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# Chapter 3: School of Imam al-Sadiq

Among the most important things of which Islam has taken care in its brilliant message is spreading cultural awareness and making public knowledge among people, for this reason it has made seeking knowledge as a religious obligation. It is incumbent on all Muslims to undertake it in order to develop their life in the economic and political fields, and to make them as a righteous community having a wise leadership for the peoples and nations of the world.

Surely Islam believes in knowledge and its creative ability in making a human civilization. It shows that man cannot reach his sound objectives in building his society except through the foundation of scientific awareness standing on understanding and reflecting on the facts of affairs. Besides it has regarded armament with knowledge as an individual and a social necessity.

The Imams of Ahl al–Bayt played a positive role in giving life to the scientific life and to develop it in the world of Arabs and Islam, in spite of the harassment they met from the ruler of their times. Among the most prominent activities they rendered in this way was founding a science school aiming at spreading all kinds of knowledge, freeing the opinions of the Muslims from ignorance and dullness. We will mention some affairs of this school as follows:

## The First Founder

The first founder of this great school was Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, the first pioneer of knowledge and development in Islam. He spared no effort to spread sciences and educate the Muslims; he used the Kufa Mosque as a school where he delivered from his pulpit his golden sermons full of economics, politics, administration, philosophy, ethics, enlightening awareness aiming at establishing good behavior and morals.

He singled his companions and disciples with his brilliant knowledge taken from that of the great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, so they learned from him theology, monotheism, jurisprudence, Islamic legislation, eloquence, and the like. Then they supplied the Islamic world with their books and their legacy. Some of them were 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbas, the great scholar of the community and

great authority of the Qur'anic sciences.

Abu al-Aswad al-Du'ali, the first teacher of Arabic grammar. Abu Rafi' was the first to write on the science of military expeditions and biographies in Islam1; he wrote the book al-Sunan wa al-Ahkam wa al-Qada'2; the Companions (of the Prophet) admired and magnified this book.3 There are many writers like these scholars who have lighted the intellectual life in Islam.

After his father, Imam al-Hasan, the sweet basil and first grandson of the Prophet, developed those science foundations and took care of them, but these foundations were moved from Kufa to Yethrib (Medina) after the Iraqis had deserted him. He, peace be on him, used the Mosque of the Prophet as an institute for giving his scientific lectures. The narrators of traditions have mentioned some of his eminent students and the narrators of his sayings.

They are al-Hasan al-Muthanna, al-Musayyab b. Nujba, Swayd b. Ghafla, al-Ala' b. 'Abd al-Rahman, al-Sha'bi, Hubayra b. Barkam, al-Asbagh b. Nabbata, Jabir b. Khuld, Abu al-Jauwaz, Isa b. Ma'mun b. Zarara, Naffala b. al-Ma'mum, Abu Yehya Umayr b. Saeed al-Nakha'i, Abu Maryam b. Qays al-Thaqafi, Tuhrub al-Ajali, Ishaq b. Yasar (the father of Muhammad b. Ishaq), 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, Sufayn b. al-Layl, and 'Umar b. Qays al-Qufun.4

Yethrib flourished during that time and became the richest of all the Islamic cities in science, literature, and culture.

After the death of his brother, Imam al–Husayn, peace be on him, undertook taking care of that institute and supplying its students with different kinds of science. However, he did not last for a long time because he met a difficult affliction and trial from the tyrant of his time, Yazid b. Mu'awiya, who made public unbelief and atheism. So Imam al–Husayn, peace be on him, thought that the religious duty made it incumbent on him to sacrifice his valuable blood for the religion of his grandfather.

He also felt that he had to sacrifice his star children and his household for the sake of the word of monotheism and to save the Muslims from the tyranny and violence of the Umayyads. Through that he could record for the truth and the thought the most wonderful, noblest, and highest sacrifice in human history.

After the martyrdom of the one who refused injustice (i.e., Imam al-Husayn)5, his son Imam 'Ali b. al-Husayn devoted himself to worship. He fasted by day and spent night in worship. So he became like an old small-sized water-bag out of too much worship. Moreover he suffered from the painful sorrows that attacked him during all the periods of his lifetime due to the calamities and misfortunes had befallen his father.

The tragedy of Karbala' was standing in front of him. He was drowned in a current of pain and sadness. So he is regarded as one of the five tearful persons who represented sorrow and agony in the world of existence. In spite of these strong sorrows that did not leave him, he, peace be on him, played an

important role in supplying the religious scholars and the narrators with his traditions on different kinds of sciences and arts.

Many traditions have been reported on his authority by his sons: Muhammad, Zayd, and 'Abd Allah. Many traditions have also been narrated on his authority by Abu Salam b. 'Abd al-Rahman, Tawus b. Kasan, Abu al-Zanad, 'Asim b. 'Amr b. Qattada, Asim b. 'Ubayd Allah, al-Qa'qa' b. Hakeem, Zayd b. Aslam, al-Hakam b. 'Utayba, Habeeb b. Abu Thabit, Abu al-Aswad Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Nawfal, Muslim al-Butayn, Yehya b. Saeed al-Ansari, Hisham b. Urwa, 'Ali b. Zayd b. Jadd'an, and the like.6

These narrators have reported on his authority different kinds of sciences. They have also reported on his authority al–Saheefa al–Sajjadiya, which is regarded as the Gospel of Muhammad's household; that is because it contains intellectual wealth distinguished by deciding the rules of morals, the principles of virtues, the sciences of monotheism, and the like.

They have narrated on his authority the Treatise on Rights (Risalat al-Huquq), which is the most wonderful treatise written in Islam. For it has shown the creative rules for the rights of the state against the people, the rights of the people against the state, and the rights of the Muslims against each other.

It has also decided the general programs for the principles of education, the types of behavior, the precepts of teaching, the rights of the teacher against the learners, and the like from among the rights that are necessary to men in their individual and social life They have reported on his authority the authentic wise sayings, valuable opinions, and proverbs; through all these things Imam 'Ali b. al–Husayn contributed in building the scientific life, and developing the intellectual life on the earth.

After the death of his father, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir7, peace be on him, took care of that religious foundation and supplied its scientists and students with the Islamic sciences and morals. During his time science institutes flourished; some scientists surrounded him to learn his brilliant sciences; he was the only authority in the Islamic world in his time for the religious sciences; concerning him Malik al-Juhni says:

When the people seek for the knowledge of the Qur'an, Quraysh rely on him. If someone asked where the son of the daughter of the Prophet is, you would gain through him the wide branches (of knowledge). You are like stars shine for night-travelers, (you are) like mountains which have inherited vast knowledge.8

The scholars of his time lowered themselves before him in recognition of his high scientific position the like of which none had. The reliable narrators have reported on his authority great abilities of the jurisprudence of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on him. Some of these narrators are: Zarara b. Alyun about whom Imam al-Sadiq has said: "Were it not for Zarara, I would think that the traditions of my father would get lost. 10

Muhammad b. Muslim heard from him thirty thousand traditions 11. Abu Basir and his brothers concerning whom Imam al-Sadiq has said: "Were it not for these, the traditions of the Prophet would be cut off and be effaced. 12 'Abd al-Malik b. A'yun, for whom Imam al-Sadiq invoked Allah, saying: "O Allah, surely Abu al-Daris was with Your choice from among Your creatures, then place him among the household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, till the Day of Judgement." 13

His traditions have also been reported by 'Amr b. Dinar, who is one of the authors of the tradition books called "the Six Authentic Books", (al-Sihaah al-Sitta). Yet other examples of the narrators of his traditions are: al-A'rajj, al-Zuhri, Abu Jahdam, Musa b. Salim, al-Qasim b. al-Fadhl, al-Awzaa'i, Ibn Jurayh, al-A'mash, Shayba b. Nassaah, 'Abd Allah b. Abi Bakr, 'Amr b. Hazm, 'Abd Allah b. Ata', Bassam al-Sayrafi, Harb b. Surayh, Hajjajj b. Artara, Muhammad b. Sawqa, Makhul b. Rashid, Mu'ammar b. Bassam, 14 and other than them.

The scientific life flourished and grew in the period of the School of Ahl al-Bayt, which supplied the Islamic world with all the essentials of the intellectual renaissance.

## At the Time of Imam al-Sadiq

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, caused the springs of knowledge and wisdom to gush out on the earth. He opened to the people doors to knowledge they had not known before; he filled the world with his knowledge, as al-Jahiz said. 15 The people transmitted from him knowledge. The knowledge was circulated by the riders and its fame spread in all the countries, as Ibn Hajar stated. 16

Among the most prominent activities Imam al–Sadiq made to spread and make public knowledge among the people was his developing the School of Ahl al–Bayt and supplying it with the elements of life and survival. This school has been ascribed and added to him because of his positive role in widening and promoting it from a special level to a high level through which it became the highest of all the scientific institutes and schools in all the times.

Imam al-Sadiq's school enlightened human thinking, made the Islamic reason appear, developed human society produced a choice of scholars, leaders, and inspired thinkers who spared no effort to spread all kinds of knowledge and to ripen the intellectual life at that time. So they were worthy of taking the medal of the golden time in Islam.

Those who made some researches on Imam al-Sadiq's school said: "Some great thinkers, philosophers, and scholars graduated from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq's intellectual school. The Islamic civilization and the Arab though are indebted to this intellectual school for development, progress, and everlastingness, (and they are indebted) to its den Imam al-Sadiq for scientific glory and valuable inheritance."

Imam al-Sadiq's school released thinking and spread scientific awareness through employing a great group of scholars who educated and set right the Muslims and made them progressive in the scientific

fields. The following is a brief review on the affairs of this great institute during the time of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him.

## The factors of Development and Prosperity

As for the factors that led to developing and progressing the School of Imam al-Sadiq, they are as follows:

1. The Islamic world in the time of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, was sinking under discords and disorders, swinging in corrupt inclinations and private tendencies, prevailed by the parties that led to the disunion of the society and the disagreement of its sectors, and witnessed the outbreak of the war in all cities and regions.

That is because the Umayyad Empire collapsed, the 'Abbasid state was established, the Muslims turned away from knowledge and sciences and headed for those terrible events. Some of them supported the previous regime and some of them supported the new one; they were busy defending their political beliefs and this distracted them from seeking knowledge and religious guidance.

Imam al-Sadiq seized this appropriate opportunity and began spreading the Islamic culture that was part of the Islamic message. The Muslims again found the opportunity to return to the Islamic regime that had made it incumbent on them to seek knowledge as one of the religious duties. They found in the grandson of the great Prophet the leader who would direct them to build their civilization and scientific entity, so they intended to attend his school to supply themselves with its brilliant knowledge.

2. Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, was apart from intervening in any of the affairs of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid governments. He did not practice any positive act against the political objectives of the two states. He was isolated from all the people who loved him and intended to please him. The local authority did not observe him nor did it harass him and prevent him from spreading his sciences.

He found a vast opportunity before him to open the gates of his school and to supply his students with all kinds of knowledge and sciences. The great scholars, narrators, and traditionists hurried to join his institute. He, peace be on him, found them as good helpers to achieve his reformative, immortal message that enlightened the intellects of the Islamic society and saved it from the sediment of ignorance and dullness.

3. Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, himself undertook the affairs of this institute and took care of it. The Muslims of all different tribes and tendencies have unanimously agreed that he was the most brilliant of all the Muslim Imams in knowledge, jurisprudence, and talents. It is natural that the personality of a den has an effect on making the school successful and prosperous.

### **The Public Center**

Imam al-Sadiq chose Yethrib, the land of emigration and place of descent of inspiration, as a place for his great school and institute; thanks to his efforts, Yethrib became one of the cities of science in Islam and one of the institutes of sciences. As for the place of giving lectures, it was, of course, the Mosque of the Prophet where the Imam gave his lectures and lessons on all arts. The Imam sometimes gave his lessons in the courtyard of his house. Through his students Yethrib became prosperous, regained its activity and position in guiding the Islamic society.

## **The Science Delegations**

When Imam al-Sadiq opened the gate of his school, all the pioneers of virtue and knowledge from different Islamic countries hurried to join it. That is because they intended to learn the sciences of the Imam and educate themselves with the precepts and teachings of the religion. Besides joining the school of Ahl al-Bayt was regarded as one of the requirements of honor and pride with the Muslims.

Professor Sayyid 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Ahl has talked about the science delegations who joined the school of the Imam, peace be on him, saying: "Kufa, Basrah, Wasit, and al-Hijaz sent to Ja'far b. Muhammad their children who belonged to all tribes such as Banu Asad, Ghani, Mukhariq, Tay, Saleem, Ghatfan, Ghaffar, al-Azd, Khuza'a, Khath'am, Makhzum, Banu Dabba, and Quraysh, especially Banu al-Harith b. 'Abd al-Muttalib and Banu al-Hasan b. 'Ali.

A crowd of the free and the children of the retainers from among the notables of this community from among the Arabs and the Persians, especially the City of Qum<sub>17</sub>, traveled (to Yethrib to join the school of the Imam).

The Muslim country took part in sending its children to the school of the Imam, the grandson of the great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to learn his pure sciences and to study the religious precepts under him. Through that the Islamic society won a wonderful victory in supporting the scientific movement and taking part in building its entity.

#### The Number of its Students

When the School of Imam al-Sadiq opened its doors for all the children of the Muslims, a great number of the pioneers of science hurried to join it. The narrators mentioned that their number was four thousand students. 18 This number is great in comparison with the other science institutes of that time.

Among them were great scholars and traditionists some of whom became the Imams and heads of some Islamic schools, and who transmitted from the Imam vast knowledge the riders circulated and whose fame spread throughout the countries. 19 Al-Hafiz Abu 'Abbas b. 'Uqda al-Hamadani al-Kufi wrote a book on the name of the traditionists who reported traditions on the authority of Imam al-Sadiq; he has mentioned the biographies of four hundred thousand narrators of them. 20

In his book called al-Mu'tabar, al-Muhaqiq (al-Hili) has said: "In his time, vast sciences spread from him (Imam al-Sadiq) through which he dazzled the intellects; a group of the traditionists reported on his authority; their number is about four hundred thousand traditionists." Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq Nasha'at has said: "Ja'far al-Sadiq's house was like a university and was always embellished by the great scholars (specialists) in hadith, explanation (of the Qur'an), wisdom, and theology.

The session of his lessons was most times attended by two thousand and sometimes by four thousand famous religious scholars; his students who attended his session and lectures collected his traditions in a group of books regarded as an encyclopedia for the Shi'ite of Ja'fari doctrine."21 Accordingly, the scientific movement widened at that time, and its waves included the following times and spread light, guidance, and righteousness among all the Muslims.

### **Its Branches**

Most of those who graduated from the school of Imam al-Sadiq returned home while they had vast scientific wealth. When they settled in their homelands, they played an important role in spreading the Islamic culture, establishing science institutes and religious clubs that educated souls and raised the level of morals.

The religious institute established in the Mosque of Kufa was the greatest of all those institutes. For it was attended by the nine hundred religious scholars from among those who were graduated from the school of Imam al-Sadiq. Likewise, al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha'22 has been related to us, saying: "I (al-Hasan b. 'Ali al-Washsha') found in this mosque (i.e., the Mosque of Kufa) nine hundred old men (traditionists); they all said: 'Ja'far b. Muhammad related to me.'23

For this reason, the scientific movement vastly widened to the extent that it included all the Islamic regions. This has been mentioned by professor Sayyid Meer 'Ali al-Hindi: "It goes without saying that the publication of science at that time released intellect. So the philosophical discussions became public in all the cities of the Islamic world. It is worth mentioning that this movement was headed by the grandson of 'Ali b. Abi Talib whose name is Ja'far and whose nickname is al-Sadig.

He was a man with a wide horizon of reflection and unfathomable reason. He was well-versed in the sciences of his time. In fact, he is regarded as the first to found the philosophical schools famous in Islam. Not only those who became the heads of the Islamic schools attended his scientific seminar, but also the seekers of philosophy and the philosophers from the remote regions attended it."24

Many knowledgeable families in Kufa studied sciences under Imam al-Sadiq, and then they became famous for jurisprudence and hadith such as the family of Hayyan al-Taghlubi, the family of A'yun, Banu 'Attiya, the family of Banu Darrajj, and other than them. 25 These families honored Imam al-Sadiq when he resided in Kufa for two years during the days of al-Saffah.

His house was among the Banu of 'Abd al-Qays. The Shi'a crowded before him to ask him about

religious edicts and the precepts of their religion. Concerning this crowd and their too much going to him, Muhammad b. Ma'ruf b. al-Hilali has related to us, saying: "I went to al-Hira to (visit Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sadiq), but I had no ability to reach him because there were many people.

On the fourth day the people left him; he saw me and brought me near to him; then he went to visit the grave of (Imam 'Ali) the Commander of the faithful; I followed him; while I was walking with him, I heard his speech."

Any way the school of the Imam and all the science foundations that branched from it established the edifices of knowledge and virtue in the Islamic world.

### **His Professional Students**

Many students of Imam al-Sadiq specialized in a group of sciences and arts. Among those who were specialists in philosophy, theology, and the researches on the Imamate were Hisham b. al-Hakam, Hisham b. Salim, Mu'min al-Taq, Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Tayyar, Qays al-Masir, and the like.

Those who specialized in the science of Islamic jurisprudence and its principles, exegesis, and the rest of the religious sciences were Zarara b. A'yun, Muhammad b. Salim, Jameel b. Darrajj, Burayd b. Mu'awiya, Ishaq b. Ammar, Ubayd Allah al-Halabi, Abu Basir, Aban b. Taghlub, al-Fudayl b. Yasar, Abu Hanifa, Malik b. Anas, Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Shaybani, Sufyan b. 'Uyayina, Yehya b. Sa'eed, Sufyan al-Thawri, and the like.

The specialist in chemistry was Jabir b. Hayyan al-Kufi, the most famous chemist in the world, as Fandik has said. The specialist in the Philosophy of Existence and Secrets of Creation was al-Mufaddal b. 'Amr, who has also mentioned in his book which was dictated to him by Imam al-Sadiq most chapters of medicine such as physiology, blood circulation, germs, anatomy, and others.

Surely, the School of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, had proudly preceded science institutes in founding specialization in scientific studies.

## **Recording Sciences**

Imam al-Sadiq urged his students to write down his lessons and lectures on most sciences and arts lest they should be disordered and lost; he emphasized this summons in other places. Abu Basir has narrated, saying: "I visited 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq) and he asked: 'What prevents you from writing? You do not keep (your information) unless you write them down.

A group of people from Basrah asked me about something; they had recorded it before they left me." Abu Basir has narrated, saying: "I have Heard Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq) say: 'Write down (your information), for you do not keep (them) unless you write (them) down.""

'Asim has said: "I have heard Abu Basir say: 'Abu 'Abd Allah al-Sadiq, peace be on him, said: 'Write

down (your information), for you do not keep (them) unless through writing (them) down. "26

His students responded to this brilliant summons that deeply aimed at enlightening human reason and spreading knowledge among the people; his companions recorded sciences. For example, Aban b. Taghlub has written the following books:

- 1. Kitab Ma'ani al-Qur'an (a book on the Meanings of the Qur'an).
- 2. Kitab al-Qira'at (a book on the recitations of the Qur'an).27
- 3. Kitab al-Fada'il (a book on the outstanding qualities).
- 4. Al-Usool fi al-Ruwaiya (Principles of Narration).
- 5. Aghareeb al-Qur'an

Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Bajali al-Kufi, better known as Mu'min al-Taq, has written the following books:

- 1. Kitab al-Imama (a book of the Imamate).
- 2. Kitab al-Ma'rifa (a book on knowledge).
- 3. Kitab Ithbat al-Wasiya (a book on proving the will).
- 4. Kitab al-Radd 'alaa al-Mu'tazila fi Imamat al-Mafdul (a book on refuting the beliefs of the Mu'tazilites in the Imamate of the less excellent).
- 5. Kitab fi amar Talha wa al-Zubayr wa 'Aa'isha (a book on the affair of Talha, al-Zubayr, and 'Aa'isha).
- 6. Kitab If'al, La Taf'al (a book on do, do not do).
- 7. Al-Munazara ma'a Abu Hanifa (a book on the debate with Abu Hanifa).28

Hisham b. al-Hakam, Abu Muhammad al-Baghdadi, has written books on various sciences and arts; his seventeen books has been mentioned by Ibn al-Nadeem; we will mention it in his biography when we deal with the companions of Imam Musa, peace be on him.

Al-Mufaddal b. 'Amr has written a book on Monotheism (al-Tawheed). The book is one of the greatest of the Islamic books; in it he has dealt with the creation and formation of man, the secrets and wonders in his organs; he has also dealt with some medical researches. 29 Jabir b. Hayyan has written a book on chemistry. The book consists of one thousand pages including the Imam's treatises, which are five hundred treatises; these treatises are rich sources to scientists 30

The scientists of this science have taken a great an advantage from it. All men of knowledge from among the Muslims and the orientalists have lauded Jabir and admired his efforts. The following is a

wonderful statement of professor 'Abd al-Rahman Bedawi, who has shown his admiration toward Jabir's personality, one of the candles of that school:

"The researcher in the history of the Islamic thought cannot find a personality more wonderful and fertile than that of Jabir b. Hayyan. He had a personality that went too far in vagueness. Mystery surrounded it to the extent that it was about to be a legend. It was high in thinking to the extent that man stands today astonished before the scientific, philosophical viewpoints full of depth and life it gives to us.

(Man stands astonished) before this general soul prevailed by the spirit of enlightenment and human tendency that inclined to fathom all the secrets, and to feel the creative divine powers that spread in it. So it raises man to the divine station, and hope incited it to make a continuous progress that keeps pace with mankind in its development.

The personality whose spiritual portion is this will be alive forever, for it is among the living, always examples for man who progressively walks on his way to achieve the ideal (model) on earth.

Scientific, philological, and civilization research cannot finish it completely whatever effort it makes in this way. Rather it will continue in remoteness whenever it goes deeply into the way to it, and its extent will increase whenever man touches its dimensions; today we are farther away from perceiving it generally other than encompassing its main lines and its guiding trends."31

Jabir b. Hayyan was among the leading personalities of the School of Imam al-Sadiq and was one of its brilliant, eminent men who are really regarded among those who established the cultural movement in the Islamic world and other than it.

Yet there are a great number of the genius students of the Imam who wrote books on various sciences. They are Zarara, Abi Basir, Isma'il b. Khalid, and the like. In his book called al-Dhari'a,32 the late of Islam, Shaykh Aaghaa Buzurg,

May Allah make shine his grave, has written the biographies of a hundred traditionists who have classified the students of Imam al-Sadiq. These big books are regarded as vast encyclopedias; they have become as sources for the Shi<sup>l</sup>ite doctrine and a proof of its scientific and intellectual wealth.

## **Pride and Glory**

The students of Imam al-Sadiq took a pride in their attending the session of his lectures. They were very proud on that and regarded joining his school as among the achievements that qualified them to the high positions in the Islamic society. Among those who prided themselves on that is Abu Hanifa, who has said: "Were it not for the two years, al-Nu'man would be perished."33

Abu Hanifa took a pride in the days when he attended the lessons of Imam al-Sadiq and regarded them as the best of the stages of his scientific life. Malik b. Anas has talked about his teacher Imam al-Sadiq,

saying: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and (none) came to someone's mind more meritorious than Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sadig in knowledge, worship and piety."34

In another place he has talked about him, saying: (I saw Ja'far b. Muhammad. He used to smile very much. When the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, was mentioned in his presence, his face became yellow. I did not see him talk about Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, except he performed an ablution. I visited him frequently for a time.

I saw him except in three qualities: he prayed or kept silent or recited the Qur'an. He did not talk about the things that did not concern him; he was among the (religious) scholars and worshipers who feared Allah."35 Surely, it is an act of the truth that Abu Hanifa and Malik b. Anas were proud on their joining the school of the Imam and attending his researches.

For he, peace be on him, was the original source of the sciences he inherited from his forefathers and from his grandfather, the great Prophet, who had caused the sources of knowledge and wisdom to gush out on earth.

## Its special Nature

Surely the School of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, had a special nature by which it was distinguished from the rest of the other foundations. It was the self-independence which was marked by that it was not affiliated to any official organ of government, so the authority had no chance to employ it in any of its political purposes, for it has no power over it. It enjoyed great freedom whether in its teaching programs or in its intellectual fields.

It did not receive from the ruling authority any economic or material help. Rather it was separate from it and was away in its behavior from all the external effects; it was run according to the Islamic brilliant teachings; it followed a clear way far from crookedness and deviation; its aim was to serve the community, and its pioneer was the truth.

Al-Mansur tried to bring the Imam near to him and to earn his affection. In the meantime he tried to attain the trust of his students and his followers; he wrote to him: "Why do you not fear us just as the people do?"

The Imam answered him about his plan and his behavior, saying: "We have nothing of the world for which we fear you; you have nothing of the hereafter for which we hope you."

Imam al-Sadiq had nothing of the vanities of the world, so he had no fear of the authority of al-Mansur; meanwhile al-Mansur had nothing of the pleasures of the hereafter in order that the Imam might hope him and communicate with him. Then al-Mansur followed another way; he wrote to the Imam: "Surely (we want you) to make friends with us in order to advise us."

The Imam answered him: "Whoever desires the hereafter should not make friends with you; whoever desires the life in this world should not advise you."

Through these words full of all the elements of truth, the Imam expressed his behavior concerning turning away from authority and refraining from cooperating with it. Mr. Asad Hayder has talked about this brilliant nature by which the school of the Imam was distinguished. He has said: "The nature and program by which the school of Imam al–Sadiq was distinguished from the rest of the Islamic schools was that it was spiritually independence.

It did not yield to the regime of the authority. It did not give an opportunity to the rulers to intervene in its affairs or to have a hand in guiding it or applying its regulations. For this reason it was not possible for those in charge of authority to employ it for their personal interests or to make it cooperate with them in the affairs of the state.

It was impossible even though they spared no effort to achieve it. The school warred against the wrongdoers from the beginning and did not incline to them. Likewise, there was no relationship between them and it, no harmony between it and them. That is because of this program it followed and the nature by which it was distinguished. The School was liable to danger, so the dispute between it and the state became strong.

The enmity between them magnified. For neither the state was ready to yield to the program of the school to earn its affection and be happy with its help nor was the school ready to yield to the will of the state in order to support it, serve it, and cooperate with it. How would that be so? (Certainly, that would not be so), for since its beginning the school had related to the two important things (al-Thaqalayn): the Book of Allah, and the family of His Messenger.

They were connected to each other and helped one another. They did not separate from each other in performing their duties that aimed to direct and guide the community. That is because the Qur'an prevents (Muslims) from helping the oppressive and inclining to them:

And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest fire touch you, and you have no guardians besides Allah, then you shall not be helped (Qur'an, 11:113).36

All the science foundations followed this brilliant program. They followed the program and behavior of the school of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him. An example of them is the Holy Najaf and Qum Theological Schools, for they both followed the original objectives declared by Imam al-Sadiq and used by him as a slogan and program for his school, such as refraining from making relationship with the ruling authorities and cooperating with them.

## The Authority fears the Imam's School

The ruling authorities were afraid of the Imam's school, for it became larger; many people attended it,

studied the Imam's science, told the others about it, spread the merits and outstanding qualities of Ahl al-Bayt. These things made al-Mansur sleepless and he had fear for his political interests.

He was fearful because he thought that the people would admire Imam al-Sadiq, so he entrusted Abu Hanifa with testing the Imam through the most difficult and ambiguous questions. Now, we will let Abu Hanifa tell us of that: "I have never seen anyone more knowledgeable than Ja'far b. Muhammad. When al-Mansur brought him, he sent for me and said: 'Abu Hanifa, the people have admired Ja'far b. Muhammad.

So prepare for him difficult questions.' I prepared for him forty questions. Then he sent for Ja'far when he was in al-Hira. He brought him and I came in to him. Ja'far b. Muhammad was on his right hand. When I looked at him, I venerated him more than I venerated Abu Ja'far al-Mansur. I greeted al-Mansur and he asked me to sit down. He turned to him (Imam al-Sadiq) and said to him: 'Abu 'Abd Allah, this is Abu Hanifa!' 'Yes, I know him', he, peace be on him, replied.

"Then al-Mansur turned to me and said: 'Abu Hanifa, ask Abu 'Abd Allah about your questions.' I asked him about them and he answered me, saying: 'You say so-and-so; the people of Medina say so-and-so; we say so-and-so. Perhaps we follow (you and them) and perhaps we oppose (you and them). I asked him about the forty questions and he showed no defect in any of them." 37

This attitude indicates that the authority had harbored malice and rage against the Imam and that it was cautious of him; likewise it indicates that the Imam had great scientific abilities.

Al-Mansur intended to battle against the Imam's school, to disparage it and to isolate the Imam from the community. So he turned his eyes towards Malik b. Anas, dignified and honored him in order to put him face to face with the Imam and to make him an authority for the community. He entrusted him with writing a book in order to force the people to put the book into practice.

However, Malik refused to respond to him, but he forced him to do that and said to him: "Write it, for there is no one more knowledgeable than you at the present time." 38 So Malik wrote his book called al-Muwatta. Al-Rashid ordered his governor over Medina not to decide any affair without consulting Malik. He sat on the ground in order to listen to his speech. 39

The state supported Malik and employed all its propaganda organs to spread his doctrine and to force the people to follow it. It did all these things to turn the people from the doctrine of Ahl al-Bayt whose position became high due to Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him.

Meanwhile al-Rashid went too far in magnifying and honoring Abu Yousif, for the latter was the student of Abu Hanifa and publisher of his doctrine, to the extent that he appointed him over the judicial power. No judge was appointed over Iraq, Iran, and Syria except through the advice and order of Abu Yousif.40

Al-Rashid said to him: "Abu Ya'qub, if I had permission to include you in my lineage and to make you

take part in the caliphate with which I am entrusted, then you are entitled to it."41

In this manner, the 'Abbasid authority spared no effort to found some Islamic doctrines, to honor their founders and take care of them. It forced the community to follow their beliefs and to put into practice their religious decisions. Through this procedure, al-Mansur opened the doors to the mental persecution; then the 'Abbasid kings followed him in repressing the religious awareness taken from the message of Ahl al-Bayt.

## **The Teaching Programs**

The Imam's valuable lectures and researches dealt with all kinds of traditional and rational sciences, theology, morals. They also dealt with high culture such as the science of Islamic jurisprudence, hadith, the sciences of the Holy Qur'an, medicine, chemistry, botany and other sciences that have perfect effects on the social progress.

The most prominent science the Imam analyzed and fully explained is jurisprudence; he dealt with all its chapters such as the acts of worship ('lbadat), dealings, contracts, and iqaa'aat. The Imam did not limit his researches to the scientific side only; rather he elaborated on spreading social manners, noble moral traits, the rules of behavior, and the like. The following is a brief review on some of them:

### **Noble Moral Traits**

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, urged his companions and his followers to endow themselves with noble moral traits and good deeds in order that they might be a righteous model of the society. In this respect some commandments have issued from him; among them are his commandments to his son Imam Musa; in them he has mentioned:

"O my little son, surely whoever is satisfied with that which is apportioned to him is rich. Whoever extends his hand to that which is in the hands of other than him dies poor; whoever is not satisfied with what Allah apportions to him accuses Allah of His decree; whoever deems his own slip small regards as great the slip of the other than him.

"O my little son, whoever unveils (the defects) of other than him, the defects of his own house are unveiled. Whoever pulls out the sword of wrong is killed by it; whoever digs a well for his brother falls into it; whoever associates with the foolish is degraded; whoever mixes with the scholars is respected; whoever enters the entrances of evil is accused.

"O my little son, take care not to despise men lest you should be despised; be careful not to enter that which does not concerns you lest you should be debased because of that."O my little son, say the truth whether it is for you or against you. "O my little son, recite the Book of Allah; spread Salam (greetings). Enjoin the good; forbid the evil. Communicate with him who cuts you off. Start (conversation with) him who keeps silent toward you.

Give him who begs you. Beware of slander, for it plants enmity in the hearts of men; be wary of mentioning the defects of men, for the position of him who mentions the defects of men is like the position of a target. "O my little son, if you seek generosity, then stick to its origins. For surely generosity has origins; the origins have an origin; the origins have branches; the branches have fruit; the fruit is not good except through a branch; no branch except through an origin; and no firm origin except through a good origin.

"O my little son, if you visit, then visit the good; do not visit the wicked, for they are like the stone whose water does not gush out, like the tree whose leaves do not get green, and like the land whose grass does not become good...."42 These commandments are full of good deeds.

They include noble moral traits, the foundations of virtues and the standards of behavior. Imam al—Sadiq, peace be on him, continuously supplied his children and his companions with such valuable commandments and useful lessons, that they might summon the people to righteousness and guidance. He, peace be on him, sent to his companions a letter in which he urged them to cling to noble moral traits and good deeds.

In the letter he has mentioned the following: "You should show love for the Muslim poor people, for him who disparages them and shows haughtiness toward them deviates from the religion of Allah. Know that he who abases a Muslim, Allah detests him.

Therefore, fear Allah in respect with your brothers, for their right against you is that you should love them, for surely Allah commanded his Prophet to love them. So he who does not love those to whom Allah has made love a must disobeys Allah and His Apostle. He who disobeys Allah and His Apostle and dies in this state dies as one of the deviators.

"Be careful not to wrong each other, for surely it is not of the qualities of the righteous, for surely he who wrongs (people), Allah turns his wrongdoing against himself, and the help of Allah is for him who is wronged and his gains success from Allah."Be careful not to envy each other, for envy is the origin of unbelief.

"Be careful not to help (someone) against a wronged Muslim who invokes Allah against you and He responds to him, for surely our father Allah's Apostle has said: Surely the supplication of the wronged is granted.' "Be careful not to let yourselves be greedy for something from which Allah has prohibited you, for if someone violates something from which Allah has prohibited him, Allah prevents him from entering the Garden."43

Through these commandments Imam al–Sadiq, peace be on him, summoned his companions to perform good deeds and to follow high values that send man far from evil and direct him at perfection. He has mentioned numerous commandments similar to these in which he urged his companions to endow themselves with noble moral traits and good deeds.

#### **Justice**

Without doubt justice is the vein which beats in the body of society. On it is based the life, security, and stability on earth. The Imam gave a lecture on it; he has described it with the most wonderful meaning and briefest statements, saying: "Justice is sweeter than the water a thirsty person finds; how wide justice is even if it is little!

Fear Allah and be just, for you find fault with the people who do not establish justice." The free peoples have struggled for a long time to establish justice, for they have regarded it as their highest aim. Justice was among the main aims the Imam's school supported and spread among the Islamic society.

### **Preferring the Truth**

Imam al-Sadiq always lauded the truth and regarded it as the Shadow of Allah on earth. He described it to his companions as the essence of faith, saying: "Surely it is an act of faith is that you prefer the truth even if it harms you to falsehood even if it benefits you." Surely following the truth and its followers and preferring it to personal interests is the most important of all realities Islam has underlined and the Imam's school had supported.

### **Bringing together the People of Separation**

The best and most loveable works to Allah is bringing together the people of separation to the extent that the Greatest Legislator (Allah) has permitted lying, which is the greatest of all the ruinous sins, for correcting discord, raising disputes, spreading love and peace among the people.

Imam al-Sadiq urged his companions to put into practice this noble deed, saying: "The alms Allah loves is setting the people right when they are hostile to one another and bringing them together when they separate from each other."

Surely the reconciliation in the full sense was the highest objective of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, who dedicated themselves to it and for it they met too much persecution and injustice.

#### **Oppression**

The intellects of mankind throughout generations and times have admitted that oppression is ugly and abominable. That is because it is the source of corruption and crimes. All kinds of oppression have been prohibited by Imam al–Sadiq, peace be on him, who has said: "He who puts oppression into practice, he who helps him, and he who is satisfied with oppression are three partners."44

He, peace be on him, prohibited the Muslims from cooperating with the oppressive or to share with them any positive work that led to spread their influence or to strengthen their authority. He was asked by a companion of his about whether it was permissible for him to build houses for them or to dig a river for them, and he answered: "I dislike to make a contract with them....Surely the helpers of the oppressive

will enter the hellfire on the Day of Resurrection."

"He, peace be on him, talked to his companions about the greatness of the crime of oppression with Allah, saying: "Guard against oppression, for surely the supplication of the oppressed ascends to the heaven." He talked to them about the ugliest kind of oppression, saying to them: "No oppression is greater than that against which one can find no helper except Allah."

There are other sayings similar to these reported on his authority concerning warning against oppression and forbidding all its kinds. Likewise, in his valuable, numerous lectures, he, peace be on him, explained to his companions the dangerous harms resulting from oppression. This indicates that he took great care of establishing security and peace among the people.

#### Cooperation

Imam al-Sadiq urged his companions to cooperate firmly with each other, for this bring about to them love and friendship. In this respect Saffwan al-Jammal has narrated, saying: "I was with Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq) when a Mecca man called Maymun visited him and complained to him of (his inability) to rent (a house). He turned to me and said: 'Rise and help your brother.'

I rose with him and Allah made easy his rent; I returned to my session and Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq) asked me: 'What have you done in respect with your brother's need?' 'Allah has granted it to him, may my father and mother be your ransom,' I replied. 'Your help to your Muslim brother is more loveable to me than your circumambulating the Kaaba for one week,' he said.""

He, peace be on him, said to Jameel b. Darrajj: "Among the good deeds is kindness to brothers and striving for accomplishing their needs, for such deeds silence Satan, remove (the doer) far away from the fires, and make (him) enter the gardens. Jameel, tell your noble companions about this tradition."

"May I be your ransom, who are my noble companions," asked Jameel

#### **His Words about Allah**

Surely to know Allah is the most important of all the Islamic duties. The Imam urged his companions to cling to it. He discovered to them its great results, saying: "If the people knew the virtue of having knowledge of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, they would not stretch out their eyes to the pleasures Allah gives to the enemies such as the splendor and luxury of the life in this world, their life in this world be less than that on which they tread, would take pleasure in having knowledge of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, would enjoy it with the enjoyment of him who is in the gardens along with the friends of Allah.

Surely to have knowledge of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, is comfort against any loneliness, a companion against any isolation, light against any darkness, strength against any weakness, and a

<sup>&</sup>quot;Those who are kind to brothers in difficulty and ease," replied the Imam.45

cure against any malady."

Then he, peace be on him, explained to his companions the sufferings and terrible chastisement the friends of Allah, the Exalted, met from His enemies, saying: "A people before you were killed, burnt, sawed. They felt that the earth was narrow thought it was wide; nevertheless, nothing turned them away from their beliefs...

And they did not take vengeance on them for aught except that they believed in Allah, the Mighty, the Praised (Qur'an, 85:8).

Therefore, ask (Allah to give you) degrees like theirs; be patient toward the misfortunes of your time and you will reach their efforts." 46 This wonderful description has encompassed the true nature of the Allah-fearing and included their real life, their struggle, and their firm belief in Allah.

#### The Qualities of the Believers

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, explained to his companions and the students of his school the qualities of the believers and of Allah-fearing, that they might follow them and their model.

He has said: "The believer has strength in religion, determination with mildness, faith with certainty, devotion with knowledge, activity through guidance, piety along with straightness, knowledge along with clemency, politeness along with gentleness, generosity in a right way, moderation during riches, patience during poverty, pardon in time of ability, obedience to Allah through giving advice, an expiration during an appetite, piety through a desire, sticking to struggle, prayer along with devotion (to Allah), steadfastness during a hardship.

He is venerable during adversities, grateful during ease. He does not backbite nor does he show haughtiness, nor does he cut off womb relatives. He is neither feeble nor rude nor rough. His eye does not precede him, nor does his stomach disgrace him, nor does his private part overcome him. He does not envy the people.

He does not revile nor is he reviled nor does he steal. He helps the oppressed and has mercy on the miserable. He is tired of himself while the people find themselves in comfortable position with regard to him. He does not beseech the exaltedness in the world nor is he impatient toward the abasement therein.

The people are with their own concern while he is busy with his own concern. None finds a defect in his decision, feebleness in his opinion, and waste in his religion. He guides him who seeks advice from him, helps him who helps him, withdraws from obscene language and ignorance."47

He, peace be on him, has described the believer saying: "The believer is not believing unless he has perfect reason. He has no perfect reason unless he has ten qualities: good from him is hoped: Evil from him is safe. He regards his own too much good as little and regards the little good of other than him as

much. He regards his own little evil as much and regards too much evil of other than him as little.

He is not fed up when he is asked to accomplish needs nor is he bored with seeking knowledge throughout his lifetime. Humbleness is more loveable to him than exaltedness and poverty is more loveable to him than riches; he is satisfied with a simple food in this world. When he meets someone, he says: 'He is better and more pious than me.'

When he meets someone who is better than him, he shows humbleness toward him in order to follow him. When he meets him who is more wicked and lower than him, he says: 'Perhaps, the evil of this is manifest and his good is hidden.' When he does that, he becomes high and a master over the people of his time."48

### **Piety**

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, advised his companions to refrain from the things prohibited by Allah. Among his statements to them are the following: "Cling to piety, for that which is with Allah is not attained except through piety." 49 He, peace be on him, has said: "Cleave to fear of Allah, piety, diligence, truthful talk, returning the things deposited, good moral traits, good-neighborhood. Be summoners to yourselves without your tongues; be ornaments and not be disgrace." 50

We are content with this small group of his high teachings with which he has supplied the Islamic society and through which he has decided the rules of manners and the rules of conduct.

## In the Time of Imam Musa

Imam Musa, peace be on him, made good progress during his lifetime at the great school of his father. He was the most prominent of all the brilliant scholars; likewise, he shared his father in giving scientific lectures, supported him in strengthening the school and making it progressive in the cultural fields. When his father passed away, he undertook the affairs of this great school and spread virtues.

For this reason the scholars and the narrators surrounded him. They did not separate themselves from him nor did they leave him. They recorded his traditions, his researches, and his religious verdicts; for example, Sayyid b. Tawus<u>51</u> narrated that the companions of the Imam and his special associates attended his sessions and there were in their sleeves thin ebony boards and pencils. When he said a word or gave a religious edict on a certain event, they hurried to write it down.

These scholars have narrated on his authority all kinds of science; thanks to his and his father's efforts, the scientific movement included all the Islamic and Arab cities and its scientific inheritance has been transmitted by generations one by one.52

- 1. Te'sees al-Shi'a li 'Uloom al-Islam, p. 232.
- 2. A'yan al-Shi'a, vol., part 2, pp. 34-35.
- 3. Al-Nejashi, Rijal, p. 5.

- 4. Heyat al-Imam al-Hasan, vol. 2, p. 280. It has been quoted from Ibn 'Asakir's History.
- <u>5.</u> Al-Zuhri has said: "I have never seen a Qereshi better than 'Ali b. al-Husayn." He has also said: "I have never seen anyone greater in jurisprudence than him." Ibn Weheb has said on the authority of Malik: "There was none among the household of the Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, like 'Ali b. al-Husayn."
- 6. Tehdhib al-Tehdhib, vol. 7, p. 305.
- 7. He was given the nickname of al-Baqir because he was well-versed in knowledge. It was the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who had given him this nickname before he, peace be on him, was born. Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari narrated on the authority of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who has said: "It will happen that you will live until you meet one of my children descended from al-Husayn, called Muhammad, who will spilt wide open knowledge. When you meet him, recite my greeting to him." A narration similar to this in meaning has been mentioned in Ibn Qutayba' 'Uyoon al-Akhbar, vol., p. 212.
- 8. Al-Ithaf bi Hub al-Ashraaf, p. 52.
- 9. Mir'at al-Jinan, vol., p. 248.
- 10. Al-Keshi, Rijal, p. 88.
- 11. Ibid. p. 112.
- 12. Ibid., p. 113.
- 13. Ibid. p. 117.
- 14. Tehdhib al-Tehdhib, vol.9, p. 350.
- 15. Al-Sendubi, Resaa'il al-Jaahiz, p. 106.
- 16. Al-Sewa'iq al-Muhriqa, p. 120.
- 17. Ja'far Bin Muhammad, p. 59.
- 18. Al-Irshad. A'lam al-Wara. Al-Mu'tabar. Al-Anwar. Al-Dhikra.
- 19. Al-Sewa'iq al-Muhriqa, p. 120.
- 20. Tarikh al-Kufa, p. 40.
- 21. Imam al-Sadiq wa al-Medhahib al-Arba'a, vol. 1, p. 62.
- 22. Al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Ziyad al-Washsha' was Bejeli and Kufi. He was among the great figures of this sect. He devoted himself to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He is regarded as among his loyal companions. He wrote many books of which were: Thawab al-Hajj, al-Manasik, al-Nawadir, Masa'il al-Ridha', and others. This has been mentioned in the book al-Ta'liqat, p. 103.
- 23. Al-Mejalis al-Seniya, vol. 5, p. 28.
- 24. Ja'far Bin Muhammad, p. 59.
- 25. Tarikh al-Kufa, p. 408.
- 26. Wasa'il al-Shi'a. Kitab al-Shehadat, Chapter 8.
- 27. Ibn al-Nedim, Fihrast, p. 308.
- 28. Ibid., p. 250. Shaykh al-Tusi, Fihrast, p. 121.
- 29. Our friend, late, Shaykh Muhammad al-Khalili has commented on it and fully explained it. He has shown the sciences and the secrets and the medical researches that agree with modern science. He has entitled it Amali Imam al-Sadiq. It is in two volumes.
- 30. Al-A'lam, vol. 1, p. 186, first edition. Mir'at al-Jinan, vol. 1, p. 304.
- 31. Al-Ilhad fi al-Islam, p. 189.
- 32. Al-Thari'a, vol. 6, pp. 301-374.
- 33. Al-A'lam, vol. 1, p. 186. Al-Tuhfa al-Ithna 'Ashariya, p. 8.
- 34. Al-Tawassil wa al-Wasila, p. 52.
- 35. Ibid.
- 36. Imam al-Sadiq wa al-Medhahib al-Arba'a, vol. 3, p. 13.
- 37. Al-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Hafiz.
- 38. Al-Zarqani, Sharh al-Muwatta', vol. 1, p. 8.
- 39. Al-Zawi, Manaqib Malik.

- 40. Al-Magrizi, Khutat, vol. 4, p. 144.
- 41. Ibn al-Qaya, al-Mukafa'a, p. 63.
- 42. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, pp. 79-80. An account similar to it has been mentioned in Hulyat al-Awliya', vol. 3, p. 135.
- 43. Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 76.
- 44. Al-Kafi, Chapter on Oppression.
- 45. Al-Saduq, al-Khisal.
- 46. Al-Kafi, al-Rouda.
- 47. Al-Kafi, Usool, vol. 2, p. 209.
- 48. Al-Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Majalis.
- 49. Al-Kafi, Usool, vol. 2, p 76.
- 50. Ibid.
- 51. Al-Sayyid b. Tawus is a great Sayyid, knowledgeable, worshipper. His name is Rady al-Deen Abu al-Qasim 'Ali b. Sa'd al-Deen b. Ibrahim al-Husayni. He lived in al-Hilla. He was given the nickname of al-Tawus due to the beauty of his face and the coarseness of his legs. He was among the great and notable Sayyids. He was their head. He had many books indicating his abundant knowledge. His good qualities and his knowledge have been mentioned by al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Khunsari in his book Roudat al-Jinan, vol. 3, pp. 43-47. In the book al-Kuna wa al-Alqab, vol. 1, p. 338, it has been mentioned: "Sayyid Ibn Tawus undertook the affairs of the union of the Talibiyyin. He sat in a green dome and the people visited him. He died on Monday, Dhi al-Qi'da 5th, in the year 664.
- 52. Al-Anwar al-Behiyya, p. 19.

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