letter of *haba" and shart* (praise and condition), which has been copied at the bottom of this letter of mine; we called to witness to it Allah, those who were present with us from among our household, the (military) commanders, the companions, the judges, the jurists, the personal entourage, and the populace.

"The Commander of the faithful has ordered the letter to be announced in the regions, spread among their inhabitants, read on their pulpits, established with their governors and their judges. So he has asked me to write about that and to explain its meanings, which are in three parts:

"The First Part: Explaining all his (al-Fadl's) works through which Allah has made his right incumbent upon us and the Muslims.

"The Second Part: Explaining his rank in removing his reason concerning all that which he has directed, in which he has entered, and there is no objection against him concerning that which he has left and hated. That is because the creatures should not pledge allegiance to anyone except to him and his brother. Part of removing the reason (for his abdicating the office) is hiding it from all those who have wronged them (al-Fadl and his brother), strive through corruption against us, them, and our friends, lest one should crave after a difference against them or after an act of disobedience to them or after a trickery concerning an entry between us and them.

"The Third Part: Explaining our gifts to him if he has to choose between abdicating and renouncing (the

office), and the proof of accomplishing (that) because of the reward of the hereafter regarding which he has striven through that which (must) be established in the heart of him who has doubt about him regarding that, and that which obligates us such as dignity, might, the *haba"* (praise) which we have given to him and his brother regarding protecting them both from that from which we protect ourselves. And that encompasses all that through which the cautious takes precautions with respect to the affairs of religion and the world."

This statement has terminated; it lauds the great efforts which al-Fadl b. SAhl made for strengthening the government of al-Ma'mu'n and establishing his state. It also praises his honesty, his refusing to accept many prizes and gifts, and his asking for abdicating the office of ministry. Moreover it shows that this request of him was refused. This statement is a preface to the letter of *al-Haba" wa al-Shart* (the Praise and Condition), which says:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is a letter on *al-Haba" wa al-Shart* (the Praise and Condition) from the servant of Allah al-Ma'mu'n, the Commander of the faithful, and his heir apparent 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', to Dhu' al-Riya'satayn al-Fadl b. SAhl; (the letter was written) on Monday, the seventh of the month of Ramada'n, in the year 201 A. H. This is the day on which Allah has completed the state of the Commander of the faithful, appointed his heir apparent, made the people wear green uniform, (made the Commander of the faithful) achieve his hope of setting right his friend and overcoming his enemy. We have summoned you to that in which is some of rewarding you, for you have fulfilled the right of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, the right of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, the right of the Commander of the faithful and of his heir apparent, 'Ali b. Musa', the right of the Ha'shimtes through whom (we) hope to set right the religion and to settle the enmity among the Muslims, until he establishes his favor upon us and upon the populace through that; and through that with which has helped the Commander of the faithful such as establishing the religion and the Sunna, manifesting the second summons (to the religion) and preferring the first (summons to the religion to it), in addition to suppressing the polytheists, breaking the idols and killing the tyrants; in the cities are still standing the rest of his works in respect of the deposed one (i.e. al-Amin) and Qa'bil, regarding the one called al-Asfar (the yellow one) and the one nicknamed Abu' al-Sara'ya', concerning the one called al-Mahdi Muhammad b. Ja'far al-Ta'libin and the Hawli Turks, regarding Tabrista'n and its kings to the Port (*Bandar*) of Hurmuz b. Sharwin, in respect of Daylam and its king Mahors, concerning Cabul and its king Harmos then its king Asfahid, regarding Ibn al-Barm, the mountains of Bida'r Benda, 'Arshista'n, al-Ghour, and the like, in regard with Khurasa'n, and Bloun the leader (*sha'hib*) of the mountain of al-Tibtt, regarding Kayma'n and Tagharghar, concerning Armenia and al-Hija'z, the Leader of the Throne (*sa'hib al-Sarir*), and the Leader of al-Khazar (*sa'hib al-Khazar*), regarding al-Maghrib (Morocco) and the wars wherein; the explanation of that is in the Divan of Biography (*sira*).

"These (works of yours) have summoned us to aid you with one million dirhams, a crop of ten million jewel dirhams, feudal estates had been given to you by the Commander of the faithful before that; in our viewpoint, you deserve more than one hundred million jewel dirhams. You had left the like of that when it

was given to you by the deposed one (i.e. al-Amin). You have preferred Allah and His religion (to that). You have thanked the Commander of the faithful and his heir apparent, secured all of that to the Muslims, and you have generously given it to them.

"You have asked us to respond to your request, for which you have yearned, and which is abdicating and renouncing (the office of the ministry), that you may set right him who has doubt about your striving for the next world apart from this world and your renouncing the world. (We) cannot manage without the like of you and cannot refuse the request of the like of you. If your demand took us out of the bliss (conferred) upon us, then how would we order? Through it you have raised provision and made argument obligatory on him who claims that your summoning (the people) to us is for the world, not for the hereafter. We have responded to what you have asked from us and given it to you, confirmed by Allah's promise and covenant which do not change; nor do they alter; we entrusted the matter to you in that time. If you intend to keep to (your office), then your are dear, the reason is removed from you, any kind of work you hate to practice is driven way from you, and we protect you from that from which we protect ourselves in all circumstances. If you intend to abdicate (the office), then you are honorable, (and only your) body is removed. Then the right of your body (against you) is that you give rest to it and honor it. Then we will give you of that which you take and of that which we have given to you in this letter, but you have left it today.

"And we have given to al-Hasan b. SAhl the like of that which we have given to you, so the half of the gift we have given to him and his household is for you, and for that he sacrificed his own life for waging jihad against the tyrants, conquering Iraq twice, scattering the gatherings of Satan, and entering the fires of war, so the religion has become strong. Through his own soul, his household, those whom ruled from among the friends of the truth, he protected us from the torture of the simoom. We have called to witness Allah, His angels, His good creatures, and all those who had given their pledge of allegiance to us and the applause of their right hand regarding what is in this letter on this day and after it. We have made Allah as surety over us for it, made it incumbent upon us to fulfill the conditions without excluding anything which decreases them secretly or openly. The promise is a religious duty (about which we shall be) questioned; the best of the people in fulfilling (promise) is he who asks the people to fulfill (it). Allah, the Exalted, said: ***And fulfill the covenant of Allah when you have made a covenant, and do not break the oaths after making them fast, and you have indeed made Allah a surety for you; surely Allah knows what you do***.[63]"

This document called *al-Haba'' wa al-Shart* has terminated, and it has been signed by al-Ma'mu'n and Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

Al-Ma'mu'n's Signature

It has been mentioned in it: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. The Commander of the faithful (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) has made it incumbent on himself (to fulfill) all that which is

in this letter, to call Allah to witness and to make Him as a Summoner and Surety for it." He wrote it in his own handwriting in (the month of) Safar, (in the) year 202, (as a sign of) honoring *al-Haba'* (praise) and confirming *al-Shart* (the condition).

Imam al-Ridha"s Signature

It has been mentioned in the signature of the Imam, peace be on him: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' has made it incumbent on himself (to fulfill) all that which is in this letter, to what he has confirmed wherein on his day and tomorrow as long as he is alive and to make Allah, the Exalted, as a Summoner and Surety for it; and enough for a witness is Allah." He wrote it in his own handwriting in this month (of Safar), in this year (202). Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, may Allah bless him and his family, ***Allah is sufficient for us and Most excellent is the Protector***.[64]"

This document has come to an end. It gives an account of the terrible pictures of the political disturbance by which Islamic country was afflicted, for popular revolts spread in it and discords became general wherein. Some sources emphasize that the time of al-Ma'mu'n was the time of discords and disorders, that these revolts were suppressed and uprooted by al-Fadl b. SAhl, who was expert in suppressing revolts, while rivers of blood flowed, sadness and mourning spread in most Islamic countries. Of course, those revolts resulted from the oppression and tyranny which dominated that time at the hands of the 'Abba'sids, who ruled Islamic world with a policy void of just and fairness. Any how, both the parts of the document do not belong to the composition of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him; rather they belong to the organ of government and its helpers; and they have attributed them to Imam al-Ridha', that they might be religious and unbroken; this can be supported by the following:

Firstly, this document grants millions of properties to al-Fadl b. SAhl and enormous wealth as a reward for the services he rendered to al-Ma'mu'n and his suppressing the revolts against him. Of course, these properties belong to the central treasury of all Muslims. Without doubt it is not permissible to misuse even the least property of the Muslims or to give it as a reward or the like to any person; rather it is obligatory to spend it on the interests of the Muslims, improving their standard of living, refreshing them, and spreading welfare among them. So how was it possible for the Imam to make that permissible and to decide giving these properties to al-Fadl?

Secondly, this document contains signs of praise and laudation toward al-Fadl b. SAhl, and, in the meantime, it defames the revolt of Abu' al-Sara'ya' and of Ja'far b. Muhammad, the two Ta'libi ones. Such a praise does not belong to the morals of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, for he did not praise anyone unless he was worthy of praise and laudation; nor did he dispraise anyone unless he was entitled to dispraise and slander; this was his behavior and method in life. So how did he give this praise to al-Ma'mu'n? And how did he laud al-Fadl with this laudation? It is worth mentioning that he harbored hatred and detest against them, for he was aware that they had wicked and spiteful souls. Generally

speaking, al-M'mu'n honored the Imam and appointed him as a heir apparent after him for a political maneuver of which the Imam was fully aware.

Thirdly, this document contradicts what the Imam, peace be on him, made as a condition on al-Ma'mu'n when he agreed to assume the position of heir apparent. In other words he agreed to assume the position of heir apparent on the condition that he would not interfere in any of the affairs of the state and would be far from all political events. So how did he interfere in the affair of al-Fadl and reward him for his loyalty to al-Ma'mu'n?

These are some criticisms which face ascribing this document to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

With his Brother Zayd

Zayd joined the revolt declared by Abu' al-Sara'ya', the summoner to Muhammad b. Ibra'him al-Hasani. He was appointed by Abu' al-Sara'ya' as a governor over the province of al-Ahwa'z, so he went to it in order to undertake the tasks of his job. When he passed through Basrah, which was under the domination of the 'Abba'sid government, he burnt the houses of the 'Abba'sids, so he was given the nickname of *Zayd al-Na'r* (the Zayd of fire). When the revolt of Abu' al-Sara'ya' was suppressed, Zayd disappeared. However, al-Hasan b. SAhl, looked for him, found him, and imprisoned him. He was still in prison until Ibra'him, the Shaykh of the singers, better known as Ibn Shakkla, took the reins of government. Then the inhabitants of Baghdad broke into the prison and released Zayd. As a result he went to Medina (Yathrib), summoned the people there to pledge allegiance to Muhammad b. Ja'far. But al-Ma'mu'n sent an army and the army could suppress the revolt, captured Zayd, and brought him to al-Ma'mu'n, who said to him: "O Zayd, you revolted (against us) in Basrah and refused to start with the houses of our enemies from among the Umayyads, Thaqif, Ghina', Ba'hila, and the family of Ziya'd, and you intended (to burn) the houses of the children of your uncle (i.e. the 'Abba'sids)."

So Zayd said to him with joy: "O Commander of the faithful, I made a mistake in all the situations; if I return to revolt, I will start with our enemies."

Al-Ma'mu'n smiled at him, sent him to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and said to him: "I have entrusted you with his crime, so educate him in a good manner.65"

Zayd was brought before the Imam, and he said to him: "Woe unto you Zayd! You did toward the Muslims in Basrah what you did, while you claim that you are the son of Fa'tima, daughter of Allah' Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. By Allah, Allah' Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, will be the severest of all people toward you! O Zayd, he who takes through Allah's Messenger should give through him."

When al-Ma'mu'n heard of the Imam's statement, he wept and said: "The Household of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, must follow this manner.66"

With His Sister Fa'tima

When Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was in Khurasa'n, he wrote to the pure lady Fa'tima, better known as lady Ma'su'ma; he asked her to come to him, for she was a favorite with him and dear to him. When the letter came to her, she prepared herself and traveled to him.67 When she arrived at Sa'wa, she fell ill. So she asked about the distance between Sa'wa and Qum, and it was said to her: "Ten leagues." So she ordered the people to carry her to Qum, and they carried her to it. She stopped at the house of Musa' b. Khazzrajj while she was holding the reins of her she-camel. He brought her to his house, and she stayed in it for seventeen days. Then she died, and Musa' prepared her for burial. He buried her in his own land and built over her holy grave a shelter of reed mats. (Such was her grave) until a dome was built over it by lady Zaynab, daughter of Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Jawa'd.68 Her Holy Shrine have become one of the dearest places of worship and one of the Holy Shrines in Islam; likewise, that Sacred City has become one of the universities of knowledge and among the cultural centers in Islam.

Al-Hasan b. Muhammad al-Qummi says: "I was (sitting) with Imam al-Sa'diq, peace be on him, and he said: 'Surely Allah has a sacred city, and it is Mecca; His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has a sacred city, and it is Medina; the Commander of the faithful has a sacred city, and it is Ku'fa; we have a sacred city, and it is Qum wherein a woman called Fa'tima from among my children will be buried; whoever visits her, the Garden is obligatory for him.69" Imam al-Sa'diq had announced that before she was born.

The 'Id Prayer

Al-Ma'mu'n asked Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, to say the 'Id prayer before the people and to deliver a sermon after the prayer, that the hearts of the populace might become assured through that and recognize his excellence, but the Imam refused to respond to him and said to him: "You have come to know about the conditions made between us; I do not interfere in this affair; therefore, exempt me from saying the prayer before the people."

"I only intend by that that the people's heart should be assured and that they should know your great merit," replied al-Ma'mu'n.

Al-Ma'mu'n insisted on that, so the Imam was forced to respond to him, but he made it a condition that he should go out just as Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and his grandfather the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, peace be on him, did.

"Go out as you wish," replied al-Ma'mu'n. Then he ordered the military commanders and the rest of the people to receive Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

The people went out waiting for the Imam in the roads and on roof-tops. As for the military commanders,

they were ready and wore the best uniform. When the sun rose, the Imam washed and put on a white turban. One end of it he made hang on his holy breast and the other between his shoulders. He took his staff in his hand and said to his retainers: “Do whatever I do.” Then he went out in that humble state, raised his head towards heaven, and exclaimed four times: “Allah is great (*Allahu’ akbar*)!” Then he stood at the door and exclaimed four times: “Allah is great (*Allahu’ akbar*)!” Then he said: “Allah is great, for He has guided us! Allah is great, for He has given to us of the cattle quadrupeds! Praise belongs to Allah, for He has tried us!”

The earth shook with saying ‘Allah is great!’ The people walked like waves and said at the top of their voices: “Allah is great!” The appearance of the Imam, peace be on him, reminded them of that of his grandfather the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who developed the intellectual life on earth. So they understood the deviation of those kings who ruled them with oppression and tyranny.

The great Imam, the peace of Allah be on him, walked bare-foot, stopped after each ten steps, and said four times: “Allah is great!” The people imagined that the sky, the earth, and the walls were answering him. As for Maru’, it shook with weeping and clamor. Al-Ma’mu’n heard of that and he became frightened and terrified. So al-Fadl b. SAhl hurried to him and said to him: “O Commander of the faithful, if al-Ridha’ reaches the place of prayer for the festival, the people will break out in rebellion. So send instructions to him to go back.”

Accordingly, al-Ma’mu’n sent one of his policemen to the Imam to ask him to go back, so he, peace be on him, called for his boots and put them on. Then he went back without saying the prayer before the people.[70] This action demonstrates the spirituality of the Imam, his renouncing the world, his rejecting the pleasures of the kingdom and authority. Al-Bahri has described the coming out of the Imam, peace be on him, in this way, saying:

When you came out of the ranks, they mentioned the

Prophet, said, “There is no god except Allah,” and exclaimed: “Allah is Great,” till you reached the place of prayer wearing the light of guidance appearing and manifesting on you.

You walked with the walking of one submissive and

humble before Allah, does not show pride nor haughtiness.

If a longing one affected other than what he could do, then

the pulpit would walk toward you.[71]

The narrators have said: “Surely the going out of the Imam in this way was one of the most important factors which motivated al-Ma’mu’n to harbor malice against the Imam and then to assassinate him.”

The Imam's Supplication in Asking for Water

Rain was withheld from the people, so some of those who harbored malice against the Imam, peace be on him, ascribed that to his assuming the position of heir apparent. They began announcing and spreading that among the popular circles in order to defame the personality of the Imam, peace be on him. Al-Ma'mu'n heard of that and became displeased with it. Then he told the Imam about that, asked him to supplicate Allah for sending down rain to the people. The Imam answered him, saying: "Surely, I will do that on Monday."

"Why?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

He, peace be on him, replied: "Surely, Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, came to me yesterday nigh, and there was along with him the Commander of the faithful, 'Ali, peace be on him, and he said to me: 'My son, wait until Monday (comes). Go to the desert and ask for water, for surely Allah shall water them (with rain), and tell them of what will Allah make you see of what they do not know of their state, that they may be increased in knowledge of your excellence and position with your Lord, the Great and Almighty."

So al-Ma'mu'n and the rest of his personal entourage waited until Monday came. Meanwhile he ordered all the popular classes to go to the desert on Monday. When this day came, the people went in a hurry to the desert. The Imam, who was in the appearance of the prophets, went to the desert. When he arrived in the desert, a pulpit had been installed for him. The people surrounded him and said at the top of their voices: "There is no god but Allah! Allah is great!"

The Imam's Supplication

The Imam ascended the pulpit, praised and lauded Allah, and then he said: "O Allah! O Lord! It is You who have magnified our right, the *Ahl al-Bayt!* So they have sought access through us (to You) as You have commanded, hoped for Your bounty and mercy, expected Your kindness and favor. So give them water with a watering which is useful, general, neither slow nor harmful! And let their rain start after their leaving this view of them to their houses and their abodes!"

The Imam added, saying: "So by Him who sent Muhammad with the Truth as prophet, the wind wove clouds in the air, and it thundered and lightened."

When the people heard of the Imam's statement, they intended to go to their houses, lest the rain should befall them. So he, peace be on him, said: "That cloud which has towered over you is not for you; rather it is for another city." And he mentioned to them the name of the city.

Then ten successive clouds towered over the people, and the Imam told them that each cloud would rain in a certain city, and he mentioned the names of the cities. As a result the eleventh cloud towered over

them, so he, peace be on him, said: “O People, that is the cloud which Allah, the Great and Almighty, has sent for you, so thank Allah for His favor toward you; go to your abodes and houses, for it has been sent for you. It has been prevented from raining on your heads until your enter your abodes. Then some good suitable for the munificence of Allah, the Great and Almighty, will come to you.”

Then he descended the pulpit, and the people went in a hurry to their houses. When they arrived at their houses, it began raining heavily. So the valleys, the basins, the streams, and the deserts were filled with water.

The people believed in the miracles of the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, and their remarkable rank with Allah, the Most High, and said: “We congratulate the children of Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, on the miracles of Allah, the Great and Almighty, toward them.”

The Imam’s Sermon

In the wake of the miracle, the Imam, peace be on him, delivered a sermon before a large crowd of people, saying: “O men, fear Allah with respect to the favors of Allah toward you, so repel them not from you through disobeying Him; rather make them continue through obeying Him and thanking Him for His blessings and favors. And know that you do not thank Allah for a thing after faith in Him, and after professing the rights of the friends of Allah from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family more lovable to Him than helping your believing brethren with their world, which is a bridge for them to the Gardens of their Lords. So surely, he who does that is among the special friends of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted; Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, already said concerning that a statement. The believer should not turn away from Allah’s bounty toward him in the statement if he carefully considers it and put it into practice.

“It was said: ‘O Allah’s Messenger, so-and-so has perished, for he has committed sins so-and-so.’ So Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, said: ‘Rather, he has saved himself (from Allah’s punishment), and Allah will not end his work except with a good final result; He will erase his evil deeds and change them into good ones. Surely, one day he passed through a road and found a believer’s pudenda uncovered while the believer was not aware (of that). He covered it on his behalf without telling him (of that) lest he (the believer) should be ashamed. Then that believer recognized him in a valley and said to him: ‘May Allah reward you generously, honor your return, and He may not discuss with you on the Day of Resurrection.’ So Allah has responded to him concerning him; therefore, Allah will not end (the work of) this servant except with a good final result because of the supplication of that believer. This man heard of the statement of Allah’s Messenger, so he repented, turned to Allah in repentance, and practiced the acts of obedience to Allah, the Great and Almighty. Only seven days ago, Median was attacked, so Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, sent a group of people to war against them (the attackers). This man was among them, so he died a martyr.”

The Imam's sermon has ended; it flows with summons to fear of Allah, the Most High, cooperation and friendship among the Muslims. The Imam has regarded that as the best act of obedience and nearness to Allah, the Exalted.

Admonition and Warning

The clubs and the assemblies talked about the Imam's supplication in asking for water and the heavy rain because of his supplication. The 'Abba'sids and their hirelings were so displeased with this miracle which showed the excellence of the 'Alawides and their great rank with Allah, the Exalted, that a wicked one of them admonished al-Ma'mu'n and warned him against entrusting regency to the Imam and against the appearance of this miracle, saying: "O Commander of the faithful, I seek refuge for you with Allah from that you will be the history of the caliphs[72] through your taking this general honor and great pride out of the house of the sons of al-'Abba's (and handing it over) to the house of the sons of 'Ali.

"You have helped (the 'Alawides) against your own soul and your own family. You have brought this magician, the son of the magicians. He was unknown, but you have made him known. He was weak, but you have exalted him. He was forgotten, but you have reminded (men) of him. He was hidden, but you have hinted at him. He has filled the world with sorcery and longing through this rain which came down during his supplication. So I fear that this man (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') will take this authority out of the sons of al-'Abba's (and hand it over) to the sons of 'Ali. I fear that he will through his magic be able to remove your blessing and to dominate your kingdom. Has anyone harmed himself and his kingdom as you have done?"

This statement gives an account of the foolish logic of those people who lived before Islam and claimed that the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was a magician because of the miracles and the signs which happened through his hand. Accordingly, such a kind of people claimed that the grandson of the Prophet was a magician. Now, let us listen to al-Ma'mu'n's answer:

"This man (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') was hidden from us and was summoning (the people) to himself. So we have intended to make him our heir apparent, that he may summon (men) to us, admit that the kingdom and the caliphate belong to us, those who have admired him may believe that he has not been truthful in what he has claimed, and that this authority belongs to us apart from him. We feared that if we had left him in that state, we would have faced unbearable difficulties. Now, if we have done toward him what we did, made a mistake in his affair, and we are about to be destroyed out of honoring (him), then it is not permissible to neglect his affair. But we must disparage him gradually, that we may picture him in the picture of him who is not worthy of this affair. Then we will scheme against him to turn his tribulation away from us.[73]"

Al-Ma'mu'n has uncovered the motives which prompted him to appoint the Imam as a heir apparent after him as follows:

1. The Imam secretly summoned the people to himself, so if al-Ma'mu'n had entrusted regency to him, he would have summoned the people to him, recognized his kingdom and his caliphate.

2. Al-Ma'mu'n intended to show the people that the Imam, peace be on him, did not renounce authority; nor did he seek the next world.

Any how, he finally admitted that he made a mistake when he nominated the Imam for this office and asked him to supplicate in asking for water and the like which displayed his spirituality and his great rank with Allah, the Most High. Accordingly, he decided to seek evil deeds and scheme against him in order to put an end to him.

Al-Ma'mu'n fears the Imam

Al-Ma'mu'n feared the Imam, was terrified by the surrounding of the people around him, and feared for his kingdom from disappearance, for the people came to know that the Imam, peace be on him, was virtuous and spiritual, that he would be able to establish political and social justice in their regions, and that the 'Abba'sids were not entitled to the leadership of the community and the authority over the Muslims.

Important Decisions

Al-Ma'mu'n reflected for a long time on (this affair) and summoned his advisers in order to get rid of the Imam, so he took the following decisions:

Firstly, he held scientific conferences which included the greatest scholars of the world in order to test the Imam and to render him incapable of answering their questions, that he might use that as means to defame the personality of the Imam and disprove the creed of the Shi'ites who maintained that the Imam should be the most learned of the people of his time. Meanwhile, if the Imam had been unable to answer their questions, al-Ma'mu'n would have able to remove him from regency.

But this plan came to nothing, for the Imam answered all the questions of the scholars who afterwards admitted his huge scientific abilities and his excellence over them.

Secondly, he surrounded him by dense forces of security in order to keep an eye on him. This task was entrusted to Hisha'm b. Ibra'him al-Ra'shidi al-Hamada'ni. The narrators say: "Ibra'him was a scholar and an author. He undertook all the affairs of al-Ridha', peace be on him, before he was sent to Khurasa'n. He received all the properties which were sent to the Imam. When the Imam was sent to Khurasa'n, Ibra'him communicated with Dhu' al-Riya'satayn. Dhu' al-Riya'satayn enticed Ibra'him with an office and money. So Ibra'him followed his caprice, abandoned his religion, deviated from the truth, and spied on the Imam. He transmitted all the stories and affairs of the Imam to al-Fadl and al-Ma'mu'n. He was appointed by al-Ma'mu'n as a chamberlain for al-Ridha'. So he thoroughly straitened the Imam,

prevented all the people from reaching him except those whom he loved, and reported all his words to al-Ma'mu'n and his minister al-Fadl.[74]"

Thirdly, he prevented the Shi'ites from attending the assemblies of the Imam and listening to his talks. He entrusted this task to his chamberlain Muhammad b. 'Amru' al-Tu'si, and he prevented them from meeting the Imam. He treated the Imam rudely, and he, peace be on him, became angry with him. So the Imam rose, performed two *rak'as*, and said in his personal prayer (*qunu't*): "O Allah! O Possessor of inclusive power, wide mercy, uninterrupted kindnesses, successive boons, beautiful benefits, and overflow grants! O He who is not described by description; nor is compared to any like! O He who creates (men) and provides (them), inspires (them) and makes (them) speak, originates and legislates, has risen high and become lofty, ordains and does well, shapes and masters, provides arguments and makes them conclusive, grants and bestows lavishly upon (men)! O He who is exalted in might, so He escapes swift eyes! O He who is close in subtlety, so He passes through thoughts! O He who takes care of the kingdom by Himself, so there is no rival in the kingdom of His authority! (O He who) is One in magnificence, so there is no opposite in the invincibility of His station! O He by whose magnificence of awe the intricacies of the subtlest of imaginations are bewildered, before whose tremendousness the swift eyes of mankind fail! O He who knows the thoughts of the hearts of those knowers and sees the glances of beholders' eyes! Faces are humble in awe of Him; necks are lowly before His majesty; hearts are afraid out of fear of Him; limbs shake with fright of Him! O Originator! O Innovator! O Powerful! O Invincible! O All-high! O Exalter! Bless him through whom prayer is honorable when blessing is called down upon him (i.e. the Prophet)! Take vengeance upon him who has wronged me, made little of me, and dismissed the Shi'ites from my own door! Let him taste the bitterness of abasement and disgrace; make him ousted among the dirty and homeless among the unclean![75]"

Allah responded to the Imam's supplications, for the mobs revolted against al-Ma'mu'n and were about to put an end to him, and he faced terror and disgrace which none can describe.

Al-Ma'mu'n dismissed the Shi'ites again and tried to annoy the Imam. When the Imam came to know of that, he washed, performed two *rak'as*, and said in his personal prayer (*qunu't*): "O Allah! You are Allah, the Living, the Self-subsistent, the Creator, the Provider, the One who gives life (to the dead), the One who makes (men) die, the Originator, and the Innovator. To You belongs munificence; to You belongs praise; to You belongs kindness; and to You belongs the command. You are One with no associate with You. O One, O Unique, O Single, O Eternal Refuge! O He who has not begotten; nor has been begotten, and equal to Him is not any one! Bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad!"

Then he supplicated Allah to drive away that which concerned him, and He removed from him al-Ma'mu'n's trickery and oppression.[76]

The Imam does not praise al-Ma'mu'n

The Imam, peace be on him, did not praise al-Ma'mu'n; nor did he flatter him. Rather he adopted toward him an attitude distinguished by earnestness, frankness, and bitter criticism for some of his works. As for al-Ma'mu'n, he burst with anger and hid that in order to follow the Imam, peace be on him. The following are some of the Imam's attitudes toward al-Ma'mu'n:

1. When al-Ma'mu'n presented the caliphate to the Imam and said to him: "I want to rid myself of the caliphate, vest the office in you, and pledge allegiance to you."

Now, reflect on this frankness of the Imam in his response to al-Ma'mu'n. He, peace be on him, said to him: "If this caliphate belongs to you and Allah has made you possess it, then it is no permissible for you to take off the garment in which Allah has clothed you and to give it to other than you. If the caliphate does not belong to you, then it is not permissible for to give me that which does not belong to you.77"

Have you reflected on this profluent logic and undeniable argument which flows with truth and truthfulness? So al-Ma'mu'n lost his mind; he did not know what to say, and then he sought refuge with silence.

2. When the Imam refused to accept the caliphate, al-Ma'mu'n presented regency to him, so he answered him with this decisive answer, saying: "Through that you want the people to say: 'Surely 'Ali b. Musa' (al-Ridha') has not renounced the world; rather it is the world which has renounced him. Do you not see that he has accepted regency and craved for the caliphate?'"

As a result al-Ma'mu'n was indignant with the Imam and shouted at him, saying: "You always face me with what I hate! You have felt safe from my penalty! I swear by Allah, you should accept regency or I will force you to (accept) it! You should do that; otherwise, I will strike off your head!78"

Through all his steps and works, the Imam, peace be on him, preferred Allah's good pleasure (to the worldly pleasures); he did not praise anyone; nor did he flatter any creature. If he had flattered al-Ma'mu'n, sought nearness to him, and satisfied his feelings, al-Ma'mu'n would not have assassinated him.

3. Yet another example of that the Imam, peace be on him, was frank with al-Ma'mu'n and did not praise him is that al-Ma'mu'n said to him: "O Abu' al-Hasan I though a bout a thing and concluded correctness from it. I thought about our ancestry and your ancestry, so I have found that they have the same excellence and that our Shi'ites have differed over that because of caprice and fanaticism."

So the Imam said to him: "There is an answer to this statement. If you like (it), I will mention it to you; if you dislike (it), I will keep silent."

"I did not say it except to know what you have regarding it," retorted Al-Ma'mu'n.

The Imam established an argument that the ‘Alawides were more entitled to the Prophet than the ‘Abba’sids and nearer to him than them, saying: “O Commander of the faithful, I adjure you before Allah! If Allah, the Exalted, resurrected His Prophet Muhammad, and he came out to us from behind one of those hills and asked you for your daughter’s hand, would you marry her to him?”

“Glory belongs to Allah!” replied al-Ma’mu’n, “is there anyone who turns away from Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family?”

“Do you think that it is permissible for him to ask me for my daughter’s hand?” asked al-Ridha’.

Al-Ma’mu’n kept silent and did not find any way to justify his closeness to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. That is because the Imam established an undeniable argument which is that he was among the children of Fa’tima al-Zahra’’, peace be on her. Accordingly, al-Ma’mu’n said: “By Allah, you are closer to Allah’ Messenger (than us).79”

The members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, were entitled to the caliphate not because of their nearness to Allah’s Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, but because of their abilities, their talents, and their knowledge of what the community needed in administrative and economic fields.

The Imam refuses to appoint Governors

Al-Ma’mu’n asked Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, to choose and appoint some governors over some Islamic regions, but he refused to respond to this request, saying: “Surely I have entered in what I entered on the condition that I should not command, nor order, nor dismiss, nor counsel until Allah advances me before you (in death). By Allah, the caliphate is a thing about which I have not told myself. I was in Medina and frequented through its streets riding my own mount. The people of Medina and other than them asked me to accomplish their needs and I did. So they were like uncles to me; my letters are valid in the cities. If you increase me in favor, then my Lord has bestowed it upon me.80”

The Imam vigorously refused to interfere in any of the affairs of the state in order to indicate that the state of al-Ma’mu’n was illegal, and that he was forced when he joined it.

The Imam predicts that he will not enter Baghdad

Al-Ma’mu’n told Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, that he would enter Baghdad and told him about what he would do in it, so he asked him: “Shall we enter Baghdad?”

“You will enter Baghdad,” the Imam, peace be on him, replied.

A Shi‘ite heard this statement and became frightened, for he came to know that the Imam would not enter Baghdad. He was alone with the Imam and said to him: “I have heard a thing which has saddened me.” He mentioned the statement, so the Imam, peace be on him, said to him: “I will not go to Baghdad.

I will not see Baghdad; nor will it see me.81"

This is one of the proofs of his Imamate, for he did not leave Khurasa'n for Baghdad until al-Ma'mu'n assassinated him.

The Imam and al-Fadl Bin SAhl

As for al-Fadl b. SAhl82, he was the most remarkable personality in the state of al-Ma'mu'n. He enjoyed wide-range powers, for he dominated all the organs of the government. So his role in the state of al-Ma'mu'n was like that of the Bara'mika during the days of Ha'ru'n al-Rashid. He was very skillful with political affairs, so concerning him, Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's says:

And if the battles become hot, I will send for them an opinion through which their phalanxes will be defeated.

When the swords become blunt, a resolution is carried out

by the opinion, so it quenches the thirst of their edges.

It (the opinion) will establish for a group (of people) its state and install in another (state) its mourners.83

These poetry lines give an account of the skill of al-Fadl at political affairs; they show that he through his own opinion could put an end to a state and establish another in the place of it, just as he did when he overthrew the state of al-Amin and established the state of al-Ma'mu'n.

Any how, al-Fadl was one of those who negotiated with Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, about regency. He threatened the Imam when he vigorously refused to accept it. We will mention some of the Imam's affairs with him as follows:

A false Suggestion for assassinating al- Ma'mu'n

Al-Fadl b. SAhl and Hisha'm b. Ibra'him tried to deceive Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and to destroy him. They came to him and asked him to ask the people to leave his assembly, that they might secretly negotiate with him. The Imam asked the people to leave his sitting-place, then al-Fadl took out an oath written in release and divorce and that for which there was no religious expiation, saying: "We have come to you to say the truth. We have come to know that the authority belongs to you, and the right is yours, O son of Allah's Messenger. Our consciences bear (witness) to what we say through our tongues. What we possess will not be released; our wives will be divorced; we will make thirty pilgrimages (to Mecca) on foot, on the condition that we should kill al-Ma'mu'n and make the authority pure for you, that the right may return to you."

The Imam was fully aware of their deception and their false statement. If they had been honest in their

statement, they would have carried that out before their negotiations with the Imam, for they had come to know that he refused to accept all those attempts which Islam did not adopt, of which was assassination. Any how, he scolded them, saying: “You are ungrateful for the blessing; if I accept what you have said, then neither you nor I will be safe (from al-Ma’mu’n’s punishment).”

Then they went to al-Ma’mu’n and told him about the statement of the Imam, and he rewarded them well. As for the Imam, he went in a hurry to al-Ma’mu’n and informed him of the matter. Accordingly, al-Ma’mu’n came to know that the Imam did not harbor evil against him.[84] It is more likely that it was al-Ma’mu’n who made this plan in order to know the Imam’s intentions toward him.

His informing against the Imam

The researchers who are aware of Islamic history say that al-Fadl was not a ‘Alawide in thought[85], for he took against Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, terrible steps of which is that he informed al-Ma’mu’n of him, saying: “Surely you have entrusted regency to Abu’ al-Hasan (al-Ridha’) and taken it out of the children of your father. The populace, the scholars, the jurists, and the family of ‘Abba’s are not satisfied with that, and their hearts have turned away from you.[86]” Have you seen how al-Fadl provoked al-Ma’mu’n against the Imam and informed him against him? Surely he made al-Ma’mu’n harbor malice and hatred against the Imam, peace be on him.

His Opposing the Imam

Al-Fadl vigorously opposed the Imam. He opposed the Imam when he suggested a certain idea and summoned al-Ma’mu’n to cancel it. The narrators have mentioned that al-Ma’mu’n visited the Imam and recited to him a letter regarding that some of his (military) forces had conquered some villages in Cabul. So the Imam asked him: “Are you pleased with conquering one of the villages of the polytheists?”

“Isn’t there any pleasure in that?” retorted al-Ma’mu’n.

The Imam turned to him and guided him to the place of the pleasure which he had to follow, saying: “O Commander of the faithful, fear Allah with respect to the community of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, this authority which Allah has entrusted to you and singled you out with it, for surely you have wasted the affairs of the Muslims and vested them in other than you, while he has ruled them with something other than the rule of Allah. You have resided in this country (i.e. Khurasa’n), left the land of immigration and revelation. The Muha’jirin and the Ansa’r have been wronged besides you. The believers have badly been treated. The wronged will someday overexert themselves, but they will be unable (to earn) their expenses, to find someone to complain to him of their conditions, and to reach him.

“So, O Commander of the faithful, fear Allah regarding the affairs of the Muslims, return to the house of the Prophet and the source of the Muha’jirin and the Ansa’r. Do you not know that the ruler of the

Muslims is like the pole in the middle of a tent, whoever wants it takes it?"

These words give an account of the Imam's frankness and sincere advice; in them there is neither praise nor complying with al-Ma'mu'n's feelings and inclinations. Al-Ma'mu'n turned to the Imam and asked him: "O my master, what do you think?"

The Imam advised him to follow the truth whereby was his salvation, saying: "I think that you must leave this country for the place of your fathers and grandfathers, take care of the affairs of the Muslims, and do not entrust them to other than you, for Allah will question you about your followers."

Al-Ma'mu'n responded to the Imam's view and said to him: "Excellent is your saying, O my master! This is the viewpoint."

Then he ordered the armies to prepare themselves to leave (Khurasa'n) for Medina (Yathrib). When al-Fadl heard of that, he became sad, went in a hurry to al-Ma'mu'n, and said to him: "What is this view which you have been ordered to follow?"

Al-Ma'mu'n told him about the Imam's view concerning taking Medina as a capital for his government. As a result al-Fadl spared no effort to disprove this view advising him to follow the opposite of what the Imam had suggested, saying: "O Commander of the faithful, this is not the correct (view); yesterday you killed your brother and removed the caliphate from him; the children of your father, all Iraqis, your household, and the Arabs are your supporters. Then you have done this second event; surely you have entrusted regency to Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha') and taken it out of the children of your father. The populace, the jurists, the scholars, and the family of al-'Abba's are not satisfied with that, and their hearts have turned away from you.

"I think that you must reside in Khurasa'n, that the hearts of the people may relay on this (situation) and forget what was regarding the affair of your brother. In this country there is a group of shaykhs who have praised (your father) al-Rashid and come to know of the affair; therefore, consult them regarding that. If they advise (you to follow) that, then you carry it out."

"Who are they?" asked al-Ma'mu'n.

"Such as 'Ali b. Abu' 'Umra'n, Abu' Yunus, and al-Julu'di," answered al-Fadl.

It is worth mentioning that it was these persons who were indignant at the pledge of allegiance to Abu' al-Hasan (al-Ridha') and were not satisfied with it.

At last al-Ma'mu'n responded to al-Fadl's viewpoint and turned away from the Imam's in respect of taking Medina (Yathrib) as a capital for the kingdom.87

1. We have mentioned his biography in the research on the Companions of the Imam and the Narrators of his Traditions.
2. Ibn 'Asa'kir, Ta'rikh, vol. 5, p. 331.

3. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, pp. 141-142.
4. Al-Agha’ni, vol. 18, p. 29. Mu‘jam al-’Udaba’’, vol. 4, p. 194. In al-Kashi’s Rija’l, p. 314, it has been mentioned: “He (al-Ridha’) gave him six hundred dinars.” In al-Ittha’f it has been mentioned: “He have him one hundred dinars.” The latter narration is unlikely, for the Imam was famous for generosity and munificence.
5. Muqaddamat Diwa’n Di‘bil, p. 52.
6. In al-Naja’shi’s Rija’l, p. 197, and in al-Biha’r, vol. 12, p. 71, it has been mentioned: “The Imam gave Di‘bil a green shirt and a ring whose stone was agate, and he said to him: ‘Keep this shirt, for I wore it and performed one thousand rak‘as during one thousand nights and completed the Qur’an one thousand times.’”
7. Abu’ al-Farajj al-Asfaha’ni, al-Agha’ni, vol. 18, p. 29. Mu‘jam al-’Udaba’’, vol. 4, p. 194.
8. Al-Biha’r, vol. 12, p. 71.
9. Al-Murtada’, Ama’li, vol. 1, p. 484.
10. Ibid.
11. Abu’ al-Farajj al-Asfaha’ni, al-Agha’ni, vol. 18, p. 42.
12. Mu‘jam al-’Udaba’’, vol. 4, p. 194.
13. Abu’ al-Farajj al-Asfaha’ni, al-Agha’ni, vol. 18, p. 42.
14. Fayya’ is a war booty gained without fighting.
15. Nu’r al-Absa’r, p. 147. Al-Ittha’f, vol. 163. Al-Biha’r, vol. 12, p. 71. Muqaddamat Diwa’n Di‘bil, p. 53.
16. Al-Dhari‘a.
17. Mahsar and ‘Arafa’t are two places in Mecca.
18. The states of the reckless were those of the Umayyads and the ‘Abba’sis who made little of all the Islamic customs and values.
19. The Banu’ of al-Zarqa’’ were the children of Marwa’n whom Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, dismissed. As for al-Zarqa’’ she was Marwa’n’s mother and was among those dissolute women who lived before Islam. Al-‘Abala’t was one of Quraysh tribes.
20. Hind was the mother of Mu‘a’wiya, the claimed companion of the Prophet, who created events and offenses in Islam.
21. Sumayya was the mother of Ziya’d, the criminal terrorist.
22. Di‘bil means the Umayyad government who broke the covenant of Allah and made little of all the Islamic values.
23. He means that Umayyad government did not depend on a consultative committee nor on nearness to Allah’s Messenger.
24. He hints at the pledge of allegiance to Abu’ Bakr about which ‘Umar has said: “The pledge of allegiance to Abu’ Bakr was a random error from whose evil Allah has protected the Muslims.”
25. The Shelter (saqifa) which Di‘bil has meant was that of the Banu’ of Sa’‘ida where they had plotted against the caliphate while the Prophet was shrouded had not been buried yet. This meeting resulted in removing Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, from the office of the caliphate, and this matter has brought upon Muslims afflictions and destruction.
26. The testamentary trustee was Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful. He was the testamentary trustee of Allah’s Messenger and the gate of the city of his knowledge. If he had undertaken the caliphate, he would have protected the Muslims from the stumbles.
27. The brother of the last of the messengers is Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, for the Prophet said to him: “O ‘Ali, you are my brother in this world and the next.”
28. Al-Ghadir is the famous place where the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, made the pledge of allegiance to Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful. The homage of al-Ghadir is part of Islam. So he who denies it denies Islam, as some great figures of the time say.
29. The verses which have been revealed regarding Imam ‘Ali are numerous, of which are: Ayat al-Muba’hala, Ayat al-Mawadda, Ayat al-Tathir, Ayat al-Tasaddiq bi al-Kha’tam, and others from among the verses which have praised and lauded the hero of Islam.
30. Al-‘Izza’ and Mena’t were two idols belonged to Quraysh, who served them apart from Allah.
31. He hints at the houses of the Sayyids from among the children of the Prophet who were killed by the swords of the Umayyads, to the extent that their house became void of those stars shone with the light of faith and monotheism.

32. The ‘Alawi Sayyids lived in these places which Di‘bil has mentioned; wherein they spent the night through serving Allah and reciting His Book.

33. The one with calluses (Dhu’ al-Thafana’t) was the nickname of the master of worshippers, Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin, who had calluses like those of a camel in the places of his prostration due to his abundant prostration for Allah.

34. Di‘bil hints at the generosity of the Household of the Prophet and that they gave food to the poor and the deprived during famines.

35. He hints at those anti-Ahl al-Bayt persons who were killed by the sword of ‘Ali, so when they remembered their dead they shed bitter tears.

36. How could the forces who deviated from the Ahl al-Bayt show love for the Prophet and his family?

37. Di‘bil means that the opponents of Islam were gentle to the Prophet through their speech, but their hearts contained enmity against him.

38. Di‘bil hints at the Holy Shrines of the ‘Alawi Sayyids; the first of their Holy Shrines is that of Imam ‘Ali, peace be on him, at Najaf, which is at the outskirts of Ku’fa, and the grave of the martyr Muslim b. ‘Aqil. In Tiba are the graves of al-Baqi‘ Imams, peace be on them. In Fakh are the grave of al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. al-Hasan and the graves of other ‘Alawis.

39. At al-Jawza’n is the grave of the great martyr Yahya’ b. Zayd, who died as a martyr during the days of al-Walid, the Umayyad (caliph). Ba’khamra’ is a place (in Iraq) between Ku’fa and Wa’sit; wherein died as a martyr Ibra’him b. ‘Abd Allah b. al-Hasan during the days of the tyrannical (caliph), (al-Mansu’r) al-Dawa’niqi.

40. As for the grave which is in Baghdad, it is the grave of Gate to needs, Imam al-Ka’zim and of his grandson Imam al-Jawa’d. Many books have mentioned: “When Di‘bil reached this poetry line, Imam al-Ridha’ asked him: ‘Shall I add two lines (to your ode) in this place?’ ‘Yes, O son of Allah’s Messenger,’ replied Di‘bil. So he, peace be on him, has said:

“‘And a grave is at Tu’s. What a misfortune is that which has pressed the bowels through sighs!

“‘To the Mustering (or) until Allah sends al-Qa”im who will remove grief and distress from us.’

“So Di‘bil asked him: ‘Whose grave is at Tu’s?’ ‘It is mine,’ answered the Imam, peace be on him.” This (narration) has been mentioned in al-Mana’qib (vol. 3, p. 450) and others.

41. For they had renounced the world.

42. By Taym, he meant Abu’ Bakr; and by ‘Adi, he meant ‘Umar b. al-Khatta’b. Di‘bil think that they are responsible for the distresses and tragedies which befell the Ahl al-Bayt. It was they who removed Imam ‘Ali, the Commander of the faithful, from the office of the caliphate and brought upon the Prophet’s family various kinds of bitter misfortunes.

43. Di‘bil hints at the previous kings who prevented the ‘Alawi Sayyids from taking their own right and left the Sayyids from among their children hostage to separation.

44. The testamentary trustee was Imam ‘Ali the Commander of the faithful; the testamentary trustee of Allah’s Messenger and gate of the city of his knowledge. As for Di‘bil, he has condemned those who swerved the caliphate from him and entrusted it to other than him.

45. Di‘bil means that he loves and is sincere to him who loves and is sincere to the Household (of the Prophet) even if they are far from him in lineage; he shows enmity toward those who show enmity toward them even if they are his family and his daughters.

46. In a narration: “I am fearful in the world and the days of its effort.” In another narration: “When Di‘bil recited this line, the Imam, peace be on him, raised his hands in supplication and said: ‘May Allah make you secure, O Khaza”i, on the Day of the Greatest Fear!’”

47. In a narration: “When Di‘bil reached this line, Imam al-Ridha’ began turning over his palm of the hand and said: ‘Yes, by Allah, they are contracted.’”

48. In a narration: “After Di‘bil had finished reciting this line, Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, began turning over his palm of the hand and said: ‘Yes, by Allah, they are contracted.’”

49. When Di‘bil had finished this line and the one after it, the Imam said to him: ‘O Khaza”i, the Holy Spirit has spoken through your tongue.’”

50. Di‘bil, Divan.

51. Al-Anwa’r al-Nu‘ma’niya, vol. 3, p. 238.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.
54. Ibid., p. 239.
55. Biha'r al-Anwa'r, vol. 12, p. 29.
56. Sharh Khuttbat al-Imam al-Ridha' fi al-Tawhid, a manuscript available in Imam Amir al-Mu'minin's Library, no. 1728.
57. Qur'an, 51, 49.
58. Al-Tawhid, pp. 34-41.
59. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 215.
60. Ibid., pp. 215-216.
61. Qur'an, 42, 20. Al-'Alla'ma has said: [The consensus (of scientists) in the two authentic books, Ahmed b. Hanbal in his Musnad, al-Tha'labi in his Tafsir have narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Abba'ss, may Allah have mercy on him, who said:] "When Say I demand not, of you any reward for it (the toil of preaching) except the love of my relations was revealed, they asked: 'O Apostle of Allah, who are your relations whose love you have made obligatory on us?' 'They are 'Ali, Fa'tima, and their two sons,' he replied."
62. Ibid., 33, 33. Al-'Alla'ma has said: "The interpreters (of the Qur'an) have unanimously agreed that this verse was revealed regarding 'Ali, Fa'tima, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn, peace be on them. Similarly, the consensus (of scientists) such Ahmed b. Hanbal, and the like, has narrated that it was revealed concerning them."
63. Qur'an, 16, 91.
64. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', p. 2, 154-159.
65. Tanqih al-Maqa'l, vol. 1, p. 471.
66. Mir'a't al-Jina'n, vol. 2, p. 13.
67. Jawharat al-Kala'm, p. 146.
68. Haya't al-Imam Musa' b. Ja'far, vol. 2, p. 439.
69. Tuhfat al-'Alam, p. 36. Al-Biha'r.
70. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 189-190. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, pp. 150-151. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, pp. 371-372. Kashf al-Ghumma.
71. Al-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 372.
72. His statement 'that you will be the history of the caliphs' is an allusion to the greatest event, namely entrusting regency to Imam al-Ridha', and that it will be the point of history for the people. Perhaps he wanted to say that you would be the last caliph.
73. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, pp. 169-170.
74. Ibid., p. 153.
75. Ibid., pp. 172-173.
76. Ha'mish al-Musba'h, p. 293.
77. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 139.
78. Ibid., p. 140.
79. Kanz al-Fawa''id, p. 166.
80. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, pp. 166-167.
81. Ibid., pp., 224-225.
82. Al-Fadl b. SAhl al-Sarkhasi became a Muslim at the hand of al-Ma'mu'n in the year 190 A. H. He was the most knowledgeable of the people in astrology. Al-Ma'mu'n asked the mother of al-Fadl to send him what her son had left behind him. She sent him a sealed box. When he opened the box, he found in a silk piece of clothe in which al-Fadl had written in his handwriting: "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is what al-Fadl b. SAhl has decided against himself. He has decided that he will live for forty years and will be killed between Ma'' and Na'r." He lived for this period, then he was killed by Gha'lib, al-Ma'mu'n's uncle, at Sarkhas. An example of the marvelous poetry which Ibra'him al-Sawli has composed regarding praising him are the following:
Fadl b. SAhl has a hand of which the like fall short.
So its giving is for riches; its power is for the moment of death;
Its inside is for generosity; and its outside is for kissing.

Praising al-Fadl, Abu' Muhammad 'Abd Allah b. Muhammad says:
By your life, though the noblemen in every city are great, they are (nothing) but creatures for al-Fadl.
You see the great men are lowly before al-Fadl when he appears, and al-Fadl is lowly before Allah.
He has become humble when Allah has increased him in exaltedness, and every great person with him is humble.
Al-Fadl lost a son called al-'Abba's and became very impatient for him. So Ibra'him, the son of Imam Musa' b. Ja'far visited him, comforted him, and composed before him:
Your reward after al-'Abba'ss is better than him,
And Allah is better than you for al-'Abba'ss.
"You are right," al-Ma'mu'n said. This has been mentioned in Wafaya't al-A'ya'n, vol. 3, pp. 209-211.
83. Abu' al-Farajj al-Asfaha'ni, al-Agha'ni, vol. 9, pp. 31-32.
84. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 167.
85. Ibid.
86. Sayyid Ja'far Murtada', in his book entitled al-Imam al-Ridha', has mentioned that al-Fadl was not a Shi'ite, while Ibn Khulaka'n, in his book entitled Wafaya't al-A'ya'n (vol. 3, p. 209), and the like have mentioned that he was a Shi'ite.
87. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 160.

Epilog

Shortly after Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, assumed the position of heir apparent, al-Ma'mu'n vigorously turned away from him, hid evil and treachery against him, sought evil deeds against him, schemed against him in the darkness of night and by the brightness of day, imposed intense watch over him, imprisoned him in his house, prevented the scholars and the jurists from communicating with him and taking his sciences, and prevented all the Shi'ites from having the honor of meeting him.

Al-Ma'mu'n burst with anger and rage because of the Imam's remarkable position in the hearts of the Muslims, which firmly established and increased when regency was entrusted to him, for the Muslims saw that he led a simple life, refrained from temptations of life, renounced the world, understood the people's sufferings, showed affection toward the weak, sympathized with the miserable, had abundant knowledge, encompassed what the community needed regarding all its affairs, strongly turned to Allah, the Exalted, in repentance, feared Allah, and other high moral traits before which reason is bewildered, and which he derived from those of his grandfather the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, who developed life, put an end to all kinds of backwardness and deviation (from the truth) in the world of the Arabs and Muslims.

The people saw those 'Alawide moral traits standing in Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so they adored him and believed in his Imamate, while al-Ma'mu'n and the rest of the 'Abba'sid kings were distinguished by qualities contrary to those of the Imam. For no laudable deed or an excellence has been ascribed to them throughout their assuming the caliphate. In other words they followed their desires and pleasures and spent millions of the money of the Muslims on their red nights. Abu' Fira's al-Hamada'ni, an inspired poet, may Allah have mercy on, revolted against oppression and tyranny. In his

wonderful, immortal poem, he has made a comparison between the ‘Alawides’ exalted life and the ‘Abba’sids’ low life, which was full of sins and offenses. He says:

(The Qur’an) is recited in their houses in the evening and

in the early morning, while in your houses are the strings and the tones.

When they recite a verse, your Imam (leader) sings: “Stop by the house which no foot has effaced.”

Does ‘Ali belong to you or to them? Does the Shaykh of the singers belong to you or to them?

There is no winepress in their houses; nor is there in their houses a shelter for evil;

Nor is there a hermaphrodite who spends the night to drink with them; nor have they an ape which has servants.

Their houses are *al-Rukn* (the corner of the Ka‘ba) , the (Sacred) House, the curtains, *Zamzam*, *al-Safa*’, (the Black) Stone, and *al-Harm* (the Sanctuary).

Surely the life of the ‘Alawides is as bright as the sun due to the light of faith, whereas the life of their ‘Abba’sid opponents is as dark as night; there is no glow of faith and of Islamic guidance in it. Any how, al-Ma’mu’n spared no effort to show Islamic society that Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, did not renounce the world when he assumed regency, but all his attempts came to nothing, for Islamic world came to know that the Imam was the most brilliant personality in Allah-fearingness, piety, clinging to obedience to Allah and to acts of worship, and refraining from all political fields.

Anyhow, in this epilog, we want to mention the last affairs of the life of the Imam, peace be on him, and that is as follows:

The Imam gives Sincere Advice to al-Ma’mu’n

The Imam, peace be on him, gave sincere advice to al-Ma’mu’n. The advice was void of all political hardships. He advised him to exempt him from regency and to exempt al-Fadl from the ministry, and through that he would save himself from the scheme and oppression of the ‘Abba’sids against him.[1] However al-Ma’mu’n did not exempt them both; he assassinated them, as we will display.

Al-Ma’mu’n decides to rerun to Baghdad

For a long time Al-Ma’mu’n reflected on returning to Baghdad, the capital of his fore-fathers and embellishment of the east, but two factors prevented him from achieving this valuable wish:

The first: The existence of Imam ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him, his heir apparent, against whom the ‘Abba’sid family vigorously harbored malice. This family had already broken the pledge of

allegiance to him, and pledged allegiance to Ibn Shakkla, the Shaykh of the singers, as a sign of taking vengeance upon him because of his entrusting the Imam with regency.

The second: The existence of his minister, al-Fadl b. SAhl, on the area of politics. The 'Abba'sids were indignant with al-Fadl, for they thought that it was he who urged al-Ma'mu'n to entrust regency to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

Accordingly, al-Ma'mu'n had to get rid of both the Imam and al-Fadl through assassinating them, that he might be free from worry, please the 'Abba'sids, and rid himself of their wrath and vengeance; this is what we will demonstrate.

The Public Bath-house of Sarkhas

Al-Ma'mu'n thought that he had to get rid of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and al-Fadl b. Sahl at the same time, that the 'Abba'sid family might be loyal to him. So he ordered a criminal band of his hirelings to assassinate Imam al-Ridha' and al-Fadl in the public bath-house of Sarkhas. He had asked both the Imam and al-Fadl to enter the bath-house together. He also decided to go with them, that he might cover the matter and that none might come to know of it. The Imam was fully aware of this trickery, so he refused to respond to al-Ma'mu'n. Al-Ma'mu'n sent another letter and the Imam wrote him: "I will not go into the baths tomorrow. Last night, I had a vision of the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family. He told me: ''Ali, do not go into the baths tomorrow.' Therefore, Commander of the faithful, I do not think that it would be wise for you and al-Fadl to go into the baths tomorrow."

Al-Ma'mu'n wrote back to him: "You are right, my master, and the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, is right. I will not go into the baths tomorrow. However, al-Fadl will make up his own mind."

The deception of al-Ma'mu'n regarding al-Fadl has become clear. He let him make up his own mind, and he was killed by his band of hirelings.

Al-Fadl is struck down

Al-Fadl went in a hurry to the baths. When he went into it, he was struck down by the swords of that criminal band. Shortly after that he became a motionless body. In this manner al-Ma'mu'n was able to achieve part of his task.

When al-Fadl was killed, his companions went in a hurry to al-Ma'mu'n in order to take vengeance upon him, for they had come to know that it was he who ordered him to be killed. The guards of al-Ma'mu'n's palace hurried to close the gates lest the revolutionaries should attack al-Ma'mu'n. However, the revolutionists carried torches of fire that they might burn the gates of the palace. When al-Ma'mu'n came to know of that, he became frightened, so he sought refuge in the Imam and asked him to protect him.

The Imam, peace be on him, went out to the revolutionaries. He ordered them to depart, and they responded to him, so al-Ma'mu'n was saved by the Imam's blessing.[2] As for those who murdered al-Fadl, they were five persons from among the personal entourage of al-M'mu'n. Among them was Gha'lib, al-Ma'mu'n's uncle. The police captured them and brought them before al-Ma'mu'n, and they (the murderers) said to him: "You had ordered us to kill him." So he said to them: "I will kill you because of your confession. As for that which you have claimed that I had ordered you to kill him is a groundless claim." Then he ordered their heads to be struck off, ordered them to be sent to al-Hasan b. SAhl, and showed false sadness for him (al-Fadl).[3]

The Imam is assassinated

Al-Ma'mu'n assassinated Imam al-Ridha', the Imam of the Muslims and grandson of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family. He put poison into grapes or pomegranates, as we will mention. In this manner al-Ma'mu'n put an end to the most brilliant personality in Islamic world, namely Imam al-Ridha', who was the source of awareness and thought in the world of Islam.

Irregular Statements

Some historians have mentioned that al-Ma'mu'n was far above committing this abominable crime, and that he did not assassinate the Imam, peace be on him. The following are some of their statements:

1. His Natural Death

Ibn Khaldu'n has mentioned that the Imam, peace be on him, died a natural death suddenly after eating some grapes.[4] Others than him have mentioned the same statement.[5]

2. The 'Abba'sids assassinate the Imam

Ibn al-Jawzi has said: "When the 'Abba'sids saw that the caliphate came out of their hands (and was handed over) to the sons of 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, they poisoned 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', and he died in a village called Sana'ba'd, in Tu's. A group of people has claimed that al-Ma'mu'n gave him poison to drink. And it is not as it has been mentioned, for al-Ma'mu'n showed sadness for him, to the extent that none like him showed sadness over him, and he wrote to the (people of) the regions in order to condole them.[6]"

3. His Death of Poison

Some historians have mentioned that the Imam, peace be on him, died of poison[7], and they have mentioned nothing other than that.

These are some of the statements which have been mentioned; they are irregular and have no share of

reality, for it is certain that it was al-Ma'mu'n who assassinated the Imam, and not the 'Abba'sid family, and that he did not die a natural death. Al-Ma'mu'n committed this crime in order to get rid of the Imam, for his reputation spread all over Islamic world, the proofs of his Imamate were clear, the Muslims loved him, had high moral traits and exalted manners, clung to Allah, renounced the world, and other qualities, whereas al-Ma'mu'n and the rest of the 'Abba'sid kings were void of any noble inclination and exalted quality.

Any how, most historians have unanimously agreed that it was al-Ma'mu'n who poisoned the Imam, for he had killed in this manner a group of the great figures of his time out of fear of them.[8]

To the Shelter Garden

The Imam was intensely tried during assuming the position of heir apparent, for al-Ma'mu'n vigorously straitened him, imposed intense watch over him, and encompassed him with huge security forces. The Imam was tired of life, so he supplicate Allah to move him form this world to the Abode of Everlastingness, saying: "O Allah, if my relief of that in which I am is through death, then hasten the hour for me (i.e. take me unto Yourself)."

Allah responded to the supplication of His great friend. He moved him from the world, which was surrounded by adversities and sufferings, to the Abode of the Truth. Now, we will show how he died. The Imam, peace be on him, summoned Harthema b. A'yun in the darkness of the night. When Herthama came, the Imam said to him:

"O Herthama, this is the time of my departure to Allah, the Exalted, and of my joining my grandfather and my fore-fathers, peace be on them; the fixed term has come; this tyrannical one (i.e. al-Ma'mu'n) has decided to kill me with squeezed grapes and pomegranates. He will have needles prodded into the grapes at the place of their storks; he will put some poison on the hand of one of his retainers and order him to knead pomegranates with it, that they may be stained with poison. He will summon me on the next day, bring the grapes and pomegranates near to me, and ask me to eat them. I will eat them, so the decision is valid and the decree is present.

"When I die, he (al-Ma'mu'n) will say: 'I will wash him with my hand.' When he says that, be alone with him and say to him on my behalf: 'He (al-Ridha') said to you: 'Do not wash, shroud, and bury me. For if you do that, He (Allah) will hasten for you the punishment which He has delayed from you, and the painful thing of which you are cautious will befall you.' So surely he will refrain (from doing that)."

The Imam added, saying: "When he (al-Ma'mu'n) let you wash me, he will sit on one of his lofty houses in order to tower over the place where I will be washed. So, O Herthama, do not wash me until you see that a white tent is installed beside the house. When you see that, then carry me (while I am wearing) my garments in which I am, place me from behind the tent, and stop behind it; someone other than you will be with you; do not remove the tent from me lest you should see me and be destroyed.

“He (al-Ma’mu’n) will tower over you and say to you: ‘O Herthama, do you not claim that none washes the Imam except an Imam like him? So who will wash Abu’ al-Hasan ‘Ali b. Musa’ (al-Ridha’) while his son Muhammad is in Medina, in the country of al-Hija’z, and we are at Tu’s?

“If he says that, say to him: ‘We say: Surely none must wash the Imam except an Imam like him. If an aggressor transgresses and washes the Imam, the Imamate of the Imam will not be invalid because of the transgression of the one who washes him, nor will the Imamate of the Imam after him be invalid because he is prevented from washing his father. If Abu’ al-Hasan ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’, peace be on him, had been allowed (to live) in Medina, his son Muhammad would have washed him apparent and uncovered. None will now wash him except a hidden one.’ When the tent is raised, you will see that I have been wrapped in my shrouds. Then put me into my coffin and carry me. When he (al-Ma’mu’n) wants to dig my grave, he will make the grave of his father Ha’ru’n al-Rashid as *qibla* for my grave, and that will never occur. When they strike the ground with the picks, they will dig nothing of it even the clipping of a finger-nail. When they do their best and it was difficult for them to do that, then say to them: ‘He (al-Ridha’) has ordered me to strike one pick in the *qibla* of the grave of his (al-Ma’mu’n’s) father, Ha’ru’n al-Rashid.’ When you strike (with the pick), you will make it reach a dug grave and a standing shrine. When the grave is open, then do not lay me in it until the white water gushes out of the shrine wherein and it becomes full of water. When the water sinks, then lay me in that grave and bury me in that shrine.[9]”

The Imam ordered Herthama to memorize his words, and he responded to what the Imam wanted. On the following day, al-Ma’mu’n sent for the Imam. When the Imam came, al-Ma’mu’n rose for him, embraced him, kissed him on the forehead, seated him beside him, conversed with him, ordered one of his retainers to bring him grapes and pomegranates.

Herthama said: “I became impatient and shook (with fear).”

Al-Ma’mu’n gave a bunch of grapes to the Imam and said to him: “O son of Allah’s Messenger, I have never seen grapes better than these.”

“Perhaps, there are grapes better than them in the Garden,” retorted the Imam.

Al-Ma’mu’n asked the Imam to have some grapes , and he refrained from having them, so al-Ma’mu’n shouted at him: “Perhaps, you are accusing as of something.”

The Imam ate three grapes, then he threw them away and rose, so al-Ma’mu’n asked him: “Where are you going?”

“To my house,” replied the Imam.[10]

The Imam went in a hurry to his house. The poison acted on all parts of his body, and he was sure of the coming down of the fatal misfortune. Al-Ma’mu’n sent for him and asked him for sincere advice, and he,

peace be on him, said to his messenger: “Say to him (al-Ma’mu’n): He (al-Ridha’) advises you not to give anyone anything for which you must repent.[11]”

The poison circulated through all parts of the Imam’s body, and he suffered from severe aches. He came to know that he was about to meet his Lord. So he recited some verses of the Holy Qur’an, asked Allah’s forgiveness, and supplicated for the believers, male and female. The narrators have said: “When he was in a critical condition, his household and his companions refrained from having food and drink.”

So he, peace be on him, turned to Ya’sir and asked him: “Have the people eaten anything?”

He answered him with a faint voice with sad tones, saying: “Who can eat while you are in a critical condition?”

He, peace be on him, rose, and then he said: “Bring me the food; he seated all his servants around the food; and reviewed them one by one. When they had finished eating, he ordered them to carry him to his womenfolk. When they had finished eating, he fainted.[12]”

In the darkness of the night, the Imam recited some verses of the Holy Qur’an, and the last verse which he recited was these words of Him, the Exalted: *Say:* ***Had we remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would certainly have gone forth to the places where they would be slain.***[13] ***And the command of Allah is a decree that is made absolute.***[14]

Then his pure soul set out for its Creator[15]; it was surrounded by the angels of the Merciful (Allah) and was received in the Gardens of Everlastingness by the souls of the prophets and the testamentary trustees.

The world became dark because of losing him and the hereafter became bright on account of his arrival. His death caused a misfortune to the scholars, the jurists, and the thinkers who took from his sciences; likewise, his death caused a misfortune to the populace, for they lost the one who took care of their interests and strove for their affairs.

The Imam moved to the Domain of Holiness after he had delivered the message of his Lord, for he did not take part in any positive work for the government of al-Ma’mu’n, and refused all kinds of cooperation with it, so he was able to prove that it was illegal, and that it was not standing on the law of Allah, the Most High; therefore, he subjected himself to all kinds of persecution, to the extent that al-Ma’mu’n put an end to him.

Al-Ma’mu’n’s pretense

Al-Ma’mu’n showed false sadness and impatience for the death of the Imam. He went out bare-footed and headed. He struck his head, seized his beard, wept, and said at the top of his voice: “By Allah! I do not know which of the two calamities is greater: losing you and parting from you, or people’s accusation

that I assassinated and killed you.[16]"

Al-Ma'mu'n displayed sorrow for the death of the Imam, peace be on him, in order to rid himself of the accusation of assassinating him, but, shortly after that, the people came to know of his pretense and became fully aware of that it was he who assassinated him.

Concealing the Death of the Imam

Al-Ma'mu'n hid the death of the Imam, peace be on him, for a day and a night.[17] I (i.e. the author) think that he prepared himself for emergencies and was afraid of a popular revolt against him. Accordingly, he ordered his security forces and his military forces to prepare themselves for every emergency.

The Body of the Imam is escorted

The people escorted the body of the Imam in a manner of which Khurasa'n had never witnessed throughout its history. For all official departments and commercial shops were closed, and all classes of people went in a hurry to escort the Imam's holy body; they were either weeping or silent. Black flags were hoisted; tears flowed abundantly; and crying became aloud everywhere for the late Imam, who was like a shelter to them. Al-Ma'mu'n was in front of the coffin while he was bare-footed and headed, and behind him were the high ranking statesmen and the military commanders who mentioned the outstanding merits of the Imam and the heavy loss which befell the community out of his death.

At his Final Resting Place

The holy body was brought to its final resting place under a halo of exclaiming, 'Allah is great!' and magnification. His grave was dug beside the grave of Ha'ru'n, who killed the Imam's father. Then al-Ma'mu'n buried the Imam in the grave and buried along with him all excellent qualities and noble inclinations through which people become sublime.

Then the people came and condoled with al-Ma'mu'n, the rest of the 'Alawides and the 'Abba'sids on their painful misfortune. Sadness and sorrow melted all hearts of the people, for they lost the Imam of the Muslims, the master of the Allah-fearing and those who turned to Allah in repentance. It is worth mentioning that al-Ma'mu'n asked the people about the reason for burying the Imam beside the grave of his father, and they answered him: "Because Allah will forgive Ha'ru'n on account of his neighboring Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him." However, the inspired poet, Di'bil al-Khaza"i, has disproved this justification, saying:

If you have a need in religion, then stop at Tu's by the grave of the pure one wherein.

The nearness to the pure one does not benefit the unclean

one; nor does the nearness to the unclean one harm the

pure one.

How far! Everyone is hostage to that which his own hands

earn, so take or leave whatever you desire.

Two graves are at Tu's: (The grave) of the best of all

people and the grave of the wickedest of them; this is

among moral lessons.

Al-Ma'mu'n stays at the Grave of the Imam

Al-Ma'mu'n resided by the holy grave of the Imam for three days. He fasted by day, recited the Holy Qur'an, and asked Allah to have mercy on the Imam, peace be on him. That is because he wanted to show that he did not assassinate the Imam, that he was loyal to him and loved him. However the garment of pretense is transparent, for all the people came to know that al-Ma'mu'n showed false sadness for the Imam.

Al-Ma'mu'n and Herthama

Al-Ma'mu'n summoned Herthama and asked him to tell him about what he had heard of the Imam and what he had said to him regarding his being poisoned by the grapes and the pomegranates. Herthama began telling al-Ma'mu'n about that, and his face sometimes turned yellow and sometimes turned red, and he said with tones dripping regret and sorrow for what he had committed with regard to the Imam, saying:

"Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from Allah! Woe upon him from Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family! Woe upon him from 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib! Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from Fa'tima al-Zahra"! Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from al-Hasan and al-Husayn! Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from 'Ali b. al-Husayn! Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from Muhammad b. 'Ali! Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from Ja'far b. Muhammad! Woe upon him from Musa' b. Ja'far! Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n from 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha'! This is, by Allah, the clear loss!"

Al-Ma'mu'n ordered Herthama to conceal what the Imam had said to him, and not to announce it, and then he recited these words of Him, the Exalted: ***They hide themselves from men and do not hide themselves from Allah, and He is with them when they mediate by night words which please Him not, and Allah encompasses what they do***.[18]

Woe upon al-Ma'mu'n because of the great sin which he committed! For he assassinated the master of the Muslims, the Imam of the Allah-fearing, and the piece of the liver of Allah's Messenger, may Allah

bless him and his family.

The Age of the Imam

The historians have differed over the age of the Imam, peace be on him, which was full of laudable deeds and excellences. The following are some of their statements regarding it:

1. 47 years.[19]

2. 48 years.[20]

3. 49 years.[21]

4. 50 years.[22]

5. 51 years.[23]

6. 55 years.[24]

7. 57 years and 49 days or 79 days.[25]

This difference has resulted from the difference in the date of his birth. Al-Sayyid al-Amin thinks that this difference has resulted from regarding incomplete year as complete one.[26]

Poets lament for the Imam

The news of the death of the Imam astonished the Muslims, for they received the painful news with sorrow and deep sadness, and for they lost through his death what they hoped for and dreamed of such as returning the Islamic caliphate to its original source, getting rid of the wicked persons, the Imams (leaders) of oppression and tyranny, establishing in their quarters political and social justice. The death of the Imam disappointed the Muslims, made their tears flow abundantly, and melted their hearts. So a group of poets lamented for the Imam through its melted souls. The following are some of it:

1. Ashja‘ Bin ‘Amru’ al-Salami

Ashja‘ b. ‘Amru’ al-Salami lamented for the Imam through a poem called ‘Asma’’, which gives an account of his deep sadness for losing the Imam of the Muslims and displays the heavy loss which befell Islamic world. The poem says:

O possessor of the camels, (O he who is seizing) their reins, urging them forward, and singing! Make (him) hear; listen, O possessor of the camels! Tomorrow recite (my) greetings to the grave at Tu’s; recite neither greetings nor blessings to Tu’s.

For therein a terror has befallen the hearts of the Muslims, and therein the terror of Iblis has

disappeared.

And (for) it has abducted the unique one and master of the world, so what a man is he whom (the world) has abducted!

If death appeared when it circulated through (his body), it would face before it the faces of bold men.

May Tu's be miserable! For his houses were not among that through which the days terrify him with misery.

He is resident where no residence is vague. What long remoteness and residence these are!

Surly the claws of death could reach him while before him was an army with many phalanxes.

Death came to him in the place of his brave sons, and death meets the father of cubs (i.e. the lion) in his place.

He was still taking from the light of his father, who belonged to the family of the Prophet, light which was not taken (from others); in a nursery where their branches rose in high (trees) planted in the plains of the kingdom.

And the branch ascends on nothing except on firm bases and foundations in the world.

No days is worthier of tearing at clothes nor striking at cheeks nor cutting off nose than the day of Tu's through whose terror the mourners called out to us (as did) the mouths of the sheets (of paper).[27]

Indeed the time destroyed him; death seeks none except those precious.

During these two minutes and two days, he is lying down in a grave; he is similar to a (person) who was buried two days ago.

During sunrise death came to him; the day of death was not withheld from him.

O he who has dwelled in a grave (in a place) other than his house! O victim of the day and not being killed!

You have been blessed by Him whom you served during midday heat in those deserts.

Were it not for that the world contradicted its own beauties, men of measures would not measure it.

Allah has made you dwell in an everlasting abode; in an abode with which Allah's Messenger is familiar.[28]

Have you seen this painful grief which befell Islamic world out of losing the unique one and master of the world, the great Imam?

In his wonderful poem, Ashja‘ has pictured the heavy loss which befell the Muslims, and which is worthy of tearing garments and striking cheeks, for the time concealed the leader, master and Imam of the community.

This poem spread and the people memorized it. Ashja‘ was afraid of this spread, so he changed the words of the poem and composed them regarding Ha’ru’n al-Rashid.[29]

2. Di‘bil al-Khaza”i

Di‘bil al-Khaza”i the poet of *Ahl al-Bayt*, peace be on him wept bitter tears for Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and lamented for him, to the extent that his soul melted with sorrow and sadness. This is one of the poems which he has composed regarding lamenting for him:

He (al-Ridha’) is my own soul and, in addition, I hide in my heart love for the family of Muhammad.

The legacy of the Prophet has harmed them, so death has taken part in it.

(Men like) wolves from among the Umayyads have summoned them; successive crisis and years have lent on them.

The ‘Abba’sids have caused mischief to the religion with a mischief; a wrongdoer and suspicious one have dominated it (the religion).

They have called (this) Rashid (wise) not because of his wisdom among them; and (they have called) that Ma’mu’n and that Amin.

So no care has been accepted from them through wisdom (*rushd*); nor has religion been accepted from a ruler (from among them) through the Imamate.

Their Rashid (wise) is errant, and his two sons after him (are errant too); misfortunes belong to this; apart from that is dissoluteness.

O grave whose place is strange at Tu’s, the columns weep bitter tears for you.

I doubt, so I do not know whether you were given a drink (of poison), so I will weep for you, or the suspicion of death, so it is easy (for me).

Which of them have you said? If you say that it is a drink (of poison) or (natural) death, then it is worthy (of weeping).

Are you amazed at the rude when they hide the principal features of religion while they are very clear?

Certainly, you have preceded them through your excellence. I have a verse (regarding that), but there was no certainty.[30]

Another example of what he has composed concerning lamenting for the Imam is these poetry lines:

Why has my eye shed tears? If it looses the water of the veins, then it will be delighted with him for whom the earth weeps, and for whom the heads of the high mountains have been brought back and they have become lowly.

The sky has mourned over missing him; the stars have wailed for him and become tired.

Allah is pleased with our late one, the grandson of our Prophet. The world had opposed (him) and turned away from him.

So today we are worthier of weeping over him because of a misfortune we regard as difficult and great.

The world after the family of Muhammad is not good; we must not pay attention to it when it vanishes.

The misfortunes of the time have become manifest, but I do not see that our misfortune regarding the chosen ones has become clear.31

Another example of what he has composed concerning lamenting for the Imam is these poetry lines:

O regret which frequents and tear which does not come to an end,

(I weep) over ‘Ali b. Musa’ b. Ja‘far b. Muhammad, who passed away strange at Tu’s (and was) like the unsheathed sword.

O Tu’s, you are blessed! Certainly, you have become the grave of the son of Ahmed.

Shed tears, O my eyes! And flame, O my heart!32

Another example of what he has composed concerning lamenting for the Imam is these poetry lines:

(‘Ali) b. Musa’ and exaltedness have departed; noble knowledge and religion have followed him just as the intimate, bosom friend does.

O delegation of generosity, old and young, come back with light bags!

We hoped that the Imam of guidance, who had wise opinions, would subsist.

You see his conditions and say: (They are) excellent and under his calmness is exalted excellence.

He has generous ones (who carry) his gifts and go early in the morning every day, and (he has generous ones who) roam by night.

So the decreed death has given as a gift to his soul a remote shrine.

Say to those who gloat over him: Slowly, death will let none walk; you have become delighted with the

death of the young man over whom Allah's Messenger and the True Religion weep.[33]

Yet another example of what he has composed concerning lamenting for the Imam is these poetry lines:

O calamity who has come from the east! You have not left nor retained (anything) of me.

The death of 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' is of Allah's wrath upon the creation.

Islam has wept over a gap which cannot be closed easily.

Heavy rain has watered the strange one whose grave has been built at Tu's.

My eye has prevented (me) from sleeping, and my bowels have become fond of disorder.[34]

This elegiac poetry gives an account of Di'bil's deep sadness for the death of the Imam of the Muslims, master of the Allah-fearing, Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, whose death has left a cut in Islam.

3. Ibn al-Mushayya' al-Medeni

Among those who were burnt by the fire of sadness for missing the Imam, peace be on him, is Ibn al-Mushayya' al-Medeni, who has composed on lamenting for the Imam:

O spot wherein is my master; there is no master like him among the people.

Guidance and generosity died after him, so death has gotten ready to deaden (all good manners).

O his grave, the rain of Allah still frequents you from Him.

He was for us (like) rain with which we quench (our thirst), and he was like the star through which we find the right way.

Surely 'Ali Bin Musa' al-Ridha' and righteousness have rested in one grave.

So O my eye, weep blood over the extinction of glory and righteousness after him!

4. Al-Khawa'fi

Among the poets who lamented for the Imam, peace be on him, is 'Ali b. 'Abd Allah al-Khawa'fi, who says:

May Allah water you with mercy, O land of Tu's!

What has you contained of the blessings, O Tu's!

Your spots have become good in the world, and they have been made good by a person buried at Sana'ba'd.

A person, whose demise is difficult for Islam, is immersed in and plunged into the mercy of Allah.

O his grave, you are a grave embraced by clemency, knowledge, purity, and sacredness.

You pride yourself (upon him), for surely you are delighted with his corpse, and you are guarded by the pious angels.

5. Al-Dabi

This is one of the good poems which have been composed concerning lamenting for the Imam. Shaykh al-Sadu'q said: "I have found the poem in a book which belongs to Muhammad b. Habib al-Dabi." It is more likely that it belongs to him, for he has mentioned that in the last lines of the poem:

In the grave at Tu's has resided an Imam to whom visitation is obligatory and general.

The grave in which the Peace has resided, to which greetings and *salam* are given as a gift.

The grave whose flashing lights remove blindness and through whose earth maladies are repelled.

The grave which represents to eyes that Muhammad, his testamentary trustee, and al-Ma'mu'n are standing.

Eyes are lowly before this and that (i.e. Muhammad and his testamentary trustee) out of dignity; understandings are bewildered by their essences.

When visitors stop at the quarter of the grave and depart, their sins are forgiven, they supply themselves with security against punishment, and they are safe from that execution will not befall them.

Allah gives security to them (visitors) through it, and because of it the pens have become dried to them.

Had it not for it, no cloud would water the country, though it is in no need of the watering of rain.

'Ali b. Musa' has resided in the grave of whose earth boast the sanctuary and the area outside sanctuary (*al-hill*).

The running (*al-sa'i*) to it has been made obligatory just as the (Sacred) House, which has, apart from it, the right of magnification.

If one visits it recognizing its right, then it is forbidden for the Hellfire to touch his body, his rank, without doubt, is praiseworthy tomorrow, he will have a place in the Gardens of Everlastingness, and he has, regarding that, Allah the Most Faithful Guarantor; (this is) an oath which all oaths reach.

Allah blesses the Prophet Muhammad and 'Ali, who supported Islam.

Likewise, al-Zahra" is eternally blessed by the Lord, Who knows her obligatory right.

He blesses him (‘Ali), and then He starts with al-Hasan, and (blesses) al-Husayn, may Allah honor him.

He blesses ‘Ali al-Taqi, Muhammad, and every gallant Sayyid.

Even though the dwarfs may be averse (to blessing), He blesses with the best blessing the educated, pure one, Ja‘far al-Sa’diq (the truthful one), from whom your knowledge is reported and to whom peoples cling.

Similarly, He blesses Musa’, your father, and after him, He blesses you with a permanent blessing.

He has doubled blessing for Muhammad al-Zaki; He blesses ‘Ali as long as a speech continues.

He blesses al-Ridha’ b. al-Ridha’ al-Hasan because of whose missing darkness has dominated the country.

And He blesses his (i.e. al-Ridha”s) successor through whom the system has become complete and perfect.

For it is he who is the hoped one through whom guidance will return fresh and the (religious) precepts become firm.

Had it not for the Imams, Islam would become effaced and submissive.

Each (Imam) takes the place of his predecessor until the days end in al-Qa”im.

O son of the Prophet and Allah’s proof who stands for prayer and fasting, if an Imam from among you disappears, his place is taken by his successor through whom maladies are cured.

Surely the Imams are equal in excellence and knowledge when old-aged and young.

You are the means and mediation to Allah; you have taught guidance (to men), so you are the Emblems of it.

You are the guardians of the religion, the world, and those who are respected and protected for Allah.

The people (are nothing) except those who acknowledge your excellence; the diners are beasts and livestock.

Rather they are straying farther off from the path because of their unbelief, and those from among them who follow them are featherless arrows (used by ancient Arabs in divination).

They claim regarding your world as if they (did you) favor through denying your favors.

O Allah’s Blessing whom He bestows upon whom He, the Munificent, chooses from among His creatures.

If your body is absent from us, your soul constantly presents.

Your souls themselves are present even if (your) bodies have been hidden from eyes.

The difference between you and the Prophet is prophecy, for after that feet are equal.

Two graves are at Tu's: The Guidance is in one, and the Error is in a grave which he sees as a flame.

Two graves are connected with each other: This (grave) is a lovable garden[35] where the Imam is visited.

And likewise that (grave) is a pit of the Hellfire therein burning thirst renewed for the errant one (i.e. Ha'ru'n al-Rashid).

The nearness of the errant one to the pure one (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') doubles his chastisement in spite of him.

Though he is near to him, he is far, and on him is a pile of robes of chastisement.

And likewise, you are not harmed by the unclean one who has been brought nigh to you by rocks and marble.

No, rather they show you that they are greater in regret for you when you are honored and the cursed one is subjected to severe, doubled torment throughout hours, days, and years.

I wish I knew: Will your Qa"m be a sufficient sword for fighting tomorrow?

Through the sword, my hands will quench the thirst in the bowels (for revenging) you; I have not quenched my burning thirst yet.

Your graves excite me just as landmarks and tents excite those other than me.

If someone is very fond of praising the rich, then through praising you I have ardent love.

I have given to Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha' the poem as a gift, which is pleasing and (which) understandings enjoy.

Take it from al-Dabi, your servant, who has found easy blames regarding you.

If I perform Allah's right regarding you, then I have the right of the entertainment of guest when he comes at night.

Therefore, accept my purpose, for I regard your accepting my purpose as a gain.

If one comes to know about love for you through teaching, then my love for you is an inspiration.[36]

I (i.e. the author) have never read poetry better than this poem, which flows with the soul of friendship

and pure affection toward the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them, the summoners to Allah and guides to His good pleasure. The poem also contains clear words and a beautiful style, for, in this poem, there is no foreign word which one's ear rejects or from which one's nature turns away; rather all the words therein are harmonious, sweet, and light to temper. Moreover, the poem has a group of high values in which the Shi'ites have believed in respect of their love for the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), peace be on them.

With this poem we will end our talk about what the poets have composed concerning lamenting for the Imam. Generally speaking, the poems display the heavy loss which befell the Muslims when they lost their great Imam.

1. Ibid., p. 145.
2. Ibid., 164.
3. Ibn Khaldu'n, Ta'rikh, vol. 3, p. 249. Al-Ka'mil, vol. 5, p. 191. Al-Ada'b al-Sulta'niya wa al-Diwal al-Isla'miya, p. 218. Bahr al-Ansa'b, p. 28.
4. Ibn Khaldu'n, Ta'rikh, vol. 3, p. 250.
5. Ibn Khullaka'n, Wafaya't al-A'ya'n. Al-Dhahabi, Ta'rikh al-Isla'm, vol. 8, p. 35.
6. Tadhkirat al-Khawa's, p. 364. Al-Muntazam, vol. 10, p. 67.
7. Al-Biha'r.
8. We have mentioned their names in the previous chapters.
9. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 247. Nu'r al-Absa'r, p. 145.
10. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 243.
11. 'Uyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 227.
12. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 241.
13. Qur'an, 3, 153.
14. Ibid., 33, 38.
15. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 241.
16. Ibid.
17. Maqa'til al-Ta'libyyin, p. 567. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha'd, p. 316.
18. Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 249.
19. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q 2/78.
20. Ibid.
21. 'Uyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 226. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 56.
22. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q 2/78.
23. Ibid.
24. Usu'l al-Ka'fi, vol. 1, p. 486. Kifa'yat al-Ta'lib, p. 458. Nu'r al-Absa'r, p. 144. Bahr al-Ansa'b, p. 28.
25. A'ya'n al-Shi'a, 4/Q 2/78.
26. Ibid.
27. By the mouths of the sheets (of paper) the poet means those letter written regarding the death of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, and sent to all regions; he has likened them to men.
28. Maqa'til al-Ta'libiyyin, pp. 568-570.
29. Ibid., 568.
30. Maqa'til al-Ta'libiyyin.
31. Di'bil, Divan, p. 99.
32. Ibid., p. 101.
33. Ibid., p. 108.
34. Ibid., pp. 108-109.

35. In the tradition: “Surely, this pulpit of mine is on one of the gardens.”
36. ‘Uyu’n Akhba’r al-Ridha’, vol. 2, pp. 252-254.

The Excellence of the Visitation to the Imam’s Holy Shrine

The Shrine of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, in Khurasa’n has become one of the dear shrines in Islam, for it has acquired a halo of admiration and sanctification, to the extent that none of the shrines of Allah’s friends has such admiration and sanctification, for millions of Muslims visit it in order to seek nearness to Allah through it. Muhammad b. al-Mu’ammal says: “We went out along with the Imam of the traditionalists, his brother-in-law Abu’ ‘Ali al-Thaqafi, a group of our Shaykhs, who were then coming to visit the grave of ‘Ali b. Musa’ al-Ridha’ at Tu’s. Ibn Khuzayma magnified that place, behaved humbly before it, and pleaded (to Allah) beside it, to the extent that he bewildered us.1”

Surely Allah, the Exalted, has singled out the grave of His friend Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, with an excellence, for He has made it as a refuge for those who are afflicted (with disaster). All people have come to know of this wide-spread miracle. Two poetry lines has been written on one of the sides of the Holy Shrine as follows:

If one wants to be pleased by seeing a grave through

which Allah removes the distress of him who sees it,

then let him come to this grave, surely Allah has made dwell in it a distinguished one belonging to Allah’s Messenger.2

Many traditions ensured by many lines of transmission have been mentioned regarding the visitation to Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him. The following are some of them:

1. Ja’bir b. Yazid al-Ju‘fi has narrated, saying: [I heard the testamentary trustee of the testamentary trustees and inheritor of the knowledge of the prophets, Abu’ Ja‘far Muhammad b. ‘Ali b. al-Husayn b. ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, say: The master of the worshippers ‘Ali b. al-Husayn related to me on the authority of the master of martyrs al-Husayn b. ‘Ali on the authority of the master of the testamentary trustees, the Commander of the faithful ‘Ali b. Abu’ Ta’lib, peace be on him, who said: Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “A piece of me will be buried in the land of Khurasa’n. If a distressed person visits it, Allah will remove his distress; if a sinful one (visits it), Allah will forgive him his sins.3”

2. Muhammad b. ‘Amma’ra has narrated on the authority of his father, on the authority of Imam al-Sa’diq, peace be on him, on the authority of his fore-fathers, on the authority of Imam (‘Ali), the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, who said: [Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] “A piece of me will be buried in the land of Khurasa’n. If a believer visits it, Allah, the Great and Almighty, will make the Garden obligatory to him, and his body will be prevented from (touching) the Fire.4”

3. Al-Hasan b. ‘Ali al-Washsha” has narrated, saying: [Abu’ al-Hasan al-Ridha’, peace be on him, said:] “I will unjustly be killed by poison. So he who visits me out of knowledge of my right, Allah will forgive him his past sins and those to follow.5”

4. Sulayma’n b. Hafs al-Marwazi has narrated, saying: [I heard Abu’ al-Hasan Musa’ b. Ja‘far, peace be on him, say:] “Surely my son ‘Ali will unjustly be killed by poison and buried beside Ha’ru’n (al-Rashid) at Tu’s. He who visits him is like him who visits Allah’s Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family.6”

5. Al-Saqr b. Dalaf 7 has narrated, saying: [I heard my master ‘Ali b. Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Ridha’, peace be on him, say:] “He who has a need with Allah must wash his body, visit the grave of my grandfather al-Ridha’, peace be on him, at Tu’s, perform two *rak‘as* by his head, and ask Allah for his need during his personal prayers (*qunu’t*), for surely He will respond to him, unless he asks (Him) regarding a sin and cutting the bonds of blood relatives; his (al-Ridha”s) place is one of the places of the Garden. If a believer visits it, Allah will release him from the Fire and make him stay in the Abode of Stability.8”

Other traditions have been transmitted from the Imams of guidance; they urge men to visit the Shrine of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and mention an increasing reward for those who visit it.

The Shrine of the Imam, peace be on him, was of great importance with the Muslim kings. For example, King ‘Abba’s ordered the holy dome over the grave to be brocaded with gold. He spent his pure property on it, and it took him six years to build it. After it had been built, King ‘Abba’s walked from Asfaha’n to Khurasa’n in order to visit the Holy Shrine.9

The Iranian kings, their ministers, and rich good-doers took care of the Holy Shrine. They endowed buildings and wide lands, specified for it special banks in order to supply it with millions of funds. A group of the Iranian army guarded it and rendered services to it. A precious library has been built near to the Holy Shrine. The library is regarded as the best one in the Middle East, for it contains more than forty thousand manuscripts, hundred thousands of printed books, all kinds of old and modern sciences. A guest-house has also been built near to the Holy Shrine of Imam al-Ridha’, peace be on him, and the guest-house undertakes giving food to visitors. As for the expenses of the guest-house, they are given by the above-mentioned banks.

With this paragraph we will turn over the last page of this book; I (i.e. the author) want to repeat what I have mentioned in the introduction to the book that there is no sufficient room in this book in order to mention all the excellences of the Imam, peace be on him, and what has been transmitted from him

such as marvelous, wise sayings, and good manners; therefore, this book contains a simple, brief research (on the Imam). We ask Allah to accept it; surely He, the Exalted, is the One Who grants success.

1. Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 7, p. 388.
2. Al-Durr al-Nazim, p. 214.
3. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 258.
4. Ibid., p. 255.
5. Ibid., p. 261.
6. Ibid., 260.
7. In a narration is al-Masqar b. Khalaf.
8. 'Uyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 2, p. 262.
9. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q 2/214.

Ziyaarat of Imam Ali bin Musa' al Ridha'(a.s)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

(زيارة الإمام علي بن موسى الرضا (ع

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لا إِلهَ إِلّا ٱللهُ وَحْدَهُ لا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّداً عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَأَنَّهُ سَيِّدُ ٱلأَوَّلِينَ وَٱلآخِرِينَ وَأَنَّهُ سَيِّدُ ٱلأَنْبِيٰاءِ وَٱلمُرْسَلِينَ.

In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

I bear witness that there is no god save Allah, the One; and there is no partner to share with Him. I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. Verily, he is the lord of the ancients and the moderns. Verily, he is the head of the Prophets and the Messengers.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ وَنَبِيِّكَ وَسَيِّدِ خَلْقِكَ أَجْمَعِينَ صَلاةً لا يَقْوىٰ عَلىٰ إِحْصائِها غَيْرُكَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad, Thy servant, Thy Messenger and Thy Prophet, the chief of all that has been created by Thee, blessings which no one is able to measure other than Thee.

اَللّٰهُمَّ وَصَلِّ عَلىٰ أَمِيرِ ٱلمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيِّ بنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَبْدِكَ وَأَخِي رَسُولِكَ ٱلَّذِي ٱنْتَجَبْتَهُ بِعِلْمِكَ وَجَعَلْتَهُ هَادِياً مَهْدِيّاً

لِمَنْ شِئْتَ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ وَٱلدَّلِيلَ عَلىٰ مَنْ بَعَثْتَهُ بِرِسٰالاتِكَ وَدَيّانَ ٱلدِّينِ بِعَدْلِكَ وَفَصْلَ قَضٰائِكَ بَيْنَ خَلْقِكَ وَٱلْمُهَيْمِنَ عَلىٰ ذٰلِكَ كُلِّهِ وَٱلسَّلامُ عَلَيْهِ وَرَحْمَةُ ٱللهِ وَبَرَكٰاتُهُ.

O Allah, send blessings on the Ameer ul Moomineen, Ali bin Abi Talib the brother of Thy Messenger, whom Thou elected to have Thy knowledge, made him a guide to show the right path to those of Thy servants who want to be led aright, an evident proof for those who pay careful attention to Thy Message, who managed the affairs of the religion according to Thy system of justice, made application of Thy commands to setle the issues which cropped up among the people, and let Thy will and command rule supreme in all matters; peace be on him, also mercy and blessings of Allah.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ فٰاطِمَةَ بِنْتِ نَبِيِّكَ وَزَوْجَةِ وَلِيِّكَ وَأُمِّ ٱلسِّبْطَيْنِ ٱلْحَسَنِ وَٱلْحُسَيْنِ سَيِّدَيْ شَبابِ أَهْلِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ، ٱلطُّهْرَةِ ٱلطّاهِرَةِ ٱلتَّقِيَّةِ ٱلنَّقِيَّةِ ٱلرَّضِيَّةِ ٱلزَّكِيَّةِ سَيِّدَةِ نِسٰاءِ أَهْلِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ أَجْمَعِينَ صَلاةً لا يَقْوىٰ عَلىٰ إِحْصٰائِها غَيْرُكَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Fatimah, the daughter of Thy Prophet, the wife of Thy friend, the mother of the two sons, Hasan and Husayn, the prime leaders of the people of Paradise, she is pure, purified, pious, content, wise, leader of all the women of the Paradise, blessings no one is able to measure other than Thee.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ ٱلْحَسَنِ وَٱلْحُسَيْنِ سِبْطَيْ نَبِيِّكَ وَسَيِّدَيْ شَبٰابِ أَهْلِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ، ٱلْقٰائِمَيْنِ في خَلْقِكَ وَٱلدَّلِيلَيْنِ عَلىٰ مَنْ بَعَثْتَ بِرِسٰالاتِكَ وَدَيّانَيِ ٱلدِّينِ بِعَدْلِكَ وَفَصْلَيْ قَضٰائِكَ بَيْنَ خَلْقِكَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Hasan and Husayn, the two sons of Thy Prophet, the prime leaders of the people of Paradise, Thy established authority among the people, Thy two evident proofs for those who pay careful attention to Thy Message, who managed the affairs of the religion according to They system of justice, and made application of Thy commands to settle the issues which cropped up among the people.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ ٱلْحُسَيْنِ عَبْدِكَ ٱلْقٰائِمِ في خَلْقِكَ وَٱلدَّلِيلِ عَلىٰ مَنْ بَعَثْتَ بِرِسٰالاتِكَ وَدَيّٰانِ ٱلدِّينِ بِعَدْلِكَ وَفَصْلِ قَضٰائِكَ بَيْنَ خَلْقِكَ سَيِّدِ ٱلْعٰابِدِينَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Ali bin Husayn, Thy servant, Thy established authority among the people, Thy evident proof for those who pay careful attention to Thy Message, who managed the affairs of the religion according to Thy system of justice, and made application of Thy commands to setle the issues which cropped up among the people, the lord among Thy adorers.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ عَبْدِكَ وَخَلِيفَتِكَ في أَرْضِكَ بٰاقِرِ عِلْمِ ٱلنَّبِيِّينَ

O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad bin Ali, Thy servant, Thy representative in the earth, the deeply versed in the knowledge of Prophets,

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ اَلصّٰادِقِ عَبْدِكَ وَوَلِيِّ دِينِكَ وَحُجَّتِكَ عَلىٰ خَلْقِكَ أَجْمَعِينَ اَلصّٰادِقِ اَلْبٰارِّ.

O Allah send blessings on Jaa'far bin Muhammad, the truthful, Thy servant, the defender of Thy religion, Thy decisive arbument over the mankind, the truthful, the just.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ مُوسىٰ بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ عَبْدِكَ اَلصّٰالِحِ وَلِسٰانِكَ في خَلْقِكَ اَلنّٰاطِقِ بِحُكْمِكَ وَاَلْحُجَّةِ عَلىٰ بَرِيَّتِكَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Musa' bin Jaa'far, Thy upright servant, Thy approved spokesman among Thy people, and Thy decisive argument over the mankind.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مُوسىٰ اَلرِّضا اَلْمُرْتَضىٰ عَبْدِكَ وَوَلِيِّ دِينِكَ اَلْقٰائِمِ بِعَدْلِك وَاَلدّٰاعِي اِلىٰ دِينِكَ وَدِينِ آبٰائِهِ اَلصّٰادِقِينَ صَلاةً لا يَقْوىٰ عَلىٰ إِحْصٰائِهٰا غَيْرُكَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Ali bin Musa' who pleased Thee most, the chosen, Thy servant, the defender of Thy religion, rightly and justly established by Thee as an authority who made earnest presentation of arguments to promote Thy religion which is the religion of his truthful ancestors, blessings which no one is able to measure other than Thee.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ عَبْدِكَ وَوَلِيِّكَ اَلْقٰائِمِ بِأَمْرِكَ وَاَلدّٰاعِي اِلىٰ سَبِيلِكَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad bin Ali, Thy servant, Thy chosen representative, appointed by Thy command, who invited people unto Thy path.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِكَ وَوَلِيِّ دِينِكَ.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ اَلْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ اَلْعٰامِلِ بِأَمْرِكَ اَلْقٰائِمِ في خَلْقِكَ وَحُجَّتِكَ اَلْمُؤَدِّي عَنْ نَبِيِّكَ وَشٰاهِدِكَ عَلىٰ خَلْقِكَ اَلْمَخْصُوصِ بِكَرٰامَتِكَ اَلدّٰاعِي اِلىٰ طاعَتِكَ وَطاعَةِ رَسُولِكَ صَلَوٰاتُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ.

O Allah, send blessings on Ali bin Muhammad, Thy servant, the defender of Thy religion.

O Allah, send blessings on Hasan bin Ali who put Thy system into practice, the established authority among the people, Thy demonstrator who carried out the mission of Thy Prophet, Thy witness over the

mankind, distinguished with Thy excellence, who reminded people to obey Thee and Thy Messenger. Thy blessings be on all of them.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ حُجَّتِكَ وَوَلِيِّكَ ٱلْقَائِمِ في خَلْقِكَ صَلاةً تَامَّةً نَامِيَةً بَاقِيَةً تُعَجِّلُ بِهٰا فَرَجَهُ وَتَنْصُرُهُ بِهٰا وَتَجْعَلُنٰا مَعَهُ في ٱلدُّنْيٰا وَٱلآخِرَةِ.

O Allah, send blessings on Thy demonstrator, Thy established representative among the people, perfect, growing and everlasting blessings, expedite his arrival and help him, let us be with him in this world and in the Hereafter.

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّي أَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيْكَ بِحُبِّهِمْ وَأُوالي وَلِيُّهُمْ وَأُعادِي عَدُوَّهُمْ، فَارْزُقْنِي بِهِمْ خَيْرَ ٱلدُّنْيٰا وَٱلآخِرَةِ وَٱصْرِفْ عَنِّي بِهِمْ شَرَّ ٱلدُّنْيٰا وَٱلآخِرَةِ وَأَهْوٰالَ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيٰامَةِ.

O Allah, I seek Thy nearness through my love for them. I make friends with their friends, I oppose their enemies. So, on account to them, give me good of this world and the Hereafter. Keep away from me the evil of this world and the Hereafter, the dreadful fright on the Day of Judgment.

اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وَلِيَّ ٱللهِ، ٱلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا حُجَّةَ ٱللهِ، ٱلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا نُورَ ٱللهِ في ظُلُمٰاتِ ٱلأَرْضِ، ٱلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا عَمُودَ ٱلدِّينِ.

Peace be on you, O the representative of Allah! Peace be on you, O the evident proof of Allah! Peace be on you, O the light of Allah in the darkness of this ignorant world! Peace be on you, O the mainstray of the religion!

اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ آدَمَ صِفْوَةِ ٱللهِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ نُوحٍ نَبِيِّ ٱللهِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ إِبْرٰاهِيمَ خَلِيلِ ٱللهِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ إِسْمٰاعِيلَ ذَبِيحِ ٱللهِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ مُوسىٰ كَلِيمِ ٱللهِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ عِيسىٰ رُوحِ ٱللهِ.

Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Adam, the sincerely attached friend of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Nooh, the Prophet of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Ibrahim, the intimate friend of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Ismaeel, the sacrifice offered to Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Musa', who spoke to Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Easaa, who received mercy, joy, and ease from Allah!

اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ ٱللهِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ أَمِيرِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيِّ وَلِيِّ ٱللهِ وَوَصِيِّ رَسُولِ رَبِّ ٱلْعٰالَمِينَ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ فٰاطِمَةَ ٱلزَّهْرٰاءِ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ ٱلْحَسَنِ وَٱلْحُسَيْنِ سَيِّدَيْ شَبٰابِ أَهْلِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ،

اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ اَلْحُسَيْنِ زَيْنِ اَلْعٰابِدِينَ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بٰاقِرِ عِلْمِ اَلأَوَّلِينَ وَاَلآخِرِينَ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ اَلصّٰادِقِ اَلْبٰارِّ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا وٰارِثَ مُوسىٰ بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ.

Peace be on you, O the inheritor Mohammad, the Messenger of Allah! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Ameer ul Moomineen, the representative of Allah, the executor of the will of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Faatimah Zahra! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Hasan and Husayn, the prime leaders of the people of the Paradise! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Ali bin Husayn, the pride of the worshippers! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Muhammad bin Ali,the deeply versed in the wisdom of the ancients and the moderns! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Jaa'far bin Muhammad, the truthful, the virtuous! Peace be on you, O the inheritor of Musa' bin Jaa'far!

اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا أَيُّها اَلصِّدّيقُ اَلشَّهِيدُ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّها اَلوَصِيُّ اَلْبٰارُّ اَلتَّقِيُّ، أَشْهَدُ أَنَّكَ قَدْ أَقَمْتَ اَلصَّلاةَ وَآتَيْتَ اَلزَّكٰاةَ وَأَمَرْتَ بِالمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَيْتَ عَنِ اَلْمُنْكَرِ وَعَبَدْتَ اَللهَ مُخْلِصاً حَتّىٰ أَتٰاكَ اَلْيَقِينُ، اَلسَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا أَبا اَلْحَسَنِ وَرَحْمَةُ اَللهِ وَبَرَكٰاتُهُ.

Peace be on you, O the faithful witness of the truth, the martyr! Peace be on you, O the virtuous and pious guardian! I bear witness that, verily, you established the prayers, gave the prescribed share of the needy, comanded to do that which is right and lawful, not to do that which is wrong and unlawful, sincerely served Allah, till the inevitable came unto you. Peace be on you, O Abal Hasa, and mercy and blessings of Allah be on you.

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِلَيْكَ صَمَدْتُ مِنْ أَرْضِي وَقَطَعْتُ اَلْبِلادَ رَجٰاءَ رَحْمَتِكَ فَلا تُخَيِّبْنِي وَلا تَرُدَّني بِغَيْرِ قَضٰاءِ حٰاجَتِي وَاْرْحَمْ تَقَلُّبِي عَلىٰ قَبْرِ اْبْنِ أَخِي رَسُولِكَ صَلَوٰاتُكَ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

O Allah, I had left my place of domicile to go towards Thee, and crossed many a town in the hope of getting Thy mercy, therefore, do not disappoint me, do not send me away without awarding that which I need, have mercy on my restless agitation near the son of Thy Messenger's brother, Thy blessings be on him and on his childrern.

بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي يٰا مَوْلايَ، أَتَيْتُكَ زٰائِراً وٰافِداً عٰائِذاً مِمّٰا جَنَيْتُ عَلىٰ نَفْسِي وَاْحْتَطَبْتُ عَلىٰ ظَهْرِي فَكُنْ لي شٰافِعاً اِلىٰ اَللهِ يَوْمَ فَقْرِي وَفٰاقَتِي فَلَكَ عِنْدَ اَللهِ مَقٰامٌ مَحْمُودٌ وَأَنْتَ عِنْدَهُ وَجِيهٌ.

My father and mother are at your disposal, O my Mawlaa! I have come to visit you, adore you and take refuge with you from the burden of sins I carry on my back, so, in the day of distress, be my advocate before Allah, because you enjoy special privileges in the presence of Allah, and He shows respect for you and brings honour to you.

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنّي أَتَقَرَّبُ بِحُبِّهِمْ بِوِلايَتِهِمْ، أَتَوَلّىٰ آخِرَهُمْ بِمٰا تَوَلَّيْتُ بِهِ أَوَّلَهُمْ، وَأَبْرَأُ مِنْ كُلِّ وَلِيجَةٍ دُونَهُم.

O Allah, I seek Thy nearness through my love and friendship for them (the Ahl ul Bayt), I love each and every one of them, from the first to the last, and avoid intimate association with anyone other than the Ahlul Bayt.

اَللّٰهُمَّ ٱلْعَنِ ٱلَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَكَ وَٱتَّهَمُوا نَبِيَّكَ وَجَحَدُوا بِآيٰاتِكَ وَسَخِرُوا بِإِمٰامِك وَحَمَلُوا ٱلنّٰاسَ عَلىٰ أَكْتٰافِ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ. اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنّي أَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيْكَ بِاللَّعْنَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَٱلْبَرٰاءَةِ مِنْهُمْ في ٱلدُّنْيٰا وَٱلآخِرَةِ، يٰا رَحْمٰنُ.

Curse of Allah be on those who subverted Thy “Favour”, suspected Thy Prophet to be guilty of falsehood, denied Thy revelation, laughted at Thy representatives, and gave preference to nonentities over the “Aali Muhammad”. O Allah, I seek Thy nearness by calling down curses on them, I keep myself aloof from them, in this world and in the Hereafter, O Beneficent!

صَلّىٰ ٱللهُ عَلَيْكَ يٰا أَبٰا ٱلْحَسَنِ، صَلّىٰ ٱللهُ عَلىٰ رُوحِكَ وَبَدَنِكَ، صَبَرْتَ وَأَنْتَ ٱلصّٰادِقُ ٱلْمُصَدَّقُ، قَتَلَ ٱللهُ مَنْ قَتَلَكَ بِالأَيْدِي وَٱلأَلْسُنِ.

Blessings of Allah be on you, O Abal Hasan! Blessings of Allah be on your soul and your body! You suffered patiently and exercised self-control, although you were truthful and your truthfulness had been confirmed; Allah destroy him who gave the orders to kill you, and him who carrited them out.

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