

Chapter 2: Characteristics Of The Virtuous Community

Undoubtedly, the general objectives of building a virtuous community contribute to the characteristics and features that are required in such a community. Likewise, these characteristics redound on the details of the necessity of building it. This fact may give reasons for the similarity in some points of these three aspects (i.e. objectives, characteristics, and features), yet there are differences with regard to different perspectives of any propounded point.

It is necessary to introduce the basic characteristics and features that must distinguish this virtuous community so that its individuals can play their essential roles in the history of Islam and perpetuate the roles of the Holy Imams (‘a) by defending Islam and safeguarding Muslim society.

In this discussion, we will summarize and catalogue these characteristics, including those previously mentioned.

Sound Belief

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) constructed the virtuous community to ensure the maintenance of the genuine doctrines of Islam and insulate it from the influence of the intellectual and cultural components of the Roman, Persian, and Greek civilizations that led some groups of Muslims to atheism, apostasy, and intellectual corruption in the early centuries of Islam.

The Holy Imams (‘a) also aimed at keeping the virtuous community sound from cultural lethargy that inflicted the Muslim nation after being exposed to cultures of new nations that joined the Muslim world bringing with them huge fortunes, luxurious lifestyles and new methods of lustful entertainment.

Furthermore, the Holy Imams (‘a) warned the virtuous community about being manipulated by the psychological and spiritual reactions that led some groups of Muslims to pursue seclusion and self-

isolation, as can be seen in Sufism and esotericism. These movements led other groups, such as the Khawarij and the Qaramitah movements, to fall into the abyss of anarchism and openly rebel against Muslim society and its system of rule, canceling all duties and condemning all the common manners and habits of Muslim society as futile.

This further led a third category to unfounded fanaticism and immoderation in emotions that changed into various sects and beliefs, including the Ghulat (extremists), the Nawasib (antagonists of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and their followers), the Qadariyyah (fatalists), and the Mufawwidhah (indeterminists).

The Holy Imams ('a) maintained a balanced lifestyle and instilled a sound belief in their followers so that they could preserve the genuine doctrines of Islam and possess the ability to survive, co-exist, and act dynamically by activating, impressing and inspiring others with their firm faith.

Because of this fact, if we observe the movement of this virtuous community and its progress throughout the history of Islam, we will notice genuineness and deep-rootedness on the one hand and expansion, steadfastness and firmness on the other in spite of the persecution and attempts at eradication that this virtuous community had to encounter. Nevertheless, the individuals of this community did not flee from social realities or cloister themselves in distant areas of Muslim lands.

On the contrary, they coexisted with their brethren in Muslim cities and in the centers of scientific, cultural, and religious knowledge, such as Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Middle Asia, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, some important districts of Africa, countries of the Persian Gulf, and the Indian subcontinent (India and Pakistan). The virtuous community has thus included individuals from all nationalities, like the Arabs, Persians, Turks, Kurds, Indians, Berbers, Africans, and many more.

Thus, it is probable that the Holy Imams ('a), having understood this fact, did not deem it necessary to exhort their followers to exert excessive effort in the domain of propagation, because true belief can perform this mission automatically when it is proposed and offered before a nation. In this respect, Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported Thabit ibn Sa'id as saying that Imam al-Sadiq ('a) once told him:

يَا ثَابِتُ، مَا لَكُمْ وَلِلنَّاسِ؟ كُفُّوا عَنِ النَّاسِ! وَلَا تَدْعُوا أَحَدًا إِلَى أَمْرِكُمْ. فَوَاللَّهِ لَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ السَّمَاءِ وَأَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى أَنْ يَضِلُّوا عَبْدًا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ هُدَاهُ مَا اسْتَطَاعُوا. كُفُّوا عَنِ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَقُلْ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخِي وَابْنُ عَمِّي وَجَارِي! فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَرَادَ بَعْدَ خَيْرٍ طَيِّبَ رُوحَهُ، فَلَا يَسْمَعُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ إِلَّا عَرَفَهُ، وَلَا بِمُنْكَرٍ إِلَّا أَنْكَرَهُ، ثُمَّ يَقْذِفُ اللَّهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ كَلِمَةً يَجْمَعُ بِهَا أَمْرَهُ.

O Thabit, why are you arguing with the people? Stop debating with them (attempting to convince them to join your creed) and do not summon them to your belief. I swear by Allah that if all the inhabitants of the skies and all the inhabitants of the earth help each other to mislead a servant (of Allah) whom Almighty Allah wants to guide, they shall never be able to do so. Stop arguing with the people and do not impose your belief on anyone even if you believe one will respond because he is your brother, cousin, or

neighbor. Verily, if Almighty Allah wants somebody to join the truth, He will make his soul responsive. As a result, he will follow that which is decent and reject that which is vile. Then, Almighty Allah will cast in his heart a word that will inspire the correct attitude. [1](#)

To make this clear, such commands to refrain from arguing with people about doctrine and such warnings against inviting them to accept beliefs are meant for no reason other than to avoid divisive disputes and unwanted discrepancies. This fact is confirmed by another tradition also reported by Shaykh al-Kulayni from one of the Holy Imams ('a):

وَلَا تُخَاصِمُوا بَدِينِكُمُ النَّاسَ، فَإِنَّ الْمُخَاصِمَةَ مُمْرِضَةٌ لِلْقَلْبِ. فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَالَ لِنَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: ﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾ وَقَالَ: ﴿أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

Do not dispute with people about your religion, for dispute gives rise to rumors. Almighty Allah has said to His Prophet (S), 'Surely, you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases. (28:56)' He has also said, 'Will you then force mankind to become believers? (10/99)' [2](#)

At the same time, some other traditions encourage inviting others to the true faith when there is a suitable chance or when this would not lead to dispute, because inviting to the true faith is a religious duty. [3](#)

In this way, we can understand why the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have always laid stress on demonstration of the pillars of religion in general and loyalty to the divinely commissioned leadership of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) (i.e. *wilayah*) in particular. They have also discriminated between Islam and atheism (*kufr*), and Islam and faith (*iman*). Of course, all such demonstrations mean to highlight the features of the true faith.

The distinctive feature of the faith of this virtuous community is love for Imam 'Ali and the other eleven Imams ('a) with the belief that they are the divinely designated leaders of Muslims. According to some traditions, true faith is linked to *wilayah* (divinely commissioned leadership of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)).

Through an authentic chain of authority, Zurarah has reported Imam al-Baqir ('a) as saying:

بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسَةِ أَشْيَاءَ: عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ، وَالزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ، وَالصَّوْمِ، وَالْوِلَايَةِ

Islam is based on five things: salat (prayer), zakat (poor-rate), hajj (pilgrimage), sawm (fasting), and wilayah.

Zurarah asked, "What is the best among these things?"

The Imam ('a) answered:

أَوْلَايَةٌ أَفْضَلُ لِأَنَّهَا مِفْتَاحُهُنَّ، وَالْوَلِيُّ هُوَ الدَّلِيلُ عَلَيْهِنَّ.

The best of them is wilayah, because it is the key to the others and the wali is the guide to them.

Zurarah asked, “What is next in being the best?”

The Imam (‘a) answered, “Then comes prayer.”

Zurarah asked, “What is next?”

The Imam (‘a) answered, “Then comes zakat, because Almighty Allah has paired it with prayer and mentioned prayer first.”

Zurarah asked, “What is next?”

The Imam (‘a) answered, “Then comes hajj.”

Zurarah asked, “What is next?”

The Imam (‘a) answered, “Then comes fasting.”⁴

According to another tradition reported by Shaykh al-Saduq in his book of *al-Amali*, Abu-Hamzah al-Thumali reported Imam ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn (Zayn al-Abidin) (‘a) as saying:

قَالَ سَلْمَانُ الْفَارِسِيُّ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ: كُنْتُ جَالِساً عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ إِذْ أَقْبَلَ عَلِيٌّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: يَا عَلِيُّ، أَلَا أُبَشِّرُكَ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى، يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ. قَالَ: هَذَا حَبِيبِي جِبْرِئِيلُ يُخْبِرُنِي عَنِ اللَّهِ جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ أَعْطَى مُحِبِّكَ وَشَيْعَتَكَ سَبْعَ خِصَالٍ: الرِّفْقَ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَالْأُنْسَ عِنْدَ الْوَحْشَةِ، وَالنُّورَ عِنْدَ الظُّلْمَةِ، وَالْأَمْنَ عِنْدَ الْفَزَعِ، وَالْقِسْطَ عِنْدَ الْمِيزَانِ، وَالْجَوَازَ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ، وَدُخُولَ الْجَنَّةِ قَبْلَ سَائِرِ النَّاسِ مِنَ الْأُمَّمِ بِتَمَائِينَ عَاماً.

Salman al-Farisi—may Allah have mercy upon him—narrated that he was with the Holy Prophet (S) when ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (‘a) joined them. The Holy Prophet (S) said to him, ‘O ‘Ali, May I convey some good news to you?’ ‘Yes, Allah’s Messenger! You may,’ answered ‘Ali (‘a). The Holy Prophet (S) said, ‘Dear Archangel Gabriel has just informed me that Almighty Allah has bestowed 7 blessings on those who love you and are your followers. These are (1) lenience at the hour of death, (2) company during loneli-ness of the grave, (3) light in the darkness of the grave, (4) security against the horror of the Day of Resurrection, (5) justice at The Balance, (6) permission to cross the Discriminating Bridge, and (7) entry to Paradise eighty years before other nations.’⁵

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) have specified a number of features and indications that confirm this love and loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) in a person. The most eminent of these indications are piety, hard work, steadfastness against hardships, and self-sacrifice, epitomized by the practice of visiting the

holy tomb of Imam al-Husayn ('a) at Karbala', as is maintained by a number of traditions.

Turning to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) to Obtain Religious Knowledge

Another essential feature that characterizes the individuals of the virtuous community from others is the issue of obtaining religious law from its genuine and authentic sources. They are also distinguished for deriving religious decisions about the settlement of disputes and regarding emerging issues from an 'Infallible Imam' ('a), 'virtuous man' or 'decent jurisprudent'.

Although all Muslims unanimously agree that the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah are the two basic sources of Islamic laws, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) are distinguished from the other Muslims by a number of important points in this respect. These points are as follows:

Understanding the Holy Qur'an

The followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) are characterized by turning to the Holy Imams ('a) in the understanding of the Holy Qur'an and religious issues that depend upon the Holy Qur'an. They have learnt to distinguish between the abrogating and the abrogated texts of the Holy Qur'an, the decisive and the allegorical, the specific and the general and the summarized and the detailed. Likewise, they have learned the motives of the revelation of each verse as well as other points appertaining to the exegesis and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an.

All Muslims unanimously agree that 'Ali and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) were the most learned in the sciences of the Holy Qur'an. Authentic traditions reported by both Sunnis and Shiites demonstrate this fact.

In this regard, the Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

كَيْفَ تُخَلِّفُونِي فِي الثَّقَلَيْنِ؟“ قِيلَ: ”وَمَا الثَّقَلَانِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟“ قَالَ: ”الْأَكْبَرُ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ؛ سَبَبُ طَرَفُهُ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ وَطَرَفُهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ. فَتَمَسَّكُوا بِهِ لَنْ تَزُلُّوا وَلَنْ تَضِلُّوا. وَالْأَصْغَرُ عِتْرَتِي؛ فَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضِ. وَسَأَلْتُ لِهُمَا ذَلِكَ رَبِّي. وَلَا تَقَدِّمُوهُمَا فَتَهْلِكُوا، وَلَا تُعَلِّمُوهُمَا فَإِنَّهُمَا أَعْلَمُ مِنْكُمْ“

“How will you behave after me regarding the two Weighty Things?” He was asked, “Allah’s Messenger, what are the two Weighty Things?” He (S) explained, “The major Weighty Thing is Allah’s Book. One of its edges is in Allah’s Hand while the other is in yours; so, adhere to it persistently so that you shall never slip or stray. The minor Weighty Thing is my Progeny. Verily, these two things shall never separate from each other until they both join me at the Divine Pond. I have prayed to my Lord to guarantee this for me. So, do not precede them lest you shall perish and do not impose your knowledge on them, for they are verily more knowledgeable than you.”⁶

Acquaintance with the Holy Sunnah

The followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) always turn to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) to acquaint themselves with the Holy Sunnah, which has been exposed to problems of forgery and obscurity. The reason for such problems can be summed up in the following points:

- (1) Some Prophetic traditions have been unfaithfully transmitted and intentionally distorted.
- (2) The texts of other traditions have been separated from the circumstances under which they were uttered.
- (3) Many traditions about the Holy Prophet (S) have been invented, forged, and fabricated.
- (4) Some genuine Prophetic traditions were suspended due to certain personal views.
- (5) Some people intentionally disregarded some genuine traditions claiming that they served no interest for Islam. As a result, confusion and immense commotion overshadowed some Islamic laws.

One of the distinctive features of the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) was that they turned to the Holy Imams ('a) alone⁷ to receive, understand, and learn the Holy Sunnah. They believed that the Imams ('a) held the Holy Sunnah in its entirety without need to turn to any other conjectural points of evidence to reach the true religious law.

Acting upon the Verdicts of an Upright, Living, Well-Versed Jurisprudent

In the process of receiving religious law, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) are restricted to taking such laws from a just and responsible ('*adil*)⁸ *mujtahid* (well-versed jurisprudent) who is known to be experienced in Muslim jurisprudence. He must be extremely pious and God-fearing. The truth about his character must be acquired through personal investigation and a sense of responsibility, free from the intimidation of rulers.

Acting according to a *mujtahid's* verdicts and judgments and becoming acquainted with religious conditions about a certain issue or dispute, as well as compliance with the verdicts of a living⁹ *mujtahid*, must be restricted to a person who has lived the event and whose characteristics and qualities can be easily observed by people.

This point has given the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) a good opportunity to move within the true framework of Muslim legislation. They have, therefore, kept themselves away from dilemmas that are faced by the followers of other Muslim sects regarding verdicts, leading them to massive contradiction, discrepancy, and disputes about verdicts, judgments, and conditions. This may be the logic behind the

Holy Prophet (S) highlighting the significance of referring to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) with regard to the laws of Islam in addition to the significance of loyalty to their divinely commissioned leadership. Through many authentic and uninterrupted reported traditions, the Holy Prophet (S) emphasized this on many occasions. One form of such emphasis is the famous tradition known as *Hadith al-Thaqalayn* (the Two Weighty Things) in which the Holy Prophet (S) says:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمْ الثَّقَلَيْنِ؛ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَعِترَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أَبَدًا، وَلَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

Indeed, I leave among you the two weighty things: the Book of Allah and my Household—the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). If you adhere to them, you shall never stray after me. They shall never leave one another until they both join me at the Divine Pond. [10](#)

In the same way, the Holy Imams ('a) have laid great emphasis on referring to them (*marji'iyah*) regarding the religious laws through numerous clear-cut traditions. They have thus educated their followers to carry out this duty and warned them against falling into deviations by depending upon conjecture or equitable preferences (*istihsan*) in the process of attaining religious law.

Commitment to the Highest Rank of Human Perfection

In the view of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), achieving the highest ranks of human perfection is one of the objectives of Islam and signifies the essential quality that the individuals of the virtuous community must possess so that they can play their roles in human history adequately. Only by doing so can these individuals influence the progress of human history and bring victory, wealth, and divine fortune to a society. Declaring this fact, the Holy Qur'an states:

(وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (7/96))

And if the people of the towns had believed and shown piety, We would certainly have opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they rejected, so We overtook them for what they had earned. (7/96)

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) emphasized this not only in the course of educating their followers (Shi'ah), but also while demonstrating their identity and personality. In this respect, Imam al-Ridha ('a) is reported to have quoted the Holy Prophet (S) as saying to Imam 'Ali ('a),

يَا عَلِيُّ؛ طُوبَى لِمَنْ أَحَبَّكَ وَصَدَّقَ بِكَ، وَوَيْلٌ لِمَنْ أَبْغَضَكَ وَكَذَّبَ بِكَ. مُحِبُّوكَ مَعْرُوفُونَ فِي السَّمَاءِ السَّابِعَةِ وَالْأَرْضِ

السَّابِعَةَ السُّفْلَى وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ. هُمْ أَهْلُ الدِّينِ وَالْوَرَعِ وَالسَّمْتِ الْحَسَنِ وَالتَّوَاضُعِ لِلَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ؛ خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ،
وَجِلَّةً قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، وَقَدْ عَرَفُوا حَقَّ وَلايَتِكَ.

O 'Ali, blessed be those who love you and believe in you. Woe be to those who bear malice against you and belie you. Your devotees are known by the inhabitants of the Seventh Sky, the seventh layer of the earth, and whatever exists between these two. They are the people of religiousness, piety, noble manners, and submission to Almighty Allah. Their eyes and their hearts are always full of fear whenever Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, is mentioned. They have recognized their duties towards your (divinely commissioned) leadership. [11](#)

In this regard, traditions have described a number of attributes and basic features that the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) must enjoy. These features are as follows:

Worship and Asceticism

Traditions have laid emphasis on all aspects of asceticism and perseverance in worship. Many traditions carry an excellent depiction of the exemplary worship of the Ahl al-Bayt's followers. In this regard, Abul-Miqdad has reported Imam al-Baqir ('a) as saying to him:

يَا أَبَا الْمِقْدَادِ؛ إِنَّمَا شِيعَةُ عَلِيِّ الشَّاجِبُونَ النَّاحِلُونَ الذَّابِلُونَ: ذَابِلَةٌ شِفَاهُهُمْ، خَمِيصَةٌ بَطُونُهُمْ، مُتَغَيِّرَةٌ أَلْوَانُهُمْ،
مُصْفَرَّةٌ وُجُوهُهُمْ. إِذَا جَنَّهُمُ اللَّيْلُ اتَّخَذُوا الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشاً وَاسْتَقْبَلُوا الْأَرْضَ بِجَبَاهِهِمْ. كَثِيرٌ سُجُودُهُمْ، كَثِيرَةٌ دُمُوعُهُمْ،
...كَثِيرٌ دُعَاؤُهُمْ، كَثِيرٌ بَكَائُهُمْ. يَفْرَحُ النَّاسُ وَهُمْ مَحْزُونُونَ

O Abul-Miqdad, the Shi'ah of 'Ali are only those who are pale, thin, and feeble. Their lips are faded because of worship and their stomachs are emaciated. Their faces are pale and yellowish. When night comes upon them, they take the ground as their beds and welcome the ground with their foreheads. Their prostrations are long, their teardrops heavy, and their prayers innumerable. While people rejoice, they remain in grief. [12](#)

Shaykh al-Mufid, in his book of *al-Irshad* and Shaykh al-Tusi, in his book of *al-Amali*, have reported the following:

One luminous night the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali, ('a) went out of his house towards the graveyard. A group of people followed him. He turned towards them and asked who they were.

"We are your followers (Shi'ah), Amir al-Mu'minin," they answered.

He said, "But I cannot see the marks of a true Shi'ah on your faces."

"What are the marks of a true Shi'ah?" asked they.

He ('a) said:

صَفْرُ الْوُجُوهِ مِنَ السَّهْرِ، عُمَشُ الْعُيُونِ مِنَ الْبُكَاءِ، حُدْبُ الظُّهُورِ مِنَ الْقِيَامِ، خُمُصُ الْبُطُونِ مِنَ الصِّيَامِ، ذُبُلُ الشِّفَاهِ مِنَ الدُّعَاءِ، عَلَيْهِمْ غَبْرَةُ الْخَاشِعِينَ.

The true Shi'ah are pale-faced because of staying up at night, thin-stomached because of fasting, and dry-lipped because of endless praying to Almighty Allah. The dust of humility covers them."¹³

Further details of these features described by Imam 'Ali ('a) for the true Shi'ah can be envisaged from his discourse with al-Ahnaf ibn Qays as reported by Shaykh al-Saduq in his book of *Sifat al-Shi'ah* (Qualities of the Shi'ah):

Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays once invited Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) to al-Basrah after the Battle of the Camel. When Amir al-Mu'minin responded to the invitation, he asked al-Ahnaf to also include his companions in the invitation. Some very reverent people with withered skin came in.

"O Amir al-Mu'minin," asked al-Ahnaf, "What has befallen these people? Was it scarcity of food or the terror of war?"

Answering him, Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) said:

لَا يَا أَحَنَفُ! إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَحَبُّ أَقْوَامًا تَنَسَّكُوا لَهُ فِي دَارِ الدُّنْيَا تَنَسُّكَ مَنْ هَجَمَ عَلَى مَا عَلِمَ مِنْ قُرْبِهِمْ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُشَاهِدُوهَا فَحَمَلُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ عَلَى مَجْهُودِهَا وَكَانُوا إِذَا ذَكَرُوا صَبَاحَ يَوْمِ الْعَرْضِ عَلَى اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ تَوَهَّمُوا خُرُوجَ عُنُقِ يَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ يَحْشُرُ الْخَلَائِقَ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى وَكِتَابٍ يَبْدُو فِيهِ عَلَى رُؤُوسِ الْأَشْهَادِ فَضَائِحُ ذُنُوبِهِمْ، فَكَادَتْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ تَسِيلُ سَيْلَانًا أَوْ تَطِيرُ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِأَجْنِحَةِ الْخَوْفِ طَيْرَانًا، وَتُفَارِقُهُمْ عَقُولُهُمْ إِذَا غَلَّتْ بِهِمْ مِنْ أَجْلِ التَّجَرُّدِ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ غَلِيَانًا. فَكَانُوا يَحْنُونُ حَيْنَ الْوَالِهِ فِي دُجَى الظُّلَمِ، وَكَانُوا يُفَجَعُونَ مِنْ خَوْفِ مَا أَوْقَفُوا عَلَيْهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ، فَمَضَوْا ذُبُلَ الْجَسَامِ، حَزِينَةً قُلُوبُهُمْ، كَالِحَةً وَجُوهُهُمْ، ذَابِلَةً شِفَاهُهُمْ، خَامِصَةً بَطُونَهُمْ، تَرَاهُمْ سُكَارَى. سُمَارٌ وَحَشِيَّةٌ بِاللَّيْلِ، مُتَخَشِعُونَ كَأَنَّهُمْ شِيَانٌ بَوَالٍ، قَدْ أَخْلَصُوا لِلَّهِ أَعْمَالَهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً، فَلَمْ تَأْمَنْ مِنْ فَزَعِهِ قُلُوبُهُمْ، بَلْ كَانُوا كَمَنْ حَرَسُوا قِبَابَ خِرَاجِهِمْ. فَلَوْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ فِي لَيْلَتِهِمْ، وَقَدْ نَامَتِ الْعُيُونُ، وَهَدَّتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ، وَسَكَتَتِ الْحَرَكَاتُ مِنَ الطَّيْرِ فِي الْوُكُورِ وَقَدْ نَهْنَهُمْ هَوْلُ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ بِالْوَعِيدِ عَنِ الرَّقَادِ كَمَا قَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: "أَقَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْفَرَى أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ بِأَسْنَا بِيَاتًا وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ؟" فَاسْتَيْقَظُوا إِلَيْهَا فَرَعِينَ، وَقَامُوا إِلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ مُعْوَلِينَ، بَاكِينَ تَارَةً وَأُخْرَى مُسَبِّحِينَ، يَبْكُونَ فِي مَحَارِبِهِمْ وَيَرْتُونَ، يَصْطَفُونَ لَيْلَةً مُظْلِمَةً بِهِمَا يَبْكُونَ. فَلَوْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَا أَحَنَفُ فِي لَيْلَتِهِمْ قِيَامًا عَلَى أَطْرَافِهِمْ، مُنْحِنِيَّةً ظُهُورَهُمْ يَتَلَوْنَ أَجْزَاءَ الْقُرْآنِ لِصَلَاتِهِمْ، قَدْ اشْتَدَّتْ إِعْوَالُهُمْ وَنَحِيبُهُمْ وَزَفِيرُهُمْ، إِذَا زَفَرُوا خَلَّتِ النَّارُ قَدْ أَخَذَتْ مِنْهُمْ إِلَى حَلَاقِيمِهِمْ، وَإِذَا أَعْوَلُوا حَسِبْتَ السَّلَاسِلُ قَدْ صُقِدَتْ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ، فَلَوْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ فِي نَهَارِهِمْ إِذَا لَرَأَيْتَ قَوْمًا "يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا" وَيَقُولُونَ "لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا فَإِذَا" خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا" وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللُّغُوِّ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا". قَدْ قِيدُوا أَقْدَامَهُمْ مِنَ التَّهْمَاتِ، وَأَبْكَمُوا أَلْسِنَتَهُمْ أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمُوا فِي أَعْرَاضِ النَّاسِ، وَسَجَمُوا أَسْمَاعَهُمْ أَنْ يَلْجَأَ خَوْضُ خَائِضٍ، وَكَحَلُّوا أَبْصَارَهُمْ بَعْضَ الْبَصْرِ عَنِ الْمَعَاصِي، وَانْتَحَوُا دَارَ السَّلَامِ الَّتِي مَنْ دَخَلَهَا كَانَ آمِنًا مِنَ الرَّيْبِ وَالْأَحْزَانِ. فَلَعَلَّكَ يَا أَحَنَفُ شَخْلَكَ نَظَرْتُكَ فِي وَجْهِ وَاحِدَةٍ تُبْدِي الْأَسْفَامَ بَعْضَارَةً وَجْهَهَا، وَدَارٍ قَدْ أَشْغَلَتْ بِنَفْسِ رَوَاقِهَا وَسُتُورٍ قَدْ عَلَّقَتْهَا، وَالرِّيحُ وَالْأَجَامُ مُوَكَّلَةٌ بِتَمَرِهَا. وَلَيْسَتْ دَارُكَ هَذِهِ دَارُ الْبُقَاءِ فَأَحْمَتِكَ الدَّارُ الَّتِي خَلَقَهَا اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ لَوْلُوَةٍ بِيضَاءِ، فَشَقَّقَ فِيهَا أَنهَارَهَا، وَغَرَسَ فِيهَا أَشْجَارَهَا، وَأَضَلَّ عَلَيْهَا

بِالنُّضْجِ مِنْ أُنْمَارِهَا وَكَبْسِهَا بِالْعَوَاتِقِ مِنْ حُورِهَا. ثُمَّ أَسْكَنَهَا أَوْلِيَاءَهُ وَأَهْلَ طَاعَتِهِ. فَلَوْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَا أَحْنَفُ وَقَدْ قَدِمُوا عَلَى زِيَادَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ سُبْحَانَهُ فَإِذَا ضُرِبَتْ جَنَائِبُهُمْ صَوَّتَتْ رَوَاحِلُهُمْ بِأَصْوَاتٍ لَمْ يَسْمَعْ السَّامِعُونَ بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا، وَأَظْلَمَتْهُمْ غَمَامَةٌ فَأَمْطَرَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمِسْكَ وَالرَّادْنَ، وَصَهَلَتْ خِيُولُهَا بَيْنَ أَعْرَاسِ تِلْكَ الْجِنَانِ، وَتَخَلَّتْ بِهِمْ نُوقُهُمْ بَيْنَ كُتُبِ الزَّعْفَرَانِ وَيَتَطَيُّ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَقْدَامِهِمُ اللَّوْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ وَاسْتَقْبَلَتْهُمْ قَهَارِمُتُهَا بِمَنَابِرِ الرِّيحَانِ. وَهَاجَتْ لَهُمْ رِيحٌ مِنْ قِبَلِ الْعَرْشِ فَتَنَّتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْيَاسْمِينَ وَالْأَقْحُوَانَ، وَذَهَبُوا إِلَى بَابِهَا فَيَفْتَحُ لَهُمُ الْبَابَ رِضْوَانٌ ثُمَّ يَسْجُدُونَ لِلَّهِ فِي فَنَاءِ الْجِنَانِ. فَقَالَ لَهُمُ الْجِبَارُ: اِرْفَعُوا رُؤُوسَكُمْ، فَإِنِّي قَدْ رَفَعْتُ عَنْكُمْ مَوْوَنَةَ الْعِبَادَةِ، وَأَسْكَنْتُكُمْ جَنَّةَ الرِّضْوَانِ. فَإِنْ فَاتَكَ يَا أَحْنَفُ مَا ذَكَرْتُ لَكَ فِي صَدْرِ كَلَامِي، لَتُتْرَكَنَّ فِي سَرَابِيلِ الْقَطْرِانِ وَلَتَطَوَّفَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمِ أَنْ، وَلَتُسْقَيْنَنَّ شَرَابًا حَارًّا الْعَلْيَانِ فِي أَنْصَاجِهِ، فَكَمْ يَوْمِئِذٍ فِي النَّارِ مِنْ صُلْبٍ مَحْطُومٍ وَوَجْهِ مَهْشُومٍ وَمُشَوِّهِ مَضْرُوبٍ عَلَى الْخُرْطُومِ، قَدْ أَكَلَتْ الْجَامِعَةَ كَفَّهُ، وَالنَّحْمَ الطَّوْقُ بَعْنُفِهِ. فَلَوْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَا أَحْنَفُ يَنْحَدِرُونَ فِي أَوْدِيَّتِهَا، وَيَصْعَدُونَ جِبَالِهَا، وَقَدْ أُلْبَسُوا الْمُقْطَعَاتِ مِنَ الْقَطْرِانِ، وَأُقْرِنُوا مَعَ فُجَارِهَا وَشَيَاطِينِهَا، فَإِذَا اسْتَعَاثُوا بِأَسْوَأِ أَخَذٍ مِنْ حَرِيقِ شَدَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ عَقَابُهَا وَحَيَاتُهَا، وَلَوْ رَأَيْتَ مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي وَهُوَ يَقُولُ: يَا أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَعِيمِهَا، يَا أَهْلَ حَلِيبِهَا وَحَلَلِهَا، خُلُودٌ فَلَا مَوْتَ، فَعِنْدَهَا يَنْقَطِعُ رِجَاؤُهُمْ، وَتَنْغَلِقُ الْأَبْوَابُ، وَتَنْقَطِعُ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ. فَكَمْ يَوْمِئِذٍ مِنْ شَيْخٍ يُنَادِي وَاشْيَبْتَاهُ! وَكَمْ مِنْ شَابٍ يُنَادِي وَاشْيَابَاهُ! وَكَمْ مِنْ امْرَأَةٍ تُنَادِي وَافْضِيحَتَاهُ! هَتَكَتْ عَنْهُمْ السُّتُورُ، فَكَمْ يَوْمِئِذٍ مِنْ مَغْمُوسٍ بَيْنَ أَطْبَاقِهَا مَحْبُوسٍ. يَا لَكَ غَمْسَةَ الْبَسْتِكِ بَعْدَ لِبَاسِ الْكُتَّانِ وَالْمَاءِ الْمُبْرَدِ عَلَى الْجُدْرَانِ وَأَكْلِ الطَّعَامِ أَلْوَانًا بَعْدَ أَلْوَانِ لِبَاسٍ لَمْ يَدَعْ لَكَ شَعْرًا نَاعِمًا كُنْتَ مُطْعِمَهُ إِلَّا بَيْضَهُ وَلَا عَيْنًا كُنْتَ تُبْصِرُ بِهَا إِلَى حَبِيبٍ إِلَّا فَقَاهَا، هَذَا مَا أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ، وَذَلِكَ مَا أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ.

No, Ahnaf. Their state is not due to either. Allah, the Glorified, loved some people, those who served Him with devotion in this world as if they were heavily burdened, because He knew their dread of the Day of Resurrection before they had witnessed it. My companions have therefore exerted all their possible efforts in this regard. When they imagine the morning when all creatures will appear in the presence of their Lord, they imagine a rope coming out of Hell to gather all the creatures before their Lord and visualize the record that will open before the Witnesses and uncover all their sins. Thus, their souls turn to flee, their hearts seek escape with wings of fear, and their minds toss hither and thither as if boiling in a cauldron. Though they long (to meet Allah) with the longing of one lost in the darkness, they are distressed and afraid because of that to which they have dedicated themselves. Thus, they have become weak-bodied, broken-hearted, gloomy-faced, dry-lipped, and thin-stomached. You see them as if they are drunk; they talk in the loneliness of nights and are as worn out as their shriveled skins. They have sincerely offered their acts to Allah, overtly and in private. Their hearts have never felt secure because of their fear of Allah. They have guarded their actions knowing they were the domes of their tribute. Were you to see them at night—when eyes sleep, silence prevails, and birds remain calm and motionless in their nests—the threatening horror of the Day of Resurrection deters them from sleeping, being reminded of Allah saying, “Did the people of the towns think themselves secure from Our wrath that could strike them at night during their sleep? (7:97)” So, they wake up panic-stricken, and hurry to their prayers, crying. Sometimes they weep and at other times praise Allah. In their places of worship, their wailing resounds. On gloomy nights, they weep. Were you, O Ahnaf, to see them at night either standing or with backs bent! They recite parts of the Qur’an in their prayers. Their wailings, lamentations, and sighs are heart-rending. If they sigh, you think the fire (of Hell) has taken them by the throat. If they wail, you think their necks are in the noose. If you look at them during the day, you see them as people

who “walk gently on the earth,” speak “politely to people,” and “when addressed by the ignorant ones, their only response is, ‘Peace be with you.’” And “when they come across something impious, they pass by, ignoring it.” They prevent their feet from following and investigating people’s defects, stop their tongues from speaking ill of people’s reputations, check their ears from hearing evil about others, turn their eyes away from (looking at) the acts of disobedience to Allah, and direct them towards the Abode of Peace—whoever enters it will be saved from doubt and grief. It seems, O Ahnaf, that you have been engaged in looking at a face that afflicts you with various sorts of misfortunes the very moment that you enjoy looking at its prosperous appearance; and you have been engaged in looking at the drawings of the exterior of that lodging, as well as its hanging curtains, while wind and hot weather are destroying its fruits within. Nevertheless, that lodging, which is definitely not your permanent abode, has distracted you from (working for) the Final Abode that Allah created from a white pearl, deep rivers, and planted trees, and cast shadows of ripe fruit over it, and filled it with young Paradisiacal women (houris). There He will lodge (permanently) His disciples and the obedient people. Were you, O Ahnaf, to see them when they will come to their Lord, the Glorified! When their mares are stricken, their riding camels will produce a sound that no one has ever heard. A cloud that rains musk and saffron will overshadow them. Their mares will neigh among the plants of the gardens (of Paradise), and their camels will take them over the rising slopes of saffron. They will walk solemnly on pearls and corals. The curators of Paradise will receive them with pulpits of basil. A wind from the direction of the Divine Throne will then disperse over them jasmine and daisies. When they approach the portals (of Paradise), Ridhwan (the Paradise doorkeeper) will open these portals before them and they will prostrate themselves before Allah in the courtyard of Paradise. Allah, the Omnipotent, will say to them, “Raise your heads. I have freed you from the burden of worship and housed you in the bliss of contentment.” If you, O Ahnaf, disregard that which I have related, you will be left in shirts of tar, run between blazing fire and boiling water, and be served with boiling water. On that day, many spines will be broken, many faces distorted, and many deformed and beaten on the nose. Likewise, chains will gouge the palms of many and bands will choke the necks. Were you, O Ahnaf, to see them slipping into the valleys of Hell and climbing the mountains there while dressed in tar and grouped with the sinful and the devils! If they call for help against the fire, scorpions and snakes will attack them. Were you also to see the caller who will say, “O people of Paradise and its bliss, jewels, and garments, you will live forever and you will never die.” Only then will they lose hope completely. The doors will close and relationships will be cut off. On that day, many old men will mourn their old age, many youths will mourn their youth, and many women will bewail their scandals. The screens (separating them from Hell) will be removed. On that day, many will be dipped into and detained between the layers of Hell. It is a dip that will cause you to wear a garment—after having worn linen clothes, drunk water that was cooled, and eaten various meals—which will turn every single smooth hair grey and gouge out the eye with which you saw your dear ones. This is what Allah has prepared for the offenders and that was what Allah has prepared for the God-fearing. [14](#)

Another depiction has been reported by al-Karachaki in his book of *Kanz al-Fawa'id* [15](#) as reported by Nawf al-Bakkali [16](#) from Imam ‘Ali (‘a) in an address to a group of his companions among whom was

Hammam ibn 'Abadah ibn Khaytham. A part of this discourse has been recorded by al-Sharif al-Radhi in *Nahj al-Balaghah*.¹⁷

Practical Belief in Wilayah

One of the characteristics of the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) is conformity between their claim of Shi'ism and loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) on the one hand, and practical patterning after them on the other. Islam has highlighted this as one of its most significant principles. The Holy Qur'an says:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ {2} كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ {3}) (61)

O you who believe: Why do you say that which you do not do? It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that which you do not do. (61/2-3)

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have also called attention to this principle as they established connections between faith and practice and clearly stated that perfection of faith cannot be achieved without putting faith into practice. In the coming discussions, more light will be shed on this topic. Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

يَنْبَغِي لِمَنْ ادَّعَى هَذَا الْأَمْرَ فِي السِّرِّ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ عَلَيْهِ بِبُرْهَانٍ فِي الْعَلَانِيَةِ... يُحِلُّ حَلَالَ اللَّهِ، وَيُحَرِّمُ حَرَامَ اللَّهِ، وَيَكُونُ لَهُ ظَاهِرٌ يُصَدِّقُ بَاطِنَهُ.

He who claims embracing this faith (i.e. loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)) within one's heart must provide overt proof....He must commit to all that which Almighty Allah has deemed lawful, refrain from whatever He has deemed unlawful, and show an outward appearance that proves his inner belief. ¹⁸

He ('a) is also reported to have said:

لَيْسَ مِنْ شِيعَتِنَا مَنْ قَالَ بِلِسَانِهِ وَخَالَفَنَا فِي أَعْمَالِنَا وَآثَارِنَا؛ وَلَكِنْ مِنْ شِيعَتِنَا مَنْ وَافَقَنَا بِلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَاتَّبَعَ آثَارَنَا وَعَمِلَ عَمَلَنَا. أَوْلَيْكَ شِيعَتُنَا.

Verily, he who claims being one of our followers in words but violates our deeds and traditions is not one of our Shi'ah. Our Shi'ah are only those who concur with us in words and intentions, imitate our traditions, and emulate our deeds. These, indeed, are our Shi'ah. ¹⁹

Through an authentic chain of authority, al-Kashshi reported Dawud ibn Farqad to have said that he heard Imam al-Sadiq ('a) saying:

إِنَّ أَصْحَابِي أَوْلُوا النَّهْيَ وَالتَّقَى؛ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّهْيِ وَالتَّقَى فَلَيْسَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِي

My companions are verily the people of understanding and piety. Hence, he who does not enjoy understanding and piety is not my companion. [20](#)

Cordial and Practical Devotion to Almighty Allah

Another feature that distinguishes the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) is devotion to Almighty Allah in practice and behavior as well as in emotions and feelings—at both individual and collective levels—which includes commitment to building good relationships with others in order to connect with Almighty Allah. In other words, followers of Ahl al-Bayt ('a) befriend people for Almighty Allah's sake, shun others for the same sake, and keep themselves away from worldly attractions and carnal tendencies.

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have focused on this aspect, which expresses real religiousness and faith in the doctrinal commitments of a Muslim. They have laid down this aspect as a goal and objective for their followers. This has come in the form of traditions and discourses declaring this objective openly or expressing it as one of the practical commitments.

In his book of *al-Kafi*, Shaykh al-Kulayni has reported through an authentic chain of authority that Abu-'Ubaydah al-Hadhaha' reported Imam al-Sadiq ('a) as saying:

مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِلَّهِ وَأَبْغَضَ لِلَّهِ وَأَعْطَى لِلَّهِ فَهُوَ مِمَّنْ كَمَلَ إِيمَانُهُ

He who loves, hates, and gives for the sake of Allah actually enjoys perfect faith. [21](#)

According to another tradition, Imam al-Baqir ('a) is reported to have said:

وَدُّ الْمُؤْمِنِ فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ أَعْظَمِ شُعَبِ الْإِيمَانِ. أَلَا وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ فِي اللَّهِ وَأَبْغَضَ فِي اللَّهِ وَأَعْطَى فِي اللَّهِ وَمَنَعَ فِي اللَّهِ فَهُوَ مِنْ أَصْفِيَاءِ اللَّهِ

When a believer loves (others) for the sake of Almighty Allah, this will be one of the greatest parts of faith. Verily, he who loves, hates, gives, and withholds for the sake of Almighty Allah is one of His elite servants. [22](#)

Other traditions also express true faith and piety through love that is intended purely for Allah's sake. Fudhayl ibn Yasar reported that he asked Imam al-Sadiq ('a) whether loving and hating for Allah's sake is part of faith. The Imam ('a) answered:

وَهَلِ الْإِيمَانُ إِلَّا الْحُبُّ وَالْبُغْضُ؟

Is true faith anything other than love and hate?

Then, the Imam ('a) quoted the following Qur'anic verse to confirm his words:

(اللَّهُ حَبَبَ إِلَيْكُمْ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيْنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ (49/7)

...Allah has endeared faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief, transgression and disobedience; these are the followers of a right way.

(49/7)²³

Abu-Ubaydah al-Hadhdha' also reported that Imam al-Baqir ('a) said to him:

يَا زِيَادُ، وَبِحُكِّ! وَهَلِ الدِّينُ إِلَّا الْحُبُّ؟ أَلَا تَرَى قَوْلَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبِّبْكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

O Ziyad, woe unto you! Is faith anything other than love? You should have considered Almighty Allah's saying (in the Holy Qur'an), "Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your faults, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (3/31)"²⁴

Acting as Excellent Exemplars

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have listed a number of features, the most important of which is to become excellent exemplars among people in both individual and social behavior. Because of the necessity of this feature, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have instructed their followers to be characterized by it; making it one of the goals of building a virtuous community.

This emphasis of the Holy Imams ('a) that their followers be characterized by piety, godliness, sincerity, and constancy in worship can represent only one aspect of the many aspects of acting as excellent exemplars.

In view of this, the practical demonstration as excellent exemplars must be among the features that distinguish the Shi'ah from others. Moreover, the Holy Imams ('a), through traditions, have matched this feature to their own attributes, since the Imams ('a) have always been excellent exemplars.

'Umar ibn Yahya is reported to have heard Imam al-Sadiq ('a) saying:

إِنَّ أَحَقَّ النَّاسِ بِالْوَرَعِ آلَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَشِيعَتَهُمْ، كَيْمَا تَقْتَدِي الرَّعِيَّةَ بِهِمْ

Verily, the first to be characterized by devoutness are the Household of Muhammad ('a) and their followers so that the people will pattern themselves after them. [\(25\)](#)

As has been previously cited, Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

فَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْكُمْ إِذَا وَرَعَ فِي دِينِهِ وَصَدَقَ الْحَدِيثَ وَأَدَّى الْأَمَانَةَ وَحَسَنَ خُلُقَهُ مَعَ النَّاسِ قِيلَ هَذَا جَعْفَرِيٌّ، فَيَسْرُنِي ذَلِكَ وَيَدْخُلُ عَلَيَّ مِنْهُ السُّرُورُ، وَقِيلَ هَذَا أَدَبٌ جَعْفَرِيٌّ. وَاللَّهِ لِحَدَّثَنِي أَبِي عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ كَانَ يَكُونُ فِي الْقَبِيلَةِ مِنْ شَيْعَةِ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَيَكُونُ زَيْنَهَا، آدَاهُمْ لِلْأَمَانَةِ، وَأَقْضَاهُمْ لِلْحَقُوقِ، وَأَصْدَقَهُمْ لِلْحَدِيثِ، إِلَيْهِ وَصَايَاهُمْ وَوَدَائِعُهُمْ، تُسْأَلُ الْعَشِيرَةُ عَنْهُ فَتَقُولُ: مَنْ مِثْلُ فُلَانٍ؟ إِنَّهُ آدَانَا لِلْأَمَانَةِ وَأَصْدَقُنَا لِلْحَدِيثِ.

Verily, if one of you shows piety in his religious affairs, speaks nothing but the truth, and behaves politely towards the people, they will refer to him as belonging to Ja'far and they will say that this is the way Ja'far educates his followers. This will please me and fill me with delight. If one does the opposite, it is I who will be defamed and offended, since the people will say that Ja'far has educated his followers in this manner. I swear by Allah that my father ('a) told me that a Shi'ite in a clan would be the best of its individuals, the most trustworthy, the most observant of their rights, and the most honest. The other individuals would always keep their wills and trusts with him, and when asked about him, they would answer that he was unmatched among them, since he was the most trustworthy and the most honest. [26](#)

Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is also reported as saying:

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ كَانُوا الْمَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي الْقَبَائِلِ، وَكَانُوا أَصْحَابَ الْوَدَائِعِ، مَرْضِيَيْنَ عِنْدَ النَّاسِ.

The companions of 'Ali ('a) were the most notable figures in their clans. They were also the most trustworthy and the most respected in the eyes of the people. [27](#)

According to another tradition, Sulayman ibn Mahran reported that he once visited Imam al-Sadiq ('a) and found a group of Shi'ah listening to the Imam while he was instructing them by saying:

مَعَاشِرَ الشَّيْعَةِ! كُونُوا لَنَا زَيْنًا، وَلَا تَكُونُوا عَلَيْنَا شَيْنًا. قُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا، وَاحْفَظُوا أَلْسِنَتَكُمْ، وَكُفُّوهَُا عَنِ الْفُضُولِ وَقُبْحِ الْقَوْلِ.

O groups of Shi'ah, represent us with fairness and do not represent us unbecomingly. Speak to men good words, withhold your tongues (from speaking evil), and desist from idle chat and foul language. [28](#)

Steadfastness

The capability to withstand and undertake the great historical responsibility of steadfastness in order to achieve the major goals of Imamate must be found in the personalities of the individuals of the virtuous

community, because without such qualities human perfection cannot be attained. Steadfastness includes commitment, self-control, keeping a confidence, patience, trust in Allah and reliance upon Him, self-sacrifice, courteous association with people, fulfillment of promises and trusts, practicing the noble manners of Islam, cognizance and a sound understanding of the historical conditions and events of Islam.

The virtuous community is in urgent need of these qualities to ensure endurance in the face of annihilation and spiritual and mental pressure exercised by the enemies against them; to confront social clashes, political changes, ethical and social problems; and to guarantee the continuity of the transmission of the message of Islam to the coming generations. To facilitate this, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) prepared, for their followers, multi-dimensional systems, regulations, special rules—such as *taqiyyah*—and a collective security system.²⁹ They also drafted certain systems of social association which include the spiritual, ethical, and cultural aspects of life. The Holy Imams ('a) have considered compliance with these regulations to be one of the features that discriminate a Shi'ite individual from others.

Let us now mention some traditions that refer to the quality of steadfastness:

Ibn Sadaqah has reported Imam al-Sadiq ('a) as saying,

إِمْتَحِنُوا شِيعَتَنَا عِنْدَ مَوَاقِبِ الصَّلَاةِ كَيْفَ مُحَافِظَتُهُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَإِلَى أَسْرَارِنَا كَيْفَ حِفْظُهُمْ لَهَا عِنْدَ عَدُوِّنَا، وَإِلَى أَمْوَالِهِمْ كَيْفَ مَوَاسَاتُهُمْ لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ فِيهَا.

*You can test our true followers (the Shi'ah) through their performing the prayers at the best time of prayer, keeping our secrets from our enemies, and taking their brethren-in-faith as partners in their wealth.*³⁰

Another tradition holds that Abul-Rabi' al-Shami reported that he once visited Imam al-Sadiq ('a) and found his house full of attendants some of whom were from Khurasan and others from Syria and other districts. He could not find a place to sit. Then, Imam al-Sadiq ('a), who was leaning, sat erect and said:

يَا شِيعَةَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ! إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَمْلِكْ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ غَضَبِهِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يُحْسِنْ صُحْبَةَ مَنْ صَحِبَهُ، وَمُخَالَفَةَ مَنْ خَالَفَهُ، وَمُرَافَقَةَ مَنْ رَافَقَهُ، وَمُجَاوِرَةَ مَنْ جَاوَرَهُ...

*O Adherents of Muhammad's Household, know that they are not ours who do not control themselves when in rage, do not respect the association with their companions, associates, and parties, and do not oppose those opposed to them in a peaceful way.*³¹

Maysir has reported Imam al-Baqir ('a) as saying to him, "O Maysir! May I introduce to you our true Shi'ah?" Maysir said, "May I be your devoted servant! Please do." The Imam ('a) said:

إِنَّهُمْ حُصُونٌ حَصِينَةٌ، وَصُدُورٌ أَمِينَةٌ، وَأَحْلَامٌ رَزِينَةٌ، لَيْسُوا بِالْمَذَابِيعِ الْبَدْرِ، وَلَا بِالْجَفَاةِ الْمُرَائِينِ، رُهْبَانُ اللَّيْلِ، أُسْدُ النَّهَارِ.

They are strong fortresses, faithful hearts and restrained intellects. They do not hide the truth and are not vain or ostentatious. They are humble worshippers at night and courageous lions during the day. [32](#)

Imam al-Baqir ('a) is also reported to have said:

شِيعَتُنَا الْمُتَبَاذِلُونَ فِي وِلَايَتِنَا، الْمُتَحَابُّونَ فِي مَوَدَّتِنَا، الْمُتَزَاوِرُونَ فِي إِحْيَاءِ أَمْرِنَا، الَّذِينَ إِذَا غَضِبُوا لَمْ يَظْلِمُوا، وَإِنْ رَضُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا، بَرَكَتٌ عَلَى مَنْ جَاوَرُوا، سَلَامٌ لِمَنْ خَالَطُوا.

Our true Shi'ah are surely those who meet the needs of each other for the sake of (their loyalty to) our leadership, love each other for the sake of their love for us, and exchange visits for the sake of discussing our affairs. They neither wrong others when they are enraged nor exceed the limits when they are pleased. They are a blessing for their neighbors and peace for their associates. [33](#)

In previously mentioned traditions, we have come to know about the Holy Imams ('a) approach of instructing and disciplining their followers to comply with high moral standards, emphasizing the quality of restoring trusts to their owners and fulfilling responsibilities. Such traditions can also be found in reference books of Hadith, especially chapters on appropriate relationships with others and enjoining that which is right. Furthermore, separate books have been written on such topics. [34](#)

Keeping the Entity Strongly Perfected

Relying upon divine support and upon the subjective capacities of the virtuous community, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) established a well-built, strong social entity that would be spiritually and morally capable of withstanding the impositions of tyrannical rulers on Muslim societies and the changing social conditions. This feature, which will be discussed in more detail in the coming books of this series, can be seen throughout the history of Islam and includes the following aspects:

First: The political system represents the system of administration, judicature, and issuance of verdicts. The well-versed jurists (*mujtahids*) are required to undertake the responsibility of managing this system on the guidance of the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). The Holy Imams ('a) have formed this system so carefully that it corresponds with the general political system of the nation and, at the same time, enables the virtuous community to be independent and capable of undertaking their mission while avoiding falling prey to corrupt political conditions, such as, turning into tyrannical rulers. [35](#)

Second: The financial system of the virtuous community secures for them disbursements for general religious work inside the community. This system basically depends upon the religious dues headed by the taxes of *khums* and *zakat*, which play a significant role in the maintenance and continuity of this

Third: The establishment of cultural foundations, such as schools and seminaries that educate well-versed jurists, propagators, and scholars specialized in religious sciences. Such schools have been invulnerable forts that shelter this virtuous community against collapse. Therefore, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) have emphasized the duty of seeking knowledge and the necessity of dissemination of knowledge by the scholars. In this respect, Imam ‘Ali Amir al-Mu‘minin (‘a) is reported as saying:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّ كَمَالَ الدِّينِ طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ وَالْعَمَلُ بِهِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمِ أَوْجِبُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ طَلَبِ الْمَالِ. إِنَّ الْمَالَ مَقْسُومٌ مَضْمُونٌ لَكُمْ، قَدْ قَسَمَهُ عَادِلٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَمِنَهُ، وَسِيفِي لَكُمْ. وَالْعِلْمُ مَخْزُونٌ عِنْدَ أَهْلِهِ، وَقَدْ أَمَرْتُمْ بِطَلْبِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ فَاطْلُبُوهُ.

O people! Beware that the perfection of religion depends upon acquiring knowledge and putting it into practice. It is more important for you to acquire knowledge than to collect wealth. Wealth has been distributed among you by the Just Lord. He has guaranteed it and He will keep His promise. However, He has stored knowledge in the hearts of some, and has ordered you to go forth to seek it from them. [37](#)

Many traditions carry this emphasis on seeking knowledge:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ.

Seeking knowledge is a religious duty.

أَلَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ بُعَاةَ الْعِلْمِ.

Verily, Almighty Allah loves the seekers of knowledge.

إِنَّ الشَّاحِصَ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ كَالْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

One who exerts serious effort to seek knowledge will have the same reward as one who strives in the way of Allah.

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

تَذَاكَرُوا، وَتَلَاقُوا، وَتَحَدَّثُوا: فَإِنَّ الْحَدِيثَ جَلَاءٌ لِلْقُلُوبِ. إِنَّ الْقُلُوبَ لَتَرِينُ كَمَا يَرِينُ السَّيْفُ؛ وَجَلَاوُهَا الْحَدِيثُ.

Hold talks with each other, meet each other for study, and exchange discourses, because discourses

refine hearts. Like swords, hearts are exposed to corrosion, and discourse is their refining polish.

Holding sessions and meetings to discuss the cultural and moral heritage of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), their virtues, everyday matters and imperative affairs of the virtuous community are also necessary for strengthening the cultural aspect of this community.[38](#)

Fourth: Among the distinctive features of the virtuous community built by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) is to take considerable interest in the assurance of financial resources for the virtuous community through two courses of action: trade and agriculture. These two courses procure a sort of economic protection against the influence of tyrannical rulers, persecution, pursuit, and sieges against the individuals of the virtuous community.

Numerous are the traditions that encourage commerce and agriculture. Some of these declare that nine tenths of sustenance lies in commerce.[39](#)

Standing by the Believers

Another distinctive feature of the virtuous community is the spirit of justice, mutual support, collaboration, joint liability and helping brethren-in-faith. This feature represents the covenant of allegiance among believers on which all relationships among individuals of the virtuous community depend, and through which their unity and adherence is achieved and points of weakness and defect dealt with. An individual might face isolation, siege, or insecurity because of certain social, economic or political conditions. However, such a spirit of allegiance will definitely come to his rescue.

Traditions convey the Ahl al-Bayt's verdict concerning the significance of this principle as one of the duties towards brothers-in-faith. This topic will be discussed in the coming book about the economic system and social relationships within the virtuous community. In this respect, Imam al-Baqir ('a) is reported as saying:

إِنَّ مِنْ حَقِّ الْمُؤْمِنِ عَلَى أَخِيهِ الْمُؤْمِنِ أَنْ يُشْبِعَ جَوْعَتَهُ، وَيُؤَارِيَ عَوْرَتَهُ، وَيُفْرِجَ عَنْ كُرْبَتِهِ، وَيَقْضِيَ دَيْنَهُ. فَإِذَا مَاتَ خَلَّفَهُ فِي أَهْلِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ.

The rights of a believer over another believer include: feeding him when he is hungry, clothing him when he is naked, rescuing him from trouble, paying off his debts, and taking care of his family after his death.[40](#)

Undertaking Public Responsibilities

The individuals of the virtuous community are characterized by their affection for all Muslims and assuming responsibility for the entire Muslim community. This feature has come from the Holy Imams'

(‘a) emphasis on the following principles:

(1) Enjoining that which is right, forbidding that which is wrong and striving hard for Allah’s sake. This principle means to resist wrong acts, oppression, and deviation.

(2) Mutual cooperation

(3) Helping each other

(4) Guiding each other

(5) Protecting the lives, possessions, and honor of the fraternity of believers

(6) Coexisting with Muslims of all inclinations

In addition, the Holy Imams (‘a) emphasized many other principles that work together to help form the strong, fundamentally perfect system which will be discussed in greater detail in the coming books of this series.

[1.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:213, H. 2.

[2.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:213–214.

[3.](#) – This topic will be discussed along with its divergent aspects in the coming book, Security System of the Virtuous Community (security policies). In my thesis about Imam al-Mahdi (‘a), I have also shed light on this topic.

[4.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2: 18–19; al-Hurr al-‘Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 1:7, H.2.

[5.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, al-Amali, p. 416, H. 548. Many traditions have demonstrated the same content of this tradition. For instance, see ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 78:9, H. 4 as well as other reference books appertaining to qualities of the Shi’ah.

[6.](#) – Al-Tabarani, al-Mu’jam al-Kabir 3:66, H. 2681; Ibn Hajar, al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqah, pp. 228–229.

[7.](#) – The followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) accept the report of any trustworthy person who reports from one of the Holy Infallibles (‘a); they, therefore accept generally the reports of the trustworthy reporters even if they follow other Muslim sects or jurisprudential schools other than the Ahl al-Bayt’s (‘a). By doing so, they in reality accept the sayings and judgments of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) alone, because a very limited number of traditions that are reported by other than the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) has been proven authentic while all the others have not been proven so. These very few accepted narrations are called ‘al-nabawi (the Prophetic traditions)’ and famously known by all Muslims who transmitted them from one generation to another. However, some scholars also doubt such narrations because their chains of authority have not been found adequately authentic.

[8.](#) – Although the Arabic word ‘adil literally means impartial, the characteristic of ‘adalah goes beyond justice to include decency.

[9.](#) – Although the stipulation of acting upon the verdicts of an living mujtahid is not unanimously agreed upon by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) School, the greater majority of scholars, in the recent ages at least, comply with this term.

[10.](#) – Ibn Hajar: al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqah p. 341; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi: Kanz al-‘Ummal 1: 185–189.

[11.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq: ‘Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha, 1:261, H.21.

[12.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, al-Khisal p. 2, H. 4.

[13.](#) – Al-Irshad, p. 114; al-Amali, p. 216, H. 377.

[14.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, Sifat al-Shi’ah, English version translated by Badr Shahin, pp. 329–336.

[15.](#) – Kanz al-Fawa’id 1:87–88; Bihar al-Anwar 68:191, H. 47.

[16.](#) – Kanz al-Fawa’id 1:88–92; Bihar al-Anwar 68:192–196, H. 48.

17. – Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 193. This sermon is as follows:

It is related that a companion of Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) called Hammam, who was a man devoted to worship, said to him "O Amir al-Mu'minin ('a), describe to me the pious men in such a way that I can see them." Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) avoided responding to him and, instead said, O Hammam, fear Allah and perform good acts because "verily, Allah is with those who guard themselves against evil and those who do good to others. (16:128)"

Hammam was not satisfied with this reply; he therefore forced him to speak. Thereupon, Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) praised and extolled Allah, invoked His blessings upon the Holy Prophet (S), and spoke thus:

Now then, Allah the Glorified, the Sublime, created (the things of) creation. He created them without having any need for their obedience or need to be safe from their sins, because the sin of anyone who sins does not harm Him nor does the obedience of anyone who obeys Him benefit Him. He has distributed among them their livelihood, and has assigned them their positions in the world.

Thus, among the God-fearing are the people of distinction. Their speech is to the point, their dress is moderate and their gait is humble. They keep their eyes closed to what Allah has made unlawful for them, and they use their ears to gain that knowledge which is beneficial to them. They remain, in the time of trials, as though they are in comfort. If there had not been fixed periods (of life) ordained for each, their spirits would not have remained in their bodies even for the twinkling of an eye because of (their) eagerness for the reward and fear of chastisement. The greatness of the Creator permeates their hearts and, as a result, everything else appears small in their eyes. Thus to them Paradise is before them as though they see it and are enjoying its favors. They also feel that Hell is before them as if they see it and are suffering punishment in it. Their hearts are grieved, they are protected against evils, their bodies are thin, their needs are scanty, and their souls are chaste. They endure (hardship) for a short while, and in consequence they secure comfort forever. It is a beneficial transaction that Allah made easy for them. The world aimed at them, but they did not aim at it. It captured them, but they freed themselves from it by paying the ransom.

During night they stand on their feet reading portions of the Qur'an and reciting it in a well-measured way, creating through it grief for themselves and seeking by it the cure for their ailments. If they come across a verse that brings about eagerness (for Paradise), they pursue it avidly, their spirits turn towards it eagerly, and they feel as if it is in front of them. When they come across a verse that concerns fear (of Hell), they picture it in their minds and feel as though the sound of Hell and its cries are reaching their ears. They bow and prostrate themselves—touching their foreheads, palms, knees and toes—and beseech Allah, the Sublime, for their deliverance. During the day, they are enduring, learned, virtuous and God-fearing. Fear (of Allah) has made them thin like arrows. Whoever looks at them believes they are sick, although they are not, or that they have gone mad. In fact, great concern (i.e., fear) has made them seem such.

They are not satisfied with their meager good acts, and do not regard their major acts as great. They always reproach themselves and are afraid of the unacceptability of their deeds. When any one of them is spoken of highly, he says: "I know myself better than others, and my Lord knows me better than I know myself. O Allah, do not deal with me according to what they say, and make me better than they think of me and forgive me (those shortcomings) which they do not know.

The qualities that you will see in one of them is that he has strength in religion, determination along with leniency, faith with conviction, eagerness in (seeking) knowledge in forbearance, moderation in riches, devotion in worship, gracefulness in hunger, endurance in hardship, desire for the lawful, pleasure in guidance and hatred for greed. He performs virtuous deeds but still feels afraid. In the evening, he is anxious to offer thanks (to Allah). In the morning, his anxiety is to engage in remembrance of (Allah). He passes the night in fear and rises in the morning in joy—fear lest night passes in forgetfulness and joy over the favor and mercy he has received. If his self refuses to endure a thing it does not like, he still does not grant its request for what it likes. The coolness of his eye lies in what is to last forever, while from the things (of this world) that will not last he keeps aloof. He transfuses knowledge with forbearance, and speech with action.

You will see his hopes simple, his shortcomings few, his heart fearing, his spirit contented, his meal small and simple, his religion safe, his desires dead and his anger suppressed. Good alone is expected from him. Evil from him is not to be feared. Even if he is found among those who forget (Allah) he is counted among those who remember (Him), but if he is among the rememberers he is not counted among the forgetful. He forgives him who is unjust to him, and he gives to him who deprives him. He behaves well with him who behaves ill with him.

Indecent speech is far from him, his utterance is lenient, his vices non-existent, his virtues abide, good precedes him and

mischief has turned its face (from him). He is dignified during calamities, patient in distress, and thankful during ease. He does not commit excess even towards him whom he hates, and does not commit sin for the sake of him whom he loves. He admits truth before evidence is brought against him. He does not misappropriate what is placed in his trust nor forget what he is required to remember. He does not utter profanities, cause harm to his neighbors, feel happy at the misfortunes of others, enter into wrong nor abandon the boundaries of right. If he is silent, this silence does not grieve him, if he laughs he does not raise his voice, and if he is wronged he endures until Allah takes revenge on his behalf. His own self is in distress because of his actions, while the people are in ease from them. He puts himself in hardship for the sake of the next life, and makes people feel safe. His keeping away from others is for the sake of asceticism and purification, and his nearness to those to whom he is near is by way of leniency and mercifulness. His keeping away is not due to vanity or feeling of greatness, nor his nearness due to deceit and cheating.

It is related that, after this speech, Hammam passed into a deep swoon and then expired. Then Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) said: Verily, by Allah, I feared this would happen to him. Then he added: Effective advice produces such effects on receptive minds.

Someone said to him: O Amir al-Mu'minin, how is it you do not receive such an effect? Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) replied: Woe to you. For death there is a fixed hour that cannot be exceeded, and a cause which does not change. Be careful, never repeat what Satan just put on your tongue. (From Syed Ali Reza's translation of Nahj al-Balaghah).

[18.](#) – Al-Nu'mani, al-Ghaybah, p. 113, H. 7.

[19.](#) – Tafsir al-Imam al-'Askari, p. 330.

[20.](#) – Al-Kashshi, Ikhtiyar Ma'rifat al-Rijal, p. 525; Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 68:166, H. 17.

[21.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, 11:431, H. 1.

[22.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, 11:431, H. 3.

[23.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, 11:435, H. 16; Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 1:409, H. 930, published by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly.

[24.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, 11:435, H. 17; Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 1:409, H. 931, published by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly.

[25.](#) – Bisharat al-Mustafa, p. 17.

[26.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 8:398 H. 2.

[27.](#) – Al-Tabrisi, Mishkat al-Anwar, p. 63.

[28.](#) – Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali, p. 440, H. 987.

[29.](#) – Later on we will discuss these aspects in further detail.

[30.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, Qurb al-Isnad, p. 78, H. 253; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:149, H. 1.

[31.](#) – Ibn Shu'bah al-Harrani, Tuhaf al-'Uqul, English version translated by Badr Shahin, p. 289.

[32.](#) – Al-Tabrisi, Mishkat al-Anwar, p. 62, H. 298.

[33.](#) – Ibn Shu'bah al-Harrani, Tuhaf al-'Uqul, English version translated by Badr Shahin, p. 199.

[34.](#) – More details about this topic will be presented in the coming chapters about spiritual aspects and the system of social relationships.

[35.](#) – In coming books of this series, detailed discussion about this system of rule will be cited.

[36.](#) – In the coming book, under the economic system of the virtuous community, this topic will be discussed in more detail.

[37.](#) – Al-Tabrisi, Mishkat al-Anwar, English version, p. 346, H. 713.

[38.](#) – A detailed discussion follows in the book concerning the cultural aspects of the virtuous community.

[39.](#) – A detailed discussion follows in the chapter on the economic system of the virtuous community.

[40.](#) – Mishkat al-Anwar, English version, p. 477, H. 1085.

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