

Chapter 1: Islamic Terminology

“In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the all merciful”

إِنَّ رَبُّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Surely your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods of time, and He is firm in power; He throws the veil of night over the day which it pursues incessantly; and (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars, made subservient by His command; surely His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds”. (Holy Quran: 7: 54)

The discussions put forth here are so that we may consider and come to understand what role the Imams (a.s.) had after the Holy Prophet (S), in the preservation of Islam's elements and or in other words, what did they do to turn Islam over and return it to the community, removing the alterations that had been made therein. How did the Al-Mighty God by way of the Imams holy war bring a faded Islam back to life? On another occasion, how did what was altered, concealed or changed return to the Human society being made available to all?

By the grace of the Al-Mighty God it will be made clear that the Holy Prophet (S) had (unity in action and aim) with Imam Hujjat ibn-al Hassan (a.s.) Imam Sadeq (a.s.) and finally with every one of the Imams. It will become evident that the Holy Prophet (S) with regard to his actions and their effect on the community was of one class with the Holy Imams (a.s.), no others belonging to this class.

This discussion, being put forth in this manner in our society for the first time needs an introduction which will be presented in a few lectures. Now, as a foundation for that introduction it is necessary for us to study carefully a few Islamic terms. An understanding of these terms will also be of help in obtaining a better grasp of all of our remarks in the following lectures.

Of course there are numerous Islamic terms which must be studied in all of their aspects and parts for an understanding of their meanings and thus an accurate complete understanding of Islam. However,

because of our immediate necessities for this discussion we will discuss only a few of the most important terms, being: “Elah”¹, “Abd”, “Rab” and “Islam”

The difference between “Elah” and “Allah” is that Allah is the proper name for “The Exalted God” but “Elah” is not proper name. In fact Allah is a proper distinguishing noun, while “Elah” is a common general noun. To clarify this matter it is helpful to pay attention to this example; Tehran is the capital of Iran. If we say capital it is certain that other than Tehran, Iran has no other capital. But capital is not the proper name for this city because many other cities throughout the world are also called by this name.

With regard to this we repeat that Allah is the name of “The Exalted God” but « is the word for anything worshipped by mankind.

The Holy Quran quotes the Pharoah as saying:

لَئِنِ اتَّخَذْتَ إِلَهًا غَيْرِي

“If you will take a god besides Me, I will most certainly make you one of the imprisoned”. (Qur’an 26:29)

Therefore god is the name for every deity, or in other words any being that is worshipped; any being man praises or any being man is humble before or works to gain his satisfaction.

In the Holy Quran we read

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ هَوَاهُ

“Have you then considered him who takes his low desires for his god”. (Qur’an 45:23)

Making his desire his god means that he acts for his hearts and souls' desires. If man works for Allah's satisfaction then they have made Allah their God (deity), but if for their souls' desire they have made the soul their god (deity).

Therefore, (Elah) God is the deity that we worship, obey, submit to, and praise. Such a being becomes (Elah) god and (Ma'bood) worshipped one, and its obedient is thus “Abd” worshipper². 1 there is a remark by Imam Javad (a.s.) on the meaning of “worshipper” which greatly enlightens and completes our understanding of this term. It explains when man becomes a worshipper and under what circumstances something takes the title “Elah” god or deity. The Imam (a.s.) says:

من أصغى الى ناطقٍ فقد عبده، فإن كان الناطق عن الله فقد عبد الله وإن كان الناطق ينطق عن لسان إبليس فقد عبد إبليس

“If someone listens to the words of a speaker, he has worshipped him. In the event that this speaker speaks from God the listener has worshipped God. And if he speaks for Satan he has worshipped Satan”.[3](#)

In this discussion with reference to one important point, the difference between the school of Ahlu'l-bait (Shi'ite) and the school of the Caliphs (Sunni) is clarified. This point being that none of the Ahlu'l-bait ever said “I say”, rather they would say the Prophet (S) said or God ordained.[4](#) Amir al-Mu'meneen Ali (a.s.) never said: “I say”[5](#) but the second Caliph Omar would say “I say”. It was he who addressed the Muslims saying:

متعتان كانتا على عهد رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم) انا انهي عنهما و اعاقب عليهما، متعة النساء، وانا انهي
عنهما و اضرب عليهما...

“There were two types of temporary marriage lawful during the Prophets time, but I prohibit them and declare them unlawful, and I will punish their agents and have them flogged”.[6](#)

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) also did not say: I expound thus, I vote thus or my personal opinion is this. On the contrary he would say: Allah ordained, or Messenger of Allah (S) said thus. However Abu Hanifa would say: I expound this or I have this opinion or vote as such.[7](#)

During the first century or so our scholars were only narrators who narrated from the Imam. Today's scholars also don't say: “I say”. They are canonists, means those who understand the laws of God and the Prophet, and for the explanation of each law in Islamic religious law they refer to the Imams remarks, the Holy Prophets traditions and the Holy Quran. As such, whatever they do is towards understanding the law of God, and are not application of their own personal opinion, style and enterprise. Therefore, the person who has followed Imam Sadeq (a.s.) or obeys the scholars of his school has listened to Gods commands. He is Gods, servant and he has worshipped God. But on the other hand those who listen to persons who say: I say, I expound thus, I vote and I create laws, have not been Gods, servants having made a weak despised person their deity or god.

2- Lord is the most important Islamic term in this lecture necessary for us to understand. At this time we will be using this term more frequently and wish to search regarding it. We repeat the phrase “Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds” very frequently but for many of us the exact meaning of this is not clear. What does the term (Lord) mean in this phrase? We don't know. Certainly until the meaning of Lord is not clarified God cannot be recognized nor the Holy Prophet (S) or Imam (a.s.) and neither can the monotheist be separated from the polytheist nor their differences understood.

First of all lets see what this word means in the Arabic language. Ragheb Isfahani the famous linguist says:

الرب في الاصل التربية وهو انشاء الشيء حالا فحالا الى حد التمام

Lord is originally an infinitive means to train or educate. The person, who trains a thing, developing and nurturing it from its first stage of development to its last, is this Lord.⁸ This is one aspect of the word lord. In addition to training and nurturing it also has the meaning of ownership.⁹

As such, we may say that a Lord is the owner, manager and trainer of a thing. As for someone who has a poultry farm, he takes care of the eggs until they hatch, gives the chicks water and seed, and immunizes them from possible sickness until they become full-grown chickens. He who is the owner and breeder of these chickens is also seen as their Lord. “Lord of the Worlds” thus means the God and nourisher of all of the worlds inhabitants. He is both their creator owner, and their trainer and developer. He was the possessor of their wills from the first stage of their development and nurtures them to the last stage of completion.

Consequently “The Exalted God” is called Lord. Also another example would be that the owner of a house who also manages it and is responsible for all of its internal matters is also called “Lord”. However the difference between the two is that god may be called Lord in a general way and without being added to something. According to the Holy Qurans interpretation:

بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ

A fair land and an indulgent Lord (Quran 34 : 15)

But in other instances lord is mentioned in addition to something else. Lord of the chicken meaning raiser and owner of chickens, Lord of the house means owner and manager of the house, and Lord of the tree meaning the cultivator and owner of tree.

If we look at the precise meaning of “Lord” we will be able to comprehend the reason for the prophets battles with the evil or rebellious persons of their time and know what these conflicts were all about. The history of divine religions shows that usually those who stood in the prophets way, did so on the matter of “sovereignty” not “creator” because the majority accepted “Allah” as being creator of all beings.

They may not have referred to Him by the name “Allah” for example calling him “Jehovah”. Such being the Jewish name for God. But our discussion is not about by what name they called god. We only want to say that they all agreed that the creator of all beings was “God” but they differed on the matter of “Lord”.

For the clarification of this comment we will mention a few examples from the Holy Quran and study a few of the confrontations of the prophets with their people or the rebellious persons of their time so we may recognize and understand similar confrontations in the Islamic community.

The Holy Quran has time and time again told us the story of Moses (a.s.) and his people and their conflicts with the tyrannical Pharaoh and the evil persons of his time. We may read about a sensitive part of this story in chapter 79 Al-Naziat” of the Holy Quran where Moses (a.s.) confronts the Pharaoh with a few divine verses and the Pharaoh assembles a vast group of Egyptians proclaiming:

أَنَا رَبُّكُمْ الْأَعْلَىٰ

“I (Pharaoh) am your Lord the Highest!” (Quran 79 : 21-25)

Meaning that if a chicken has a Lord, being he who is its owner and breeder and who enacts laws dealing with the life and growth of the chicken he breeds I am in that very sense your “Lord”. What being is the “Lord” of an object, animal or Human Being? It is he who provides the necessities of that which he is lord of, takes care of his requirements and determines the laws and rules for his life and growth. It was here that the Pharaoh said:

وَتَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ

And Pharaoh called out among his people; he said, "O my people, does not the kingdom of Egypt belong to me, and these rivers flowing beneath me; then do you not see? (Quran 43:51)

Therefore, “Law” which is the second feature of “sovereignty” or Lordship must be obtained from me. I supply your necessities therefore I must be your absolute law and Leader.

The Emperor of Egypt, the Pharaoh, was the owner of all of Egypt at that time (from where?) and everyone who worked was seen as his worker and servant. Therefore, it appears as if he possessed one pre-requisite for Lordship which was providing food, bread, water and the peoples needs, claiming that all of this is my property and I give to you.

Thus, I must enact the laws as well and you must live according to my will and desires. At any rate, I must make laws and I must ascertain the law and rules for life. I say that the Israelites must be slaves, their sons killed and their daughters remain, and it certainly must be accepted. I say that the Israelites must be inferior and the native Egyptians must be the masters and this certainly must be enacted. I say that a certain way and is necessary that it becomes so.

The lordship the Pharaoh claimed was not in the sense that “I am the creator of the heavens and earth and I am the creator of man and all other things”. On the contrary, what he said was that “You must work to attain my satisfaction and to execute my intentions and act according to my laws because I am your Lord the Highest!”.

What does Moses say in reply to this logic? What is his message and how does he confront the

Pharoah? God commands Moses and Aaron:

اذْهَبَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لِّعَلَّهٖ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٤٤﴾ قَالَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ أَنْ يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَا
أَوْ أَنْ يَطْغَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ لَا تَخَافَا إِنِّي مَعَكُمَا أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾ فَأْتِيَاهُ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِي
إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَا تُعَذِّبْهُمْ قَدْ جِئْنَاكَ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَىٰ ﴿٤٧﴾ إِنَّا قَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْنَا أَنَّ الْعَذَابَ عَلَىٰ
﴿٤٨﴾ مَن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ

O Moses and Aaron! Go to the Pharaoh and tell him that you are messengers of your Lord who has nurtured you and brought you to maturity! O Pharaoh, you who claim being the peoples highest and greatest Lord are greatly mistaken and have a vain, false claim. We have with us verses and signs from your Lord (Qur'an 20: 43-48)

Of course the Pharaoh who recognizes no Lord for himself rejects their statement and asks:

﴿قَالَ فَمَنْ رَبُّكُمَا يَا مُوسَىٰ﴾ ﴿٤٩﴾

“And who is your lord O' Moses” (Qur'an 20:49)

You don't accept my Sovereignty and say that it belongs to another and that law and judgement must be received from him! Who is this other?

Moses replies:

﴿قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ﴾ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴿قَالَ فَمَا بَالُ الْقُرُونِ الْأُولَىٰ﴾ ﴿٥١﴾

“Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it (to its goal)” (Qur'an 20:50-51)

Our Lord is He who created everything and ascertained their way of life and rules for living, and in other words guided him while every being must live by the law he made for them

The Pharaoh sees Moses' words as being sound and fears that these ideas will take root among the people. Thus he proceeds to create doubt so that erroneous thoughts would come to be. So he says: (What then is the state of the generations of old? Did they also have a lord? Did this lord of which you claim also have a commander for them?) Moses replies and in his reply stresses Gods sovereignty: (My lord knows of their state and their past. He neither errs nor forgets).

These events continue and again the Pharaoh tries another trick to break Moses, logic and to rally the peoples sentiments against him. He then says to him: (You have come with your magic to run us out of our country and take over our homeland and therefore we will also use magic to defeat you) The

Pharaohs magician came to fight Moses (a.s.) with all of their might, but “The Lord of the Worlds” power was apparent and all of their tricks were defeated. The magicians who were better informed of magic than the other people flung themselves down prostrate in the face of the lords power saying:

آمناً برب هارون و موسى

We believe in the Lord of Haroun and Musa” (Qur’an 20:70)

Throughout this story the name “Lord” is repeated, and he is mentioned by both sides. Moses (a.s.) speaks of him. The magicians come to believe in him. The Pharaoh does not accept his existence. As such it becomes apparent to us that the conflicts between the two sides of Satan and God the Merciful, Gods friends and His enemies, the prophets and the evil, rebellious persons were mostly over matters of Lordship or Sovereignty and from who we must accept law, order, rule and judgement.

During the lifetime of Gods great Prophet Abraham (a.s.), there were also these same types of conflicts and struggles:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكََ

“Have you not considered him (Namrud) who disputed with Ibrahim about his Lord, because Allah had given him the Kingdom?” (Qur’an 2:258)

His power and absolute authority makes him insolent and he ceases to believe in Gods' Sovereignty.

Abrahams quarrel with Nimrod is over this very matter. Abraham (a.s.) says to him:

“The rightful legislator and He who rightfully ascertains and defines human life is He who brings to life and causes death. Yes, He is everyone's lord and He is my Lord”.

Nimrod, the rebellious one on that age said:

أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ

“I also bring to life and cause death”. (Qur’an 2:258)

Bring forth from prison a person sentenced to death and I will free him. He was considered dead and I brought him to life. Bring another who is careless and free walking in the streets and execute him. He was alive and should have remained alive and it was I who caused his death.

As such the attribute you applied to the Lord, I also possess, therefore I am also the lord. It was here

that doubt was caused to arise and it became possible for an ignorant person to accept his words. Without hesitation Abraham (a.s.) offers another attestation:

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“My lord who is Allah causes the sun to rise in the East, if you are also lord and speak the truth then cause the sun to rise in the West”. (Qur’an 2:258)

What could Nimrood say? He had no choice but to remain embarrassed and powerless.

This was only one scene from the hero of Monotheistic struggle. In another quarrel he had with those who worshipped the heavenly bodies the same debate is repeated. Abraham goes to a gathering of these pagans and begins to argue with them.

Of course this is done with their own words, with what they believe in and in a way that will allow them to understand his argument and the veil of ignorance covering their hearts to be torn away. It is night and Abraham upon seeing a bright star turns to the vast group of star worshippers saying:

..فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي

“This bright star is my Lord”. (Quran 6: 76)

After a time the star sets and as that points out its weakness and deficiency he says:

“This cannot be my Lord, my Lord must not set and I love not things that set”. (Quran 6: 76)

This story continues as such for the sun, and moon and in the end after the setting of the sun, the brightest most powerful heavenly body, Abraham says:

..قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ إِنِّي وَجْهَتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا

“O ye people! Lo, I am free of all you associate with Gods lordship (sovereignty). I have turned my face towards He who created the heavens and earth and is my Lord”. (Quran 6: 78-79)

The people will not leave Abraham alone and the dispute continues. In the face of their arguments, Abraham declares that:

..قَالَ أَتَحَاجُّونِي فِي اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانِ وَلَا أَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ بِهِ

My Lord Allah has guided me and I fear not the false gods you set beside him (Qur'an 6: 80)

It is clear that Abrahams people recognize God but they gave Him partners and it is this matter Abraham (a.s.) disputes and has proceeded to argue with them about.

In yet another scene we have Abrahams dispute with the idol worshippers among his people. When he enters one of their gatherings he proceeds to oppose them because of his inner sight, insight and natural purity, saying:

مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ

'What are these images you bow and prostrate yourselves before?' (Holy Quran, 21:52)

They replied:

قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا لَهَا عَابِدِينَ

.. "We found our fathers worshippers of them." (Holy Quran, 21:53)

Abraham says in answer to them:

كُنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

'You and your fathers were surely in error' (Holy Quran, 21:54)

They then said:

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنْتَ مِنَ اللَّاعِبِينَ

'Are you joking or are you speaking to us seriously?' (Holy Quran, 21:55)

He answered:

"[No], rather, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth (Quran 21: 56)

The people of the cave, brave worshippers of god in ancient times also have the same to say. They rose up against the rebellious person of their time and spoke of The Lord of the heavens and earth.

وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذًا شَطَطًا

And We made firm their hearts when they stood up and said, "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never will we invoke besides Him any deity. We would have certainly spoken, then, an excessive transgression. "(Qur'an 18: 14)

"This person who claims lordship saying that mankind must follow my commands and I must lay down laws for him and give order to his life. No he is not lord. He is not the lawgiver and organizer of our lives. Our lord is the lord of the heavens and earth". "(Qur'an 18: 14)

These are examples of the history of divine religions which reveal to us the principle motive for the confrontations of the prophets and evil persons of their age. It also clarifies the main reason for the battles between the men of God and Gods party and their opponents.

On one side are the men of God who say that no-one may ascertain mankinds way of life except God, He alone being the lord of mankind because only He is the Lord of all earthly beings. On the other side are the evil persons who themselves claim being the legislators and the agents of giving order to mans life.

In the ninth year of the Hejrat, Edy the son of Haatam Taaey who was a Christian came to the Holy Prophet (S) and after some discussion embraced Islam. [10](#) In this meeting Edy wore a golden cross around his neck.

The Holy Prophet (S) said: «Throw that idol away which you have hung from your neck» Edy threw the cross away and left the Prophet. During their second meeting Edy heard that the Prophet had revealed a Quranic verse:

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَابَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ

"The Jews and Christians have taken their religious leaders as lord instead of Allah". "(Qur'an 9: 31)

Edy then said:

We did not worship our religious leaders

The Holy Prophet (S) then said:

«Didn't he forbid that which God allowed and allowed that which he prohibited while you followed him without questions?» [11](#) This situation even exists today amongst the Christians. The Pope has the right to change Catholic religious law and they accept without questions. The church claims on the basis of existing Bible verses that he may be legislator and that which he ratifies on earth will be accepted in Heaven. This is exactly what the Quran refers to in this verse.

In the new Testament, Mathew 16: 18–19 we read:

“And so I tell you Peter. on this rock foundation I will build my church and not even death will ever be able to overcome it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in Heaven and what you permit on earth will be permitted in Heaven”.

So the Holy Quran in giving Jewish and Christian scholars and priests the title lord did so because they legislated and showed partial views on mans way of life. They prohibited what God made lawful and allowed what He prohibited.

As such, the prophets battles were so that mankind would accept the Sovereignty of The One God, and embrace only His command deriving what is allowed and prohibited from Him. The entire spirit and content of religion is nothing other than this. If in a certain country I am forced to accept an order that goes against the command of God at the hand of some powerful person, I have not made him my lord.

Submitting to someone's lordship is when willingly you accept his law against Gods will and act upon it. It is here that you have made that being your lord. For example a Christian priest said not to circumcise and the Christians accepted refraining from circumcising, and/or said drink liquour is lawful and religion allows it and they once again accepted. It is here that the matter of making man ones lord comes to light.

In the future in our further investigations we will see to what extent the two schools of thought of Islam, Shi'ite and Sunni, differ from one another. One school (Shi'ite) relies on nothing but the word of God while the other school (Sunni) has allowed the opinions and views of men to infiltrate religion. With insight into the ways and means of these two schools we will see the true role of the Holy Imams (a.s.) in the Islamic community, and will comprehend the fact to be mentioned that the Holy Prophet (S) and Hazrat Mahdi (a.s.) had one aim and means for accomplishing it.

إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

The Holy Prophet of Islam Muhammad (S) said:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال رسول الله صَلَّى الله عليه و آله: سيأتي زمانٌ على أُمَّتِي لا يبقى من القرآن الا رسمه ولا من الاسلام الا اسمه، يُسَمَّونَ به و هم ابعد الناس عنه

“There will arrive a time for my nation when of the Quran only its lore, meaning its writing or written word, and of Islam only its name will remain. The people will be called Muslims by this name, but they

will be the furthest from Islam”. [12](#)

That which we wish to bring under discussion and assessment – as far as God bestows upon us success is this sentence from the Prophets tradition:

“Of Islam only its name will remain”.

The Holy Prophet (S) made a strange prediction. When we read this forecast certain questions come to mind.

- 1) What was Islam like during the Prophets time?
- 2) What happened to his Islam afterwards? In other words how did they empty it of its original content? What form aid they change it to and how did they change its realities to reticence?
- 3) How did the Holy Imams (a.s.) return to the people the true Islam we now possess, in the same form that existed during the Prophets (S) time?

By finding and understanding the answers to these questions we will discover what our responsibility is towards Islam in the present day and age. The above questions are summarized in the following sentence.

What was Islam? What happened to it and what must be done now?

In our previous discussion it was said that we understand from studying Quranic verses that The Lord is a nurturer that promotes and sustains the development of the being subject to his tutelage until it reaches complete perfection or maturity. Providing the necessities of the creature being nurtured is a requisite of lordship and nurturing. We also learned that the Prophets conflicts with their nations and the evil persons of their time were over who possessed lordship or sovereignty. According to the Holy Quran most of them had no dispute over God being Creator.

We read in the Holy Quran:

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ

“If you should ask them; who created the Heavens and the Earth? They would certainly answer: Allah!” (Quran 31: 25)

Consequently the conflicts and arguments with the pagans were not for the most part over the matter of creation but rather mainly over sovereignty. This is the main center of the prophets wars with the evil persons and nations buried in ignorance. Victory in this battle is what makes the prophets successful in the establishment of religion.

We said that the lord is obliged to legislate for the life of the beings under his tutelage. This is in principle the most prominent characteristic of lordship. Allah creates and then decrees how his creatures should live. He gives them the laws for living and specifies the manner of their life, also equipping them with the means for reaching maturity guiding them in this direction.

The prophets stood by this very basic, fundamental characteristic saying: O Mankind! Your lord and Nurturer is the Lord of the Heavens and Earth. He has made laws for all living creatures. He has given order to the lives of the heavens and earth and the creatures therein, and he also created laws for you, ascertaining your way of life.

We said previously that every creatures way of life was ascertained according to its own structure and nature. In the case of one of them the Quran speaks of subjugation. The Quran sees inanimate objects obliged and subjugated in the powerful chain of the law of creation. They follow the way to their perfection in this way never straying from it in the least because straying from the way that creation has ascertained for them is equal to their destruction:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا
وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Lo! your lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then mounted He the throne. He covereth the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it, and hath made the sun and the moon and the stars subservient by His command. His verily is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah” the Lord of the Worlds!” (Quran 7:54).

This verse begins with the words “your Lord” and after giving examples of his lordship such as the earths rotation and the appearance of day and night, he is praised with the attribute “Lord of the Worlds”

وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلًّا يَجْرِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

***“He constraineth the sun and moon to give service, each running on for an appointed term.....”
(Holy Qura, 31:29)***

For another group of creatures Divine guidance is in the form of inspiration. Animals live under the influence of Gods inspirational guidance and as thus follow the way towards their maturity, reaching its absolute bounds. The precise, subtle and sometimes extremely complicated way of animal life is all led by the inspiration of their “Lord”. From the first moment of life until the final degree of maturity, and from then until death animal life continues under the radiation of this form of guidance.

In the Holy Quran we find an example of animal life as thus:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا

“And thy lord inspired the bee, saying: Choose thou habitations in the hills and in the trees and in that which they thatch. Then eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of they Lord, made smooth (for thee)”. (Quran 6:69)

However in the case of man, the most superior creature in these three groups, guidance is by revelation. Divine organization goes to work and from its fountain-head revelations are revealed to the prophets by esteemed Angels and their like. Mans way of life is therefore ascertained, giving order to all aspects of his life guiding him towards the way for achieving happiness in the two worlds.

This order or system and set of laws in Quranic Culture is called “Islam”, it is a religion for mankind based on his nature and the realm of his existence, collating exactly with human disposition, coming from his “Lord”. This is not just the proper name for the religion and special Divine law of The Last Prophet Muhammad (S). That which all of the prophets proclaimed; Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, all had the name of “Islam” This is to the point where the Quran informs us that no name appeared for it before Noah (a.s.), but from his time onward the name for all of Gods Divine Laws is “Islam”.

We discussed this before and we saw that according to Quranic logic

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ﴿١٠٤﴾ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ

“Lo! religion with Allah (is) al-Islam (The Surrender to his will and guidance) Those who (formerly) received the scripture differed only after knowledge came unto them, through transgression among themselves”. (Quran 3: 19)

Hence, a description of Islam may be summed up in this form: «The set of laws that The Lord of Mankind has expounded for him in proportion to his make-up and corresponding to human nature».

From here on our discussion will be about Islam in order to see what this Islam was (meaning mans way of life and thought, beliefs and morality), and what form it took after the Prophets death. We will also see how it was emptied of its original content and what should be done now.

The Holy Prophet (S) had announced «nothing will remain of Islam but its name». What was this “Islam” and how did it become so empty and hollow that only its name remains? With an accurate analysis of Islam we will discover it has four types of existence. In other words, Islam in human society, four types of substances:

A) Nominal Existence

B) Conceptual Existence

C) Practical Existence

D) Islamic Society Existence

Nominal Existence

In the collection of personal and social religious commandments and Islamic ethics and beliefs, we run across a series of terms that have been shaped by God just as all of the other aspects of this religious creeds. We have also seen that the last Prophet (S) had announced that there would come a time when nothing but these terms would remain which make up Islam's existence in name.

The last Prophet (S) upon his appointment proclaims the commandments for “Salaat” (Prayer), “Wudhu” (Ablution), and Jihad (Holy War).....etc. In Arabic the word Salaat literally means praise, “Wudhu” means cleanliness, and “Jihad” is taken from a sentence meaning ability and fortitude.

The Holy Prophet (S) recruited these words and organized and appointed them according to revelation to a series of actions and behaviour. Thus these words are introduced to the communities in a terminological style, which possess special meanings in Islam, taking on an Islamic hue and becoming terms peculiar only to Islam. Lastly, along with all of the other terms they make up Islams existence in name.

Conceptual Existence

The true meanings of Islam in all of its aspects, in other words, the foundations for religious practice, ethics and belief form the existence in meaning of Islamic terms. When prophets are appointed they proclaim these two things together, and they deliver both the term and its meaning as their divine message. We also know that the first and foremost duty of all Prophets throughout history is the proclamation of Gods message.

فَهَلْ عَلَى الرُّسُلِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ

«Are the messengers charged with aught save plain conveyance (of the message)? (Quran 16: 35)

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ

«.....then know that the duty of Our messenger is only plain conveyance (of the message)? (Qur'an 5: 92.)

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ

«then, if they turn away, thy duty (O Muhammad) is but plain conveyance (of the message)» (Qur'an 16: 82)

In one analysis and assimilation we can say that the Prophets had two distinctive superior characteristics in common: Firstly they are Muslims, and they are the very first Muslim of their nation, just as the Quran states with regard to Muhammad (S). [13](#)

Secondly they are a messenger from God. According to both of these characteristics they possessed certain responsibilities. In relation to their first characteristic, that of being a Muslim, they must pray, fast, encourage the people to be free from impurity, keep them from corruption and vice and go to Holy War (Jihad) and Hajj. In short all of the responsibilities of one Muslim must be done by them at the best level. Yet in relation to their second characteristic, that of a messenger, they are only charged with the proclamation of that message and nothing more.

These men, being the Prophets of God, must relay Gods message to the people while in the way of this cause fearing nothing, standing firm until death, suffer stonings, give into exile and emigration but continuing to notify his nation of Gods word which is summed up in Islamic terminology and their correct meanings.

The prophets proclaim Gods message throughout history. They present to the community both the name and meaning of Islam. Even so, this is only the beginning of their task, and not the entirety. For example, after the people of a nation become familiar with the terms “prayer”, “ablution” and “Holy War” (Jihad) along with their Islamic meanings the prophets begin a new endeavor. They strive towards bringing this way of thought, message, and knowledge to the active stage. In other words creating a people who will “dress” Islamic teachings with the clothing of practice.

By way of the prophets endeavors the people who lived during the age of proclamation came to know the existences in name and meaning of Gods religion, along with each of its practices, beliefs and behaviours, understanding them well.

They became familiar with the special terms in Islam and also their hidden meanings. All of the Abudhar, Abu lahabs, Omars and Abu Jahls, all of the prophets contemporaries, believers and non believers, understood all of the Islamic terms and their meanings. After this comes the time for Islams existence in practice and the prophets strived to apply practically and actual existence. Praying persons should come to exist and all other Islamic practical laws and ethics should be applied.

Islamic Personality Existence

It is here that Islams third form of existence or its existence in practice appears and Islamic personality is

born. "Islamic Identity" may be observed in that person who performs his "ablutions", prays, fasts, goes to Holy War (Jihad) and pilgrimage "Hajj" and is bound by Islamic morality. All of the Prophets endeavors in Mecca after the proclamation were in the way of building Islamic identities. In this period he brought such personalities as Ali (a.s.), Khadija, Abudhar, Ammar, Somayeh, Yaser, Khabbab, Bilal and etc. During the Prophets last year of residence in Mecca these three stages of Islamic subsistence were transferred to Medina and took root there in the Prophets absence.

The subject is itself clear that it is impossible that the third stage of existence of Islam i.e. practical presence or Islamic personality exists in a place which nominal and conceptional existence does not exist. Until the Prophet (S) has not explained Islamic terminology and proclaimed their correct meanings, the third stage which applied Islam or Islamic personality cannot come into existence, because the first two stages proceed the third.

Existence of Islamic Society

Now that the third "essence of existence" or Islamic identity was formed in society and came to be, the Prophet (S) began to establish the fourth stage of Islamic existence called Islamic society. This was at a time when Islamic individuals came and swore allegiance to the Holy Prophet (S) in order to set up an Islamic community, a community where Islamic social practical laws would be constituted.

Thus Islam broke through the walls of homes entering the economic and political scene and that of war and peace. From here we understand the meaning and function of «Allegiance» in Islam, and realize that allegiance brought about the Islamic community or the highest form of Islamic existence.

Hence, during the lifetime of our Prophet (S), Islam acquired four types of subsistence. The terminology was announced, their meanings were proclaimed and indoctrinated, individuals were trained to bear the burden of acting according to Islam and eventually the Islamic community was also founded.

In the prior historical periods of man, during the lifetimes of all of the prophets (the prophets of mission), these very terms used in the final Divine religion also existed: prayer (salat), compulsory alms (zakat), fasting (soun) and Holy War (jihad) etc. existed as terms along with their meanings. The proceeding prophets propagated these terms and their meanings in every possible way to them. In addition to this, Islamic personalities were also trained by them.

Of course, the success of the prophets in this third part varied, some having more success, some having less. However, some of them were successful in creating an Islamic society, like Moses, David and Solomon and others were not.

During the Holy Prophets (S) time, Islam emerged in all of its "essences of existence" and with all of its aspects and phases in society. But after that revered prophet what happened? It might be surprising for you to find out that the Islam subsisting among the majority of Muslims today is nothing but the name of

Islam, its real meaning having disappeared.

An example of this is seen in relation to prayer. Since prayer has certain conditions, if these conditions do not exist the true reality of prayer ceased to exist. The same is true for every other Islamic commandment such as “fast” and the Holy War (Jihad), if their conditions and particulars don't accompany them they will not be considered as Islamic laws.

We now repeat our question: Islam's existence in name, meaning, identity and society came to be during the lifetime of the Last Prophet (S) and most other prophets, but what happened after the death of these prophets? About the previous prophets it must be said that after their deaths Islam was completely erased from their society being altered, changed and concealed.

Of course this didn't happen all in one day or all at one time but over a span of time. In time the Islam that Moses proclaimed completely vanished. The Islam that Jesus son of Mary preached was destroyed after him not even its literal or terminological existences remained.

Because Islam is the name of a religion which God revealed to all of his prophets of mission, the name of Moses's religious law was Islam and has now been changed to Judaism, while the name of Jesus's (a.s.) religion has been changed to Christianity. These names did not come from God but were created by nations and came to be at the hands of meddlers.

During previous ages alteration was so advanced that not only did Islamic societies such as that founded by Moses cease to exist, but the Islamic identity built by him was also overturned so that even its meaning and terminology were destroyed. Only this group (the Jews) see themselves as his followers but did Moses or Jesus proclaim these practices, beliefs and behaviour which now exist among the Jews and Christians? Were the drinking of liquor, the refraining from circumcision, ideas that Jesus is the son of God and that God is made up of three persons, taught by Jesus (a.s.)? As such it may be said that Islamic society, identity, meaning and terminology have all ceased to exist.

Now let's see what form the situation will take with regard to the religion of the Last Prophet (S). He himself had said: “Only its name will remain”. Nay of Islam only its name will remain and of the Quran only its written lines.

We are trying here to understand this remark and penetrate and dig into its environs, We have said that of the Islam previous prophets proclaimed, none of the various stages of its existence remain. However with regard to the Last Prophets (S) religion, according to his own words, in the ages following him only the name of Islam will remain.

Literally, this tragic event pertains to the first period of the Imamate. The role of the Holy Imams (a.s.) in the Islamic society was to return to the dead, meaningless, evicted Islam, and bring to life its active and conceptual existences. These great men both returned the true meanings of Islam to the society and then proceeded to nurture Islam's identity.

Alteration and its Dimensions in Past Nations

In a short, analogic, comparatory discussion we will study the ways of alteration, replacement and concealment in previous nations so that with greater clarity we will come to know the final Divine law and its fate. We will consult the only accurate unaltered record in our possession of the history of divine religions, The Holy Quran to see how previous divine religions were destroyed:

1) On Concealment

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا
قَلِيلًا ۚ فَبُئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ

«And (remember) when Allah laid a charge on those who had received the Scripture (He said): You are to expound it to mankind and not to hide it. But they flung it behind their backs and bought thereby a little gain.» (Qur'an 3: 187)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ
اللَّاعِنُونَ

«Those who hide the proofs and the guidance which We revealed, after We had made it clear in the Scripture: such are accursed of Allah and accursed of those who have the power to curse» (Qur'an 2: 159)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ
اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

«o! those who hide aught of the scripture which Allah hath revealed, and purchase a small gain therewith, they eat into their bellies nothing but fire. Allah will not speak to them on the day of Resurrection, nor will Me make them grow. Theres' will be a painful doom.» (Holy Quran: 2: 174)

2) On mixing the truth with falsities

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبُسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ

«O people of the scripture! Why confound ye truth with falsehood and knowingly conceal the truth» (Holy Quran 3:71)

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ

«Confound not truth with falsehood, nor knowingly conceal the truth» (Holy Quran 2 :42)

3) Alteration

أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

«Have you any hope that they will be true to you when a party of them used to listen to the word of Allah, then used to change it, after they had understood it, knowingly?» ” (Qur’an 2: 75)

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّاعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ

«...and of the Jews: listeners for the sake of falsehood, listeners on behalf of other folk who come not unto thee, changing words from their context....» (Qur’an 5: 41)

مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ غَيْرَ مُسْمِعٍ وَرَاعِنَا لِيًّا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي الدِّينِ

«Some of those who are Jews change words from their context and say: “We hear and disobey; hear thou as one who heareth not” and “listen to us” distorting with their tongues and slandering religion.....» “(Qur’an 4: 46)

From a careful study of the proceeding verses we discover that different nations used different methods to plunder heavenly truths and divine religions. A group of them hide or concealed these truths, another mixed the truth with falsehood creating suspicion and the third group only changed directions to alter meaning or intention, having nothing to do with its outer appearance and literality. In short, by using these methods they would alter the Scriptures or Testaments and progressed to the point where it became impossible to recognize the truth from falsehood.

Of course the primary motive for these treacherous acts and plundering was that Heavenly truths were always and in every place at war and in conflict with a part of mans' sensual passions and desires. The validity and value of these types of realities closed the way to the enactment and practice of sensual desires for the powerful and pleasure seeking.

Both these pleasures and countless conveniences must be refuted; those realities removed from their valid, recognized position; or changed in essence and nature. The powerful persons of nearly all nations chose the third method. This was because they were not willing to accept the first method which meant

forsaking their pleasures and the second method was not feasible because refuting religious truths in their entirety would damage their position making life difficult for them.

As such, the best method was to alter and plunder all of its meanings and realities under the pretense of religion. This was the fate of all Divine religions and past religious laws, they were altered in this fashion. The Holy Quran groups these crimes and malicious acts under the word revolt, injustice. [14](#)

Previously we learned that the exigency of Divine Lordship is that his laws---being the only laws that ring true for mankind---be sent to the prophets in the form of revelations which are then taught to us by them. We also learned that because they are messengers, Divine messengers have no responsibility except that of propagation. In addition to that however, every prophet before being Gods messenger is also a Muslim. That which is required of us with regard to our being Muslim is also required of him.

Being a Muslim he must pray, fast, perform the rites of Hajj, perform Holy War (Jihad) and establish a just government. All of these are Islamic responsibilities, not those of prophetic mission. In the sense that the prophet is a messenger of God and an apostle he has no other responsibility but that of propagation.

Now, with the preliminary information we have acquired we will proceed to the main topic of this series of lectures, being the role and responsibilities of the Holy Imams (a.s.) in Islamic society.

Imamate and Caliphate

In Islam there exists two schools of thought and insight: The Imamate school and the Caliphate schools.

In the Imamate school, the Imam possesses certain particularities, Among them that he must be infallible of all sin and error (“Masum” = infallible). Another is that he may only be appointed by God, the Prophet having no role in his appointment except for the propagation and proclamation of Gods command. ‘The Almighty God’ chooses, and the prophet relays the news of this divine appointment to the people.

Of these Imams, the first being Amirul Mu'meneen Ali (a.s.) and the last being Hujjat ibn al-Hassan Mahdi (a.s.), that which we know and recognize in relation to Ali is the same for Hujjat ibn al-Hassan. That which is proved for Ali; infallibility, divine appointment, divine inspiration, and knowledge of all the aspects of eternal Islam, exists for all of the Imams and is proved.

But in the Caliphate school, the people choose the Caliph and he comes to hold the position of Caliph by the people's choice. Here, what is confirmed for Abu Bakr has been confirmed until the end of the Ottoman Caliphate. The Caliphate is determined by a vote and an oath of allegiance and this never differs.

This discussion was only a very small introduction. We will now see that in the Imamate school and based on its views, how Imam Ali (a.s.) is seen and what the Holy Prophet (S) said on his behalf.

A study of the Prophets life will clearly show that the propagation of divine law by him was not unrelated to the events of time and place. For instance, when something happened and the Prophet was consulted concerning it, Gabriel would reveal the related judgement by way of revelation. In domestic or social matters, conflicts would arise, someone would ask a question, or an issue would be brought up by friend or foe with the Prophet (S). Following these situations a revelation would be revealed that solved the disagreement or answered the question.

We will refer to a very important event in Islamic history and learn from it. In the eighth year of the Hejrat, the Prophet conquered Mecca and returned to Medina.

Now the Muslims possess the mightiest power in Arabia. However other scattered forces exist in Arabia which have not come under the banner of Islam, and a group of the pagan Arab tribes still loyal to the customs of the ignorant Arabs come to Mecca. These pagans circumambulate the “House of God” in Mecca and perform all of the other rites customary just as the Muslims.

After Islam gained power and Mecca was conquered, all of these rites were performed by the Muslims. The Muslim and pagan both performed Abrahams great rite and each went in his own way having nothing to do with the other.

The Chapter of Bara'ah in the Holy Quran, was revealed as a strong command to end the mixing of Muslim and Pagan. In these verses God explicitly informs the pagans that:

بِرَاءةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١﴾ فَسِيحُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَلِّمُوا أَنْكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢﴾ وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ

“(This is a declaration of) immunity by Allah and his Apostle towards those the idolaters with whom you made an agreement. So go about in the land for four months and know that you cannot cause failure to Allah and that Allah will bring disgrace to the unbelievers. And an announcement from Allah and His Apostle to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allah and His Apostle are free from liability to the idolaters;.... “(Qur’an 9: 1, 2 & 3)

So it was thus that the proclamation for combat with all of the Arab polytheists was given. This was Allahs command and judgement and must be communicated as such to the Arab pagans and polytheists. The Prophet is the one delegated for the duty of propagation. The initial proclamation of the Quran and each of Gods laws to its audience is the particular concern of the (“Masum”) infallible. Those bound by, or the audience intended for a particular divine law must initially hear it, from one of the infallible.

The Holy Quran stipulates that; our invisible officers (Angels) look after those possessed of prophetic mission in all aspects and ways during the propagation of divine law, so that the message will be given

without encountering the danger of mistakes or errors. As a result Heavenly truths reach the people in their true entirety. [15](#) This is the very principle we mentioned as the purity of first hand propagation which consists of this divine practice:

«The initial propagation must be undertaken by an infallible (Masum)»

Here a point is necessary to make because without it this subject will not be correctly understood. The ideas that must be relayed to the people may be divided into two parts: first are those of which both the terminology and their meanings or intent are from God such as the Quran and other divinely inspired scriptures, second are those whose ideas and meanings are Heavenly but its terminology coming from the Holy Prophet (S) and those are the traditions.

The Holy Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet (S) by God, both the very terminology, the words and all of their meanings and intent are from Him. Of course the Quran only contains the major and main topics of Islamic matters and doesn't usually deal with specific matters. But there also exists a series of Islamic laws and learnings and other specifics such as how many "Rakats" (units or sections) make up one prayer, what is recited in "Rukoo" (genuflection) and "Sujud" (prostration) during prayer, how do we say the "Tashahud" (testimony) in the rite of Hajj how many times must we circumambulate the Kaaba, where is "Meeghat" (a certain place for beginning Hajj rites), how do we put on the pilgrims clothing, when are alms necessary and all other secondary details.

These are not in the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet (S) with reliance on revelation but with his own terminology and words explained them. In this series of religious laws the meanings and ideas are from God but the speech from the Prophet.

That which in word and meaning was from God; the Holy Quran and its propagation to the duty bound, was finished by the last year of the Holy Prophets (S) life, and the Prophet proclaimed it to all of the people. However, the ideas and truths which must be explained in prophetic traditions are of two types. One type included those which the Muslims of that time needed and wanted. The Prophet informed everyone of these.

The other type were those which would not be enacted during the Prophets time and would be enacted in later times, there as such being no urgent need for their proclamation in the Prophets time. For example; if the leader of the Muslims is not infallible, (the prophet or Imam the rightful one) what is the duty of the Muslims, and how should they act towards him? This verdict was not needed during the Prophets time. Also, if between two groups of Muslims war should break out, how should the oppressive side be treated and the property taken from them holds what verdict in Islamic law?

These laws and their like had no opportunity for enactment during the Prophets day and age. Later however, during the age of Imam Ali (a.s.) it became reality and its practical verdict was enacted by the Imam. Also, if the Muslims should go to war against the rightful leader what must be done with their captives and how should the spoils of war be taken possession of? All of these were matters brought up

later and there was no need for their verdicts during the Prophets time so they weren't explained.

It was all of these events and hundreds and thousands of other events that had laws, rules, and verdicts, and God related and explained them to His prophet by way of revelation. In these sorts of matters the Prophet left their verdicts as a trust with Amirul Mo'meneen Ali (a.s.),¹⁶ and it was he who had the responsibility of their communication after the Prophet (S)!

Another division of the matters necessary to be propagated could be into those being proclaimed for the first time without an intermediary, and those proclaimed by an intermediary.

The laws necessary for their duty-bound must initially be proclaimed by a person completely infallible and free of sin, error and prejudice. Prayer, the Fast, Zakat and Jihad and every other Divine Law must initially be taught by a missionary who is infallible (Masum) to the duty bound. This must be done by one who is appointed by God, and infallible of errors and mistakes and if not Gods law may become subject to subtraction and additions, mistakes and forgetfulness. Of course, after correctly learning religious law every Muslim may and must proclaim it to others. One Muslim may say to the other: the Prophet (S) taught me to pray like this, he taught the particulars of a certain law like this or he performed some particular action like this. An ordinary Muslim, one who is not infallible ("Masum") may not say the following without mentioning an intermediary; God requires you to pray in this manner. No, in principle the right to say such does not exist for those other than the infallible. This is the precise, important point here.

According to this principle the Islamic laws which were not proclaimed during the Prophets lifetime must have been proclaimed by what person? While we answer this question we will draw closer to the role and deed of the Holy Imams (a.s.).

49) In creditable Shi'ite Traditions it is said that the Holy Prophet (S) informed Ali (a.s.) of all of the matters needed by man and he (Ali) collected and put these down in a book called « **جامعة** =collection», which was kept by Ahlu'l bait as a scientific legacy. We have also seen much of this book in Sunni Traditions. We will discuss this book further in the future. If God wills.

A Man of Myself

The verses of Bara'ah were revealed and it addressed the pagans as a group specially. They were in Mecca far from the Prophets (S) reach and the Medinites were not subject to the propagation of these verses. These verses were not meant for them and are remarks and commands for the pagans exclusively. Previously we learned and will see more clearly in the future, that according to Islamic thought, propagation of verses to those they address must be accomplished by an infallible.

Our point is a clear and prominent point in the text of this story. The Holy Prophet (S) sent for Abu Bakr and giving him the verses told him; mount and go to Mecca and proclaim these verse to those subject to

them, the pagans.

Here we have a revelation from God, those subject to it not being the Muslims of Medina so that the Prophet could have delivered it himself, and the first propagation having been carried out by an infallible (Masum). If this revelation had been meant for the people of Medina of course Abu Bakr being one of them could have proclaimed it everywhere and to everyone as second hand propagation.

We have however seen that this was not so and the word was especially meant for the pagans and carried the announcement of Islams position regarding its encounters with them in the future. Hence, the delivery of these verses in Mecca was only correct if done by the Prophet (S).

Abu Bakr mounts and starts out towards Mecca. Gabriel appears and brings to the Prophet (S) this categorical divine command: “That is the propagation of Gods verdict, first hand propagation at that. Either you must see to it yourself or someone who is of you”.

This was the basis of this incident.

Now we will take a look at the related traditions. Here we will refer to the point that all of the traditions we will read are from authoritative Sunni writings and we have not used Shi'ite sources. In principle it was not necessary for us to do so because the authoritative Sunni narratives cover almost all aspects of this incident.

Tirmidhi in “As-Sahih”, Nasa'i in “al-Khasa'is” and Ahmad bin Hanbal in “Masnad” and many other famous narrators have narrated it and we will report it literally from Tirmidhi's “Sahih”. Anas ibn Malik had reported that the Prophet (S) sent the Bara'ah verses with Abu Bakr to Mecca but called him back from the road saying:

“Its not suitable and these verses must not be read to the people except by a man of my family” [17](#)

Who are those of the Prophets family? They are those included in and covered by this noble verse:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

“Allah's wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you O' folk of the Household, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing”. (Qur'an 33: 33)

And they are far from any uncleanness they possess the condition for first hand propagation or in other words they possess infallibility and divine immunity. Therefore, now that the Prophet (S) himself cannot deliver these verses to those they are addressed to, someone must see to this important task who possesses the special conditions for first hand propagation. For this reason the Prophet (S) sent for Ali (a.s.) and gave the verses to him so that he would undertake this duty.

Several traditions of Imam Ali (a.s.) exist on this matter. In one of them, Zayd ibn Yasee relates as such from the Imam:

“The Holy Prophet (S) dispatched Abu Bakr to the people of Mecca with the Surah of Bara'ah. After Abu Bakr's departure he sent Ali after him saying, “Get the letter (containing the verses) from him and take it to Mecca”.

The Imam went after Abu Bakr, retrieved the letter and took off for Mecca to perform his duty. Abu Bakr returned to Medina in distress. He was upset and feared that something had been revealed from Heaven about him to the Prophet (S). When he arrived in Medina he went to see the Holy Prophet (S) asking: “Has something been revealed about me?”

The Holy Prophet replied: “No! nothing has been revealed about you on this matter. It is only that I was given the duty to either deliver these verses myself or send a person of my family for this purpose” [18](#)

In another tradition the Imam himself relates:

“I told the Holy Prophet (S): O' Prophet of God! I am not eloquent nor an orator! The Prophet replied: There is no other way or solution and is inevitable that either I take these verses or you deliver them. I then said: Now that I have no alternative and there is no other solution, then I will take them. The Prophet then said: Go without a doubt the Exalted Lord will keep your tongue on the truth, and truth will guide your heart”.

The Holy Prophet (S) said this and then placed his blessed hand on Ali's mouth. [19](#)

Another existing tradition related by the Imam (a.s.) reads like this:

“The verses of the Surah of Bara'ah were revealed to the Holy Prophet and he called for Abu Bakr and gave the verses to him to take to Mecca and proclaim them to its inhabitants. But after a short period he summoned me and said: Go after Abu Bakr and wherever you reach him retrieve the letter from him, take the verses to Mecca and proclaim them to the inhabitants there. I met Abu Bakr in “Johfeh” and retrieved the letter from him. Abu Bakr then returned to the Holy Prophet (S) saying: O' Apostle of Allah, has something been revealed concerning me. The Prophet replied: No, But Gabriel came to me and said: “Other than you or a man of you no one may pronounce the prophetic message on your behalf”.[20](#) There is another tradition from Sa'ad Waqqas. This companion of the Prophet (S) says:

“The Prophet (S) sent Abu Bakr with the verses of Bara' ah towards Mecca. He was still on the way when the Prophet sent Ali after him (to get the verses from him and go himself to perform the duty of Proclamation). Ali (a.s.) got the verses and went with them to Mecca. Abu Bakr returned to the Holy Prophet (S) in much distress and sadness and complained to him. The Prophet saying:[21](#)

Once again according to this tradition, the Holy Prophet (S) makes the propagation restricted to himself or a man of himself saying: “Myself or a man from me must perform the duty of propagation and the

communication of this divine Mission.”

Ibn Abbas spoke in more detail. He reports that the Prophet sent Abu Bakr and Omar together to Mecca placing the letter in Abu Bakr's hands. These two started out and progressed a distance. Away along the road they saw a man on a camel coming towards them and they called out:

“Who are you?”

The man astride the camel replied:

“It is I, Ali! Abu Bakr give me the letter! (the letter containing the verses of Bara'ah)”

Abu Bakr asked him:

“Has something happened?”

Amir-ul-Mo'meneen Ali (a.s.) replied:

“Its alright, its nothing bad with regard to you”.

Then Ali (a.s.) took the letter from him and started out towards Mecca in order to announce it to the pagans. Omar and Abu Bakr upon their return to Medina asked the Prophet:

“What's new regarding us, and what has happened?” The Prophet replied:

“Its alright, however; [22](#)

“I have been told and the order has been given, that no one shall deliver the divine message except myself or a man who is from me”.

The last tradition will be quoted from Abu Bakr himself. Zayd ibn Yasee quotes from Abu Bakr that the Prophet sent him to Mecca with the verses of Bara'ah and this message:

“Form this year onwards pagans may not perform the Hajj, while no longer may naked persons circumambulate the Kaaba such as was the custom in ignorant times, and no one except the Muslims will enter Heaven. Those who have treaties with the Holy Prophet their treaties are valid and standing for their lawful term, and Allah and his prophet like not the idolaters.”

Abu Bakr, with this message and the Quranic verses goes off to fulfill his duty, but in his absence the Holy Prophet (S) sent for Ali directing him:

“Go toward Mecca and try to catch up Abu Bakr, sent him back to me and you go on to proclaim the Quranic verses and my command.”

Ali completed the Prophets orders Abu Bakr also returned to Medina when he went to the prophet, in tears he said:

“O’ Apostle of God! Has something happened concerning me?”

The Prophet replied:

“No, All is well, but²³ I have been ordered by god that no one but I or a man from me must propagate.”

The afore mentioned events and the Prophets comments about Imam Ali (a.s.) have been recorded in the writings of other narrators, of which we all refrain from conveying here. Those who wish for a greater detailed account may refer to the writings of traditions and exegesis.

This event was related to the Propagation and message of the Surah of Bara’ah. The Prophet was here commanded that only himself or a man like himself may rise to its proclamation. We have also seen that at this time and among all of the supporters and family of the Prophet it was only Ali (a.s.) who was introduced as possessing this distinction. The conclusion here is that “only Ali is a man such as the Apostle of God.”

This is another event in Islamic history which brings across this very meaning and reality, bringing greater clarity to the sentence (a man of myself) It also removes the inadmissible probabilities that declared the depth of these words as being nothing.

It was during the ‘Battle of Uhud’ with all of its difficulties and unpleasantness. The Muslims, upon hearing the diabolic shout “Muhammad has been killed!”, decided to flee rather than remain. The Holy Prophet (S) remained, injured and alone. Only a few of the Muslims remained with him and according to the narratives of some historians they were Ali (a.s.) and two others. In this battle the Imam had killed the pagan standard bearers one after the other. Now that the Muslims had fled and the Prophet had remained alone, he was rushing back and forth in every direction fighting off the numerous enemy soldiers and the pagan ranks who were attacking the Holy Prophet (S) each time the Prophet would repeat this sentence:

O’ Ali, ward these (solders) off!

The Imam and his sword alone would attack them, breaking off their rushing attack, placing his own life in danger to protect that of the Prophet (S) Gabriel, who was present here at the prophets side on this battlefield said:

“O Messenger of Allah, this is an example of Ali’s devotion and selflessness, his fellowship is with you!”

The Prophet replied:

“Ali’s sacrifices in my way are not surprising; because he is of me and I am of him.”

Gabriel then said:

“I am also of you both”²⁴

In this historical event, all of the speech surrounds the words 'Mennie' and 'Menkoma'. The Prophet (S) says Ali is of me and I am also of Ali. Gabriel says: I am also of you. The Prophet does not refute his remark. What do these words mean? What could be the meaning behind these three being of one another? How are they alike? What is the common aspect between them? Which meanings does the word 'Min' relay here?

Gabriel was not a human being and was not the paternal cousin or close relative of the Prophet, and therefore we cannot see the words "I am of you" as being in this manner. The only relation he had to Prophet was in their partnership delivering the divine message. He received revelation from God and delivered it to the Prophet (S) The Prophet also received divine commands. Sometimes delivering them himself and sometimes Ali delivering them to the Muslims.

So, the sentence *انه مني و أنا منه* *انا منكم* all say that we are similar and equal in the distinction of propagation (of divine law), to such an extent that these three are as parts of one another's being.

Remarks of the Holy prophet (S) which sows Ali (a.s.) as having such a similarity and affinity to the Prophet in the duty of propagation (that he is as a part of his being), are not restricted to the event of the propagation of the surah of Bara'ah. For example, in the farewell pilgrimage when he delivered a great number of his most important messages and commandments to this fact. He explains this unparalleled similarity and closeness with complete clarity, and also it's result in the cooperation and partnership in the primary process of the Prophetic Mission (the propagation).

The Prophets companion Habashy Ibn Jonadeh said:

During the farewell pilgrimage the Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Ali is of me, and I am of Ali, and no one may deliver the prophetic message on my behalf other than myself or Ali."[25](#)

In another famous tradition we read: The Prophet sent Imam Amirul Mo'meneen (a.s.) to Yemen bestowing upon him military command Khaled had gone for this purpose he gave the command of the first division to Khaled and the second to Ali (a.s.) then saying:

"If the two divisions should meet and merge, then the command of both will be in Ali's hands."[26](#)

The Imam went to this battle and returned the victor. A small group of the army instigated by Khaled, upon their return to Medina, brought complaints against Ali (a.s.) to the Holy Prophet (S). The Prophet was so enraged by their actions that anger was immediately seen in his face.

Then he said:

"What do you want of Ali? What do you want of Ali? What do you want of Ali? Ali is of me and I of Ali and he is the master and leader of every believer after me."[27](#)

In another tradition where Hassan (a.s.) and Hussain (a.s.) are present the same remark is made. This tradition is found in the book 'Al-Riazal-Nazarath' The Holy Prophet (S) said to Ali (a.s.):

“Three blessings have been bestowed upon you and on no one else, not even myself; you have the distinction of being my son in law and I do not possess this virtue. You have a wife such as ‘Sediqeh’ my daughter, while I have had no such wife and two children have been bestowed upon you such as Hassan and Hussain (a.s.), while from my loins no such children have come to be. But you are not separate from me, you and Hassan and Hussain are of me and I am of you.”[28](#)

In reference to the Imams of Ahlu'l bait (a.s.) this remark exists in various forms. According to a tradition by one of the Prophet's companions Maqdaam bin Ma'di Karb, the lap saying[29](#)

“This is of me”. In reference to Imam Hussain (a.s.) he also said:
(Hussain is of me and I am also of Hussain)[30](#)

Regarding the last member of Ahlu'l-bait, the last Imam of this household, Imam Mahdi (a.s.) he also said:

(Mahdi is of me)[31](#) and /or: (Mahdi is of our household)[32](#)

All of these remarks show that this entire group had the responsibility of propagation. The Holy Prophet (S) holds the responsibility for the propagation of the Divine Message. The Holy Imams (a.s.) were also charged with this duty. The difference between the two is that Ali (a.s.) and the other Imams received the Divine Message from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Prophet received it from God. The conclusion here is that; our Imams, up until the last one Hujjat ibn al Hassan (a.s.), all being of Ahlu'l-bait are all responsible for the propagation as their first and foremost duty and responsibility that could never be abandoned. These great men, placing no worth on their own life, sacrificed everything for the fulfillment of their duty. However, the other duties of Holy Imams are as affairs of their concern. Holding public prayer is of his concerns. Establishing and enforcing Islamic law is one of their concerns and the creation of an Islamic community and a just government is also the same. This means that if no one followed them and they acquired no assistance it's possible the just government wouldn't come into practice. But with or without the help of others, propagation could not be unconditional. But, all other no concerns, even though they are mandatory they are also conditional.

Now, how these great men performed their main duties and how they proclaimed it, and what they propagated, are matters and questions that must be clarified in the following discussion that must be clarified in the following discussions. They were the bearers of religious laws; they properly performed the duties of the preservation and propagation of Islam. In future lessons we will study these subjects of discourse.

The religious creed of the Final Prophet (S) – just like in previous nations – was to be and as Amir-ul-Mo'meneen (a.s.) said; took the form of a reversed cloak or a bowl turned over[33](#). The efforts of the

powerful with the aid of a few traitorous, fake scholars proceeded to alter Gods religion, destroying it in the process. In this nation, Islam fell victim to this very fate; to the point that of Islam fell victim to this very fate; to the point that of Islam only a name remained.

The exhausting efforts and self-sacrifices of the Holy Imams (a.s.) gave new life the final religious creed, and returned it to the community where it came to practical in various aspects of time and place. God had appointed these great men for the guardianship and protection of Islam. First of all they were the bearers of all Islamic truths and learning, and secondly they had been charged with the duty of propagation the banishment of alterations and the campaign against change.

Here I repeat; the Holy Imams special responsibility was the same as that of the Prophet, and exclusive in one word, and that being (propagation) in this nation, that which man required and the Prophets era needed was proclaimed by the Prophet (S) himself, and that which was not then needed was handed over to Ali (a.s.); so that he and his eleven descendents would then be the guardians and deliverers of Islamic views in all ages.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ {19} فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ أَأَسْلَمْتُمْ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ {20}

“Lo! Religion with Allah (is) the surrender (to his will guidance) those who (formerly) received the Scripture differed only after knowledge came unto them, through transgression among themselves whose disbelieveth the revelations of Allah (will find that). Lo! Allah is swift in reckoning.” “And if they argue with thee, (O Muhammad), say: I have surrendered my purpose to Allah and (so have) those who follow me. And say unto those read not: Have ye(too) surrendered? If they surrender, then truly they are rightly guided, and if they turn away, then it is, thy duty only to convey the message (unto them). Allah is seer of (his) bondmen.” (Holy Quran: “The Family of Imran”, 3: 19-20.)

In our preliminary discussions we had a few important Islamic terms to consider: ‘Elah’, ‘Abd’, ‘Rab’ and ‘Islam’. After research into the first three terms we arrived at a discussion on the environs of the term ‘Islam’ and in the interim we brought up the famous tradition of the Holy Prophet (S). Previously we placed the very important term under detailed evaluation, therefore we will skirt it here briefly³⁴.

In previously discussion we cited contained the remark that:

“A day will come for the people when there will remain nothing of the Quran but its format meaning its written word. And also of Islam, except for its name nothing else will remain. The people will be called by this name but they will be the furthest persons from Islam...”

And we spoke of this part it, which says:

“Nothing else of Islam will remain except for its name”,

And we wanted to know that from Islam had during the Holy Prophets time and afterwards what from it took.

We saw that the God of creation, based on his lordship must train his creatures and give them growth until the point of maturity. True lordship requires that the best needs of His creatures be known precisely and provided in the necessary amount far from waste and dissipation. The exchangeless divine laws throughout world all bubble up from the spring of God’s lordship and are the way towards anatomical, evolutionary perfection throughout creation.

We have observed that the ordinary battles and conflicts of the Prophets with the evil forces of their era or their nations were over the acceptance of God’s Lordship. The prophets strived to have mankind accept the world comprising divine order and give order to their lives in accordance with His widespread commands. They would tell him (man) that; your lord and the organizer of your life is that same organizer and perfecter of the Heavens and Earth, sun, moon and stars and these creatures will in no way escape from under the weight of divine order.

We know that divine order in mans life is called Islam and this was not the particular name for only the religious creed of the Final Prophet (S). In the Quran we read:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

“Gods religion is Islam” (Holy Quran: 3: 19)

and the differences that the Jews and Christians have introduced into it, each going in a different direction, were only because of oppression and tyranny.

“He hath ordained for you that religion which We inspire in the (Muhammad), and that which We commended unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus...” (‘Counsel’: 13)

This Islam appeared in four stages in the society and has come to be in four “essences of existence”:

1) Nominal Existence

In the past we saw that the Holy Prophet (S) had remarked that of Islam nothing will remain except this from of its appearance and existence.

2) Conceptual Existence

Those meanings that the Prophet explained in relation to legal words and words and expressions. The Holy Prophet (S) used series of terms and words that were generally³⁵ but he explained new meanings

for these literal forms, which of course are not unrelated to their literal meanings. Up to this point the active stage has not come to be and the Prophet strives to his utmost to circulate these words with their new meanings among the people and cause them to be propagated. We have also seen that the primary output of the first prophets was this very propagation and nothing else.

3) Practical Existence

Then the prophet strives to be these Islamic meanings to the stage of practice and earn its active existence. When a Muslim performed his ablutions, prayed, gave zakat, went to Jihad and called people to goodness (Amr bil Maroof) he has found Islams' in practice. Up until the second stage, or in other words the terminological existence both the Muslims and all others during the Prophets time understood. Abu Lahab, Abu Jahl, and Abu Sufyan on the opposing side, and Ammar, Abu Dhar and Khabbab on the agreeing side heard the words 'Salat' and 'Zakat' and understood their meanings.

They recognized the principle terms of Islam such as 'Rab' and 'Elah' with their correct meanings. In this aspect during the Prophets era the Muslim and non-Muslim were equal in their understanding of the pronunciation and meanings of all these terms. It is from this stage onward that Muslims and non-Muslim are separated. After the proclamation the Holy Prophet (S) goes to Jihad striving to make these terms and meanings find their active existence. Here it was that Islamic identity appeared.

It is impossible to present applied Islam in a place without existing the nominal and conceptual existence. Therefore no Muslim exists without knowing Islam. Propagation is meaningless unless until Holy Prophet (S) does not convey the Islamic Terminology.

4) Islamic Society

Now that in Mecca and Medina the third essence of existence was established, the Prophet begins to establish his fourth "essence of existence" taking the name Islamic society. This Islamic society became established when Islamic individuals made an allegiance to the Prophet (S) to build a one hundred percent Islamic community.

The previous prophets who were given the duty of the propagation of Gods religion, Islam, also placed all of their efforts on this very ideal and aspiration. A group of them such as: Moses, Solomen, and David were also successful in the establishment and completion of Islams four essences of existence. During the last Prophets (S) time they were also established by him and they were able to emerge.

One inevitable practice existed thought out the history of mankind. This practice existed may be interpreted into a world wide general rule. It summed up in these sentences: Every true statement, and every just way and rule that conflicts with carnal desires and hinders extravagance in the exploitation of human and natural resources, restricting wealth for certain persons will create for itself a strong group of enemies who will stop at no from of sabotage regarding it. However, since the religion of God especially that of the last Prophet (S) enjoyed heavenly assistance³⁶ and its victory in first stage held a divine

guarantee³⁷.

These alert, powerful enemies had no choice but to hide under the mask of hypocrisy. Of course with the death of the Prophets and the disappearance of heavenly assistance this group came out of hiding causing the hatred they had stored in their hearts to appear.

From this very central point and by this very group, the truth and religion of God was being altered and turned over, and to the point that very were successful they changed and adjusted heavenly and religious truth. Of course they kept the other appearances of religion, and in its name they exploited Gods servants by forcing upon them their own opinions and choices.

With regard to all of these preliminaries it might still appear strange and astonishing that we believe, the prayer, fasting, Zakat, and the beliefs and thoughts that were propagated by the Prophet (S) do not exist amongst an enormous group of today's Muslims. Of course its existence in name remained. What has disappeared is its correct meaning and intent. For example, the law of divorce thrice, which is one of the laws of true Islamic creed, possesses certain conditions and if they are fulfilled this divorce as such also ceases to be and becomes non-existent. What has remained is the name of this Islamic law.

In previous centuries, in the era of the preceding prophets and also in the period following him, Islam would be completely annihilated. The Islam that Moses son of Emran (a.s.) proclaimed and circulated was completely destroyed and annihilated. Thus a prophet possessed of divine law, like Jesus (a.s.) was appointed to once again restore Islam. After him the Islam he proclaimed was eventually forgotten and another prophetic mission became necessary.

Isn't it true that the name of the religion, which God revealed to all of His great prophets, was Islam? Isn't it also true that the alterations of past ages didn't even stop at this name, also changing it? Wasn't the name of Moses's religious law Islam from which it was changed to Judaism? As such its existence in name was destroyed. Wasn't the name of religion revealed to Jesus (a.s.) Islam, while afterwards alterations and changes went to such an extent that even that name was changed becoming Christianity? We know all of the answers to these questions are positive.

Christians see themselves as being the followers of Jesus, son of Mary but did he bring these beliefs and practices to be? Did he introduce wine -drinking as a religious rite?³⁸ Did he command not to circumcise?³⁹ Last of all, did he introduce God to the people as being made up of the Trinity, 'Thee father', 'the son', and 'the Holy Spirit'?⁴⁰ Certainly not!

Of Jesus's religious creed nothing has remained, the name has gone and the meaning has been destroyed. The Islamic individuals trained by that he or any other prophets in other ways established not a truce remains. Therefore, (of the Islam that previous prophets proclaimed not even it's name has remained) But with regard to the religion of the Last Prophet (S) he himself had said: There will when Islam will become a name without content, and nothing will remain of it but its name, Yes, such a time arrived according to the Prophets prediction and it came very quickly. In a few years all of Islam's

meanings were plundered and only its name remained.

The alteration of the last Prophets religion began at his death, the culmination of this being during the long period of Mu'awwiyahs rule. He and his hirelings, of whom some also bore the title of the Prophets companions, went to work in earnest at ransacking all of the aspects and facets of 'Pure Islam'. The official Islam that is believed in by most of the worlds Muslims was established during this age.

Now we will think about and see what a momentous task and what great pains were placed on the shoulders and in the hearts of the Holy Imams (a.s.) for the campaign against this altered Islam. What an enormous burden of pain and suffering they carry on their shoulders, on the one hand because of their fundamental knowledge of Islam and on the other hand because they see with their own eye the Prophets legacy in the Islamic community being plundered. Here we realize what an enormous and serious task the Holy Imams (a.s.) have. We believe, and with Gods help will prove that it was they who community.

Nations Alterations

In previous discourses, by citing the Holy Quran we studied the reasons and means for the alteration, change and destruction for divine religious creed. Now as an introduction to our next discussion we will briefly repeat it:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ تَمَنَّا قَلِيلًا فَبُئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ

“And (remember) when Allah laid a charge on those who had received the Scripture (he said): Ye are to expound it to mankind and not to hide it. But they flung it behind their backs and bought thereby a little gain.” ((Qur’an 3: 187)

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَى أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ

“And with those who say: “Lo! We are Christians, We made a covenant, but they forgot that whereof they were admonished.” (Qur’an 5: 14)

مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ

“Some of the Jews change words from their context”. (Qur’an 4: 46)

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

“O People of the Scripture! Why confound ye truth with falsehood and knowingly conceal the truth ”. (Qur’an 3: 71)

In these verses there are references to several of their deeds. They concealed, placing falsehoods on the truth like clothing. They made the truth suspicious by mixing these two together. They knew they were doing this and it wasn't out of ignorance.

From these verses and the numerous other verses on this subject we learn that after the death of their prophets, past nations over the years forgot some of the truth, concealed some and sometimes mixed the truth with falsities creating doubtful subject matter. Sometimes they would create some remarks delivering them to the people as the words of God. They changed their divine books by these means, altering and plundering them.

The Last Nation

In numerous traditions recorded in creditable Shi'ite and Sunni books, the Holy Prophet (S) is seen to have remarked:

«This nation will do just as the previous nations and will follow them minutely»

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) quotes from his fathers as narrating that the Holy Prophet said:

“That which occurred in past nations will also occur in this nation. Just like one arrow is like another arrow, and a pair of horse-shoes are like each other, that nation is like other nations.[41](#)

In another tradition, Imam Sadiq (a.s.) also quotes from his fathers as saying the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“I swear by He who sent me as a Prophet and harbinger of good news that my nation will travel the same route past nations travelled to the point that if a snake of Bani Israel entered a hole, of this nation a snake will also enter that hole”. [42](#)

Creditable Sunnite books narrate from Abu Sa'id Khudri that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

“You, my nation! You follow the practices of the ancients and you will go inch by inch and cubit by cubit the ways the ancients travelled; if they went one inch you will also go one inch, and if they went one cubit you will also go one cubit, to the point where if one of them had entered a lizards hole one of you will also enter a lizards hole.”[43](#)

The followers questioned: Do you mean the Jews and the Christians when you mention the ancients? Will we be like the Jews and Christians? Will we do as they? The Holy Prophet (S) replied: Then who do I speak of?”

Based on another tradition of these books it is quoted from Abu Hurayrah that the Holy Prophet said:

“The resurrection day will not come unless my nation follows the way and method of past nations, and follows them minutely and to the letter!” They asked him:

“O Messenger of Allah, like the Persians and Romans? He replied: “Are there people other than these?”

[44](#)

Traditions are numerous but we didn't set out to give a complete account of all of them. Those who wish may refer to a more detailed book.[45](#) In Conclusion, we saw that according to Quranic verses past nations concealed heavenly truths and therefore in this nation there must also be concealment of the truth. We saw that in previous nations there was alteration, and truths were changed, so in this nation change and alteration must also exist. Among the followers of previous prophets truth and falsehoods had been mixed, so in this nation this must also be so.

The study of how the above events took place, how truth and falsehood were mixed, how realities were concealed, how beliefs were changed and altered, how far these changes and alterations went and their effect on pure Islam are all subjects that will be enlightened in the future If Almighty Allah wills.

* * * * *

Previously, we were repeatedly reminded that after its prophet, every religion was altered and this alteration went so far that it made it impossible to gain access to its truths and realities. From that time God would appoint another prophet to once again revive and bring to life that lost religion. This rule existed in relation to Abraham (a.s.) and Noah (a.s.), it also occurred in relation to Moses (a.s.) and Jesus (a.s.). When the religion of Jesus (a.s.) was lost and no matter how hard they tried they could not find it again, the last Prophet (S) was appointed, revived Islam, and delivered it to mankind in its entirety. Now eternal wisdom sees it appropriate that this religion remains until resurrection day because this was His last word and most complete leadership for mankind. 80

The Holy Prophet (S) was responsible for the propagation of Islam, proclaiming, protecting, circulating and promoting its laws and learnings and was charged with the explanation of Islamic terms and meanings, while he must also establish Islamic identity and the the Muslim society.

As such, after his death God left certain persons among the nation to take over the Prophets' responsibilities. This is the serious duty that makes up the essential output of each of the Holy Imams (a.s.) and they performed this duty up until the time of Hujjat ibn al-Hassan. Their strivings, their peace, uprising, suppressions, their being poisoned and their living were all for this very cause.

After their prophet this nation did as previous nations did. They altered Islamic truths and creed, they changed it and concealed it until during the time of Mu'awwiyah; «Nothing remained of Islam but its name and of the Quran but its writing» Imam Husseins uprising and his bloody Ashura became an unpenetrable dam before alteration.

From this time onward fundamental alteration did not take place. The revival of Islam, and Islam of which only the terminology remained, was begun in the time of Imam Baqir (a.s.). The continuous strivings and struggles of the Imams of this nation returned the correct meanings and concepts to the community. Once again Islamic individuals were trained, an Islamic community was founded and in short Islam in all of its dimensions returned amidst the people.⁴⁶ God willing we will study all of these subjects in our following discussion.

80) With regard to the Holy Prophets identity we read in the Holy Quran

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

“Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets....” (Qur’an 33:40)

Also regarding His book

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

“And We reveal the Scripture unto thee as an exposition of all things”. (Qur’an 16: 89)

Also

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“Perfected is the Word of thy Lord in truth and Justice. There is naught that can change His words. He is the Hearer, and Knower”. (Qur’an 6: 115)

And

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ . لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ

“... It is an unassailable Scripture. Falsehood cannot come at it from before it or behind it”. (Qur’an 41:41-42)

81) Proof of this statement is the undertaking of future discussion–If God will.

1. “Elah” is derived (rooted) from “Elaha” accorded with “Kataba” taken as “Abada” i.e. he worshipped and “Elaha” as worshipped one accorded with “Ketab” means “written”

2. 'عبد' as to its literal meanings we may read: اطاعة: عبادة عبد meaning: took orders. 'العبادة' I or worship means: obeying with humility, worship your God: means obey your God, worship the devil means: to obey his temptations and enticements.
«Lisan al-arab-Taj al-aroos- the word.

3. "Tohful Oqul /336 published in Najaf. Also pay attention to this tradition: (Usul al-Kafi 2/398)

4. From Husham bin Salim and Hamad bein Eisa and other related a certain tradition (Usul al-Kafi 1/53)

5. For example refer to the "Shoora" incidents (abdullah ibn Saba 1/214-215 in Arabic, kand in Persian 1/265-280)

6. "Badiyatul Mojtahed" 2/141, and "Zad al-Ma'adel ibn Qayyem" 2/205 and "Al-Mogni-le-ibn Ghodameh" 7/527 and "Al-Mohli-le-ibn Hazam" 7/107. "Ahkam al-Quran lel-Hesas" 1/279 and "Al-Mohli" 7/107.

7. The introduction to "Meratul Uqul" 23/17-67 chapter Totoor -e-Ejtahad

8. "Mofradat", article on Rab, p. 182 published in Tehran 1373. and Rabbo Zaiato Esleha wa A'temmaha wa rabbo folan waladahu ay-robah (Al-Sehah 17130)

9. Lord of all things, owner (Al-Sehah, article On Rab 17130) Rabbo Kolla Shai'in Malekohu wa Mostaheqqohu aw Sahebohu (Al-Qamoos 1773) Al-Malek = Al-Rab(=Lord: owner) (Kashef 1753) Also, sometimes the word lord in a section is used to mean owner or manager. In Arabic any name which is composed of two parts, may be used alone in either of those parts, like (Maedah) which originally used to say a (table with food) may be used to mean a table without food or food without a table.

10. Ibn Hesham 4/578-581 published by: Mostafa as-Seqaa and others 1375, Egypt.

11. Majma-ul-Bayaan 5/23-24 and Tafseer al-Borhaan 21/121 and Ad-Durrul Mansoor 3/330-331.

12. "Savab al-amal" by Shaikh Saduq 301; "Behar al-anwar" 52/190; and "Montakhab al-athar", 427

13. "Cattle", Surah n.6, verse 163.

14. "The Cow", 213 and "The Family of Imran", 19 and "Counsel", 14 and "Crouching, 17.

15. See chapter 'The Jinn' verses 27 & 28.

16. In creditable Shi'ite Traditions it is said that the Holy Prophet (S) informed Ali (a.s.) of all of the matters needed by man and he (Ali) collected and put these down in a book called «جامعة =collection», which was kept by Ahlu'l bait as a scientific legacy.. We have also seen much of this book in Sunni Traditions. We will discuss this book further in the future. If God wills.

17. Tirmidi "As-Sahih", 5/275; Tafsir al-Quran tradition # 3090; Al-Musnad 3/283-old printing; Al-Khasaes 20, 21, Egypt.

18. Al-Khasaes, 20, Egypt, and Tafsir al-Tabary, 10/46.

19. Al-Musnad 1/150, old-print, 2/319, 1286 A.H. Research by Ahmad Muhammad Shaker and "Al-durrul Mansoor" 7/29 and Tafsir Ibn Kaseer 2/333.

20. Al-Musnad 2/322 1296 A.H; Majma'az-zawaed 7/29 and Durrul Mansoor 3/209.

21. Al-Khasaes, Al-Nesai, 20, Egypt and exists in a mention of Sa'ads tradition in Al-Dorrul Mansoor 3/209.

22. Mostadrak al-Sahihain 3/51, Riyadh.

23. 'Musnad' Ahmad ibn Hanbal 1/156, tradition #4, Research of Ahmad Muhammad Shaker, Egypt 1368, old printing volume 1, p. 3.

24. (Tabari 'Tarikh-e-Rosol wal Molook' 2/514, printed by Dar al-Kutub, and "Sharhe Nahj" 10/182, printed by: Muhammad Abufazl Ebrahim, Egypt 1386, etc.)

25. Tirmidhi, as-Sahih 5,636, tradition 3719 and Sunan-e-ibn-Majeh 1/44 tradition 119 and al-Musnad 4/164 and History of the Caliphs, 169.

26. Ibn Hesham 4/641/ and Tabakatul Kubra 2/169, Uyunal-athar 2/271, Beirut 1974, and Al-Bedayeh wan-Nehayeh 7/344.

27. Tirmidhi 5,632, Tradition #3712, Al-Mustadrak 3/110-111, AlBedayeh wan-Nehayeh 67/345, and Al-Musnad 5/356.

28. Al-Riyazul Nazarath 2/268 1372, Cairo.

29. Al-Musnad 4/136 old print, also see Kanzul a'mal.

30. Tirmidhi 5/59-658 tradition 3775 and Ibn Majeh 1/15, tradition 144 and Al-Musnad 4/172.

31. Sunan-e-ibn-e-Dawood 4/107 tradition 2475.

32. Al-Musnad 1/74.

33. Nahjul Balaghe, sermon 107, also 'Sobhe Saleh' 158); and also; 'Nahjul Balaghe, sermon 103.

34. We are hopeful that Gods assistance we will be able to arrange these lectures and publish them.

- [35.](#) In Arabic, 'Salat' means prayer, 'Soum' means thrift, 'Hajj' means intention and 'Zakat' means growth, or cleanliness.
- [36.](#) The Family of Imran: 123–123.
- [37.](#) 'The Believer': 51.
- [38.](#) The sanctification of bread and wine called 'The Lords' supper' is performed in remembrance of the Israelis flight from Egypt or (Passover). This is one of the most important Christian rites. They believe that during this rite the priest performs the miracle of changing the bread and wine into the blood and flesh of Jesus. (Mathew, chapter 26, verses: 266, 27, and 28, Luke, ch.22, verses; 19.
- [39.](#) –Circumcision is a definite law of the Torah (you and your descendant must all agree to circumcise every male among you) Genesis 17:10, 11 and (From now on you must circumcise every baby boy when he is eight years old). But among the Christians it was abolished on the order of the Apotle Paul and his like and other words the religious creed was altered. (Galatians 2:7–10, Acts 15)
- [40.](#) In the summer of 325 AD, nearly three hundred Bishops of Eastern cities gathered in the city of Nicaea near constantinople and after lengthy discussions adopted a formal statement of the tenets of Christian faith, establishing the primary principles of Christian thought, chiefly the doctrine of the trinity. (See V. M. Miller: The History of Civilization 9/345, and John Nass: History of Religious Communities. 425)
- [41.](#) Saduq: Kamaluddin 576, Tehran 1390, Behar al-anwar 873, also Majma-ul Bayan 10/462, also Tafseer al-Borhan 4/444 and Tafseer al-Safyy 2/802.
- [42.](#) Saduq: Kamaluddin 576, Tehran 1390, Behar al-anwar 8/3, also Majma-ul Bayan 10/462, also Tafseer al-Borhan 4/444 and Tafseer al-Safyy 2/802.
- [43.](#) "Musnad al-Telyasi" tradition 2178 and "Musnad Ahmad" 3/94,84 and "Sahih Muslim" sharhe Nowawi 16/219, Kitab al-a'mal and "Sahih Bokhari" Kitab al-Anbiya 2/171 and "Kanzul A'mal" 11/123.
- [44.](#) "Sahih Bokhari" Sharhe fath al-Bari 17/63 and "Sonan ibn Majeh" tradition 3994, "Masnad Ahmad" 2/327, 369,450, 511, 527 and "Kanzul a'mal" 11/123.
- [45.](#) For example see "Khamsoon wa me'ata sahabi Mokhtalef" 2/45–52.
- [46.](#) Proof of this statement is the undertaking of future discussion–If God will.

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