

## Chapter 3: Cultural Aspect

### Prelude

Culture, or education, occupies the third place of importance in the process of building the virtuous community. It can portray the correct features of this community, since it represents the proportionally detailed outlines of the doctrinal and moral content and the foundation on which the superstructure of the virtuous community can be established. The institutions, programs, and consequences of education can maintain the endurance and continuity of this structure in addition to connecting with the doctrinal and moral aspects. Education helps make these aspects become part of the culture by which the nation abides.

Education is a well-fortified shelter that can maintain the doctrines and morals of the nation on the one hand and supply the people with a high moral spirit on the other.

It can also hold together the nation and the virtuous community from all parts of the world to unify them on their path, affairs, and goals. This is so because education monitors the details of the social structure and supplies all aspects with the concepts it needs at political, economic, social, organizational, or security levels and even at the levels of form, content, and purport.

The Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa) School has granted the educational aspect a special privilege and particular significance through their actions and by building the virtuous community.

No doubt, the Holy Qurʿan, being the richest source of Islamic education in the view of the Ahl al-Bayt (ʿa), has been the object of their greatest interest. For that reason, Imam ʿAli Amir al-Muʿminin (ʿa) took the initiative of compiling the Holy Qurʿan based on its revelation and interpretation.

In this respect, ʿAmr ibn Abiʿl-Miqdam has reported on the authority of Jabir that he heard Imam al-Baqir (ʿa) saying:

مَا ادَّعَى أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ أَنَّهُ جَمَعَ الْقُرْآنَ كُلَّهُ كَمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَّا كَذَّابٌ؛ وَمَا جَمَعَهُ وَحَفِظَهُ كَمَا نَزَّلَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَّا عَلِيٌّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَالْأَئِمَّةُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ.

*None may claim that he compiled the entire Qur'an as exactly as it was revealed but a liar. None compiled and preserved it as exactly as it was revealed except 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib ('a) and the Imams ('a) after him. [1](#)*

Likewise, Imam 'Ali ('a) was the first to compile, write down and preserve the Prophetic Traditions (Sunnah), because these traditions are considered the second source of Islamic culture. His efforts resulted in the Comprehensive Document (*al-Sahifah al-Jami'ah*) that was transferred to the Holy Imams ('a) thereafter.

Abu-Basir has reported Imam al-Sadiq ('a) as saying:

يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ! وَإِنَّ عِنْدَنَا الْجَامِعَةَ. وَمَا يُدْرِيهِمْ مَا الْجَامِعَةُ؟ صَحِيفَةٌ طُولُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، وَإِمْلَاتِهِ مَنْ فُلِقَ فِيهِ وَخَطَّ عَلَيَّ بِيَمِينِهِ. فِيهَا كُلُّ حَلَالٍ وَحَرَامٍ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ يَحْتَاجُ النَّاسُ إِلَيْهِ حَتَّى الْأَرْضُ مِنَ الْخَدَشِ.

*O Abu-Muhammad, we do have the Jami'ah with us. What do they know about the Jami'ah? It is a seventy-cubit long document that was measured and directly dictated by Allah's Messenger (S) and handwritten by 'Ali ('a). It includes all that which is lawful and unlawful and everything people may need, even matters that are as minute as the expiation for a scratch. [2](#)*

Abu-Basir has also reported that he heard Imam al-Sadiq ('a), talking about the verdicts of Ibn Shabramah, saying:

أَيْنَ هُوَ مِنَ الْجَامِعَةِ؟ أَمَلَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، وَخَطَّهُ عَلَيَّ بِيَدِهِ. فِيهَا جَمِيعُ الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ حَتَّى أَرْضُ الْخَدَشِ فِيهِ.

*How can he be compared with the Jami'ah? It is the dictations of Allah's Messenger (S) and the handwriting of 'Ali ('a). It comprises all that which is legal and illegal even matters that are as minute as the expiation for a scratch. [3](#)*

Additionally, Imam 'Ali ('a), after the Messenger of Allah (S), was the most knowledgeable of all people, the most skilled in judgment, and the most experienced in the lawful and the unlawful issues as well as the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. He was verily the door to the city of the Holy Prophet's knowledge.

At the level of practice, Imam 'Ali ('a) was the most liberal of all people in cultural and educational aspects after the Holy Prophet (S). He was the first to set courses and invent new branches in the

sciences of education. He is thus the founder of a number of sciences, such as jurisprudence (*fiqh*), hadithology, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an (*tafsir*), syntax (*nahw*), and many others.[4](#)

The same course of Imam 'Ali ('a) has been followed by the other Holy Imams ('a), their followers and partisans who, directed by the Holy Imams ('a), founded the Islamic sciences.[5](#)

In the field of education, while building the virtuous community, the Holy Imams ('a) worked on diagnosing and constructing two important projects:

## First Project: Cultural And Educational Courses

Any educational course plays a major role in successfully strengthening the cultural aspect of the virtuous community by making its individuals competent enough to fulfill their requirements and fill the gaps of their cultural needs.

While building the virtuous community culturally, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) adopted four cultural policies that complemented each other. These policies are as follows: While building the virtuous community culturally, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) adopted four cultural policies that complemented each other. These policies are as follows:

## Freedom of Thought and Sources of Islamic Education

### First Line: Freedom of Thought and Accurate Ijtihad

Freedom of thought and accurate *ijtihād* forms the general framework and foundation of educational policy. A reference to this point, which is one of the distinctive features by which the jurisprudence of the Twelver Imamiyyah sect outmatches other sects and jurisprudential schools, has been made in the previous chapter regarding intellectual and doctrinal aspects. We saw that the Holy Imams ('a) had a clear-cut goal and accurate course on which their educational school was set up and its scientific foundations framed. This framework was established on the following foundations:

**First:** The Holy Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah (traditions) of the Holy Prophet (S) are the essential sources of Islamic culture in all fields such as historical-philosophy, socio-philosophy, Muslim jurisprudence, ethics, ideology, cosmology, literature, and linguistics.

**Second:** The principle of the referential authority of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) must be observed in understanding Islam, its convictions and in obtaining Islamic law. In fact, Islamic texts, history and Prophetic traditions have suffered inaccuracy in interpretations and explanations in addition to variety and multiplicity in situations and trends.

The policy of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School firmly attests that the Holy Imams ('a) are the referential authorities in obtaining an accurate understanding of Islam in addition to being the divinely appointed

leaders of the Muslim nation and the legitimate representatives of the Holy Prophet (S). The famous *hadith al-thaqalayn* (Tradition of the Two Weighty Things) has referred to this very fact, as has been previously cited.<sup>6</sup>

**Third:** Jurisprudential rules and fundamental principles of Islam can be inferred from the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah—the two sources of Islamic legislation. General rules and universal laws can be applied in order to deal with the latest developments. The Holy Legislator has left the Representative of the Holy Prophet (S), the Holy Imam ('a) or a well-qualified jurist, to deduct laws from their sources.

Inasmuch as the Islamic system is the final divinely revealed code of law, it must cover all ages and times. In view of this fact, jurists and well-versed scholars are required to play the role of inferring the secondary and circumstantial religious laws from their sources in order to meet with the latest circumstances, on condition that such inference is based on the general laws of Islam. Furthermore, jurists and scholars are required to assess the legal situation and human responsibility towards every event and condition.

As a part of the mission, competent scholars are required to implement the Qur'anic verses regarding Islamic law in their inferences regarding new developments that occur in Muslim life in general. They are also required to apply historical concepts and norms to their inferences attributed to the social and political conditions of the Muslim community.

**Fourth:** Considerable attention has been paid by the Holy Imams ('a) to teach their followers the precise method of inference of religious laws from their sources and the accurate approach of using the Islamic texts (i.e. texts of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah) in the most appropriate way. They are expected to compare the texts, which seem to be contradictory, with one another in order to come up with an acceptable result and to uncover points of concurrence and connection between them and also prefer some texts over others on the basis of certain regulations and standards that are defined in *'Ilm al-Usul* (Fundamentals of Muslim Jurisprudence).

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) asserted the significance of familiarization with the abrogating and abrogated, decisive and allegorical, general and particular, concise and elaborate texts of the sources of the religious legislation before a process of inference of religious laws is carried out. They also emphasized the use of the method of dealing with such texts and understanding some of them in the light of others. This matter was one of the gifts in which Imam 'Ali ('a) used to excel over the other companions of the Holy Prophet (S), since it was one of his peculiar excellences.

#### [Ijtihad and Vitality of Islamic Law](#)

The objective of such meticulous freedom of thought was to accomplish the following two significant matters:

**First:** Freedom of thought aimed at creating among every generation a class of well-qualified scholars

competent enough to infer religious laws from their genuine and fundamental sources. This was done to avoid falling into chaotic situations due to reliance upon the opinionism<sup>7</sup> in which the opinionists (*ashab al-ra'y*) had fallen; in other words, the Hadithists had become inert by depending upon a single text and not subjecting these single texts to perfect comprehension by comparing them to other texts. In fact, the totality of Almighty Allah's words (i.e. the Holy Qur'an), the Holy Prophet's traditions (i.e. Sunnah), and the Holy Imams' ('a) reported discourses are considered one word—one explaining the other—just like the uninterrupted speech of an individual when the first, middle, or the last part of that speech indicates the speech as a whole.

**Second:** Freedom of thought aimed at maintaining the vitality of the religious code of Islamic law and sustaining its capability to adapt itself to the changing circumstances and developments, without (1) falling victim to the perils of distortion, falsification and imitating other jurisprudential schools, (2) interpreting the sacred texts inappropriately, or (3) challenging the truth due to the political and cultural chaos into which the Muslim world had fallen as a result of the spread of seditious matters and painful events suffered by Muslims all through history. (3) challenging the truth due to the political and cultural chaos into which the Muslim world had fallen as a result of the spread of seditious matters and painful events suffered by Muslims all through history.

## Seeking Knowledge and Learning

### Second Line: Promotion of Seeking of Knowledge

The second line in the educational course of the Holy Imams ('a) is urging seeking of knowledge in general and knowledge of the religious law in particular. In the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School, seeking knowledge has become a religious duty, the violation of which brings about accountability. Books of hadith have dedicated separate chapters to this subject, since many traditions, such as the following, have confirmed it:

Imam al-Ridha ('a) has reported Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) as saying:

سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، يَقُولُ: طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ... بِهِ يُطَاعُ الرَّبُّ، وَبِهِ تُوصَلُ الْأَرْحَامُ، وَبِهِ يُعْرَفُ الْحَالِلُ وَالْحَرَامُ. الْعِلْمُ إِمَامُ الْعَمَلِ، وَالْعَمَلُ تَابِعُهُ: يُلْهَمُهُ السُّعْدَاءُ وَيُحْرِمُهُ الْأَشْقِيَاءُ.

*I heard the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim... Through it, the Lord is obeyed (properly), kinships are observed, and lawful and unlawful (matters) are recognized. Knowledge is the leader of deed while deed is its follower. Knowledge is inspired in the blessed but withheld from the wretched."*<sup>8</sup>

Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said,

لَوْ عَلِمَ النَّاسُ مَا فِي الْعِلْمِ لَطَلَبُوهُ وَلَوْ بِسَفْكِ الْمُهْجِ وَخَوْضِ اللَّجَجِ.

*Had people realized the benefits of knowledge, they would have certainly sought it even by exposing themselves to death and the toil of tumults.*[9](#)

Zayd al-Zarrad has reported Imam al-Sadiq ('a) as saying:

قَالَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ الْبَاقِرُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: يَا بُنَيَّ؛ إَعْرِفْ مَنَازِلَ الشَّيْعَةِ عَلَى قَدْرِ رَوَايَتِهِمْ وَمَعْرِفَتِهِمْ، فَإِنَّ الْمَعْرِفَةَ هِيَ الدَّرَايَةُ لِلرَّوَايَةِ، وَبِالدَّرَايَاتِ لِلرَّوَايَاتِ يَعْلُو الْمُؤْمِنُ إِلَى أَفْصَى دَرَجَاتِ الْإِيمَانِ. إِنِّي نَظَرْتُ فِي كِتَابِ لِعَلِّي عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَوَجَدْتُ فِي الْكِتَابِ: إِنَّ قِيَمَةَ كُلِّ امْرِئٍ وَقَدْرَهُ مَعْرِفَتُهُ.

*Imam (Abu-Ja'far) al-Baqir ('a) said, "O Son, you can recognize the ranks of the Shi'ah according to their reports and knowledge. Verily, knowledge is to have acquaintance with the traditions. Through familiarity with traditions, a believer can mount up to the furthest rank of belief. As I looked at it, I found the following in the Book of 'Ali ('a): "The value and worth of each individual is his/her knowledge."*[10](#)

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

إَعْرِفُوا مَنَازِلَ شَيْعَتِنَا بِقَدْرِ مَا يُحْسِنُونَ مِنْ رَوَايَاتِهِمْ عَنَّا، فَإِنَّا لَا نَعُدُّ الْفَقِيهَةَ مِنْهُمْ فَفِيهَا حَتَّى يَكُونَ مُحَدِّثًا... أَلْمُؤْمِنُ يَكُونُ مُفَهِّمًا، وَالْمُفَهِّمُ مُحَدِّثٌ.

*You can recognize the standings of our Shi'ah (i.e. adherents) through recognizing the amount of their reporting of our traditions in a proficient way. We cannot regard the jurisprudents among them as true jurisprudents until they prove themselves as reporters of our traditions...A believer can receive understanding of things (from the angels), and one who receives understanding is actually talked to by the angels.*[11](#)

In this respect, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) did not stop at touching this matter in general terms; rather, they portrayed the steps leading to it. These steps are as follows:

### [Knowledge and Opinion](#)

The Holy Imams ('a) laid much stress on adopting the Qur'anic methodology of research, highlighting the role of science and positivism in obtaining knowledge as opposed to the course of adopting conjecture and surmise. As has been previously cited, the Holy Imams ('a) attached acquaintance with the religious laws to the authentic resources of these laws. In addition, they asserted that the dependence upon these resources must be consistent with the methodology of research founded on study and learning derived from the true scholars, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

As a result of these instructions, the Holy Imams ('a) blocked the way of adopting surmise and personal

views, opinions and conjecture, such as the so-called principles of equitable preference (*istihsan*), analogy (*qiyas*), acceptable advantages (*al-masalih al-mursalah*) and similar invented principles. Divine truths, religious laws and the details of advantages and disadvantages related to these laws cannot be realized except by Divine revelation and inspiration. This is granted to prophets and divinely selected individuals or by learning, erudition, recording, and taking from the true scholars who are the Household of the Holy Prophet (S) and trustees of Divine revelation.

The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ عَلَى غَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَانَ مَا يُفْسِدُ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا يُصْلِحُ.

*He who acts without knowledge will bring about more corruption than correction.* [12](#)

Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) said:

إِنَّ النَّاسَ أَلْوَا بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ: أَلْوَا إِلَى عَالِمٍ هُدَى مِنَ اللَّهِ قَدْ أَعْنَاهُ اللَّهُ بِمَا عَلِمَ عَنْ غَيْرِهِ، وَجَاهِلٍ مُدْعٍ لِلْعِلْمِ لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ، مُعْجَبٍ بِمَا عِنْدَهُ، قَدْ فَتَنَتْهُ الدُّنْيَا وَفَتَنَ غَيْرَهُ، وَمُتَعَلِّمٍ مِنْ عَالِمٍ عَلَى سَبِيلِ هُدَى مِنَ اللَّهِ وَنَجَاةٍ. ثُمَّ هَلَكَ مَنْ ادَّعَى وَخَابَ مَنْ افْتَرَى.

*After the departure of Allah's Messenger (S), the people separated into three groups. One group represented the scholars that were truly guided by Almighty Allah Who made them needless of other than Him due to the knowledge He gave them (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)). Another group represented the ignorant ones who pretended to be knowledgeable while they lacked knowledge. They were admirers of what they had. They were tempted by this world while they themselves tempted others. The third group represented those who were learning from scholars for the sake of finding Allah's guidance and salvation. Beyond these three categories, perdition befall him who claims falsely and frustration befall him who forges lies.* [13](#)

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

مَنْ أَفْتَى النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدَى مِنَ اللَّهِ لَعَنَتْهُ مَلَائِكَةُ الرَّحْمَةِ وَمَلَائِكَةُ الْعَذَابِ، وَلَحِقَهُ وَزُرُ مِنْ عَمَلٍ بِفِتْيَاهُ.

*He who gives a verdict without knowledge and true guidance will be cursed by the angels of mercy and the angels of chastisement and will be responsible for the deeds of those who acted upon his verdict.* [14](#)

Answering the question of his companion who asked him to mention the creatures' duty towards Almighty Allah, Imam al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

أَنْ يَقُولُوا مَا يَعْلَمُونَ، وَيَكْفُوا عَمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ، فَإِنَّا فَعَلْنَا أَدْوَا إِلَى اللَّهِ حَقَّهُ

*They are required to say only that which they know and refrain from that which they do not know. If they do so, then they will have carried out their duty towards Almighty Allah. [15](#)*

### Recording the Hadith

In addition to memorizing, reflecting on, and comprehending the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Imams ('a) highlighted the significance of reporting, memorizing, and recording the Hadith. In this regard, history has recorded a precedence for the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and their followers who were the first to record, maintain, and circulate the Hadith, especially after the Holy Sunnah had been in danger of extinction due to negativity shown by the second caliph in the earliest age of Islam. When the suggestion of recording the Hadith was put before him, the second caliph rejected it, claiming that such records would have a negative bearing on retaining the Holy Qur'an and distract the public from it (i.e. the Holy Qur'an). [16](#)

As a result of the trend of recording and reporting the Hadith under the encouragement of the Holy Imams ('a), their companions attained high ranks in jurisprudence and general knowledge in which they excelled over all others. [17](#)

By virtue of these instructions, the companions of the Holy Imams ('a), in successive ages, endeavored to write down and record the *ahadith* (plural of *hadith*). These recordings were known as *al-Usul al-Arba'mi'ah* (The Four Hundred Principles). Some of the Holy Imams' ('a) companions, such as Aban ibn Taghlib and 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Ali al-Halabi referred to these recordings. [18](#) The Holy Imams ('a) praised those companions who undertook this work, including Burayd ibn Mu'awiyah al-'Ajli, Abu-Basir, Muhammad ibn Muslim, and Zurarah ibn A'yun. [19](#)

### Propagation of Knowledge and Learning

The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) instructed their companions and followers to seek knowledge and learn. They highlighted these two activities as much as they focused on retaining and recording the Hadith. Consequently, these practices became as important as recording the Hadith.

As a result, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) managed to pave the way for making seeking of knowledge easy-to-obtain and within reach by the individuals of the virtuous community despite the difficult political circumstances encountered by these individuals. They suffered constant harassment by the ruling authorities who also imposed economic and educational boycotts on them.

Shaykh al-Kulayni, in his book of *al-Kafi*, has reported Mu'awiyah ibn 'Ammar as saying, I asked (Abu'Abdullah) Imam al-Sadiq ('a), "There is a reporter of your traditions who spreads them among people so as to show them and your partisans the right way. There is, on the other hand, a worshipper among your partisans that does not have such ability to report your traditions. Which one is better?"

The Imam ('a) answered:

الرَّأْيَةُ لِحَدِيثِنَا يَشُدُّ بِهِ قُلُوبَ شِيعَتِنَا أَفْضَلُ مِنْ أَلْفِ عَابِدٍ.

*A reporter of our traditions who strengthens the hearts of our Shi'ah (partisans) is better than a thousand worshippers.* [20](#)

The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

تَذَاكَرُوا وَتَلَاقُوا وَتَحَدَّثُوا؛ فَإِنَّ الْحَدِيثَ جَلَاءٌ لِلْقُلُوبِ. إِنَّ الْقُلُوبَ لَتَرِينُ كَمَا يَرِينُ السَّيْفُ، جَلَاؤُهُ الْحَدِيدُ.

*Hold sessions of discussions, meet each other, and exchange discourses. Verily, discourses polish hearts. Just as swords rust and are then polished by iron, so also do hearts rust.* [21](#)

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

مَنْ أَرَادَ الْحَدِيثَ لِمَنْفَعَةِ الدُّنْيَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ نَصِيبٌ؛ وَمَنْ أَرَادَ بِهِ خَيْرَ الْآخِرَةِ أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ خَيْرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ.

He who learns the science of reporting any traditions for the sake of gaining a worldly benefit will have no share (of benefit) in the Hereafter, but he who learns it for the sake of gaining the benefits of the Next World will be granted by Allah the benefits of this world and the Next World.

[22](#)

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

مَنْ حَفِظَ مِنْ أَحَادِيثِنَا أَرْبَعِينَ حَدِيثًا بَعَثَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَالِمًا فَقِيهًا.

*He who retains forty of our traditions, Almighty Allah, on the Day of Resurrection, will include him with the well-versed scholars.* [23](#)

Muhammad ibn Muslim has reported the following:

I asked Imam al-Sadiq ('a), "When I hear a tradition from you, is it acceptable to add or delete part of the statement when I convey it to others?"

The Imam ('a) answered:

إِنْ كُنْتَ تُرِيدُ مَعَانِيَهُ فَلَا بُدَّ

*If your intention is to explain its meaning, it is then agreed.* [24](#)

This policy is the only reason for the continuity of the Ahl al-Bayt's cultural momentum and the endurance of their scientific and cultural centers in spite of the difficult circumstances they had to encounter. In addition, one of the most prominent features and evident characteristics of the scientific policy of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School is free education with which this school, along with all its branches, has withstood all pressures and difficulties.

At the same time as the ruling authorities strongly supported the official schools of the other Muslim sects by means of massive donations, they exercised pressure and official persecution against the schools of the Ahl al-Bayt's followers in addition to depriving them of any support, donations or aid. Nevertheless, the Ahl al-Bayt's schools endured in such an increasing manner that they occasionally excelled all the other officially supported schools that would have collapsed and vanished if governmental aid had stopped.

Among the major reasons for such endurance and continuity was the method of free education, the propagation of seeking knowledge and the adoption of seeking nearness to Almighty Allah through learning.

In fact, this is still the general feature of these schools and their prevailing methodology with regard to dealing with all educational activities appertaining to the individuals of the virtuous community at all levels, including teaching, propagation, communication of religious laws, writing books, or any other level of education. In fact, this is still the general feature of these schools and their prevailing methodology with regard to dealing with all educational activities appertaining to the individuals of the virtuous community at all levels, including teaching, propagation, communication of religious laws, writing books, or any other level of education.

## **Variety in Educational Methodology**

### **Third Line: Variety in Methods of Educating and Teaching**

In addition to the current styles for preaching sermons, reporting traditions and composing poetry that were widely known in the earliest era of Islam, the Holy Imams ('a) took much interest in other styles that were new methods for general education because they were unfamiliar practices and behaviors. These styles included supplicatory prayers (*du'a'*), bequests (*wasiiyah*), epistles (*risalah*), statements (*bayan*), formulas of visitation (*ziyarah*), sessions (*majlis*), general gatherings (*ijtima'*) including congregational commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom (*al-majalis al-husayniyyah*).

### [Supplicatory Prayer \(Du'a'\)](#)

In the educational system of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), supplications (or supplicatory prayers) have transformed into a perfect school that teaches doctrines, ethics, Islamic and social concepts, human relationships and high moral standards as well as self-purification, high discipline, and expression of relationships with Almighty Allah.

Through his famous supplications (*du'a'*) and whispered prayers (*munajat*), Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) founded this style for which he is famed. The most famous of his supplications is one reported by Kumayl ibn Ziyad al-Nakha'i and known as *Du'a' Kumayl*.

One of the distinctive and famous formulas of supplication of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) is Imam al-Husayn's '*Supplication on the Day of 'Arafah*'.

Taking advantage of this style, yet more expansively, Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) produced an extensive collection of supplications, the role and impact of which has been considerable on the educational course of the Shi'ah. It was the most successful style of treating the educational and moral degradation that struck Muslim society on the one hand and overcoming the difficult political circumstances that Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) had to encounter after the martyrdom of his father and the proscription that the Umayyad ruling authorities imposed on him, on the other hand.[25](#)

### [Bequest \(Wasiyyah\)](#)

The style of using bequests was started by the Holy Prophet (S) who addressed Imam 'Ali ('a) with a number of political, educative, and edifying instructions. Continuing this style, Imam 'Ali ('a) instructed his son Hasan ('a), as well as his other sons, through a number of bequests. After that, this style became another idiosyncratic course adopted by the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), who left such a valuable asset of bequests—touching on various educational features—that they can be compiled in a voluminous book.[26](#)

### [Epistle \(Risalah\)](#)

The style of epistles can be seen in the instructive and educational letters and statements of Imam 'Ali ('a) in the *Nahj al-Balaghah*. The same style is visible in the epistles that the Holy Imams ('a) used to send to their partisans and followers, such as the epistles of Imam al-Baqir ('a), Imam al-Sadiq ('a), and Imam al-Kazim ('a), that contained many precise and varied details of educational guidelines.[27](#)

### [More Styles](#)

In coming books of this series, we will discuss in detail other styles, such as *Ziyarah* (Ritual Systems); the Husayni Assemblies (Educational Foundations); and general gatherings (System of Social Relations).

In these books, we will have a look at the great, organized work of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the variety of educational styles they engendered, some of which have become substantial establishments and distinctive ventures. In these books, we will have a look at the great, organized work of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and the variety of educational styles they engendered, some of which have become substantial establishments and distinctive ventures.

## **Variety in Topics of Education**

### **Fourth Line: Miscellaneous Education and Scientific Specialization**

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) took much interest in the variety of educational and scientific specializations because they believed that their followers must master such variety and specialization in various human and natural domains.

Not satisfied with the multiplicity and variety in educational information, the Holy Imams (‘a) urged their followers to adopt specialization in fields of knowledge in order to be able to reach high levels in various educational issues. Since the beginning, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) realized the significance of enlarging the fields of human and natural sciences. They also foresaw the expansion in the horizons of knowledge as well as intellectual conflicts and doctrinal deviations that the Islamic world would face, such as tendencies of infidelity, atheism, exaggeration, fanaticism, opinionism, personal views, and adjacency with the Greek, Indian, Persian, and Byzantine civilizations.

As a result of such efforts, specialization in various branches of science was practiced not only in later ages of Islamic history when educational affairs and branches ramified and expanded, but also in past ages, particularly in the beginning of the second century of Hijrah, and under the special direction of the Holy Imams (‘a). For instance, Husham ibn al-Hakam was specialized in theology, Zurarah ibn A’yun and Muhammad ibn Muslim in issuance of religious verdicts, Aban ibn Taghlib in the sciences of the Holy Qur’an, and Sulaym ibn Qays, Lut ibn Yahya, and Aban al-Ahmar al-Bujali in history.

In natural sciences, Jabir ibn Hayyan, who received his knowledge directly from Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a), not only specialized in chemistry but also established the foundations of this science. In addition, al-Mufadhhal ibn ‘Umar and many other prominent companions of the Holy Imams (‘a) were specialists.[28](#)

Such comprehensiveness and specialization represented a policy in the educational building of the virtuous community aimed at meeting the requirements, filling the gaps and meeting the needs of this community on the one hand, and granting them their independence in construction, movement, and self-dependence on the other. This enabled the virtuous community to take its normal position in the Muslim nation in the capacity of its being a pioneering group that undertook its mission of safeguarding, reinforcing, and protecting Islam.

Naturally, such specialization does not mean turning away from the other fields of knowledge. In fact, the companions and followers of the Holy Imams (‘a) dealt with the other sciences by means of research

and learning side by side with their specialization, concentrating on a certain branch of science so that the educational movement would be comprehensive and characterized by profundity and power.

## Second Project: Cultural And Scientific Establishments

After identifying the sources of Islamic culture and organizing the general courses to be taught, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) devoted their attention to building educational and scientific establishments.<sup>29</sup> They also encouraged others to activate establishments, such as mosques, which were the first educational and worshipping establishments known in Muslim societies. They also founded other educational establishments unfamiliar to Muslims, where special sessions were held by the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and through the efforts of the virtuous community for the purpose of propagating and teaching their traditions. With the passage of time, these establishments became one expansive educational establishment that included the congregational commemoration of Imam al-Husayn’s martyrdom (currently known as *al-Majalis al-Husayniyyah*).

Interest grew in these educational establishments for two reasons that are related to the cultural aspect:

The **First Reason** was to instill these educational approaches into the mainstream to ensure its continuity under all circumstances.

The **Second Reason** was that these unique approaches were not capable of being maintained by public establishments, no matter how competent they happened to be. Also, the opportunities offered by these establishments would be limited to the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). For these two reasons, the Holy Imams (‘a) took a considerable interest in creating special establishments.

In the following sections, we shall refer to certain establishments that had a great impact on the educational aspect of the lives of the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

### Shi’ite Seminaries (ḥawzah ‘Ilmiyyah)

Since their first day, Muslims were forming debate groups in the form of assemblies (*halqah*) to confer the various branches of their sciences. Such sessions progressed into famous schools in the history of Islam, such as the School of Kufah, Madinah, Basrah, Mecca, Cairo, Andalusia and many others. In the tradition of the Ahl al-Bayt’s followers, such schools are called *hawzah* (seminaries).

Moving with this stream, which was familiar to Muslims, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) established these schools to not only teach the general knowledge of Islam but also activate schools of other fields of knowledge and Islamic sciences in all the cities of the Muslim world. This role became more evident during the age of Imam al-Baqir and Imam al-Sadiq—peace be upon them. They played a distinctive role in educating and disseminating knowledge among the entire Muslim community. As has been previously cited, the major Muslim scholars and scientists studied under the Holy Imams (‘a).<sup>30</sup>

Likewise, the Holy Imams (‘a) played a major role in the establishment of schools, especially for their followers and partisans (Shi’ah), within a special course which they drew up to build the virtuous community. This interest originated from their belief in the vital role the educational establishment could play in founding the pillars of education.

### **Schools of Kufah and Qum**

The School of Kufah was one of the private schools in the history of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). Shi’ism found its way to Iraq at the beginning of the Islamic conquest of Iran along with the earliest prominent companions of the Holy Prophet (S), such as Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman and Salman al-Farsi. They participated in this conquest and were the first to hold the highest governmental offices of the Islamic caliphate in the city of Mada’in, along with ‘Ammar ibn Yasir, ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud, and many others.

The School of Qum, a branch of the School of Kufah before it became an independent school specializing in the sciences of the Shi’ah, was then established in this small town by sincere followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) to avoid being harassed by the ruling authorities.

Other schools in the Muslim east followed the Schools of Kufah and Qum, such as the schools in Ray (southern Tehran), Khurasan (northern Iran), Isfahan (central Iran), Afghanistan, and Jabal ‘Amil (southern Lebanon).

After that, the School of Kufah, from which four thousand scholars graduated, each of whom used to say, “Ja’far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq (‘a) taught me...”, developed to extend to Baghdad. That was during the ages of Imam al-Hasan al-‘Askari (‘a) and the ‘Four Envoys’ in the Age of the Minor Occultation.

It distinctively expanded during the periods of Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Sharif al-Murtadha, and Shaykh al-Tusi in whose age this school moved to the cities of Najaf, Hillah, and Karbala<sup>1</sup> respectively. Finally, it settled in the holy city of Najaf in the last couple of centuries.

Passing through different stages, the School of Qum kept on swinging between expansion and contraction until it became the second most important school in the Shi’ite world in modern history after the School of Najaf.[31](#)

### **Graduation of Well-Versed Jurisprudents**

The Holy Imams (‘a) took much interest in establishing religious seminaries. To achieve this goal, they encouraged their followers to embark upon teaching, issuing verdicts, and holding meetings and assemblies dedicated to such subjects. A firm, influential methodology was set up for running such schools in order to put into action a set of scientific, educational, and spiritual objectives and contribute to the achievement of other social, political, and organizational goals, the details of which will be discussed in the following books of this series.

However, the principal goal was to maintain the momentum of *ijtihad*. In addition to the graduation of proselytizers from all countries where the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) existed, the most important objective of the scholastic courses in these schools was to graduate well-versed scholars and researchers in fields like Muslim jurisprudence, *Usul*, preliminary sciences to these two fields and other Islamic sciences. Actually, this curriculum remained consistent for ages until the latest developments of the modern age made it necessary to add some new courses to it.

As a result, we can see that such schools (*hawzah*) are abounding with large numbers of well-versed jurists (*mujtahid*) in every age and among every generation and social class. It is also noticeable that these schools differ from one another competitively in the quality and quantity of their graduates and in the profundity of the jurisprudential, fundamental, and Islamic studies that they teach.

However, such increasing interest in the achievement of this goal resulted in negative consequences that affected the nature of the scientific outcome of these schools and their capability of achieving other goals. It is thus noticed that there are gaps, both wide and limited, in the yield of other Islamic fields of knowledge, such as exegesis of the Holy Qur’an, Islamic doctrine, philosophy, ethics, Hadith, history, and literature. This is so because there was always urgent need for *ijtihad* (i.e. deep specialization) in the fields of *fiqh* and *Usul*, and some other fields of knowledge which did not need such specialization.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, these schools made speedy progress in opening the door to *Ijtihad* and maintaining the graduation of well-versed scholars in the various fields of Islamic sciences even in the harshest circumstances through which the Islamic world passed.

They could also stand steadfast in the face of attempts at distortion which were encountered by other religious schools in the Islamic world, such as al-Azhar in Cairo and the al-Zaytunah Schools of the Indian subcontinent, plus the schools of Mecca, Madinah, Baghdad, and other places.

### Graduation of Missionaries

Among the other objectives of these schools was to graduate preachers, missionaries, envoys to other countries and teachers for subsidiary religious seminaries.

In this respect, these schools had to face a big problem. This was the absence of a curriculum competent enough in form and content to achieve these objectives directly and respond to the requirements of the latest developments and the various stages, especially in the new regions of the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a). This was so because the level of general knowledge of the Muslim nation, as well as the type of knowledge and the new cultural and educational problems, were different and more progressive than the previous ones. Besides, the multiplicity, ramifications, and reciprocity of the branches of knowledge, in addition to the existence of modern scientific and technical methods, not to mention other channels of development—all required a new treatment of the curricula at both levels of form and content so as to spare time for the students, summarize knowledge for them, and supply them

with useful means in practical fields.

In view of this, the idea of specialization in the various fields of knowledge became practicable and more effective since it would meet realistic requirements.

### **Surmounting New Problems**

In spite of all the problems mentioned, the religious seminaries were able to surmount them, albeit partially, by means of increasing their personal scientific competence to enable a student to acquire scientific and technical knowledge through personal effort widening the horizons of knowledge.

The following features of these schools have helped in the achievement of all that has been accomplished in the discipline:

- (1) Freedom of thought and research
- (2) Freedom in choosing classes and instructors
- (3) Freedom in controlling and utilizing time suitably
- (4) The financial system of these schools which is, to a great extent, controlled by the social and cultural requirements of the virtuous community
- (5) The system of social relations that drives students to respond to the cultural requirements of the Muslim nation

Another factor was the moral course of the religious seminaries that arouses religious responsibility, prompts the highest degrees of piety and asceticism, and induces mental and spiritual education.

These factors have made the students of these religious seminaries move speedily to fill these gaps and stand steadfast against temptation.

### **Maintenance of Islamic Heritage**

Among the other objectives of the religious seminaries was the maintenance of Islamic heritage in general and the heritage and culture of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) in particular. They were to provide Islamic thought, doctrine, history, and other researches related to Islam with the new, genuine, and pure thought based purely on Islamic resources and intended to face the other ideological trends.

We notice that these schools and seminaries continued to produce profound research and wide-ranging cultural investigation to maintain this heritage, such as research in the biography of reporters of Hadith (*'ilm al-rijal*) and Islamic encyclopedias of Hadith and jurisprudence.

These seminaries produced grand scholars and reformers in various scientific fields, such as Avicenna,

Shaykh al-Mufid, Sharif al-Murtadha, Sharif al-Radhi, Shaykh al-Tusi, Shaykh Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli, 'Allamah al-Hilli, Shaykh al-Tabrisi, al-Shahid al-Awwal (First Martyr; Muhammad ibn Makki), al-Shahid al-Thani (Second Martyr: Zayn al-Din al-'Amili), Ibn Tawus, Shaykh al-Baha'i, Sayyid al-Damad, Mulla Sadra (Sadr al-Din al-Shirazi), 'Allamah al-Majlisi (Muhammad Taqi); Shaykh al-Majlisi (Muhammad Baqir), al-Faydh al-Kashani, al-Muhaqqiq al-Karaki, al-Wahid al-Bahbahani, Sayyid Bahr al-'Ulum, Shaykh Kashif al-Ghita', Shaykh al-Jawahiri (known as *Sahib al-Jawahir*), Shaykh al-Ansari, and al-Shirazi the reformer.

In the past century, these seminaries produced master scholars such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Shaykh al-Akhund al-Khurasani, Shaykh al-Mamuqani, Shaykh al-Na'ini, al-Muhaqqiq al-'Iraqi, Sayyid al-Burujerdi, 'Allamah Kashif al-Ghita', 'Allamah Sharaf al-Din, Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin, Shaykh al-Balaghi, Sayyid al-Hakim, 'Allamah al-Tabataba'i, Sayyid al-Khumayni, Martyr Mutahhari, Martyr al-Sadr, Sayyid al-Khu'i, and many others who played a major role not only in the Shi'ite world but also in the Islamic world as a whole. These scholars have enriched the Islamic scientific schools with new theories as they have written scientific encyclopedias and research papers on Muslim jurisprudence, the sciences of the Holy Qur'an, various fields of Islamic knowledge, history, and doctrine. In addition, they approached with great determination the events through which they served Islam and its blessed renaissance and boldly faced international colonization, atheism, and local tyranny.

## Masjid and Husayniyyah

Since the beginning, the mosque (*masjid*) has played the role of an educational institution, not to mention its religious and administrative roles in the Muslim community. Sermons, lessons, and lectures were delivered in mosques and people frequented mosques in order to quench their thirst from this spring of Islamic education.

Following this pattern, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) used mosques to link the general culture with religious duties on the strength of belief in Almighty Allah and thus confer sacredness upon them (i.e. cultures). It was one of the religious duties to seek knowledge, as expressed by the Hadith that states:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

*Seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim.* [33](#)

The followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) patterned this course after the Holy Prophet (S) and his noble companions lead by Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib ('a)—the Master of the Successors of the Prophets. During his reign as caliph, he changed the mosque into a perfect Islamic foundation of rule, judicature, jihad, and social attitudes, and made education act as one of the basic features of this foundation.

## The Virtuous Community and Mosque

In the various regions of the Muslim world, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) had to encounter the problem of the aggression and harassment of the tyrannical ruling authorities against them, their culture, thoughts, and doctrines. Because of this, they could rarely find an opportunity to make use of mosques as cultural foundations, since mosques were under the management of the ruling authorities. They therefore had to choose other places away from the watchful eyes of the tyrants and their agents to study their religion, teach others, and exchange viewpoints in the various fields of life and culture.

Nevertheless, they never deserted the mosque; rather, they always established firm relationships with it as they practiced the Islamic rituals in the mosques even under the most vehement circumstances because they believed that the mosque was not only a place of study but also a place of worship, supplication, and confidential talk with Almighty Allah. In addition, mosques were a communication device of the Muslim nation.

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) worked earnestly toward keeping and maintaining this connection between their followers and mosques.

Whenever they would find an opportunity, the followers of the Holy Imams (‘a) made mosques their starting points for cultural work. As has been previously cited, al-Kufah Mosque was one of the major centers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) School throughout the Islamic era.

Likewise, the mosques of the regions in which the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) could find some freedom and security were used as centers of Islamic education without seeking alternative locations, such as mosques in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and other regions.

Additionally, the followers of the Holy Imams (‘a) took much interest in building, reconstructing, and concerning themselves with mosques—a fact that is witnessed in all Muslim regions that are inhabited by followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

## The Virtuous Community and Husayniyyah

In the regions where the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) could not find freedom and security, they would betake themselves to other places in order to maintain their culture, doctrines, and history. This was the reason for establishing places that are currently known as *Husayniyyah*<sup>34</sup> because the original idea was to find centers in which they could speak freely and securely, as is derived from many traditions reported from the Holy Imams (‘a).

The main subject discussed in such places was Imam al-Husayn (‘a) and the atrocities he encountered. Later on, this idea developed so largely that the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) established many such *Husayniyyahs* as cultural and social centers.

Attending to the religious and ritual role of mosques, they would dedicate one part of such buildings to worship and another part to commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn. This guaranteed more freedom of work and activity and kept the mosque away from the religiously discommended or banned matters, taking into consideration the fact that jurists from the Ahl al-Bayt School ('a) believed in keeping mosques free of ceremonial impurity. They also hold it unlawful for the menstruous and the ceremonially impure to remain in mosques and it is not recommended to eat and sleep in mosques or to bring children therein. Of course, such rulings are not applicable to *Husayniyyahs*. There are also other specific acts and practices discommended in mosques but not in *Husayniyyahs*.

In addition, *Husayniyyahs* are originally dedicated to holding and practicing certain social and cultural ceremonies, such as mourning ceremonies, particular events, general festivals, and establishment of loan offices and public libraries that may help those who gather therein.

In view of this, *Husayniyyahs* have changed into special cultural foundations that the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have adopted for the sake of proclaiming the Islamic culture. Likewise, they have become the springboard to the establishment of a wide-ranging cultural foundation that the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have as a distinctive feature. This foundation is namely the commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom (*al-sha'a'ir al-husayniyyah*). Nevertheless, *Husayniyyah* is in fact an extension of the Islamic foundation of mosques. is in fact an extension of the Islamic foundation of mosques.

### Commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's Martyrdom

Commemorating Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom has been one of the significant fundamentals that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) established in the field of cultural activities. It has also been one of the distinctive features of their followers and devotees. This fundamental includes holding ceremonies commemorating Imam al-Husayn ('a) and his martyrdom, collective recital of *ziyarah* (formulas to be said when visiting the tombs of the Holy Imams ('a)), and other ceremonies that will be described.

Actually, commemoration of Imam Husayn's martyrdom is regarded as one of the significant objectives that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) adopted in building a virtuous community. It is important because they relied on it in their movement inside the Muslim nation, and it received inspiration from Imam al-Husayn's uprising and venerated and highlighted the various political, cultural, doctrinal, and spiritual aspects of its goals.

The Holy Imams ('a) laid the foundation of this commemoration, giving it a purely religious color and defining its form and contents so that it corresponded with the significant role these ceremonies needed to play.

As for the form, these ceremonies must be utterly compatible with the circumstances of the tragic saga of Karbala' and the circumstances of the Ahl al-Bayt's followers.

As for the contents, they must be compatible with the political, spiritual, cultural, and doctrinal aspects of Imam al-Husayn's ('a) uprising and martyrdom.

Beyond doubt, Imam al-Husayn's uprising has had a far-reaching impact on movements of the Muslim nation and has resulted in safeguarding Islam and the Muslim nation from a variety of distortions.

The ceremonies of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom have played a great role in consummating the role of Imam al-Husayn's uprising. This role is mainly consecrated within the virtuous community, even though it has had some impact on the Muslim milieus in general.

Because the cultural aspect is one of the basic, most important goals among its multifaceted goals, we will single out a rather comprehensive discussion on these ceremonies and include other aspects in order to round off its benefits. Because the cultural aspect is one of the basic, most important goals among its multifaceted goals, we will single out a rather comprehensive discussion on these ceremonies and include other aspects in order to round off its benefits.

## **Commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's Martyrdom and the Virtuous Community**

The commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom can be organized in the following two major sections according to its form and contents:

### **(1) Prescribed Rituals**

The first section deals with the ceremonies held according to authentic and forthright instructions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). Their authenticity depends upon their performance:

#### **A) Grief and Weeping**

In addition to all reasonable semblances of grief, sorrow, and complaint about the offensive carried out against the grandson of the Holy Prophet (S), many traditions that are reported from the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have referred to the significance of weeping over Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom. These sorrowful slogans of protest obviously express the emotional and spiritual reaction to Imam al-Husayn's tragedy and introduce the persecution he had to encounter and the brutal crime that was committed against him.

Many other traditions have asserted that the Holy Imams ('a) did weep for Imam al-Husayn ('a), as a token of protest that was initially instituted and raised by Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin ('a).

In his book of *Kamil al-Ziyarat*, Ibn Qawlawayh has reported that a servant of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) saw him while he was prostrating before Allah and weeping. He asked, "O 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ('a), has the time of the termination of your grief not yet come?"

The Imam ('a) raised his head, looked at him, and answered:

وَبَلِّغْ! وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ شَكَا يَعْقُوبُ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فِي أَقْلٍ مَا رَأَيْتُ حِينَ قَالَ: "يَا أَسْفِي عَلَى يُوسُفَ!" وَإِنَّهُ فَقَدَ إِنْبَاءً وَاحِدًا. وَإِنِّي

رَأَيْتُ أَبِي وَجَمَاعَةَ أَهْلِ بَيْتِي يُدَبَّحُونَ حَوْلِي

*Woe to you! By Allah I swear, (Prophet) Jacob (‘a) complained to his Lord for less than what I have seen, saying, “O my sorrow for Joseph!” That was because he had lost one son only. As for me, I saw my father and a group of my household lying slain around me!*[35](#)

Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) is reported to have said:

بَكَى عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ عَشْرِينَ - أَوْ أَرْبَعِينَ - سَنَةً. وَمَا وَضِعَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا بَكَى عَلَى الْحُسَيْنِ حَتَّى قَالَ لَهُ مَوْلَى لَهُ: ”جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ يَا بْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ! إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْ الْهَالِكِينَ!“ قَالَ: ”إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو بَنِي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ. إِنِّي لَمْ أَذْكَرْ مَصْرَعَ بَنِي فَاطِمَةَ إِلَّا حَنَقْتَنِي الْعَبْرَةَ

*‘Ali ibn al-Husayn wept for (his father) Husayn ibn ‘Ali (peace of Allah be upon them all) for twenty or forty years. Whenever he was served with food, he would weep for Husayn (‘a). Once, one of his servants said to him, “May Allah accept me as ransom for you, O son of Allah’s Messenger (S)! I fear you will die (by weeping so much).” The Imam answered, “I only complain of my grief and sorrow to Allah. Whenever I recall the killing of Fatimah’s sons, tears gush out.”*[36](#)

This intensive practice of weeping of Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin (‘a) cannot be interpreted as mere emotional reaction to the scenes that he had witnessed in those days of Muharram, after which he was not able to suppress his feelings and emotions. In addition to this understanding, this practice must have apprised his followers of a well-determined plan based on the tragic truth the Imam (‘a) had to personally suffer. This confirms its profundity and enormity so much so that this tragedy permanently exists as an issue experienced by the Muslim nation since the time it took place and as a basic motive for the virtuous community.

After Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin (‘a), other Holy Imams (‘a) offered further insight when they propounded it as a third example of holding in honor the rituals of God.[37](#) This was done by declaring an objection to injustice and personally reacting to the issue and goals of the tragedy of Karbala<sup>1</sup>, and undertaking a course of self-purification and self-discipline. As a result, weeping over Imam al-Husayn’s martyrdom has changed into an act of worship practiced by people individually and collectively.

The Ahl al-Bayt’s emphasis on the significance of actually weeping and trying to weep for Imam al-Husayn (‘a) and the reward of such acts shows that this act has become an example of weeping recommended by Almighty Allah, similar to weeping out of fear of Him.

In this regard, Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) is reported to have asked Fudhayl, “Do you regularly gather and mention us?”

Fudhayl answered, “Yes, we do.”

The Imam (‘a) commented,

إِنَّ تِلْكَ الْمَجَالِسَ أَحِبُّهَا، فَأَحْيُوا أَمْرَنَا يَا فَضَيْلُ. فَرَجِمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ أَحْيَا أَمْرَنَا. يَا فَضَيْلُ، مَنْ ذَكَرَنَا أَوْ ذُكِرْنَا عِنْدَهُ فَخَرَجَ مِنْ عَيْنِهِ مِثْلُ جَنَاحِ الذُّبَابِ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ ذُنُوبَهُ وَلَوْ كَانَتْ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ زَبَدِ الْبَحْرِ.

*I love these assemblies. Bring to life our affairs (i.e. deeds), O Fudhayl. May Allah have mercy upon him who revitalizes our deeds! O Fudhayl, if one mentions us or listens to our deeds and his eyes shed a tear that is as little as a fly’s wing, Allah will forgive all his sins even if they were as vast as the foam on the seas.* [38](#)

Abu–Harun al–Makfuf (the blind) has reported that he once visited Imam al–Sadiq (‘a) who asked him to say an elegy about Imam al–Husayn (‘a). Abu–Harun recited the elegy in an ordinary way, but the Imam (‘a) said, “Do not recite it in this ordinary way; rather, chant it as you do at the graves.”

So, Abu–Harun started with this verse, “Pass by Husayn’s grave and say to his pure bones.”

As he saw Imam al–Sadiq (‘a) weeping, Abu–Harun stopped. The Imam (‘a) commanded him to continue. He went on until the end of the lamentation. The Imam (‘a) then asked for more, so Abu–Harun chanted another elegy beginning with, “O Maryam, mourn for your master and weep soulfully for Husayn (‘a).”

Imam al–Sadiq (‘a) then wept, his body heaving with sobs, and women also began to wail. When they stopped, the Imam (‘a) said to Abu–Harun:

مَنْ أَنْشَدَ فِي الْحُسَيْنِ فَأَبْكَى عَشْرَةَ فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ... مَنْ أَنْشَدَ فِي الْحُسَيْنِ فَأَبْكَى وَاحِدًا فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ. مَنْ ذَكَرَهُ فَبَكَى فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ.

*If one recites an elegy about Husayn (‘a) and makes ten persons weep, Paradise will be his reward. If he makes nine persons weep, Paradise will be the reward... If he makes even one person weep, Paradise will still be the reward. If one mentions Husayn (‘a) and weeps, Paradise will also be his reward.* [39](#)

### [Logic for Weeping](#)

If we take into consideration the following consequences of weeping, we can understand its significance:

First: There is a political facet in weeping for Imam al–Husayn (‘a). Weeping is generally the best human and social method—sound and gentle—to condemn wrongdoing and express the profundity of this tragedy and the transgressions to which Imam al–Husayn (‘a) and his noble goals were exposed. The political significance of this method manifests under circumstances of ordeal, repression of freedom and terrorism, when all other aspects fail to convey the truth.

In various stages of history, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have been experiencing difficult and brutal conditions; therefore, the method of weeping has been the most appropriate in expressing and abiding by their political posture.

We can now clearly understand Imam Zayn al-'Abidin's inclination to this method considering his psychological state due to his presence in Karbala' during that tragedy.

This issue highlights a significant truth about the Ahl al-Bayt's strategy about political issues: a faithful individual is required to demonstrate his political belief through this practice—under all circumstances—despite the fact that it represents the least degree of faith. Hence, it is imperative for a believer to be duly conscious of political ideology and belief. Many reports that deal with the duty of enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong confirm this. Such reports focus on condemning that which is wrong, even if only in one's heart when higher levels of condemnation are impossible (such being described as the lowest level of faith).

Second: At the same time, weeping represents, at minimum, a moral and subjective reaction to the tragedy of Karbala', an arousal of Muslims' emotions towards the event and its goals, and detachment from the enemies, their acts and wicked purposes.

This moral aspect of weeping became one of the natural means through which the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) maintained the morality of unification. The virtuous community stood by the right party, faced wrongdoers despite pressures at various levels, including the external pressures of despotic rulers and the internal pressures of personal desires and lust.

Third: Because weeping has some bearing on tenderheartedness, wakefulness of the conscience, and awareness of the sentiments, it promotes a course of self-purification from sins and raises sensitivity towards the pains of humanity, deviations of the community and issues of persecution and justice.

The issues of hardheartedness, tenderheartedness, and reverence are the most important factors that create an impact on the personal progress of humanity. Relying on this fact, the Holy Qur'an treated and criticized hardheartedness and praised tenderheartedness and reverence on many occasions, some of which are as follows:

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً

***Thenceforth were your hearts hardened: they became like a rock and even worse in hardness. (2:74) Thenceforth were your hearts hardened: they became like a rock and even worse in hardness. (2:74) Thenceforth were your hearts hardened: they became like a rock and even worse in hardness. (2:74)***

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

**Has not the time arrived for the Believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allah and the Truth revealed to them, and that they should not become like those to whom was given Revelation aforesaid, but long ages passed over them and their hearts grew hard? For many among them are rebellious transgressors. (57: 16)**

أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

**Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Qur'an, or are there locks upon (their) hearts? (47:24)**

وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۖ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ

**They (i.e. the Jews) say, 'Our hearts are the wrappings.' Nay, Allah's curse is on them for their blasphemy. Little is it they believe. (2:88)**

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۖ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

**Woe to those whose hearts are hardened and cannot celebrate the praises of Allah! They are manifestly wandering in error. (39:22)**

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِي تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُضَلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ

**Allah has revealed from time to time the most beautiful Message in the form of a Book, consistent with itself, yet repeating its teaching in various aspects. The skins of those who fear their Lord tremble thereat; then their skins and their hearts do submit to the celebration of Allah's praises. Such is the guidance of Allah: He guides therewith whom He pleases, but those whom Allah leaves to stray can have none to guide. (39:23)**

The state of hearts and setting a seal on them, mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is the state of hardheartedness. The opposite state is that of purity, reverence, fear, tenderness, leading to tranquility.

Based on this fact, the Holy Legislator has encouraged weeping for fear of Him. Thus, an eye that weeps for fear of Allah is, according to sacred texts, in line with the eyes abstaining from violating His

prohibitions and staying awake to guard in His way.<sup>40</sup> In addition to its political and moral aspects, weeping enjoys a spiritual and sentimental aspect.

No doubt, weeping is the finest way of cleansing the filth from the hearts and preparing them to respond to improvement. This is linked to justice and injustice. The motives of weeping that stir up such emotional and sentimental feelings have an impact on man's outlook on life and reaction to various socio-politico-economic issues. When feelings towards wrong and oppression are aroused in a person and when he reacts to such feelings, he will undoubtedly think about the causes of injustice and the standards of justice and resort to methods of commitment to it. Usually, discussions of such ideas surface after stimulation of such feelings.

### **B) Significance of Ziyarah**

Originally, Ziyarah of Imam al-Husayn ('a) indicated presence near his tomb. Later, it took on a broader aspect appertaining to paying tribute to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) since it required visitation of Imam al-Husayn ('a) on various occasions from near and far. After that, visitations to Imam al-Husayn's tomb paved the way for visiting the shrines of the other Holy Imams ('a), their descendants and followers.

According to certain reports, the first to have visited Imam al-Husayn's grave was Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a), forty days after his martyrdom (ceremonially called *al-arba'in*), on his return from Sham (currently Syria) to Madinah.<sup>41</sup>

Subsequently, the other Holy Imams ('a) recommended visiting Imam al-Husayn's tomb. According to traditions, some of which will be cited hereinafter, visiting Imam al-Husayn's tomb is a duty required by every Shi'ite individual who believes in Imam al-Husayn's Imamate.

Authentic traditions, reported from the Holy Imams ('a), have mentioned the great rewards ensuing from this blessed act of devotion as well as its preference to the recommended (i.e. not obligatory) pilgrimage to Mecca (*'umrah*).

Shaykh al-Tusi in his book of *Misbah al-Za'ir* has recorded a form of the *ziyarah* that is different from the famous one that is recited on the day of 'Ashura'. Through a valid chain of authority, he has also reported this formula of *ziyarah* from 'Abdullah ibn Sinan, the author of *al-Mazar al-Kabir*, as follows:

*On the tenth of Muharram ('Ashura') of one year, I visited my master Abu-'Abdullah Ja'far ibn Muhammad (al-Sadiq) ('a) and found him gloomy, apparently aggrieved, with tears flowing from his eyes like pearls. I asked, "O Son of Allah's Messenger (S)! What is making you weep? May Allah never cause your eyes to weep!"*

*The Imam ('a) answered, "Are you inattentive? Do you not know that Husayn ibn 'Ali ('a) was martyred on this day?"*

*I then asked, "O master, what do you say about fasting on this day?"*

The Imam ('a) answered:

صُئِمَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَبْيِيتٍ، وَأَفْطَرَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَشْمِيتٍ، وَلَا تَجْعَلُهُ يَوْمَ صَوْمِ كُمْلًا، وَلْيَكُنْ إِفْطَارُكَ بَعْدَ صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ بِسَاعَةٍ عَلَى شَرِبَةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ، فَإِنَّهُ فِي مِثْلِ ذَلِكَ الْوَقْتِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ تَجَلَّتِ الْهَيْجَاءُ عَنْ آلِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَأُنْكَشَفَتِ الْمَلْحَمَةُ عَنْهُمْ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْهُمْ ثَلَاثُونَ صَرِيحاً فِي مَوَالِيهِمْ، يَعْزُّ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ مَصْرَعُهُمْ. وَلَوْ كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا... يَوْمَئِذٍ حَيًّا لَكَانَ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ هُوَ الْمُعَزَّى بِهِمْ

يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ سِنَانَ! إِنَّ أَفْضَلَ مَا تَأْتِي بِهِ فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ أَنْ تَعْمَدَ إِلَى ثِيَابٍ طَاهِرَةٍ فَتَلْبَسُهَا وَتَتَسَلَّبَ... تُحَلِّلُ أَرْزَارَكَ وَتَكْشِفُ عَنْ ذِرَاعَيْكَ كَهَيْئَةِ أَصْحَابِ الْمَصَائِبِ، ثُمَّ تَخْرُجُ إِلَى أَرْضٍ مُفْفَرَةٍ أَوْ مَكَانٍ لَا يَرَاكَ بِهِ أَحَدٌ أَوْ تَعْمَدُ إِلَى مَنْزِلٍ لَكَ خَالٍ، أَوْ فِي خِلْوَةٍ مِنْذُ حِينَ يَرْتَفِعُ النَّهَارُ فَتُصَلِّيَ أَرْبَعَ رَكَعَاتٍ تُحْسِنُ رُكُوعَهَا وَسُجُودَهَا وَخُشُوعَهَا، وَتُسَلِّمُ بَيْنَ كُلِّ رَكَعَتَيْنِ. تَقْرَأُ فِي الْأُولَى سُورَةَ الْحَمْدِ {قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ} وَفِي الثَّانِيَةِ الْحَمْدَ {قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ} ثُمَّ تُصَلِّيَ رَكَعَتَيْنِ أُخْرَيَيْنِ تَقْرَأُ فِي الْأُولَى الْحَمْدَ وَسُورَةَ الْأَحْزَابِ وَفِي الثَّانِيَةِ الْحَمْدَ {وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ} أَوْ مَا تَيْسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ.

ثُمَّ تَسَلِّمُ وَتُحَوِّلُ وَجْهَكَ نَحْوَ قَبْرِ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَمَضْجَعِهِ. فَتَمَثَّلُ لِنَفْسِكَ مَصْرَعَهُ وَمَنْ كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ وُلْدِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ. وَتَسَلِّمُ وَتُصَلِّيَ عَلَيْهِ وَتَلْعَنُ قَاتِلِيهِ وَتَبْرَأُ مِنْ أَفْعَالِهِمْ، يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَكَ بِذَلِكَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِنَ الدَّرَجَاتِ وَيَحِطُّ عَنْكَ مِنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ. ثُمَّ تَسْعَى مِنَ الْمَوْضِعِ الَّذِي أَنْتَ فِيهِ إِنْ كَانَ صَحْرَاءً أَوْ فُضَاءً أَوْ أَيَّ شَيْءٍ كَانَ خَطَوَاتٍ، تَقُولُ فِي ذَلِكَ: إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ؛ رِضَى بِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ وَتَسْلِيمًا لِأَمْرِهِ. وَلْيَكُنْ عَلَيْكَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْكَابَةِ وَالْحُزْنِ. وَأَكْثَرُ مَنْ ذَكَرَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَالِاسْتِرْجَاعِ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ

فَإِذَا فَرَعْتَ مِنْ سَعْيِكَ وَفَعَلْتَ هَذَا، فَفَقِّ فِي مَوْضِعِكَ الَّذِي صَلَّيْتَ فِيهِ ثُمَّ قُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ عَذِّبِ الْفَجْرَةَ الَّذِينَ شَاقُوا رَسُولَكَ وَحَارَبُوا أَوْلِيَاءَكَ وَعَبَدُوا غَيْرَكَ وَاسْتَحَلُّوا مَحَارِمَكَ، وَالْعَنِ الْقَادَةَ وَالْأَتْبَاعَ وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْهُمْ فَخَبَّ وَأَوْضَعَ مَعَهُمْ أَوْ رَضِيَ بِفِعْلِهِمْ لَعْنَا كَثِيرًا. اللَّهُمَّ وَعَجِّلْ فَرَجَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَاجْعَلْ صَلَوَاتِكَ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمْ وَاسْتَنْقِذْهُمْ مِنْ أَيْدِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ الْمُضِلِّينَ وَالْكَافِرَةَ الْجَا حِدِينَ وَافْتَحْ لَهُمْ فَتْحًا يَسِيرًا وَأَنْحِ لَهُمْ رَوْحًا وَفَرَجًا قَرِيبًا وَاجْعَلْ لَهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنْكَ عَلَى... عَدُوِّكَ وَعَدُوِّهِمْ سُلْطَانًا نَصِيرًا. ثُمَّ ارْفَعْ يَدَيْكَ وَأَقْنُتْ بِهَذَا الدُّعَاءِ وَقُلْ وَأَنْتَ تُوْمِي إِلَى أَعْدَاءِ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

*You may abstain from eating and drinking on that day but without a predetermined intention of ritual fasting and you may break your abstinence from eating and drinking but without prearrangement. Do not fast for the whole day; rather, you must break your fast an hour after the Afternoon ('Asr) Prayer with a drink of water. At this very time of that day, the combat with the family members of Allah's Messenger (S) terminated and the massacre ended while thirty of their supporters were thrown on the ground. Their slaying is very hard for Allah's Messenger (S). Had he been alive then, he would have been the one consoled for their death.*

*O 'Abdullah ibn Sinan, the best act you may do on this day is to dress yourself in clean clothes, undo the buttons, and uncover your arms, just like those stricken by a disaster. At midday, you may take leave to*

*a wasteland or a place where nobody can see you, go to an empty house you own, or keep yourself secluded. You may offer a four-unit (rak'ah) prayer with genuflection (ruku') and prostration (sujud). After each two units, you say the taslim (the concluding statement of prayers). In the first unit, you recite Surah al-Hamd (al-Fatihah, No. 1) and Surah al-Kafirun (No. 109) and in the second Surah al-Hamd and Surah al-Tawhid (al-Ikhlās, No. 112). You then offer another two-unit prayer, reciting in the first unit Surah al-Hamd and Surah al-Ahzab (No. 33) and in the second Surah al-Hamd and Surah al-Munafiqun (No. 63) or any other part of the Holy Qur'an as much as is easy.*

*You then say the taslim and turn your face towards Husayn's tomb and place of rest. You then call to mind the way he, his sons and family members were slain. You salute him, invoke Allah's blessings upon him and Allah's curse upon those who slew him, and distance yourself from their crimes. By doing so, Almighty Allah will raise your rank in Paradise and absolve you from your evildoings.*

*You then take some steps in the place where you are, be it desert, an empty space, or any other area, repeating the following words:*

*"We are Allah's and unto Him shall we return. We are pleased with His decree and we submit to His decisions."*

*Depression and sadness should be manifest on your mien. You should also mention Almighty Allah as much as you can and repeat the previous statement.*

*When you finish walking while doing the previous acts, you should stop in the same place where you offered the prayers and say the following statements:*

*"O Allah, torture the wicked ones who contended with Your Messenger (S), fought against Your Representatives ('a), worshipped other deities than You, and violated Your prohibitions. Curse the leaders and the followers as well as those who loved them, those who participated with them, and those who approved of their crimes with much cursing. O Allah, hasten the Deliverance of Muhammad's Family ('a). Shower on them Your blessings and save them from the grasp of the misleading hypocrites and the contemptuous unbelievers. Grant them ('a) manifest victory. Confer upon them soothing mercy and approaching relief, and furnish them with an overcoming authority from You over Your enemy and theirs."*

*You then raise your hands, pointing to their ('a) enemies, and say the following... etc.*[42](#)

Investigation of the political, ethical, social, and spiritual denotations of this sublime *ziyarah* requires a lengthy discourse, especially when we take into consideration the historical aspect and the reactions of the despotic ruling authorities to it during the various stages of history. However, let us now refer to a number of basic aspects briefly. (S)

[The Various Aspects of Ziyarah](#)

**First Aspect:** This *ziyarah* represents the same set of principles represented by the rituals of Hajj according to the Islamic ruling, yet in a special framework and a restricted goal, which is to refine the virtuous community and the genuine line of the Ahl al-Bayt's followers in accordance with the purposes behind Imam al-Husayn's uprising.

Such refinement can be achieved through loyalty to this Islamic standard, namely Imam al-Husayn ('a), and by responding to his call in the capacity of a caller to Almighty Allah. This response has been introduced in the following formula:

لَبَّيْكَ دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ! إِنْ كَانَ لَمْ يُجِبْكَ بَدَنِي عِنْدَ اسْتِغَاثَتِكَ وَلِسَانِي عِنْدَ اسْتِنصَارِكَ، فَقَدْ أَجَابَكَ قَلْبِي وَسَمْعِي وَبَصَرِي.  
سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا.

*Here I am responding to you, O caller to Allah. If my body could not respond to your call when you called for aid and my tongue could not respond to your call for help, then, verily, my heart, my hearing, and my sight have responded to you. Glory be to our Lord! Most surely, the promise of our Lord was to be fulfilled.* [43](#)

**Second Aspect:** The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) aimed at connecting the movement of the virtuous community and the genuine line of Islam to Imam al-Husayn's Islamic standard and his religion-based situations. In view of differences in their conditions, which required variety in their provisional political affairs, the Holy Imams ('a) needed to confirm a fixed line to be followed by their movement and a clear-cut practice for their school. This line signifies the objection to oppression and injustice, which was declared by Imam al-Husayn ('a) in his first sermon delivered to the people of al-Kufah, saying:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، قَالَ: مَنْ رَأَى سُلْطَانًا جَائِرًا مُسْتَحِلًّا لِحُرَامِ اللَّهِ، نَاكِثًا لِعَهْدِهِ، مُخَالِفًا لِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، يَعْمَلُ فِي عِبَادِ اللَّهِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ، فَلَمْ يُغَيِّرْ عَلَيْهِ بِقَوْلٍ وَلَا فِعْلٍ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يَدْخِلَهُ مَدْخِلَهُ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ قَدْ لَزِمُوا طَاعَةَ الشَّيْطَانِ، وَتَوَلَّوْا عَنِ طَاعَةِ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَأَظْهَرُوا الْفُسَادَ، وَعَظَلُوا الْحُدُودَ، وَاسْتَأْتَرُوا بِالْفِيءِ، وَأَحْلَوْا حُرَامَ اللَّهِ وَحَرَّمُوا حَلَالَهُ، وَإِنِّي أَحَقُّ بِهَذَا الْأَمْرِ

*O people: Verily, Allah's Messenger (S) has said, "He who realizes that an unjust ruler is violating the prohibitions of Allah, breaching his pledge with Him, opposing the traditions of His Messenger (S) and oppressing His servants yet does not try to change that through his deeds or words, then Allah will definitely place him with that ruler." Verily, those rulers have acted in accordance with Satan, abandoned their obedience to the All-beneficent God, made overt mischief, infringed upon the provisions of Allah, seized booty, violated the prohibitions of Allah, and prohibited that which Allah has deemed lawful. Most certainly, it is my duty, more than anyone else, to oppose them.* [44](#)

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) took much interest in consolidating this fixed line in an

unambiguous, clear way by concentrating on visiting Imam al-Husayn's tomb, rendering homage to him, responding to his call, showing loyalty to his devotees and followers, and announcing hostility towards his enemies and all those who support and follow them.

**Third Aspect:** The Holy Imams ('a) worked towards educating the individuals of the virtuous community on commitment to the doctrinal, ethical, and political concepts present in the texts of the *ziyarah* that are addressed to Imam al-Husayn ('a) on various occasions.

Visiting Imam al-Husayn's tomb was consecrated within a certain season to express commitment to these multifaceted concepts. As a result, a cultural line, which is characterized by attentiveness and firmness, was created in the milieu of the virtuous community.

**Fourth Aspect:** By way of connecting with Imam al-Husayn's movement, the Holy Imams ('a) introduced the virtuous community politically and socially and opened the doors for other Muslims to join this movement. This fact explains the following two events that manifested themselves eminently throughout history associated with the visitation to Imam al-Husayn's tomb.

**First Event:** The despotic authorities and the criminal tyrants practiced suppression and violence against the Muslims who visited the holy shrine of Imam al-Husayn ('a). Throughout history, these visitors had to encounter various sorts of injury: some were killed, some fined, some their hands cut off and others persecuted. The holy tomb of Imam al-Husayn ('a) was exposed to many attempts of ruination at the hands of despotic rulers, such as al-Mutawakkil, the 'Abbasid ruler (822-861 AD), the Wahhabis at the end of the thirteenth century of Hegira, and the 'Aflaqi<sup>45</sup> rulers of Iraq (1968-2003).

**Second Event:** The Holy Imams ('a) adopted the course of precautionary dissimulation (*taqiyyah*) and worked on safeguarding their followers and keeping them away from all risks and pain. However, they enlightened their followers on the necessity of reciting the *ziyarah* no matter what menace they faced, since visiting Imam al-Husayn's tomb came to be regarded by them as a fight for the sake of Allah (i.e. jihad).

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

مُرُوا شِيعَتَنَا بِزِيَارَةِ قَبْرِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ، عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ، فَإِنَّ إِيْتِيَانَهُ مُفْتَرَضٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ يُفِرُّ لِلْحُسَيْنِ، عَلَيْهِ  
السَّلَامُ، بِالْإِمَامَةِ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

*Command our followers to visit the tomb of Husayn ibn 'Ali ('a), for this deed is obligatory upon each and every believer who has confessed to the divinely commissioned leadership of Husayn ('a).* <sup>46</sup>

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a) is reported to have said:

لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ حَجَّ دَهْرَهُ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَزِرْ الْحُسَيْنَ بْنَ عَلِيٍّ، عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ، لَكَانَ تَارِكًا حَقًّا مِنْ حُقُوقِ اللَّهِ وَحُقُوقِ رَسُولِهِ،

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، لِأَنَّ حَقَّ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَرِيضَةٌ مِنَ اللّٰهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَاجِبَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ.

*If you go on Hajj every year for your entire lifetime but miss visiting Husayn ibn ‘Ali (‘a), you will have abandoned one of the duties towards Allah and towards His Messenger (S). Carrying out the duty towards Husayn (‘a) is verily obligatory upon each Muslim by a command of Almighty Allah.* [47](#)

### [Commemorating Imam al–Husayn’s Martyrdom](#)

The ceremonies commemorating Imam al–Husayn’s martyrdom (*al–majalis al–husayniyyah*) are the assemblages that the followers of the Ahl al–Bayt (‘a) hold on the days of the great disaster, in Muharram and Safar, and on other days of the year. In these assemblages, Muslims gather to recollect the events of the tragedy of Karbala’ as well as probe other religious issues.

Originally, these ceremonies expressed deep grief for Imam al–Husayn’s martyrdom (‘a). They recalled the terribleness of the calamity that befell Imam al–Husayn (‘a) and his family members, and pointed out the savagery of the Umayyad band in general and Yazid the tyrant in particular, revealing the deep–rooted hatred and animosity they had against Islam, the Messenger (S), and his Household (‘a).

In the following stages, these ceremonies developed into a mobile school of the Ahl al–Bayt’s followers to meet the cultural, political, emotional, and social needs of the virtuous community whose individuals could move freely in the midst of these ceremonies under all circumstances.

Since the first days of the tragedy of Karbala’, such sessions were first held in Sham when Yazid began to retreat in the face of the mass denunciation of the tragedy.

This mass wakefulness was the result of the all–inclusive enlightenment that Lady Zaynab and Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin (‘a) spread among the public when their caravan, carrying them as captives, entered Sham and they were presented in the court of Yazid ibn Mu’awiyah. Some traditions confirm that Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin (‘a) held a three–day funeral ceremony in Sham. [48](#)

The other members of the Holy Prophet’s household and some of his wives, such as Ummu–Salamah, also held funeral ceremonies in al–Madinah as soon as the surviving members of Imam al–Husayn’s family, headed by Imam Zayn al–‘Abidin (‘a), returned home. [49](#)

Whenever they had an opportunity and especially on the first ten days of the month of Muharram, the Ahl al–Bayt (‘a) continued to hold such ceremonies. They also encouraged their followers and devotees to do the same, as has been previously cited.

Although discussions of the history, aspects, consequences, and logic for these ceremonies of commemorating Imam al–Husayn’s martyrdom are too extensive for one book, we will hereinafter refer to some of these aspects briefly:

### [Significance and Aspects](#)

**First:** These ceremonies contribute to the preservation of the great event of Imam al-Husayn's uprising, which also embodies a Divine proposal the purpose of which is to draw the Muslim nation's attention towards safeguarding the final Divine message of Islam against loss, distortion, and deformation.

Since the beginning, the tyrannical authorities attempted to misrepresent the truth by presenting Imam al-Husayn's uprising as mutiny against the legal authority, as an act of rebellion aimed at destroying Muslim unity. They also tried to cast a shadow on Imam al-Husayn's personality and on the goals, background, causes, and circumstances of his uprising. The masses need to learn the truth of this great uprising in the history of Muslims.

In the beginning Yazid, the tyrant, tried to absolve himself from the responsibility of this catastrophic massacre and cast the blame on 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, the commander-in-chief. However, the reason-based planning of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) reiterated the features of this uprising in such ceremonies and saved the truth from being hidden or lost. As a result, Imam al-Husayn's uprising, with all its details and attributes, has been well-protected in the history of Islam.[50](#)

**Second:** These ceremonies keep the following significant aspects existent, active, and influential in Islamic life in general and the milieu of the virtuous community in particular:

A) These ceremonies activate the conscience of Muslims. One of the basic goals of this uprising was to shake, revive and move this conscience whenever it was exposed to death or cultural anesthesia, or whenever it buckled under the psychological pressures or methods of terrorism that lead to absence of willpower despite acquaintance with the truth.[51](#)

The tragedy of Karbala' has thus become a moving factor not only for the present generation but also for all generations throughout the ages.

A pioneering role in this field has been played by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) through their magnificent depictions that embodied the tragedy in the most effective way. Additionally, poets of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School have contributed to portraying and presenting this tragedy through the elegies they have composed in various stages of Muslim history.

We can understand the reason for the traditions that urged composing and reciting poetry on the tragedy of Imam al-Husayn ('a) in particular.[52](#) We can also understand the reason for the voluminous poetic heritage on Imam al-Husayn ('a), which is too huge to find its match in human literature as a whole.

B) These ceremonies reveal the politico-cultural recognition of the events by which the Muslim sects in general and the virtuous community in particular are passing, since this community has been characterized by profound and unique recognition of all political events and its commitment to Islamic principles and revolutionary ethics.

C) These ceremonies shed light on the need of a genuine Islamic inspection of the Islamic system of

government and its components. It is necessary to stipulate the correct attitude regarding the Islamic system of government and have the competence of distinguishing between right and wrong practices within this system, along with the capability of distinguishing between the red, green and grey lines so that a more comprehensive understanding is achieved of the issues that menace Islam which must be confronted and resisted.

**Third:** The ceremonies of commemorating Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom maintain the human and social relations among the members of the virtuous community and the other Muslims who interact with them. However, such interactions must be within the accurate frame of these relations—a frame that represents the goals and moralities of Imam al-Husayn ('a).

Just as these sessions and ceremonies have provided great opportunity to confirm such relations and strengthen the bonds of mutual love and affiliation among the members of the virtuous community and increase the spirit of cooperation and fraternity, so also have they become opportunities for spending, giving, offering, and attending to the feeble and poor after recognizing their condition. This can be accomplished because the largest congregations of Muslims of various social and religious levels attend such sessions and celebrations.

This aspect in the Ahl al-Bayt's ('a) plan (of commemorating Imam Husayn's martyrdom) has preserved the unity of the virtuous community in its social and human relations throughout history regardless of the difficulties, ordeals, and pain the members of this community have to face.

**Fourth:** These sessions and ceremonies of commemorating Imam al-Husayn's uprising and martyrdom have contributed to spreading the genuine Islamic culture, which faced several attempts of ideological and physical debarments and terrorism at certain stages of its history as well as unavailability of both human and material potential for promulgating this culture.

The culture of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School, in its various aspects including the doctrinal, ethical, behavioral and historical has been characterized by the features and peculiarities of genuine Islam as practiced by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). Opportunities to promulgate this culture were not always available; rather, they were even banned at certain times. Secondly, religious establishments, such as seminaries, mosques, and other cultural centers, were neither helpful nor available. As a result, the virtuous community was threatened by dissolution, loss, ignorance, or baseless fanaticism.

To tackle these needs, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) recommended establishing the commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's uprising and martyrdom, thus establishing mobile cultural schools. Shaykh al-Kulayni, through a valid chain of authority, has reported Maysar as saying:

*Imam Abu-Ja'far (al-Baqir) once asked me, "Do you (Shi'ite groups) usually seclude yourselves to exchange discourses and say whatever you have in mind freely?"*

*I answered, "Yes, I swear it by Allah. We usually seclude ourselves to exchange discourses and say*

*whatever we have in our minds freely.”*

The Imam (‘a) commented:

أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ، لَوَدِدْتُ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ تِلْكَ الْمَوَاطِينِ. وَأَمَّا وَاللَّهِ، إِنِّي لِأُحِبُّ رِيحَكُمْ وَأَرْوَاحَكُمْ. وَإِنَّكُمْ عَلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ  
وَدِينِ مَلَائِكَتِهِ. فَأَعِينُوا بِوَرَعٍ وَاجْتِهَادٍ

*By Allah I swear, I do wish I were with you on even some of these occasions. By Allah I swear, I do love your fragrance and your souls. You are following the very religion of Allah and the religion of His angels. So, help (us) by means of piety and diligence.”<sup>53</sup>*

### Basic Objectives

In view of the aforementioned display of the goals and outcomes of commemorating Imam al-Husayn’s uprising and martyrdom, we can ascertain that the nearer these ceremonies get to achieving their objectives in the most appropriate forms of practice the more they fulfill the actual function that the Holy Imams (‘a) planned.

However, when practiced in unacceptable forms, they will definitely fail to achieve their goals and be just like prayers performed without cordial attention to Almighty Allah.

The objectives of practicing these rituals and ceremonies are summarized below:

The *first objective* is to create a spiritual, mental, and emotional attachment to Imam al-Husayn (‘a), the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), and the purposes of this great uprising.

The *second objective* is to accurately inspect, at two levels of policy and religion, the issue of government rule and political events that the Muslim nation faces, including the issues of injustice, justice, enjoining the right, forbidding the wrong, and constructing the divine system of rule.

The *third objective* is to implant the features of genuine moral education in the virtuous community’s political and social movement. Such features can be represented through self-sacrifice, altruism, steadfastness, feelings of responsibility towards Muslim issues of resisting injustice and tyranny, abiding by what is right, fulfillment of pledges and covenants, sincerity to Almighty Allah, perseverance, and compliance with principles.

The *fourth objective* is to spread Islamic culture and cognizance of its various aspects, such as recognition of Islam, studying its fundamentals, raising the degree of feeling in human souls, and awakening sentiments and consciences.

The *fifth objective* is to strengthen the relations of fraternity, mutual love, and cooperation among the believers as well as take interest in their affairs, provide them with the required advice, help the poor and the feeble among them, bring into being more joint liability among them, and present them as a powerful,

invulnerable and united community.

## 2) Innovative Rituals

The second section of this discussion deals with the rituals associated with the commemoration of Imam al-Husayn's uprising and martyrdom, which have not been prescribed or recommended by the Holy Imams ('a). These rituals have been invented by their followers in various stages of history. These include organizing processions for expressing grief and sadness for Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom (*al-mawakib al-husayniyyah*) and rituals of representing and acting out the scenes of Imam al-Husayn's tragedy in addition to other rituals that may be invented in the future.

Discussion in this respect can be based on the following two topics:

**The First Topic** is dedicated to the legal justifications of performing such rituals about which we cannot find a tradition reported from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) at the three levels of words, deeds, and confirmation.

The best justification in this respect is the idea that any practice or act is regarded as a traditional expression of glorifying Imam al-Husayn ('a) or showing sorrow for his tragedy, especially if such a practice or act was common during the ages of the Holy Imams ('a), or a tradition reminding of his tragedy and goals. Such practice and act will thus be legal according to the following Qur'anic rule:

(ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظِمَ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ) (22:32)

***Whoever holds in honor the symbols of Allah, such (honor) should come truly from piety of hearts. (22:32)***

To describe Imam al-Husayn ('a) as 'the Vengeance of Allah' is one of His symbols or signs and rituals that hold Imam al-Husayn ('a) in honor is to hold in honor signs of Allah. Besides, many traditions of general purport have instructed showing sorrow for Imam al-Husayn ('a) and proclaiming his tragic event on the days of 'Ashura' (the first ten days of Muharram).

**The Second Topic** is about the limits and framework in which these innovative ceremonies and rituals are practiced to satisfy the aforementioned Qur'anic rule.

The first kind is legally correct under all circumstances because its forms and contents have been mentioned in traditions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). It, therefore, represents a fixed line.

As for the second kind, its legality must include the same contents and purport that Almighty Allah has decided for it; that is, the symbols of Allah must be held in honor. It is not sufficient to claim that the effectuation of such ceremonies is for Imam al-Husayn ('a) and not for holding in honor the symbols of Allah, as long as their form expresses a traditional reason-based style of holding honor. Hence, such practices must be in line with the legitimate content of Imam al-Husayn's uprising, as has been

previously explained.

This content can be restricted to two basic lines:

**The Positive Line**, which entails the goals determined for holding the ceremonies of commemorating Imam al-Husayn's uprising and martyrdom in their third line. As much as these ceremonies achieve the goals cited in the previous five points, these practices express holding in honor the symbols of Almighty Allah.

**The Negative Line** entails that these practices must not violate the sacredness of Islam and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) School and must not deform the view of this School. This may happen when these practices take a form that is incompatible with the actual goals that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) decided for them. Such distortion is obvious in some unwanted practices that are irreconcilable with any act of worship or behavior that the Holy Legislator has accepted to be an expression of connecting with, loving, honoring or glorifying Almighty Allah, as well as other forms that reasonable people acknowledge in social life.

Some unwanted practices are disgusting to pure sentiment, sound human taste and reason. In fact, such practices are only expressions of uncontrolled passions, reckless emotions, and imaginations without legitimate basis since they cannot be sanctioned by Islamic law. They are therefore practiced by naive people who lack acquaintance with Islamic culture and stand rejected by the well-versed scholars of jurisprudence and divinity.

[1.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:228, H. 1.

Undoubtedly, 'compilation' in this tradition must stand for collecting the Holy Qur'an with all of its peculiarities that went along with it, beginning with the reasons for the revelation of its verses and its inferences including the Holy Prophet's explanations of it.

[2.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:239, H. 1; al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat, p. 143, H. 4 and pp. 151–152, H. 3; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 26:22, H. 11.

[3.](#) – Al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat, p. 145, H. 15; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 26:35, H. 61 (quoted from the earlier reference book).

[4.](#) – This subject will be discussed in further detail in the coming book regarding the intellectual referential authority.

[5.](#) – Refer to Sayyid Hasan al-Sadr, Ta'sis al-Shi'ah li-'Ulum al-Islam (The Shi'ah: Founders of the Sciences of Islam). This book has been summarized in Al-Shi'ah wa-Funun al-Islam (The Shi'ah and Islamic Arts) and Mu'allifu al-Shi'ah fi'l-Islam (Shi'ite Authors in Islam) by Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din.

[6.](#) – Proofs on this fact will be cited in a coming book about the referential authority of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) within this series.

[7.](#) – Opinionism (in Islamic traditions) is the trend of using personal views and conjectures in the issuance of religious verdicts.

[8.](#) – Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali, pp. 487–488; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 1:171, H. 24 (quoted from the earlier reference book).

[9.](#) – Ibn Abi-Jumhur, 'Awali al-La'ali 4:61, H. 9; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 1:171, H. 53 (quoted from the earlier reference book).

[10.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar, p. 1, H. 2; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 2:184, H. 4 (quoted from the earlier reference book).

[11.](#) – Al-Kashshi, Ikhtiyar Ma'rifat al-Rijal 1:61, H. 2; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 2:82, H. 1 (quoted from the earlier reference book).

[12.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:12, S (section) 4, H. 13.

[13.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:7, S. 3, H. 4.

[14.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:9, S. 4, H. 1, 11, 14.

[15.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:12, S. 4, H. 10.

Refer to Chapter: Qualifications of Judges in the same reference book, S. 6 (Illegality of Analogy and Conjectures), H. 14, 15, 20, 21.

[16.](#) – Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-Kubra 5: 140; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm 2:147; al-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Huffa" 1:4-5; al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-'Ummal 5:239, H. 4865.

[17.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:61, S. 8, Sifat al-Qadhi (Qualifications of Judges), H. 35.

[18.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:72-3, S. 8, H. 80-81.

[19.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:57-59, H. 14, 16, 21.

[20.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:52, S. 8, H. 1.

[21.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:52, S. 8, H. 3.

According to other forms of this tradition, the Holy Prophet (S) said, "Just as swords rust, so also do hearts rust, and discourses are the polish of the rust of the hearts."

[22.](#) Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:52, S. 8, H. 4.

[23.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:52, S. 8, H. 5.

[24.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 18:52, S. 8, H. 9.

[25.](#) – The al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah (also called Psalms of Islam) by Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) is one of the clearest examples in this respect.

[26.](#) – Examples on such precepts are: The Holy Prophet's precept to Imam 'Ali ('a) (Tuhaf al-'Uqul by Ibn Shu'bah al-Harrani), Imam 'Ali's precept to Imam al-Hasan ('a) (Nahj al-Balaghah), Imam al-Baqir's precept to Jabir al-Ju'fi (Tuhaf al-'Uqul), Imam al-Sadiq's precept to Muhammad ibn al-Nu'man (Tuhaf al-'Uqul), and Imam al-Ka'im's precept to Husham ibn al-Hakam (Tuhaf al-'Uqul).

[27.](#) – Examples on such epistles are: Imam al-Sadiq's Epistle to his followers (al-Kafi 8:397), Imam al-Baqir's Epistle to the entirety of the Shi'ah and his companions (al-Kafi 8:230), Imam al-Hadi's Epistle of refutations of the Fatalists and Indeterminists (Tuhaf al-'Uqul 341), and Imam 'Ali's Instructive Epistle to his companions (400 instructions compiled in Tuhaf al-'Uqul 66-83).

[28.](#) – Refer to Sayyid Hasan al-Sadr, Ta'asis al-Shi'ah li-'Ulum al-Islam (The Shi'ah; the Founders of the Sciences of Islam).

[29.](#) – Each of these establishments can be a topic for a complete, expansive study. Nevertheless, we have to refer to the basic features of these establishments for brevity.

[30.](#) – This discussion will be further discussed in the topic of the intellectual referential authority within my encyclopedia entitled 'The Role of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) in Muslim Life'.

[31.](#) – The history of these schools involves many details. I expect to have the opportunity to discuss these details in my book on the virtuous referential authority, which deals with the applied aspect and the history of the virtuous community after the Occultation.

[32.](#) – During the age of the referential authority of Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim in the holy city of Najaf and Sayyid al-Burujirdi in Qum, several attempts were made to rectify the progress of the scholastic courses of these schools and fill the gaps found therein. These attempts developed greatly to reach their climax after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran when a large movement of reformation began to bear fruit.

[33.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:30-31; Abu'l-Fath al-Karajaki, Kanz al-Fawa'id 2:107; Ibn Abi-Jumhur, 'Awali al-La'ali 4:70, H. 36; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 1:177, H. 54 (as quoted from the previous reference book); al-Muttaqi al-Hindi, Kanz al-'Ummal 10:57-79, S. Kitab al-'Ilm.

[34.](#) – Such places are ascribed to Imam Husayn ('a) because the ceremonies of commemorating his martyrdom and the lectures about his uprising and its spiritual, moral, political, social, and doctrinal features were held therein.

[35.](#) – Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 46:110, H. 4, as quoted from Kamil al-Ziyarat.

[36.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 2:922, H. 7.

- [37.](#) – This is an indication of Almighty Allah’s remark mentioned in the Holy Qur’an, “Whoever holds in honor the rituals of Allah, such should come truly from piety of heart. (22:32)”
- [38.](#) – Al-Himyari al-Qummi, Qurb al-Isnad, p. 36, H. 117; ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 44:282, H. 14 as quoted from the earlier reference book.
- [39.](#) – Allamal al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 44:287, H. 25 as quoted from Kamil al-Ziyarat.
- [40.](#) – ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 93:329.
- [41.](#) – Some reports indicate that the first to have visited Imam Husayn (‘a) on the forty-day occasion was Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah al-Ansari, a grand and revered companion of the Holy Prophet (S). See al-Muqarram, Maqatal al-Husayn, p. 360.
- [42.](#) – ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 101:303–307 as quoted from Shaykh al-Tusi’s Misbah al-Za’ir.
- [43.](#) – Imam al-Husayn’s formula of Ziyarah on the fifteenth of Rajab and Sha’ban, as quoted from Abbas al-Qummi’s Mafatih al-Jinan.
- [44.](#) – Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, Tarikh al-Umam wa’l-Muluk (known as Tarikh al-Tabari) 4:304; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi’l-Tarikh 4:48 (with little difference).
- [45.](#) – Michel Aflaq (1910–1989), an anti-Islam leader and the founder of al-Ba’th Socialist Party, fought against Islam in general and against the rituals of the Shi’ah in particular.
- [46.](#) – Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Mazar, p. 37.
- [47.](#) – Shaykh al-Mufid: al-Mazar, p. 37.
- [48.](#) – Sayyid ‘Abdullah Shubbar, Jala’ al-‘Uyun 2:264.
- [49.](#) – Muhammad ibn Sa’d, in his famous book of al-Tabaqat al-Kubra, has recorded that when she was informed about the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (‘a), Ummu-Salamah, the Holy Prophet’s wife, cried out, “Did they have the courage to do it? May Allah fill their houses and their graves with fire!” She then wept so heavily that she lost consciousness. See also Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani’s al-Bidayah wa’l-Nihayah 8:218.
- [50.](#) – It is natural to find small differences in the details of the event. Not all the accounts that relate the details of Imam Husayn’s martyrdom are adopted as truths; rather, such details and special situations are aimed at presenting the basic features, trends, plans, reasonable grounds, backgrounds, and tragedies of this uprising, although there may be differences in depiction.
- [51.](#) – In my book entitled Thawrat al-Imam al-Husayn (Imam al-Husayn’s Uprising), I have discussed this goal in further detail.
- [52.](#) – Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) is reported to have said:
- مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ قَالَ فِي الْحُسَيْنِ شِعْرًا فَبَكَى وَأَبَكَى بِهِ إِلَّا أُورِجَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ الْجَنَّةَ وَغُفِرَ لَهُ.
- As for any one who composes poetic verses about Imam Husayn (‘a) and weeps for him or makes others weep, Almighty Allah shall certainly award him Paradise and forgive his offenses.
- See al-Hurr al-‘Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 10:464, H. 1.
- [53.](#) – Al-Hurr al-‘Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 11:567, H. 5.

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