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33. Chapter on Excess and Delegation (Al-Ghuluww wa't-Tafwid)

Abu Ja'far says: "Chapter concerning the denial of Excess and Delegation ".ash-Shaykh al-Mufid says: 'Excess' (al-ghuluww)1, linguistically means 'exceeding the limit and turning aside from the true goal'. Allah, the Almighty, says:

O, People of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion, nor utter aught concerning Allah save the truth [4:171].

Hence, He forbade exceeding the limits concerning the belief in the Messiah, and warned against turning aside from the true goal in speech, and declared the Christians' claims about him excess, since they went beyond the limit, as we have explained.

The Extremists (al–Ghulat) among those who outwardly profess Islam, are those who attribute divinity and prophethood to the Commander of the Believers and Imams of his progeny, peace be upon them, and ascribe to them privileges concerning their status in this world and the world to come, by which they go beyond the limit and turn aside from the goal; hence they are evil–doers and infidels whom the Commander of the Believers *has sentenced to death, and the stake;* 2 also the Imams, peace be upon them, have branded them with unbelief and departing from the pale of Islam.

Chapter: As for what Abu Ja'far mentions of the death of our Prophet and the Imams by poison or murder, some of this is confirmed as fact and some not. What is confirmed is that the Commander of the Believers, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be upon them, departed from this world by murder, none of them died a natural death. Musa ibn Ja'far, peace be upon him, was killed by poison.

It is highly probable that ar-Rida ('Ali ibn Musa) was poisoned, yet this cannot be confirmed. As for the others, there is no justification for the claim that they were either poisoned or murdered or killed through persecution, since the reports concerning this matter are extremely confused, and there are no means of proving it definitely.

The adherents of the doctrine of delegation (al–Mufawwidah)3 are a group of extremists who are distinguished from the others by their peculiar claim that though the Imams are created, originated beings, and not eternal, yet they ascribe to them creation and sustaining. Also, they maintained that Allah, the Exalted, created them and ceased to create, delegating to them the creation of the world and what lay therein.

As for the Hallajiyyah, they are a certain group of Sufis, the adherents of the doctrine of licentiousness (ibahah) and incarnation (al-hulul)4. Al-Hallaj5 outwardly claimed to be a Shi'ah, yet he, in fact, was a Sufi. The Hallajiyyah are, indeed, heretics and zindiqs, appearing to each sect as if they were of their persuasion, and claiming impossible powers for al-Hallaj, as the fire-worshippers used to ascribe miracles to Zoroaster, and the Christians who attribute miracles and wonders to their monks. Yet, fire-worshippers and Christians are nearer to fulfilling duties than they are, and, indeed, they are further removed from the observance and practice of the law than are the fire-worshippers and the Christians.

Chapter: As for the claim of Abu Ja'far, may Allah have mercy upon him, that he who accuses the learned divines of Qum of attributing to the Imams less than their due, should be stigmatized as an extremist. In fact, the charging of this group with such attribution is not a sign of excess, since amongst those who are mentioned as learned divines and scholars, there are many who accuse the bona fide scholars of attributing less than their due to the Imams, be they from Qum or from any other country or any other people.

We have heard a narration, the meaning of which is plain, related to the authority of Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Walid", may Allah have mercy upon him, and the interpretation in favour of taqsir is inescapable. This is what is related on his authority: "The first degree of excess is to deny that the Prophet and the Imams were ever fallible (sahw)", Then if this was indeed related by him, he in fact attributes less than their due to the Imams, and yet he is one of the divines of Qum.

Moreover, we found a group of the divines of Qum who openly and firmly made this attribution in their belief, and they were degrading the Imams from their proper ranks, and alleging that they were ignorant of many of the religious ordinances until they received illumination. Also, we saw that many of them claim that they (the Imams), apply religious law according to their personal opinion and suppositions, and yet they claim that they are divines and this indeed, is attributing to the Imams less than their due.

Indeed, it is a sufficient sign of excess to claim that the Imams are not created beings, and that they are divine and eternal, since the only logical conclusion of this assertion is excess; that the Imams are the creators of bodies, originators of substances, and bring into existence accidents which are beyond human power. We need no more than this to judge or to ascertain their position without the signs which Abu Ja'far, holds the marks of excess.

1. al-Ghuluww: The technical term for the ultra-Shi'ah groups. "Originally, it seems to have had", as Friedlaender observed, "a wider range and to have been applied to other than Shi'ite movements", (op. cit., p. 12). 'Ali burnt* several of certain groups of them who publicly proclaimed his divinity. ash-Shahristani says that the innovations of the extremists can be

restricted to four: Anthropomorphism (at-tashbih, al-bada', i.e., mutability of Allah's Will), ar-raj'ah (the return) and at-tanasukh, transmigration or reincarnation, (al-Milal, vo1.2, p.11).

See also Lisanu 'l-'Arab, vol.I5, p. 132; an-Nawbakhti, Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, p. 35; al-Ash'ari, op. cit., vol.I, p. 16; Ibn Hazm, al-Fisal, vol.4, p. 186; Ibnu 'l-Jawzi, Talbis Iblis, p. 99; at-Tahanawi, Kashshaf istilahati 'l-funun, vol.2, p. 1099.*[What has come to us in the Shi'ite Traditions Amiru '1-Mu'minin, peace be upon him, has not killed them by burning but they were suffocated by an overwhelming sour fumes. What has been narrated by the translator was quoted from the Sunni sources (ed).]

- 2. 56 T, hakama fihim Amiru 'I Mu'minin bi 'I-qatl wa 't-tahriq bi 'n-nar. . .; N,hakama fihim Amiru 'I-Mu'minin bi 'I-kufr.
- 3. Al-Mufawwidah: A group which maintains that Allah created Muhammad, peace be upon him and his progeny, (some add 'Ali, peace be upon him), then He committed to him (or to them) the management of the world and the disposal of its affairs. Then Muhammad, peace be upon him and his progeny, entrusted the rule of the universe to 'Ali and the Imams, peace be upon them, after him. According to Friedlaender, "At the bottom of this idea lies the Gnostic discrimination between the 'unoriginated, inconceiv- able Father' and the word (Logos) emanating from him which is Demiurge", op. cit., p.92; see also al-Baghdadi, al-Firaq, p.237; al-Ash'ari, op. cit., p.16; Ibnu '1-Jawzi, op. cit., p.98; Ibn Hazm, op. cit., vol.4, p.179.
- <u>4.</u> al-Hululiyyah: A group who derive their name from the doctrine of incarnation, hulul, and incorporation, imtizaj. They held that it is possible and permissible for Allah to become incarnated in man's body. Most of them have, also, an inclination to a relaxed attitude towards religious obligations prescribed by the Divine Law.

The Hululis are often mentioned as followers of and related to al–Hallaj; nevertheless, al–Hujwiri denies this relation and says that, "In the compositions of al–Hallaj himself there is nothing but profound theosophy" (al–Hujwiri, Kashfu 'l–mahjub, Eng. transl. by Prof. Nicholson, R.A., p.260). See al–Baghdadi, op. cit., p.241; al–Ash'ari, op. cit., pp. 13–14; Ibnu 'l–Jawzi, op. cit., p.171; Friedlaender, L, op. cit., vol.2, p.12; at–Tahanawi, op. cit., vol.1, p.352.

<u>5.</u> Abu '1-Mughith al-Husayn ibn Mansur ibn Mahama al-Baydawi: APersian mystic and theologian. His grandfather is said to have been a magician. He was born in 244/858 at at-Tur near al-Bayda (Fars). He was accused of being charlatan by the Mu'tazilah, ex-communicated by a tawqi' of the Imamiyyah and a fatwa of the Zahiriyyah, and twice arrested by the 'Abbasid police (E.I., the article, "al-Hallaj", by Massignon, L.). "The Sufi shaykhs", says al-Hujwiri, "are at variance concerning him. Some reject him, while others accept him. Others suspended their judgment about him" (op. cit., p. 150).

He was executed by crucifixion after a trial on Tuesday, 24th Dhi 'l-Qi'dah, 309 AH (26th March, 922 AD), during the caliphate of al-Muqtadir, because in one of his ecstasies he had cried out "I am the Truth". "al-Hallaj", says al-Hujwiri, "was the author of brilliant compositions and allegories and polished sayings in theology and jurisprudence" (op. cit., p. 151). See Ibnu 'n-Nadim, al-Fihrist, pp. 190-2;Ibn Khallikan, op. cit., vol.I, p. 183; adh-Dhahabi, Mizanu 'l-i'tidal, vol.I, p. 548; Browne, E.G., A Literary History of Persia, vol.I, p. 428; Nicholson, R.A., A Literary History of the Arabs, p. 399.

6. Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Ahmad ibn al-Walid: He is known asAbu Ja'far al-Qummi (d. 343 AH), was a celebrated traditionist, a jurist of high reputation and the spritual head of the Qummi divines. He was accepted by the traditionists as a trustworthy and realiable transmitter. He was the shaykh of Ibn Babawayh al-Qummi. See an-Najashi, op. cit., p.271; at-Tusi, op. cit., p.495; al-Mamagani, op.cit., vol.3, p.100, no.10534.

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