

## 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-Majlisi, 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-Majlisi 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.

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