

## Chapter 4: His Ideals

Through his talents and genius, Imam Musa could reach the highest human levels and values; due to his abilities and powers he became one of the unique thinkers and among the wonderful examples of good and perfection on earth. The Imam was the object of pride in the Islamic world.

That is because of his virtues and achievements such as vast knowledge, clemency, gentleness, liberality, kindness to men, steadfastness in front of events, and other noble tendencies which are sanctified by every man who believes in ideals and honorable humanity; we will deal with his tendencies and qualities as follows:

### His Imamate

Allah gifted him with the Imamate and singled him out with the general deputyship on behalf of his grandfather, the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family; he was one of his testamentary trustees of authority and his successors over his community. The 22Shi'a maintain that the Imamate is similar to the prophet hood Allah does not gift to anyone except the good people who are pure from defilement and sins and void of all kinds of oppression and false things.

It is one of the highest divine offices none undertakes except him who is the best of all creation and most honorable of them to Allah. It is necessary for us to pause in order to give an account of the Imamate, for it is automatically and objectively related to our subject matter.

### The Meaning of the Imamate

The theologians have defined it, saying: "The Imamate is the general presidency of one person over the affairs of the religion and the world." Therefore, the Imam, according to this definition, is the general leader and president who has the general authority over the worldly and religious affairs of men, so all people should follow him.

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, is more appropriate for authority over the believers than themselves, and so is the Imam according to the stipulation of the sermon of the Prophet, may

Allah bless him and his family, on the Day of Ghadeer Khum when he appointed Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, as an Imam and a successor over the Muslims after him.

## **The Necessity of the Imamate**

Surely the Imamate is among the rules and principles of Islam. The Muslims are in agreement on the necessity and requirement of the Imamate. That is because Islamic Law is a group of precepts and rules. So it contains the prescribed punishments, the government according to what Allah has revealed, enjoining the good, forbidding the evil, jihad in the way of Allah, protecting the religion, and other precepts one cannot establish without an Imam who undertakes carrying them out.

Ibn Taymiya says: "Surely the authority over the affairs of men is the greatest of all the religious duties; rather the religion cannot be established except through it; that is because Allah has made obligatory enjoining good, forbidding the evil, helping the oppressed; likewise the rest of that which Allah has made obligatory such as jihad, justice, administering the prescribed punishments, and (these things) are not put into effect except through force and authority."<sup>1</sup>

Surely it is necessary for the Muslims to establish their political and religious entity through an Imam who undertakes their affairs, solves their problems according to the Book of Allah, and the Sunna of his Prophet, and treats them with justice and pure truth. Surely the Imamate is one of the requirements of the Islamic life; man cannot function without it; through it man can achieve the great justice Allah desires on earth.

The most important affairs require the Imamate are helping men know Allah and obey Him, supplying society with the essence of faith and piety, sending it far from the tendencies of evil and delusions.

## **Agreement on the Necessity of the Imamate**

The Muslims have unanimously agreed that the Imamate is required and necessary except the Kharijites who have said: "Imposing the Imamate is not required of people, but they should practice the truth among them."<sup>2</sup> This belief is false and invalid. For the narrations have been reported on a wide scale about the necessity of the Imamate.

It has been reported from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who has said: "He who dies and does not pledge an allegiance (to an Imam) dies like those who died in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance."

He, May Allah bless him and his family, has said: "He who separates himself from the community dies like those who died in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance. He who fights under the standard of fanaticism, sides with a group or summons (people) to a group or helps a group and is killed, then his death is like that of those who were killed in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance."<sup>3</sup>

Ibn Khaldun has said: "Surely installing the Imam is required. It has been known that it is required according to the unanimous agreement of the companions (of the Prophet). That is because when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, passed away, his companions hurried to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr and entrusted him with their affairs.

Such was the procedure in the times that followed; the people were not left to lead a life of chaos; this is well-established as a unanimous agreement on the necessity of installing the Imam."<sup>4</sup> Since the dawn of their history, the Muslims have unanimously agreed that appointing an Imam is required and that the Islamic life does not run well without him.

## The Duties of the Imam

Islam has entrusted the Imam with great responsibilities. It has made it incumbent on him to guard the interests of the Muslims, to take care of their affairs, to develop their life, to send them far from all the factors of decline and backwardness. Those who are concerned in these researches have mentioned some important duties the Imam should carry out, and they are as follows:

1. The Imam should keep the religion, guard Islam, and protect it from those who make light of values and morals.
2. He should protect the Islamic country, defend the sacred things in order that the people may move about in their livelihood, travel and feel that their souls and properties are safe.
3. He should fortify the frontiers of the Muslims with the reinforcements and an adequate number of fighters in order that the enemy may not find a gap through which he violates the sacred things and sheds the blood of a Muslim or an ally.
4. He should struggle against the stubborn unbelievers in order that they may become Muslim or enter the protection of Islam, i.e., he should undertake the right of Allah through causing His religion prevail over all religions.
5. He should carry out the Islamic precepts, settle disputes in order that the oppressive may not transgress, and the oppressed may not become weak.
6. He should administer the prescribed punishments, that the sacred things may be protected, souls and properties may be preserved.
7. He should choose those trusted and well-qualified, entrust authorities to those trustworthy and loyal, that works may accurately be done by the well-qualified, and properties are kept by the trusted.
8. He should collect the funds of the war booty gained without fighting, zakat, land taxes (kharaj) on that which the Islamic law has made obligatory whether according to a certain text in the Qur'an and the

Sunna or according to deriving religious decisions without any injustice and tyranny.

9. He should estimate soldiers' pay and what each person deserves of the public treasury without any extravagance and stinginess; he should pay it to them in a fixed time without any delay or advance.

10. He should supervise the public affairs by himself, not depending on his governors or his rulers. For the trusted may break the law, and the loyal may cheat people. In this respect Allah, the Exalted, says:

***O Dawood, surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow desire, lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allah. (Qur'an, 38:26)***

In the two books called al-Sahihayn<sup>5</sup> there is a narration on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, who has said: "I have heard the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, say: 'All of you are guardians and all of you are responsible for your subjects. The woman in her husband's house is a guardian and is responsible for her subjects; the servant (who is in charge of) the property of his master is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects.'"

He has said: "I have heard that from the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, and I think that he has said: 'The man (who is in charge of) the property of his father is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. Therefore, all of you are guardians and all of you are responsible for your subjects'"

Al-Turmidhi<sup>6</sup> has published a tradition narrated by 'Amru b. Murra al-Juhni, who said to Mu'awiya: [I have heard the Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him and his family, say:] "If the Imam close his door at the faces of the needy and the miserable, Allah closes the gates of the heavens and the earth at the faces of his shortcoming, need, and misery."

Addressing al-Ma'mun, his minister, Muhammad b. Yazdad, said:

He who guards the world is surely worthy of that he should not sleep when all the people are asleep.

How do the eyes of him whom two worries of his affair, revocation and rectification, annoy sleep?<sup>7</sup>

These duties have been described as an including constitution; if we put them into practice in the language and idioms of the time, they would be higher and more inclusive than those of the rulers in the international constitutions.<sup>8</sup>

Whoever ponders over what has been transmitted from 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, sees that the duties of the Imam, peace be on him, are more inclusive than that. For they include morals, virtues, and building the society that lives under justice and the truth, from which are uprooted all kinds of opportunism, wrong, and corruption.

I (the author) have in detail talked about that in my book Nizam al-Hukum wa al-Idara fi al-Islam.

## The Qualities of the Imam

The Imam must have all the good tendencies, high attributes, noble ideals such as knowledge, piety, easy opinion, original thinking, perfect awareness of what the community needs in all fields; those concerned in the Islamic, political science of jurisprudence have mentioned the qualities the Imam must have as follows:

1. He must have the comprehensive conditions of justice such as refraining from great sins and not insisting on small sins.
2. He must have knowledge of deriving religious decisions on mishaps and precepts.
3. He must have sound senses such ears, eyes, and tongue, that he may perceive things through them.
4. He must have limbs sound of any defect that may prevent him from movement and quick rising.
5. He must have an opinion leading to ruling his subjects and managing their interests.
6. He must have bravery and help leading to protecting the Islamic country and struggling against an enemy.
7. He must have a lineage, i.e. the Imam should be from Quraysh.

These qualities have been mentioned by al-Mawardi and Ibn Khaldun;<sup>9</sup> other qualities have been mentioned by al-Juwany, al-'Ayjy, al-Jurjany, and al-Faraby.

I (the author) have in detail mentioned these qualities in my book *Nizam al-Hukum wa al-Idara fi al-Islam*.

The Shi'a maintain that the Imam should be the most meritorious of all people in talents, genius, and that he must have the following:

### Infallibility

The Shi'a maintain that the infallibility of the Imam is a basic rule in the Imamate and among the primary principles in their ideological entity. The theologians have defined the Imamate, saying: "Surely the Imamate is a grace from Allah, Who grants it to the most perfect and best of His servants to Him; through which he (the servant) refrains from committing sins and crimes intentionally and unintentionally."

This belief has brought about to the Shi'a many accusations and criticisms. A group of people has accused them of excessiveness and immoderation in love for their Imams. However, if we resort to the proofs, we will find them confirm the beliefs of the Shi'a. Aayat al-Tathir is a sufficient proof of that; Allah,

the Most High, says:

***Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House and to purify you a (thorough) purifying. (Qur'an, 33:33).***

This verse clearly indicates the infallibility of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, of sins and their purity from deviation and defilement. That is because the will of keeping away the uncleanness—namely acts of disobedience—has been limited by the word *inna* (only), which is the strongest of all the determiners. The definite article *al* (the) has been added to the predicate; the word *tahara* (purity) has been repeated.

All these words, according to the Arabic Terminology, indicate limitation and specialization. Likewise it is impossible for the willed thing to remain behind Allah's will that has decided to keep away the uncleanness from them; in this respect Allah, the Exalted, says:

***His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it: Be, so it is. (Qur'an, 36:82)***

By that their infallibility of sins and acts of disobedience is established. [10](#)

Similarly, hadith al-Thaqalayn clearly indicates their infallibility. In it the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, has compared his family to the Book. The Holy Book is immune from mistakes and slips, and so is the family of the Prophet. Otherwise, the comparison between them is incorrect. The conclusive proofs of the infallibility of the Imam are available, so it is not permissible for others to criticize the Shi'a for it.

This has been explained by 'Allama, Shaykh Muhammad Ameen Zayn al-Deen, who has said: "What shall the Shi'a do when they have been forced by the nature of Islam itself to (embrace) this belief? What shall they do when they have been led by the texts in the Qur'an, the authentic books on traditions, and rational proofs (to this belief)? What shall they do when they have fully been led by these demonstrations to this result?"

"Does the infallibility they have stipulated in the Imam of Muslims take him out of the class of Mankind and add him to gods, as those who fabricate lies against them say?"

"Is infallibility itself a divine part? Do we believe in incarnation when we impose it as a condition in the Imam? Does divinity have parts in order that infallibility regarded as one of them, and that this fabrication can stand on one foot? Has the Muslim general populace not imposed it as a condition in the message of the Messenger?"

Did it have this stipulation there? Did anyone criticize it there with such a criticism? Infallibility is a condition in the message of the Messenger as the Muslim general populace maintain even if their schools have differed over this condition: Was infallibility available only in the time of the prophet hood or even before his time?"

The Shaykh has added, saying: "Only the Shi'a of Ahl al-Bayt maintain that infallibility is a condition in the message of the Messenger, and that the Imam throughout the stages of his life should be infallible of all kinds of sin and defect even mistake, heedlessness, and inattention.

"Infallibility is a great, psychological balance. It is formed when all the psychological forces are equal and when each of them reaches the maximum degree man is able to reach. Then the rational forces fully control all these forces, instinct, pillars that they may not deviate (from them) and may not be exploited in a work by other than them.

"This self immunity makes man far above the lowness in his nature. It makes him refrain from the sliding in his will, the deviations and crookedness that precipitate in the area of the unconscious, as the psychologists say, and change into complexes that control his motives, his behavior, his inclinations, and his talents. And then unwillingly drives him to disobey truth and to escape from justice.

This self immunity arouses perfect man's feelings lest he should be heedless. It makes him high through his talents and radiance lest he should fall into error or stumble. It guarantees to him his psychological health from all sides; this is the infallibility the school of Ahl al-Bayt has imposed as a condition in the supreme president of the Islamic government; I think that this stipulation is very clear and wise."<sup>11</sup>

Surely scientific thinking decides that the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, should be infallible is correct, as for the opinion that opposes it, it is very far from the thinking based on evidence and proof.

Yet, there is another thing; the thing is that the Shi'a believe that the Imam should be the most knowledgeable and meritorious of all people in scientific abilities. This belief has fully been clarified, explained, and established by His Eminence, late Shaykh, Muhammad Rida al-Muzaffer, who has said: "As for his knowledge—namely the Imam's knowledge—he receives the divine knowledge and precepts and all the teachings through the Prophet or the Imam before him.

When something has happened lately, it is necessary for him to know it through inspiration through the holy ability Allah, the Exalted, has deposited in him. When he heads for something and desires to know it as it is through a way with which he makes no mistake. All of that is based on the rational proofs and not on the teachings of teachers, though his knowledge is increasable and strength enable.

For this reason, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has said: My Lord, increase me in knowledge!"

Having given proofs of that, he has added, saying:

"This subject matter is clear in the history of the Imams, peace be on them. They were like the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, for no one educated and taught them even reading and writing from their childhood to the age of ritual puberty. None has proved that they attained schools or studied under a teacher a certain thing, though they had a matchless, scientific position, immediately

answered all the questions about which they were asked, the word 'no' was not uttered by their tongues.

They did not postpone the answer to another time in order to study or consider it carefully. If we study a biography of a Muslim jurist, narrator, and scholar, we will find the teachers under whom he studied, the well-known persons from whom he took the narration and knowledge, his inability to answer some questions, and his doubt about a lot of information, just like mankind throughout times."<sup>12</sup>

His Eminence Imam Kashif al-Ghita' has mentioned the qualities of the Imam, and especially as it concerns his scientific talents, saying: (He—namely the Imam—should be the most meritorious of the people of his time in all virtues and most knowledgeable of them in all sciences. For he should perfect men, purify their souls, educate them with knowledge and good deeds; He it is:

***Who raised among the illiterates an Apostle from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom. (Qur'an, 62:2)***

The imperfect (person) cannot perfect (men); one who is void (of knowledge) does not give (knowledge), so in respect with the outstanding qualities, the Imam is inferior to the Prophet and superior to men."<sup>13</sup>

This is the frank opinion of the Shi'a concerning the knowledge of the Imam, which has no excessiveness of which their opponents have accused.

## **The Designation of the Imam for the Imamate**

The Shi'a have unanimously agreed that neither the community nor those in power have the right to designate the Imam, that electing the Imam is null and void, and that choosing him is impossible, for the Imam is similar to the prophet. The prophet is not designated according to man's election and desire, and so is the Imam.

That is because the Infallibility, which is a condition in the Imamate with them, is not known by anyone except Allah, Who is fully aware of the secrets of souls and inward thoughts. So He it is Who grants it for whom He pleases of His servants and chooses for the office of the Imamate and Caliphate.

As for that whether it is permissible to nominate and elect the Imam and the prophet for these divine offices, it is that Allah Who designate them. This has been shown in the Holy Book in which Allah, the Exalted, has said:

***O Dawood, surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice. (Qur'an, 38:26).***

***And your Lord creates and chooses whom he pleases; to choose is not theirs; glory be to Allah, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him). (Qur'an, 28:68).***

The Imamate is just like the prophethood concerning which there is no need to resort to the election and

will of the community. The Shi'a have concluded this belief from the successive traditions transmitted from the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them. Among these traditions is that which has been given as a proof by (Imam al-Mehdi), the Proof of Allah (hujjat Allah) and His vicegerent over His creatures.

He will make straight the crookedness of the right, set right those corrupt precepts have been fabricated by some people and ascribed to the religious regime, the rightly-guided one of this community, may Allah hasten his coming. That was when he was asked by Sa'd b. 'Abd Allah about the reason why men are prevented from choosing an Imam for themselves, and he, peace be on him, answered him, saying:

-Do they choose a righteous person or a mischievous one?

-A righteous one.

-Is it possible that they may choose the mischievous one when none knows the righteousness and mischief that comes to the mind of other than him?

-Yes.

-So this is the reason I have given to you with a proof your reason trusts. Tell me of the apostles Allah chose and revealed the Books to them, confirmed with inspiration and infallibility when they were the great figures of the communities and the most rightly-guided to be chosen. From among them were (Musa) Moses and 'Isa (Jesus); though they were abundantly wise and perfectly knowledgeable. If they intended to choose (someone), was it possible for them to choose a hypocrite and they had thought that he was a believer?

-No.

-Though the epithet of Musa (Moses) had abundant reason and perfect knowledge, and received the inspiration, he chose some hypocrites. That was (when) he chose seventy men from among the notables of his people and had no doubt about their faith and loyalty. Allah, the Great and Almighty, has said:

***And Musa chose out of his people seventy men for Our appointment. To His words: (Qur'an, 7: 155)***

For they said:

***Show us Allah manifestly; so the lightning overtook them on account of their injustice. (Qur'an, 4: 153)***

We have found that the one Allah had chosen to be a prophet chose the mischievous and not the righteous; he thought that they were righteous. So we have come to know that none has the right to choose except Allah, Who knows what hearts hide and what minds conceal."[14](#)

Surely man's abilities fall short of perceiving the righteous through whom the community becomes

happy; so this subject matter is in the hand of Allah, the Most High, Who knows hidden affairs.

### The Statement of Imam al-Ridha'

The deepest of all the proofs of the Imamate, the greatest of them in encompassing, including and explaining this office and in (showing) the impossibility of electing someone for it is the talk of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, with 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Muslim. The Imam has explained many sides of the Imamate; the following are some texts of the talk:

'Abd al-'Aziz b. Muslim has said: "In the days of 'Ali b. Musa al-Ridha' we were in Maru. We held a meeting in its mosque; the people discussed the affair of the Imamate; they mentioned many differences over it; after the talk had come to an end, I rose and (went) to visit Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. I told him about what the people had discussed; he, peace be on him, smiled and said:

"Abd al-'Aziz, the people have become ignorant; they have been deceived in respect with their religions. Surely Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, did not take unto Himself His Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, till he completed for him the religion. He revealed to him the Qur'an in which there are details about all things, in which He has explained the lawful, the forbidden, the prescribed punishments, and all necessary things. He, the Great and Almighty, has said:

***We have not neglected anything in the Book. (Qur'an, 6:38)***

In the Farewell Pilgrimage, which was in the last time of the Prophet's span, He revealed:

***This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. (Qur'an, 5:3)***

"The subject matter of the Imamate is part of the perfection of the religion. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, did not pass away until he explained to his community the principal features of their religion. He clarified to it its way, left it seeking the truth, installed for it 'Ali as a signpost (of knowledge) and an Imam, and explained to it all the things it needed.

So whoever claims that Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, has not completed His religion refuses the Book of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted; whoever refuses the Book of Allah, the Most High, is an unbeliever.

"Do they know the importance of the Imamate and its place among the community, so their choice in respect with it is permissible?

"Surely the Imamate is greater in importance, larger in affair, higher in position, more invincible, and farther in fathom than that men can reach it through their intellects, attain it with their opinions, or install an Imam through their election.

"Surely Allah singled out Ibraheem, the bosom friend, peace be on him, with the Imamate after the prophethood. The friendship is a third rank, and an excellence through which he had honored him and lauded his name. So He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***Surely I will make you an Imam of men. (Qur'an, 2:124)***

So the bosom friend said out of his pleasure with it: And of my offspring? Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***My covenant does not include the unjust. (Qur'an, 2:124)***

So this verse has invalidated the Imamate of all the unjust till the Day of Judgment. And it (the Imamate) has been limited to the choice. Then Allah, May He be magnified and exalted, honored him (Ibraheem) when he appointed his offspring as the people of choice and purity; when He, may He be magnified and exalted, said:

***And We gave him Ishaq and Ya'qub, a son's son, and We make them all good. And We made them Imams who guided (people) by Our commands, and We revealed to them the doing of good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of the alms, and Us (alone) did they serve. . (Qur'an, 21:72-73)***

So it (the Imamate) was still among his offspring. They inherited it one by one a century after a century till it was inherited by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***Most surely the nearest of people to Ibraheem are those who followed him and this Prophet and those who believe and Allah is the guardian of the believers. . (Qur'an, 3:68)***

He was singled out for it, so he entrusted it to 'Ali according to the Command of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, according to the description Allah has made obligatory, so it (the Imamate) was entrusted to him and his children, the chosen ones, Allah has given knowledge and faith in His words, may He be magnified and exalted:

***And those who are given knowledge and faith will say: Certainly you tarried according to the ordinance of Allah till the day of resurrection. (Qur'an, 30:56)***

"Therefore, it is entrusted to 'Ali's children only till the day of resurrection, for there will be no prophet after Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family; so from where do these ignorant choose? Surely the Imamate is the position of the prophets and legacy of the testamentary trustees (of authority). Surely the Imamate is the vicegerency of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, and of the Messenger, position of Imam ('Ali), the Commander of the faithful, and inheritance of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, peace be on them.

"Surely the Imamate is the reins of the religion, regulation of the Muslims, righteousness of the world, and exaltedness of the believers. Surely the Imamate is the growing foundation of Islam and its high branch; through the Imam the prayers, zakat (alms), fasting, the hajj, jihad are performed; war booty gained without fighting and endowments are secured; the prescribed punishments and precepts are administered; the frontiers and borders are protected.

"The Imam makes lawful what Allah has made lawful, forbids what Allah has made forbidden, administers the punishments prescribed by Allah, defends the religion of Allah, summons (men) to the way of his Lord with wisdom, good exhortation, and conclusive argument." The Imam, peace be on him, elaborated on the attributes of the Imam, his perfection and genius given to him by Allah; after that he has stated that men fall short of knowing the reality of the Imam and perceiving his excellence, saying:

"So who is it he who reaches the knowledge of the Imam and is able to choose him? How far! How far! Intellects have failed. Insights have become perplexed. Hearts have become confused. Eyes have failed. The great have become too low. The wise have become bewildered. The clement have fallen short. Orators are unable. The intelligent have become ignorant.

Poets have fallen silent. Writers have become unable. The eloquent have become tired to describe one of his affairs or one of his excellence. So they have acknowledged incapacity and falling short; how is he described or his core depicted or a thing of his affair understood or is available he who replaces him or sufficient as he is? No, and how?

"How far election still is from this (Imam)? How far intellects still are from this? Where is the like of this? They thought that was available in other than the family of the Prophet, May Allah bless him and his family; by Allah, their souls have deluded them and made them desire falsehood; so they have ascended a slippery ascent; (which make) their feet slip to the bottom!

They want to install the Imam through unjust, dull, and defective intellects and through misleading opinions, so they have increased (themselves) nothing except farness; may Allah destroy them; how they are turned away. They have desired something difficult, told lies, and strayed off into a remote error.

They have fallen into perplexity, for they have intentionally left the Imam; and the Shaytan made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so he kept them back from the path, though they were endowed with intelligence and skill. They have turned away from the choice of Allah and of His Apostle to their choice while the Qur'an calls them out:

***And your Lord creates and chooses whom He pleases; to choose is not theirs; glory be to Allah, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him). . (Qur'an, 28:68)***

And Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***And it behooves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Apostle have decided a matter. . (Qur'an, 33:36)***

And He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***What has happened to you? How do you judge? Or have you a book wherein you read, that you have surely therein what you choose? Or have you received from Us an agreement confirmed by an oath extending to the day of resurrection that you shall surely have what you demand? As them which of them will vouch for that, or have they associates? Therefore, let them bring their associates if they are truthful! (Qur'an, 68: 36-41)***

And He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***Do they not then reflect on the Qur'an? Nay, on the hearts there are locks. (Qur'an, 47:24)***

***Or has Allah set a seal on their hearts so they do not understand? Or have they said: We hear, and they do not obey? Surely the vilest of animals, in Allah's sight, are the deaf, the dumb, who do not understand. And if Allah had known any good in them He would have made them hear, and if He makes them hear they would turn back while they withdraw. (Qur'an, 8:21-23)***

They said:

***We hear and disobey. (Qur'an, 2:93)***

That is the grace of Allah:

***He gives it to whom He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace. (Qur'an, 57:21)***

"Accordingly, how do they choose the Imam? And the Imam is the knowledgeable one who does not be ignorant. The guardian who does not draw back, the origin of sacredness and purity, (of) piety and asceticism, (of) knowledge and worship, distinguished by the summons of the Messenger. He is of the children of the purified, chaste (lady).

There is no defect in his lineage; no noble equals him. So the lineage is from Quraysh; the top is from Hashim; the family belongs to the household of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, the consent is from Allah, the honor of the nobility; the branch is from 'Abd Manaf.

He has growing knowledge and perfect clemency; he is versed in the Imamate (and) knowledgeable in policy. Obedience to him is obligatory. He undertakes (the office of the Imamate) according to the Command of Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, and he is loyal to the servants of Allah and observes His religion."

After this, Imam al-Ridha' has presented the knowledge of the prophets and of the Imams, saying:

"Surely Allah grants success to the prophets and the Imams, the blessings of Allah be on them. He gives to them some of his stored knowledge and wisdom He does not give to any other than them. So their knowledge is superior to the knowledge of the people of their time; then reflect on these words of Him, the Exalted:

***...is he then who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself does not go aright unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you; how do you judge? (Qur'an, 10:35)***

And these words of him, the exalted,

***And whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given a great good. (Qur'an, 2:269)***

And His words, may He be magnified and exalted, concerning Taloot:

***Surely Allah has chosen him in preference to you, and He has increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique, and Allah grants his kingdom to whom He pleases, and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing. (Qur'an, 2:247)***

And He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said to His Prophet:

***And Allah's grace on you is very great. (Qur'an, 4: 113)***

And He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said concerning the Imams from among the household, the family and the progeny of His Prophet:

***Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace? But indeed We have given to Ibraheem's children the Book and the wisdom, and We have given them a grand kingdom. So of them is he who believes in him, and of them is he who turns away from him, and hell is sufficient to burn. (Qur'an, 4:54-55)***

If Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, for the affairs of His servants, He will open his heart for that, deposit in his heart the sources of wisdom, and inspire him with an inspiration. So, after that, he does not fail to give any answer, and concerning it he does not deviate from correctness.

He (the Imam) is infallible, confirmed, successful, directed, and safe from mistakes, slips, and stumbles. Allah singled him out with that, that he may be His proof over His servants and a witness over His creatures. That is the grace of Allah:

***He gives it to whom He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace. (Qur'an, 57:29)***

"Therefore, are they able (to find) the like of this (person) and choose him? Or does the one chosen by them have such attributes and they give him precedence (over them)? By the House of Allah, they have exceeded the truth and thrown the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they knew nothing. In the Book of Allah there are guidance and cure; nevertheless they have thrown it (behind their backs).

They have followed their desires, so Allah has dispraised, detested, and make them miserable when He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***And who is more erring than he who follows his low desires without any guidance from Allah? Surely Allah does not guide the unjust people. (Qur'an, 28:50)***

And him, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***For them is destruction, and He has made their deeds ineffective. (Qur'an, 47:8)***

And He, may He be magnified and exalted, has said:

***Greatly hated is it by Allah and by those who believe. Thus does Allah set a seal over the heart of every proud, haughty one." (Qur'an, 40:35)***

Imam al-Ridha's speech has come to an end.<sup>15</sup> It is full of the most wonderful kinds of proofs of the Imamate. It indicates that the Imamate is required, and that it is impossible for men to choose and elect an Imam.

It also shows that it is only Allah, the Exalted, Who chooses for this high office whom he pleases of His servants. It displays that such servants must have the attributes of good and perfection, the purity of soul, the clearness of self. They must not yield to the motives of inclination, the tendencies of evil and vainglory, that they may be righteous for guiding men, planting the essence of trust and virtue in their souls.

## **Texts on the Imamate**

Surely the Shi'a maintain that the Imam is appointed according to the texts, and there is no other way for that. Accordingly it is incumbent on the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to appoint him who will succeed him. Likewise it is incumbent on the Imam to appoint his successor to whom men should resort.

All the tradition books that deal with such a subject matter are full of different kinds of texts on that. For example, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has said concerning the Commander of the faithful (Imam 'Ali) on the day (of the assembly) at the house: "This is my brother, my trustee, and my successor among you, so listen to him and obey (him)."<sup>16</sup> Al-Tabarani has published the following tradition on the authority of Selman al-Farisi, who has said: "Allah's Apostle has said:

'Surely my trustee, the place of my secrets, the best one I will leave behind me, who will fulfill my promise, and carry out my religion will be 'Ali b. Abi Talib.<sup>17</sup> In his Hulyat al-Awliya', Abu Na'eem al-Hafiz has published the following tradition on the authority of Anas, who has said: "Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, has said:

'O Anas, the first one to come to you through this door is the Imam of the Allah-fearing, master of Muslims, leader of those famous nobles, and last of the testamentary trustees (of authority).'" Anas has said: "Ali came and Allah's Apostle rose cheerfully; he embraced him and said to him: 'You will carry out (my religion) on my behalf, make them (men) hear my voice, and explain to them that over which they differ after me.'" [18](#)

In his book al-Kabeer, al-Tabarani has published the following tradition on the authority of Abu Ayyoob al-Ansary, on the authority of Allah's Apostle, who has said: "O Fatima, did you not know that Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, looked thoroughly over the people of the earth and chose your father from among them and made him a Prophet. Then He looked over them a second time and choose your (present) husband and made him a trustee of authority; Allah inspired me to marry you to him." [19](#)

Al-Muhib al-Tabari has reported the following tradition on the authority of Anas, who has said: "We said to Selman al-Farisi: 'Ask the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, about his trustee of authority, and he asked him: 'O Allah's Apostle, who is your trustee of authority?'

'Who was the trustee of Musa?' he asked. 'Yushi' b. Nun,' replied Selman. 'So surely my trustee, my inheritor, (the one who) carries out my religion on my behalf, and fulfills my promise is 'Ali b. Abi Talib.'" [20](#)

Al-Muhib al-Tabari has reported the following tradition on the authority of Burayda, who has said: "Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, has said: 'Every prophet has a trustee and an inheritor, and that 'Ali is my trustee and inheritor.'" [21](#)

Numerous Prophetic traditions ensured by many lines of transmission have been narrated by the two parties (i.e., the Shi'a and the Sunna) on the Imamate of the two grandsons and sweet basil (of the Prophet), peace be on them. Concerning them the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has said: "You are two Imams, and your mother has (the right) to intercede (with Allah for men)." [22](#)

Referring to al-Husayn, he may Allah bless him and his family, has said: "This is an Imam, son of an Imam, brother of an Imam, and father of nine Imams." [23](#) In his book al-Ikmaal, al-Saduq has published the following tradition on the authority of Selman, who has said: "I visited the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and there was al-Hasan b. 'Ali (sitting) on his thigh.

He was kissing him on the mouth and saying: 'You are master, son of a master; you are an Imam, son of an Imam, brother of an Imam, and father of the Imams. You are the proof of Allah, the son of His proof, father of the nine proofs from your backbone; their nine (one) will be their Qa'im (the one who will undertake the office of the Imamate).'" [24](#)

Hadith books are full of Prophetic traditions that confine the Imamate to the twelve Imams who are all from Quraysh. For example, Jabir b. Samra has narrated, saying: "On Friday, the eve of stoning al-Aslami, I heard Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, say: 'The religion is still standing until the Hour begins, and there will be over them (men) twelve caliphs who are all from Quraysh.'" [25](#)

In his book al-Ikmaal, al-Saduq has published the following tradition on the authority of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, on the authority of his father, on the authority of his grandfather, who has said: [Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, has said:] "The Imams are twelve. The first of them is 'Ali and the last of them is al-Qa'im; they are my successors and my trustees (of authority)."[26](#)

Al-Hafiz Abu Na'eem has narrated the following tradition on the authority of Ibn Abbas, who has said: "Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, has said: 'If a man desires to be pleased to live as I do, dies as I do, resides in Adan Garden my Lord has planted, then let him follow 'Ali after me and follow his friends and imitate the Imams after me. For they are my family who have been created of my clay and given understanding and knowledge. Woe unto those from among my community who deny their excellence and cut off their relationship with me (due to their cutting off their relationship) with them; may Allah do not make my intercession include them.'"[27](#)

In addition to these Prophetic traditions are those have been narrated by those trustworthy and religious traditionists on the authority of the Imams from among Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, concerning their designating each other. For example, when he was about to die, the Commander of the faithful (Imam 'Ali), peace be on him, designated his son Imam al-Hasan, peace be on him.

He said to him: "My little son, Allah's Apostle has ordered me to make you as a trustee (of authority) and to give to you my books and my weapon. (That is) just as Allah's Apostle had appointed me as his trustee (of authority) and given to me his books and his weapons. And he has ordered me to order you that when death was close to you, you had to give them to your brother al-Husayn."

Then he turned to al-Husayn and said to him: "And Allah's Apostle had ordered you to hand them over to this son of yours--and indicated with his hand to Zayn al-'Abidin." Then he took 'Ali b. al-Husayn by the hand and said to him: "And Allah's Apostle had ordered you to hand them over to your son Muhammad; recite to him the greetings of Allah's Apostle and of mine."[28](#)

Hadith books contain hundred traditions similar to the ones mentioned above and that indicate that texts on the Imamate are required and other than them is invalid; the Shi'a have depended on them in building their beliefs in the Imamate.

## **The Texts on his Imamate**

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, informed his followers of the Imamate of his son Musa, peace be on him, when the world shone with his birthday. On every occasion he told them of that and asked them to keep that a secret for fear for them and his son of the ruling authority.

When the Imam, peace be on him, was seventy years old, a group of his followers hurried to him to ask him about the Imam after him to pledge allegiance to him and to resort to him in respect with the affairs of their religion. He answered them that the Imam after him would be his son Musa, peace be on him;

the following is the presentation of these texts:

## 1. Al-Mufaddal Bin 'Umar

Al-Mufaddal Bin 'Umar al-Ju'fi<sup>29</sup> was among the prominent Shi'ites and one of their famous, great figures. He asked Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad, peace be on him, about the Imam after him to follow him and to adopt his Imamate, and he, peace be on him, answered: "Mufaddal, the Imam after me is my son Musa, the hoped, awaited successor."<sup>30</sup>

## 2. Yazid Bin Sulayt

Yazid Bin Sulayt<sup>31</sup> was trustworthy and trusted. He was among the men of piety and knowledge. He and a group of his companions made the pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah (Mecca). On his way, he met Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq), who was accompanied by his sons and retainers. He hurried to the Imam to ask him about the Imam after him, saying: "May my father and mother be your ransom; you are the purified Imams; none escapes from death; who is the Imam after you?"

The Imam, peace be on him, indicated with his hand to his son Musa and explained his ideals with which he was endowed. He said: "He has the knowledge of wisdom, understanding, and generosity, knowledge of that which men need and of the affairs of their religion over which they differ. He has good manners and good neighborhood; he is one of Allah's gates; he has another (quality) that is the best of all these (qualities)."

-May my father and mother be your ransom, what is it?

-Allah, the Most High, will bring forth from him the succor of this community, its relief, its knowledge, its light, its understanding, and its wise man, the best baby and youth. Through him Allah will prevent bloodshed, correct discords, bring together the people of separation, make peace among (them), clothe the naked, satisfy the hungry, make the fearful safe, and send rain down. Men obey him; the best middle-aged one and young man; his words are a decision; his silence is knowledge; he explained to men that over which they differ."<sup>32</sup>

The Imam, peace be on him, told them about that with which Allah had gifted his son such as that He placed among his progeny the rightly-guided one (Mahdi) of the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, of whom the Prophet and the Imams after him gave good news.

He will set right crookedness, the regulations of the world and the religion. He will not come till corruption prevails, oppression becomes public, chaos spreads, deviation from the religion becomes famous, the earth is full of discords and disorders; may Allah bring about his early reappearance, place us among those who summon to him and support him.

### 3. Dawud Bin Kuthayr

Dawud Bin Kuthayr hurried to Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq) to ask him about the Imam after him, saying: "May Allah make me your ransom and make me die before you, I am afraid that something may happen, to whom shall I resort?" "To my son Musa," replied the Imam. Dawud became assured with this answer; his conscience rested; he had no doubt and perplexity about the knowledge of the Imam; just as he has said: "I have no doubt of Musa even a twinkle of an eye."<sup>33</sup>

### 4. Al-Fayd Bin al-Mukhtar

Al-Fayd had the honor of visiting Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq), peace be on him. A conversation took place between them about Abu al-Hasan Musa; while they were talking about his affairs, he entered; Abu 'Abd Allah turned to al-Fayd and said to him: "Fayd, he is your leader about whom you have asked me; rise and admit his right."

Al-Fayd hurried and began kissing the Imam on the hand and the head; he asked Allah to prolong his lifetime; then he turned to Abu 'Abd Allah and asked him: "May I be your ransom, shall I tell someone of him?" "Yes," replied the Imam, "your family, your children, and your companions." Through this tradition we understand that the Imam and his followers kept the affair of the Imamate a secret for fear of the oppressive authority.

So al-Fayd went to his loyal companions and gave them good news (of the Imamate of Musa). Among them was Younis b. Zabyan, who wanted to be sure of (the news) and went to the house of Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq); when he reached the Imam, he said to him: (Younis, the affair is just as al-Fayd has told you." Accordingly, Younis left cool-hearted; he was flooded by happiness and delight out of this grace he attained.<sup>34</sup>

### 5. Ibraheem al-Karkhi

Ibraheem al-Karkhi visited Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad (al-Sadiq), peace be on him. While he was sitting with the Imam, Abu al-Hasan Musa came. Ibraheem rose for him and Abu 'Abd Allah said to him: "Ibraheem, he is your leader after me. Some people will perish through him, and some others will be happy through him. May Allah curse those who will kill him and double chastisement against their souls.

Allah will bring forth from his backbone the best of the people of the earth of his time, the namesake of his grandfather and inheritor of his knowledge. The tyrant who belongs to the children of so-and-so will kill him after unique miracles out of envy of him, but Allah will attain His purpose though the polytheists may averse."

By him he meant Muhammad al-Mahdi, May Allah bring about his early reappearance, the namesake of the Prophet and the one similar to him in destroying oppression and putting an end to the oppressive.

He talked about his son Allah had gifted with grace and dignity, saying: "Allah will bring forth from his backbone twelve rightly-guided ones. He will distinguished them by his dignity and place them in the abode of His Holiness; he who follows the twelve one from among them is like him who draws his sword before Allah's Apostle to defend him."

When Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, reached these words, some Umayyad hirelings broke into his house, and he, peace be on him, stopped his talk. Ibraheem wanted him to complete it but he did not do that; so he left Yethrib (Medina) for his homeland. In the following year he had the honor of visiting the Imam while he felt burning desire for hearing the rest of his speech.

The Imam, peace be on him, understood that and said: "Ibraheem, he will remove distress from his Shi'ites after long straits and tribulation, impatience and fear; so blessed is he who lives during his time." Then he said to him: "That is enough for you, Ibraheem."

Ibraheem was pleased with this speech of the Imam and said: "I have never returned with a thing more delightful and happier to my heart than this (speech)."<sup>35</sup>

## **6. 'Isa al-'Alawi**

'Isa b. 'Abd Allah al-'Alawi visited Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad to ask him about the Imam after him, saying: "If something happened—may Allah not make me see such a thing—who should I follow?"

He, peace be on him, pointed to his son Musa.

"If anything happened to Musa, who should I follow," asked 'Isa.

"His son," replied the Imam.

"If anything happened to his son," 'Isa went on, "and he left a big brother and a small son, who should I follow?"

"His son; it is always this," answered the Imam.

"If I do not recognize him and his place?"

"You say: O Allah, I follow the one from among Your proofs from among the children of the last Imam who has remained, for that is enough for you."<sup>36</sup>

## **7. Mu'adh Bin Kuthayr**

Mu'adh Bin Kuthayr<sup>37</sup> visited Imam al-Sadiq to ask him about the Imam whom he should follow after him, saying: "I ask Allah, Who provided your father with you for this position, to provide you with one of your offspring for the same position before your death."

"Allah has granted that," he answered.

"May I be your ransom, who is it?"

He pointed to his son Musa, who was sleeping, saying: "This one who is sleeping." He was at that time a boy. [38](#)

## **8. Mansur Bin Hayim**

Mansur Bin Hayim visited Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq) asking him to designate the Imam after him, saying: (May I ransom you) with my father and mother. There is a great coming and going among men about (the succession). Since that is so, who is it?" "This is your leader," replied Abu 'Abd Allah. He pointed to Abu al-Hasan Musa; then he tapped the right shoulder of Abu al-Hasan (Musa). He was at that time, as far as I know, about five years old.[39](#)

## **9. Sulayman Bin Khalid**

Sulayman Bin Khalid has narrated, saying: "I and a group of my companions were sitting with Imam Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq), peace be on him. He called for his son Musa. When he stopped in front of him, he turned to his companions, saying: 'It is your duty (to follow) this man after me. By Allah, he is your leader after me.'" [40](#)

## **10. Saffwan al-Jammal**

We have previously mentioned his narration we have given as a proof of the cleverness and genius of Imam Musa during his childhood.

## **11. Ishaq Bin Ja'far**

Ishaq b. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq has narrated the following, saying: "One day I was with my father when 'Umran b. 'Ali asked him: "May I be your ransom, to whom shall we and the people turn after you?" He answered: "To the owner of two yellow clothes. He who is coming out of the door to you." 'Ali was yearning for and looking at him who was coming out of the door. They did not wait long before Imam Musa came out of the door. He was still a boy and was wearing two yellow garments.[41](#)

## **12. 'Ali Bin Ja'far**

'Ali b. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, peace be on him, has narrated, saying: "I heard my father Ja'far b. Muhammad, peace be on him, say to a group of his close associates and followers: 'Treat my son Musa with kindness. He is the most meritorious of my children and the one who will succeed after me. He is the one who will undertake my position. He is Allah's proof (hujjat) to all his creatures after me.'" [42](#)

## **13. Zayd Bin Asbat**

Yazid b. Asbat visited Imam Abu 'Abd Allah al-Sadiq, peace be on him, during his illness of which he

passed away; the Imam turned to him, saying: "Yazid, do you see this (pointing to his son Musa)? When you see that the people differ over him, then bear witness for me that I have told you that Yousif's sin in his brothers' sight when they had thrown him into the well was that they envied him. That was when he told them that he had seen eleven stars and the sun and the moon making obeisance to him; similarly this boy shall be envied."

Then he called for his sons: 'Abd Allah, Ishaq, Muhammad, al-'Abbas, and Musa. He said to them: "This—pointing to his son Musa—is the testamentary trustee of the testamentary trustees, the scholar of the scholars, and a bearer of witness to the dead and the living."<sup>43</sup>

#### **14. Salama Bin Muhriz**

A hypocrite from among the 'Ajaliya has criticized the Shi'a for their belief stipulating that an Imam should be succeeded by an Imam. The hypocrite said that Imam al-Sadiq had no successor to replace him. He mentioned that in the presence of Salama b. Muhriz. When the latter heard the words of the former, he became displeased and went to the Imam, peace be on him to inform him about his words and to ask him to designate an Imam after him.

He said to him: "My master, a man from among the 'Ajaliya said to me: 'How long will this an old man remain (alive) for you? He will die within one or two years, and then you will have no Imam to follow.'" Abu 'Abd Allah al-Sadiq said to him: "Why have you not said to him that Musa b. Ja'far has attained the age of ritual puberty?"<sup>44</sup>

#### **15. Zarara Bin A'yun**

Zarara b. A'yun<sup>45</sup> has narrated, saying: "I visited Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq), peace be on him. There was with him the master of his children Abu al-Hasan Musa, and there was in his assembly a corpse covered with a garment. Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq), peace be on him, ordered me to bring him Dawud al-Raqqi, Hamran, and Abu Baseer.

I went out to bring them and came across al-Mufaddal b. 'Amr, who was heading for the Imam. (Meanwhile) I saw the people going to the house of the Imam. I quickly went and brought the people to him. When they had the honor of meeting him, he, peace be on him, turned to Dawud al-Raqqi and said to him: 'Uncover Isma'il's face.' He uncovered his face and he was a motionless corpse. He, peace be on him, asked Dawud al-Raqqi: 'Dawud, is he alive or dead?'

"My master, he is dead."

He showed him to all those who attended his assembly to make them bear witness to his death; he asked them to acknowledge and admit his death. He did that to refute the claims of some Shi'ites who maintained that Isma'il would be the Imam after his father, for he was righteous and abundantly knowledgeable. He, peace be on him, wanted to return them to reason and correctness and to tell them

that the Imam after him was his son Musa.

Then he ordered Isma'il to be prepared for burial. He was washed and shrouded. Then the Imam ordered al-Mufaddal b. 'Amr to uncover Isma'il's face again that the people might see him and be sure of his death and that they would have no doubt about that. After that he wanted to increase them in certainty and to remove doubt from them, so he turned to all his companions and asked them: "Is he alive or dead?"

They all confessed his death, so the Imam, peace be on him, raised his hands towards the heaven, saying: "O Allah, bear witness, for surely those who say untrue things will have doubt about him. They desire to put out the light of Allah—he pointed to his son Musa— with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, though the unbelievers may be averse.

Then the Imam ordered Isma'il to be buried in his final resting place. After he had laid him to rest in the narrow space within the grave and poured the earth over him, he turned to his companions to remove doubts and suspicions from them, asking: "Who is the one who is dead, shrouded, perfumed, and buried in the grave?"

"He is Isma'il," they all said.

"O Allah, bear witness!" Then he took his son by the hand and said: "He will be the truth; the truth will be with him and (issue) from him till Allah inherits the earth and those who are on it."[46](#)

Imam al-Sadiq confuted with these repeated declarations all those who had doubts and suspicions about the Imamate of his son Isma'il. More than one time He explained to them that the Imamate was not in his hand but it was in the hand of Allah, the Exalted, Who grants it for whom He pleases of His servants. Abu Baseer has narrated, saying: "I was with Abu 'Abd Allah (al-Sadiq), peace be on him.

His companions mentioned the testamentary trustee (of authority) and Isma'il. So the Imam turned to them and said: 'No, by Allah! Abu Muhammad that (the affair of the Imamate) does not belong to us; no one except Allah, may He be magnified and exalted, Who designates (the Imams) one by one."[47](#)

Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, declared that the affair of designating an Imam was not in his hand. However, it was in the hand of Allah, Who chooses from among his servants those who have good tendencies and noble talents. Accordingly, none has the right to choose the Imam; a special group of the Shi'ites knew this subject matter and believed in it.

In this respect Zareef b. Nafi[48](#) has narrated the following: "While I was (sitting) with al-Husayn b. Zayd and his son 'Ali, Abu al-Hasan Musa, peace be on him, passed by us. He greeted us and went away. I asked al-Husayn: 'May I be your ransom, Musa is known as the Qa'im of the household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family?'

"If someone knows him, then it is he." Then he said: "And how does (none) know him? And he has the

writing of 'Ali b. Abi Talib and the dictation of Allah's Apostle, May Allah bless him and his family."

His son asked him: "Why do my father Zayd b. 'Ali have not that?"

"My little son, surely 'Ali b. al-Husayn and Muhammad b. 'Ali are two masters and Imams of men. So, my little son, your father Zayd kept close to his brother, followed his example, and studied jurisprudence under him." "My father, if something happens to Musa, peace be on him, will he designate one of his brother as his testamentary trustee?" "No, by Allah, he will designate none as his testamentary trustee except his son."<sup>49</sup>

## **16. A Shi'ite**

A Shi'ite visited Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq and asked him to designate the Imam after him, and he, peace be on him, answered: "Your seven one is he who will undertake the office of the Imamate (Qa'im); he is the namesake of the owner of the Torah." By the owner of the Torah he means Musa b. 'Umran, peace be on him.<sup>50</sup>

## **17. A Companion of his**

One of his companions had the honor of meeting him and asked him to designate the Imam after him, and he, peace be on him, replied: "Count the days." He counted them beginning from Sunday. The Imam asked Him: "How many days have you counted?" "Seven days," he answered.

Imam al-Sadiq explained, saying: "The Saturday of the Saturdays, the Sun of the times, the Light of the months, the one who does not fool and play, your seven one who will undertake the office of the Imamate (Qa'im)." Then he pointed to his son Musa.<sup>51</sup>

With this narration we will end our speech about some texts have been reported on the authority of Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad, peace be on him, concerning the Imamate of his son Musa, peace be on him. They indicate that his Imamate is certain. As we have previously mentioned that the Imamate is the most important favor with which He singled out Ahl al-Bayt, for it includes all the elements of righteousness and perfection. We will mention his other ideals that uncover the secrets of his Imamate as follows.

## **His Scientific Talents**

Imam Musa, peace be on him, was the most knowledgeable of the people of his time in all rational and traditional sciences; his knowledge was divine and not acquisitive just like that of the prophets and the testamentary trustees of authority and not like that of men. The Shi'ite theologians have given a torrent of reliable proofs of that.

Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad al-Sadiq has borne witness to the abundant knowledge of his son Imam

Musa, peace be on him. Concerning him he has said to Isa: "If you ask this son of mine about what is between the two covers of the Qur'an, he will give you an answer to it with knowledge."

And he has said concerning him: "He has the knowledge of wisdom, understanding, and generosity, knowledge of that which men need and of the affairs of their religion over which they differ."

The sufficient evidence for his abundant knowledge is that the religious scholars have narrated from him all kinds of the sciences of the religion and other than them, to the extent that they have filled books with them, and written many books to the extent that they have called him the Scholar (al-'Aalim).

Al-Shaykh al-Mufeed has said: "The people have reported traditions on the authority of Abu al-Hasan Musa, and they have become very numerous; he was the most knowledgeable in the law during his time."<sup>52</sup>

## His Worship and Fear of Allah

Imam Musa grew up in the house of sacredness and piety, in the institute of worship and obedience (to Allah), as well as he inherited from his forefathers the love for Allah, faith in Him, and loyalty to Him. For they had sacrificed their souls in His way, done their best to spread his religion and to put an end to polytheism and misguidance.

So Ahl al-Bayt were the foundation of fear of Allah, the origin of faith and thought; were it not for them, no worshiper would worship Allah, no monotheist would profess His Unity, no religious duty would be performed, no Sunna would be established, and no Islamic law would be permissible.

Imam Musa, peace be on him, saw all kinds of fear of Allah standing in his house. For example, his father Imam al-Sadiq, peace be on him, had, as Malik says, three qualities: "He was either fasting or praying or mentioning (Allah); he fed the poor and clothed the naked to the extent that he had left nothing of food and clothes to his family."<sup>53</sup> He generously spent all that in the way of Allah and in order to seek nearness to him.

Imam Musa saw his father do that, and he acquired it and it became one of the elements of his self and of his personality. The historians have said that he was the most worshipful of the people of his time<sup>54</sup> to the extent that he was given the nickname of al-'Abd al-Salih (the pious worshipper) and of Zayn al-Mujtahideen (the ornament of those who spent night in prayer).

That is because no man has ever seen someone equal to him in worship and obedience to Allah. We will give some examples of his obedience and worship as follows:

### His Prayers

The most beautiful and valuable hour to Imam Musa, peace be on him, was that when he was alone with Allah, may His name be exalted. He devoted himself to Him with all his feelings and sentiments. The

narrators have mentioned that when he stood before Allah, the Most High, to perform the ritual prayers or to say a whispered prayer or to supplicate, he wept so much, his heart beat and became disordered out of fear of Allah.

He spent most his time in performing prayers; he used to pray supererogatory prayers throughout the night so that he would make them extend until the morning-prayer, then continue them until the sun rose. He would remain prostrating himself before Allah without raising his head from prayer and praising Allah until the sun came near to descending (from its midday zenith)[55](#)

One of the aspects of his obedience to Allah is that he entered the Mosque of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, at the beginning of the night and prostrated himself before Allah for a long time and said sincere words out of fear of Him:

"The sin is great with You! Therefore let forgiveness seem good to You, O Worthy to be fear and Worthy to forgive!" He repeated these words with turning to Allah in repentance, submission, and weeping till morning.[56](#)

When the tyrant of his time, king Harun al-Rashid, threw him into the dark cells of prisons, he devoted himself to obedience and worship to the extent that he with that dazzled and perplexed the intellects. He thanked Allah for giving him free time to worship Him, saying: "O Allah, you know that I used to ask You to give me free time to worship You. O Allah, You have done that. To You be praise."[57](#)

The Imam set a record in worshipping, for none was like him in obeying Allah and devoting himself to Him; his soul adored Allah and deep faith in Him took root in his heart.

Al-Shaybani[58](#) has talked about Imam Musa's too much worship, saying:

"In some tens of years Abu al-Hasan Musa, peace be on him, would perform a sajjda after the whiteness of the sun until its coming near to descending (from its midday zenith). His opponent Harun al-Rashid acknowledged that he was the ideal of turning to Allah in repentance and faith; that was when he kept him in the prison of al-Rabi'.[59](#)

He looked from the top of the palace and saw a garment thrown in a special place of the house and did not change its place. He would be astonished at that and ask al-Rabi': 'What is that the garment I see at that place every day?'

"Commander of the faithful, that is not a garment; that is Musa b. Ja'far; every day he performs a sajjda after the sunrise to its coming near to descending (from its midday zenith)," replied al-Rabi'.

So Harun was dazzled and showed his admiration toward Imam Musa, saying: "Surely he is among the Hashimite monks."

Having heard Harun acknowledging the Imam's asceticism and renouncing the world, al-Rabi' turned to

him and asked him to release the Imam and not to harass him, saying: "Commander of the faithful, why have you harassed him in prison."

Harun replied him with an answer void of mercy and piety, saying: "How far! There is no escape from that!"[60](#)

Surely Harun knew the achievements and asceticism of the Imam, but he was blinded by his craving after the world and his loving the kingdom, and so he exerted pressure on him. We will fully explain that when we speak about the heavy misfortunes and black ordeals the Imam met from Harun.

When the Imam was imprisoned in her brother's house, al-Sind b. Shahik's sister has narrated the following on his worship, saying: "Surely when he had performed the evening prayer, he praised Allah, gloried Him, until midnight. Then he rose and performed prayers until morning, so he performed the morning prayer. Then he praised Allah until the sun rose.

Then he sat down until forenoon. Then he slept and woke before the sun came near to descending (from its midday zenith). Then he performed the ritual ablution and performed prayers until he performed the afternoon prayer; then he praised Allah until he performed the sunset prayer; then he performed a prayer between the sunset and the evening prayers; so this was his behavior till he died."[61](#)

These examples indicate that the Imam was very fond of worship and that he devoted himself to Allah. He was most times busy performing prayers; he prostrated himself in prayer so much that he had calluses like those of a camel; he had a boy and he ordered the boy to cut off those calluses from his forehead and nose; a poet has hinted at that, saying:

A callus became long out of his long sujud, so his forehead and his nose ulcerated.

He thought that his free time in prison was as his wish and as a favor for which he thanked Allah for a (long) time.[62](#)

## **His Fasting**

Imam Musa spent most days of his lifetime obeying Allah. He fasted by day and performed prayers by night, especially when he was imprisoned by Harun; he did not leave all kinds of the recommendable prayers such as fasting and the like; he thanked and praised Allah for giving him free time he spent worshipping Him.

## **His Performing the Hajj**

Imam Musa sincerely performed all the things Allah loved and recommended; among these things is that he performed the hajj on foot, while the high born camels were driven before him. He along with his brother 'Ali b. Ja'far and all his family performed the hajj four times.

'Ali b. Ja'far talked about the time when they covered their ways, saying: "The first journey lasted for twenty–six days; the second took twenty–five days; the third was twenty–four days; and the fourth lasted for twenty–one days."

He most times kept away from the road to the House of Allah and withdrew from the people, for his heart and mind had clung to Allah, the Most High. One time he, peace be on him, performed the hajj and none accompanied him. All those who have written the biography of the Imam have unanimously agreed that a story took place between him and Shaqeeq al–Balakhy.[63](#)

The story reads as follows:

Shaqeeq al–Balakhy went out to make the pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah (Mecca) in the year 149 A. H. or in the year 146 A. H. He stopped at al–Qadisiya. When he resided in the place, he began supervising the pilgrims and took care of their readiness (for the hajj).

While he was busy looking at the pilgrims, he saw, as he says, a handsome, brown, and thin young man wearing a woolen garment on his clothes sitting alone and withdrawing himself from the people far away from their affairs and from associating with them.

He (Shaqeeq al–Balakhy) thought that the young man belonged to Sufis and wanted to be a heavy burden on the pilgrims, for he had no provisions. Shaqeeq al–Balakhy decided to go to him to scold him that he might refrain from that in which he was and return to rightness. When he approached him, the young man gently said to him: "O Shaqeeq al–Balakhy, avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin."

He said no word more than these words. Then Shaqeeq al–Balakhy left him and went away. He was dazzled, remained perplexed in thinking and intellect: Who ordered the young man to utter his name and know his inner thoughts? He admired him very much and was assured that he was among the righteous servants of Allah.

He repented of his neglecting his affairs, so he decided to go to him in order to ask him for pardon and to forgive him his sin. He hurried to him but did not find him. When the caravans stopped at the Valley of Fudda, Shaqeeq al–Balakhy saw his companion praying, shaking with fear of Allah, and his tears flowing down his cheeks.

He kept silent until he finished his prayer. Before he asked him (for pardon), the young man had turned to him and said: "O Shaqeeq, recite: And most surely I am most Forgiving to him who repents and believes and does good, then continues to follow the right direction.

Then Shaqeeq left him and went away. He roamed in a current of suspicions and thoughts, then he began saying: "O Allah! How wonderful! He revealed twice what my soul had hidden! Surely he is among the righteous! He is one of the rightly–guided who turns to Allah in repentance!"

He reflected for a long time on his affairs. Anyway, the caravan walked and began covering the desert. When it arrived at al-Abwa', Shaqeeq went out to wander at it. Suddenly he saw the young man. He hurried to him. He found him standing by a well to take some water with a coffeepot. The coffeepot fell into the well and the young man glanced at the heaven; he addressed Allah with submission and faith, saying:

"You are my drink of water when I become thirsty and my food when I desire food!

"My Lord! My Master! I have none except You! Therefore do not deprive me of it!"

He said no word more than these words and suddenly the water began rising to the top of the well; the coffeepot was floating on it. He stretched out his hand and took it; then he made the ritual ablution out of it. He performed four ruk'as and then he bent down a sand hill. He took a handful of sand and put it into the coffeepot. He stirred it and drank some of it. Shaqeeq greeted him and said: "Give me some of the food with which Allah has provided you!"

"Shaqeeq, Allah still bestows upon me outwardly and inwardly," explained the Imam, "therefore you must have good opinion of your Lord." Then he gave the coffeepot to Shaqeeq and he drank out of it and found in it fine flour and sugar. Shaqeeq said that he never drank something more delicious than it.

He lasted for some days and he had no appetite for food and drink. Then he left him and went away. He did not meet him in any place except in Mecca. He found him beside Qubat al-Shirab in the dark night standing and performing prayers with humbleness, moaning, and weeping.

He continued performing that till the light of dawn appear; then he rose and went to Hashiyat al-Mataf and performed the two ruk'as of the dawn. Then he performed the morning prayer with the people; then he went to the House (the Kaaba) and circumambulated it after the sunshine; then he went out of the House and Shaqeeq followed him in order to greet him and to have the honor of meeting him.

He found that the retainers and the followers had surrounded him. He admired that situation and hurried to ask those around him about the owner of that situation, and it was said to him: "This is Musa al-Kazim." Accordingly, Shaqeeq was sure that the Imam was worthy of such a miracle on which [64](#) a poet has composed a poem, saying:

*Ask Shaqeeq al-Balakhi about what he has seen of him.*

*He said: When I performed the hajj, a pale, thin, brown person.*

*He was alone and had no provisions. I was always thinking of him.*

*I imagined that he would beg the people; I did not know that he would perform the major hajj.*

*When we stopped at (al-Abwa), I saw him on the red sand him.*

*He was putting sand into the coffeepot. I called him out and my intellect was perplexed.*

*Give me a drink. When he gave the drink, I saw that it was fine flour and sugar.*

*I asked the pilgrims who was it? It was said: "This is Musa b. Ja'far."[65](#)*

The story of Shaqeeq shows some of the Imam's miracles and that he was endowed with faith and knowledge of what souls hidden.

## **His Reciting the Qur'an**

The Holy Qur'an was the comrade of the Imam during his privacy and his companion during his loneliness. He recited it with scrutiny and reflection. He was the best of the people in reciting it. When he recited it, the listeners became sad and wept.[66](#)

Hafs has talked about his reciting the Qur'an, saying: "His reciting (the Qur'an) was sadness. He recited it as if that he addressed a person."[67](#) In this manner, he recited the verses of the Holy Qur'an. He carefully considered its teachings and moral rules; he reflected on its commands, its prohibitions, and its precepts.

## **E. His Weeping out of Fear of Allah**

Imam Musa, peace be on him, was the greatest of the people in fear of Allah; he was as afraid of Allah as his grandfather, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was. Concerning his fear of Allah, the narrators have said: "He used to weep so much out of fear of Allah that his beard would be wet with tears."[68](#)

## **F. His Releasing Slaves**

Yet another example of his obedience to Allah is that he, peace be on him, was merciful and kind to slaves, so he released a thousand slaves for Allah's sake, beseeching His good pleasure, and seeking nearness to Him.[69](#)

## **His Renouncing the World**

Imam Musa was on top of those who renounced the world and turned away from its ease and vanities. He headed for Allah and desired the comfort and dignity He has prepared for him in the Abode of Everlastingness. Ibraheem b. 'Abd al-Hameed has related to us about his great asceticism, saying: "I visited him in his house where he used to pray. I saw nothing in the house except a basket, a hung sword, and a copy of the Qur'an."[70](#)

He led a simple life and lived in a simple house that was void of even the furniture the poor had; this indicates that he renounced the world and turned away from it. It is worth mentioning that enormous

funds were collected for him, legal rights sent to him by the Shi'ites in the Islamic world.

Besides he owned al-Basariya and other lands that yield him important funds, but he generously spent all those funds on the miserable and the deprived for Allah's sake and beseeching his good pleasure. He, peace be on him, always recited to his companions Abu Dharr's behavior, the great companion of the Prophet, and the model for self-negation, renouncing the world, and turning away from its pleasure.

He, peace be on him, said: "May Allah have mercy on Abu Dharr, who said: 'May Allah dispraise the world on my behalf after two barely loaves of bread. I eat one at lunch and the other at dinner, and after the two woolen cloaks; I use one as a loincloth and the other as a garment.'" [71](#)

In this manner he, peace be on him, put before his eyes the behavior of the immortal, great companions of the Prophets, may Allah bless him and his family. He praised their names, recited to his companions their brilliant behavior, that they might follow their example in the life in this world.

## His Generosity and Liberality

Imam Musa, peace be on him, is the highest example for man's perfection in his talents. Among the noble talents standing in him it is that he was generous and open-handed in giving. Undoubtedly, liberality indicates the goodness of soul if it is for good and kindness and not for other reasons such as show-off and reputation, for such an act is not of generosity; rather it opposes it in the full sense of the word.

Real generosity and actual liberality appeared in Imam Musa al-Kazim. He was cited as an example for generosity and kindness. For the miserable and the deprived resorted to him in order that he might save them from the abject poverty and the inferno of misery. The historians have unanimously agreed that he, peace be on him, spent on them all that which he had for Allah's sake.

He besought neither reward nor thankfulness from anybody; on the contrary he secretly sent his gifts to the poor lest the abasement of need should be seen on the face of the receiver. Through that he besought Allah's good pleasure, for this reason he went out in the dark night and sent his gifts to the weak class while they did not know who sent them such gifts.

He sent them purses containing money ranging from two hundred dinars to four hundred dinars; [72](#) his purses were proverbial, so his family said: "We wonder at him to whom Musa's purses come while he complains of paucity and poverty." [73](#)

He was so kind that when he heard that someone harmed or wronged him, he sent him a purse of one thousand dinars. [74](#) Generally speaking, the poor in Yethrib (Medina) lived on the Imam's secret gifts. The historians have mentioned a group of those upon whom the Imam lavishly spent; we will mention only the following:

## Muhammad al-Bakri

Some people in Yethrib (Medina) were in debt to Muhammad al-Bakri, so he went to them to ask them to repay the debts; he asked them for the repayment of the debts and insisted on that for a long time, but he took nothing of his debts. It came to his mind that he had to go to Imam Musa to have the honor of meeting him and to complain to him of need and poverty.

He went to him and he had been in one of his estates at Niqma. When he reached the place of the Imam, the Imam came out (to receive him); with the Imam was a servant carrying a basket in which there was some chopped-up meat. They all ate some of the meat. Then the Imam asked him what he wanted. So he told him his story.

The Imam, peace be on him, arose and entered the house. Then he came out and ordered his servant to go away lest he should see the asker and he felt abasement. He gave him a purse in which was three hundred dinars—perhaps it was more than his debts. Muhammad took it, thanked the Imam for it, invoked Allah for him, and went away.<sup>75</sup>

## 2. Black Servant

Imam Musa along with his servants and some of his children left Yethrib (Medina) for his estates at Saya; before reaching them, they had a rest in one of the neighboring places. It was very cold. While they were sitting, an eloquent black servant came out to them. The black servant was carrying on his head a boiling pot. He stopped in front of the Imam's servants and asked them:

Where is your master?

There he is. They indicated with their hands to Abu al-Hasan (Imam Musa).

What is his Kunya?

Abu al-Hasan.

He stopped in front of him, begging him and saying:

My master, I want to gift this porridge to you!

The Imam, peace be on him, accepted his gift and ordered him to give it to the servants. He gave it to them and went away. It was only a short time before he came back carrying a bundle of wood. He stopped in front of the Imam and said to him:

My master, I want to gift this bundle of wood to you!

The Imam, peace be on him, accepted his gift and ordered him to fetch him a firebrand. He went for a short time and then came back carrying a firebrand. The Imam order his name and his master's one to

be written. He ordered a son of his to keep their names for the time of need. Then they went to their estates.

They remained there for some days and then they headed for the Sacred House of Allah (Mecca). The Imam, peace be on him, performed Omra therein. Having finished it, he ordered Saa'id to look for the black servant's master. He said to him: "When you come to know of his place, then inform me of it, that I may walk to him, for I hate to send for him while I am in need of him."

Saa'id went and looked for the man till he found him. He recognized him and understood that he was among those who believed in the Imamate. He greeted the man and he asked about the arrival of the Imam. Saa'id denied that. Then the man asked Saa'id about the reason for his coming.

He told him that he had traveled for some needs. The man was not satisfied with his answer. He thought that the Imam had come to Mecca. Saa'id said good-bye to him and returned to the Imam. The man followed him. Saa'id turned and saw the man walking behind him. He wanted to leave him but he could not. They both walked until they reached the Imam.

When they stopped in front of him, he, peace be on him, rebuked Saa'id for telling the man of his coming. Saa'id apologized to the Imam for that he had not told the man, and that it was he who willingly followed him. When the man sat down, the Imam turned to him and asked him:

Do you sell your servant so-and-so?

May I be your ransom, the servant, the estate, and all my possessions are yours!

As for the estate, I do not want to deprive you of it.

The man tried to convince the Imam to accept the estate, but he refused to accept it. Then the Imam bought the estate and the servant for a thousand dinars. Then he released the slave and gifted the estate to the man. He did that as kindness for kindness and good for good. Thanks to Imam Musa, Allah enriched the slave to the extent that his children became among the rich and the money changers in Mecca.[76](#)

### **3' Isa Bin Muhammad**

'Isa b. Muhammad al-Qurtubi has said: "I planted melons, cucumbers, and gourd in a place in al-Jawaniya (village) by a well called um 'Izam. When the blessing approached and the plants ripened, grasshoppers attacked them and ate them up. I paid a hundred and twenty dinars for sowing then and buying two camels. While I was sitting, I saw Imam Musa b. Ja'far walking towards me. He greeted me and said:

How are you?

It has become as black, barren land.

How much have you paid to sow your land?

A hundred and twenty dinars including the cost of two camels.

The Imam, peace be on him, turned to 'Arafa and ordered him: "Give to al-Mugheeth's son ('Isa) a hundred and fifty dinars."

Then he said to 'Isa: "Therefore, you have profited thirty dinars in addition to the two camels."[77](#)

#### **4. A Poor Man**

A poor man visited Imam Musa and begged him. The Imam, peace be on him, intended to test the poor man in order to give him some money as equal as his knowledge. He asked him:

If you were given to wish in this world, what would you wish?

I would wish that I would be provided with piety in my religion and that I would fulfill the rights of my brothers against me.

The Imam, peace be on him, approved his answer and ordered him to be given a thousand dinars.[78](#) History books are full of numerous examples of his kindness to the miserable he showered with his generosity and beneficence to the extent that he made them in no need of begging.

Yet another example of his generosity is that he gave a banquet on the occasion of one of his children. He gave food to all the people in Yethrib for three days. One of those who envied him criticized him for that, and he, peace be on him, said to him:

"Allah gave to Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, all the things He had given to His prophets and gave him things He did not give to them. He, the Most High, has said to Sulayman b. Dawud: This is Our free gift, therefore give freely or withhold, without reckoning[79](#).[80](#) He, peace be on him, said: "One of the things that bring about forgiveness is giving food."[81](#)

He, peace be on him, thought that property was insignificant except that it should be spend on satisfying the hungry and clothing the naked. He took this noble attribute from his forefathers, who were the models of generosity, liberality, and kindness.

#### **His Clemency**

Islam has taken great care of fixing clemency in the souls of Muslims and made it as a custom for them. Many traditions have been narrated from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and the Imams of guidance; the traditions urge Muslims to be clement. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his

family, has said:

"O Allah, enrich me with knowledge and adorn me with clemency." He, May Allah bless him and his family, has also said: "Allah does not strengthen (anyone) with ignorance, nor does He abase (anyone) with clemency." Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, has said: "The good is not that your possessions and your children are many, but the good is that your knowledge and your clemency are much." Imam Zayn al-'Abidin has said: "Surely I admire the man whose clemency sets him right during his anger." Imam al-Sadiq has said: "Clemency is a sufficient helper."[82](#)

This aspect was one of the most prominent qualities of Imam Musa, peace be on him. He was proverbial in his clemency and restraining his anger; he pardoned those who wronged him and forgave those who show enmity towards him. He not only did that but also he showed beneficence toward them and showered them with his favors in order that he might remove from their soul's evil and selfishness.

The historians have mentioned many examples of his examples. They have narrated that one of the grandsons of 'Umar b. al-Khattab wronged Imam Musa, cursed his grandfather Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. One of the Imam's followers intended to kill 'Umar's grandson, but the Imam prevented him from doing that. He decided to solve the problem in another way.

He asked some people about his place and they answered that he was planting at one of the outskirts of Medina. He, peace be on him, disguised, mounted his mule and went away. He found him on his farm and went towards him. Al-'Umary ('Umar's grandson) shouted at the Imam, saying: "Do not walk on my plants!"

The Imam paid no attention, for he found no other way to follow it. When he reached him, he sat beside him, treated him with kindness, said to him good words and asked him with gentleness and leniency:

- How much have you paid to sow your land?
- One hundred dinars.
- How much do you hope to acquire from it?
- I do not know the unknown.
- I only asked you about what you hope it would bring you.
- I hope that it will bring me two hundred dinars.

The Imam, peace be on him, gave him three hundred dinars and said to him: "This three hundred dinars is for you and your plants are as they are." Al-'Umary changed and was ashamed of himself out of what he had neglected concerning the right of the Imam.

The Imam, peace be on him, said good-bye to him and went to the Mosque of the Prophet. He found al-

'Umary was sitting there. When he saw the Imam walking towards him, stood up for him and called out: "Allah knows best where to put his (prophetic) mission."

His companions jumped (in surprise) towards him criticizing him for this change in his attitude towards the Imam. He disputed with them and recited to them the achievements and noble deeds of the Imam and invoked Allah for him. So the Imam, peace be on him, turned to his companions and said to them: "Which was better—what you wanted or what I wanted? I have put right his attitude to the extent you have now become acquainted with."[83](#)

The Imam treated with kindness his opponents and all those who harbored malice against him. He put before his eyes these words of Him, the Exalted: Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! He between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend.

In this manner he gave to his companions a wonderful lesson on how should they advise and guide men. He explained to them that the summons and propagation to Islam should be based on the exalted truth, depend on good-heartedness and clemency.

Yet another example of his clemency is that he, peace be on him, passed by a group of those who envied him and showed hostility towards him. Among them was Fuhaym b. Hayyajj. He ordered one of his followers to cling to the bride of the Imam's mule and to claim that it was belonged to him.

The man went towards the Imam and clung to the bride of his mule and claimed that it belonged to him. The Imam came to know of his purpose. He dismounted his mule and gave it to him.[84](#) In this manner he, peace be on him, gave to mankind a typical example of exalted clemency.

He, peace be on him, advised his children to have this excellent attribute and to pardon him who wronged them. He brought them all together and advised them to have that, saying: "My children, I advise you to (follow these) commandments:

Whoever memorizes them avails himself of them. When a comer comes to you and makes you hear detested things in your right ears and then he goes to your left ears and apologizes to and said: 'I have said nothing.' Then accept his apology."[85](#)

These commandments make us understand that the Imam had great clemency and great morals from which many social advantages result. For accepting a wrongdoer's apology and refusing to return like for like are among the most important means leading to friendship, love, unity, and removing hatred from the hearts of men.

## [His Directions](#)

To direct and guide men to correctness is among the most reformative affairs of which the Imam took care, for he played an important role in saving a group of those the world drowned and swept away with

its trends. Thanks to his teachings and preaching to them, they abandoned error and misguidance and became notables.

In this respect the historians have mentioned many examples of directions; they have narrated his story with Bishir al-Hafi, who drank wine, spent his nights and days in impudence and prostitution. The Imam passed by Bishir's house in Baghdad. He heard the singers singing and the flutes were loudly being played.

Meanwhile he saw a slave girl coming out of his house carrying some sweepings and throwing them in the street. He turned to the slave girl and asked her: "Slave girl, is the owner of this house free or servant?"

"He is free," she replied.

"You are right," retorted the, "if he was servant, he would fear his Lord."

The slave girl came into the house while Bishir was at the wine table, so he asked her: "What delayed you?" She gave him an account of what took place between her and the Imam. Accordingly, Bishir quickly went out to catch up with the Imam. He repented at his hands, apologized to him and wept.<sup>86</sup>

After that he educated himself and clung to Allah out of knowledge and faith to the extent that he surpassed the people of his time in piety and asceticism. Concerning him Ibraheem al-Harbi has said: "Baghdad did not graduate anyone more perfect in intellect and greater in preserving the tongue than Bishir b. al-Harith. He had an intellect in each of his hair."<sup>87</sup>

Bishir turned away from the adornments of the life in this world and was satisfied with contentment concerning which he has said: "If contentment has nothing except enjoying the glory of sufficiency that will be sufficient." And he began to recite:

Contentment has brought me a perfect glory, and there is no glory more glorious than contentment.

Take it as a capital for yourself and make it as a commodity after piety, and you win two states: You are in no need of the miserly and are happy in the gardens through patience for an hour.

Bishir complained of the people of his time and hated to mix with them; that is because of the paucity of the believers and the good, and because the wicked and the errant were many. For this reason he decided to refrain from associating with many people, to the extent that al-Ma'mun asked Ahmed b. Hanbel to ask Bishir to permit him to visit him, but he refused and did not respond to him. <sup>88</sup>

Among his poems on his complaining of the people of his time is the following:

The men whose deeds are hoped and who forbid all evil deeds have passed away.

And I have remained among the successors who adorn each other, that an ugly-conducted person man

defend an ugly-conducted on.[89](#)

He got rid of the world and devoted himself to Allah to the extent that he became among the leading knowers; all that was due to the instructions and preaching of the Imam to him.[90](#)

Another example of those whom Imam Musa guided to the right way is al-Hasan b. 'Abd Allah, who was a remarkable personality with the kings renouncing the world, enjoying the good, forbidding the evil, and fearing no censure of any censurer in respect with Allah. He met with the Imam, peace be on him, and he said to him:

Abu 'Ali, I approve your behavior and am pleased with it, but you have no knowledge; therefore seek knowledge.

What kind of knowledge (do you mean)?

Study the science of Islamic jurisprudence and seek hadith.

The man (al-Hasan b. 'Abd Allah) went and wrote down the hadith on the authority of Malik and the jurists of Medina. Then he showed them to the Imam, peace be on him, and he did not accept them and directed him to the jurisprudence of Ahl al-Bayt, to take the religious precepts from them, and to adopt their Imamate. The man (al-Hasan b. 'Abd Allah) yield to that and became guided.[91](#)

Imam Musa, peace be on him, urged the people to perform good deeds. He guided them to righteous acts and warned them against the meeting with Allah and the Day of Judgment. He heard a man wishing death, and he asked him:

- Is there any relationship between you and Allah that He may side with you?

- No.

- Therefore, you invoke the everlasting destruction.[92](#)

The Imam took care of guiding the Muslims to fear of Allah and good deeds. We will mention his excellent commandments and valuable teachings when we deal with his scientific and literary legacy.

## **His Kindness to Men**

Imam Musa was loyal to the Muslims and kind to them. He granted the need of all those who came to him and they left him while they were happy and tranquil. He, peace be on him, thought that making people happy and granting their needs were among the most important good deeds; for this reason he did not fail short of responding to the distressed and raising oppression from the oppressed.

He permitted 'Ali b. Yaqteen to take part in the government of Harun al-Rashid and regarded (the

atonement for working with the ruler) as a justification for him. So some destroyed people resorted to the Imam, and he removed their pain and filled their hearts with hope and mercy.

Among those whom the Imam, peace be on him, helped was a Persian person against whom were enormous funds for the government of al-Ray (Persia) and he was unable to repay them and he feared that he would be deprived of his possessions. He reflected for a long time on what he would do.

He asked the people about the governor of al-Ray, and they told him that he was a Shi'ite; so he intended to seek the help of Imam Musa. He traveled to Yethrib (Medina). When he reached it, he had the honor of meeting the Imam. He complained to him of his critical condition. The Imam supplied him with a letter to the governor of al-Ray. The letter reads as follows:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Know that there is a shade under the throne of Allah; none resides in the shade except him who does his brother a favor or dispels his worries or delight him. This is your brother.

Greetings.”

The man took the letter and went away. After he had performed the hajj, he went to his homeland. When he arrived in it, he went to the governor at night. He knocked on the door of his house, and his servant came out and asked him:

Who are you?

The messenger of Musa, the steadfast.

The servant hurried to his master and told him of that, and he came out bare-footed. He received him, embraced him, and kissed him on the forehead. He repeated that many times and with yearning asked him about the Imam. The (Persian) person handed the letter to the government, and he arose for the letter and kissed it. When he read it, he ordered his servant to bring his money and his clothes. He gave to the person a half of them and said to him:

Brother, are you pleased?

Yes, by Allah, and you have increased that!

Then the governor called for the record and ordered his debts to be canceled and freed him from them. The man went out while his heart was full of happiness and delight. He intended to reward the governor for his kindness and favor. He decided to go to the Sacred House of Allah (Mecca), to invoke Allah for him, and to tell the Imam about his kindness and favor.

When the season of the hajj came, he went to Mecca. Then he headed for Yethrib. He met the Imam and told him about the kindness and favor of the governor, and he, peace be on him, was very pleased

with that. The man asked the Imam:

My master, are you pleased with that?

Yes, by Allah, it has delighted me. By Allah, it has delighted Allah, the Most High, my grandfather, Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and the Commander of the faithful (Imam 'Ali).

This indicates that the Imam took great care of the affairs of the Muslims, and that he had great wish for granting the needs of men. With this example we will end our talk about the ideal attributes of Imam Musa.

1. Al-Siyasa al-Shar'iya, pp. 172–173.
2. Al-Milal wa al-Ahwa', vol. 4, 87.
3. The tradition has been narrated by Muslim and al-Kisa'i.
4. Al-Muqaddama, p. 151.
5. Al-Bukhari, vol. 9, 62. Muslim, vol. 12, 213.
6. Al-Turmidhi, Sahih, vol. 6, p. 73.
7. Ma'athir al-Anafa fi Ma'lim al-Khilafa, vol. 1, p. 59.
8. Dawlat al-Qur'an, p. 82.
9. Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniya, p. 4. Al-Muqaddama, p. 135.
10. We have fully explained the meaning of the verse in the first volume of the book Hayat al-Imam al-Hasan, pp. 69–74.
11. Al-Islam, pp. 283–285.
12. 'Aqa'id al-Imamiya, pp. 51–54.
13. Asl al-Shi'a wa Usoolaha, p. 103, al-'Urfan edition.
14. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 13, p. 127.
15. 'Uyoon Akhbar al-Ridha', vol. 1, pp. 216–222. Usool al-Kafi.
16. Kanz al-'Ummal vol. 6, p. 392.
17. Ibid. p. 154.
18. Hulyat al-Awliya', vol. 1, p. 63.
19. Kanz al-'Ummal vol. 6, p. 153. Majjma', vol. 8, p. 353.
20. Al-Riyad al-Nadira, vol. 2, p. 178.
21. Ibid. In al-Manawi's Kunuz al-Haqa'iq, p. 121, it has been mentioned that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, has said: "Every prophet had a testamentary trustee and an inheritor. And 'Ali is my testamentary trustee and inheritor."
22. Al-Ithaf Bihub al-Ashraf, vol. 129. Nezhat al-Mejalis, vol. 2, p. 184.
23. Minhajj al-Sunna, vol. 4, p. 210.
24. Al-Muraja't, p. 228.
25. Saheeh Muslim, Kitab al-Imara. Musnad al-Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal, vol. 5, p. 89. Saheeh al-Bukhari, vol. 4, p. 164.
26. Al-Muraja't, p. 227.
27. Hulyat al-Awliya', vol. 1, 86.
28. Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 151. Usool al-Kafi.
29. We will mention his biography when we talk about some of the Imam's narrators and companions.
30. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 234. Al-Irshad.
31. His biography will come.
32. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 234.
33. Ibid.
34. Usool al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 309, vol. 11, p. 234.
35. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, 235.

- [36.](#) Usool al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 309. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 235.
- [37.](#) Mu'adh Bin Kuthayr al-Kisa'i was among the special group of Imam Abu 'Abd Allah. He is among the jurists and great figures of the Shi'ite sect. This has been mentioned in al-Ta'liqat, p. 335.
- [38.](#) Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 244. Usool al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 308. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 235. Al-Irshad, p. 264.
- [39.](#) Usool al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 309.
- [40.](#) Al-Irshad, p. 265. Usool al-Kafi, vol. 1, p.310.
- [41.](#) Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 244. Al-Irshad, p. 265. Bihar al-Anwar.
- [42.](#) Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 244. Al-Irshad, p. 266.
- [43.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 236.
- [44.](#) Ibid. p. 237.
- [45.](#) Zarara b. A'yun al-Shaybani was among the leading Shi'ites and on top of their religious scholars in jurisprudence, tradition, and theology, as Ibn al-Nadeem said. Imam Abu 'Abd Allah was so proud of him that he appointed him as a jurist to give religious decisions to the Shi'ites. He said to al-Fayd b. al-Mukhtar: "If you want a tradition, take it from this sitting one." He indicated to Zarara with his hand. He, peace be on him, said: "Were it not for Zarara and the like of him, my father's traditions would come to an end."

Zarara narrated many traditions on the jurist of Ahl al-Bayt. All what he narrated were correct and acceptable. As he had close relationship with Ahl al-Bayt, his opponents criticized him. They accused him of many accusations and criticism. However, they did not degrade his position and his dignity. For all the people know that Zarara served knowledge and religion. He, May Allah have mercy on him, died in the year 150 A. H. See his biography in Al-Keshi, al-Najashi, al-Fihrast, al-Ta'liqat, Lisan al-Mizan, and the like.

- [46.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 237.
- [47.](#) Ibid. p. 227.
- [48.](#) Zareef b. Nasih was a Kufan. He grew up in Baghdad. He is reliable in traditions. He wrote many books of which were al-Diyat, al-Hudud, al-Nawadir. This has been mentioned in the book al-Ta'liqat, p. 186.
- [49.](#) Zayd b. .Ali, p. 193. It has been quoted from the book Qurb al-Isnad, a handwritten book.
- [50.](#) Farid Wajjidi, Da.irat al-Ma.rif, vol. 9, p. 594. Al-Milal wa al-Nihal.
- [51.](#) Ibid.
- [52.](#) Al-Irshad, p. 272.
- [53.](#) Saffwat al-Safwa, vol. 2, p. 98.
- [54.](#) Jawhart al-Kalam, vol. 2, p. 98.
- [55.](#) Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 276
- [56.](#) Wafayat al-A'yan, vol. 4, p. 293. Kanz al-Lugha, p. 766
- [57.](#) Wafayat al-A'yan, vol. 4, p. 293. Al-Manaqib, vol. 2, p. 379.
- [58.](#) Al-Shaybani's name is Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. al-Hasan. He was the retainer of the Banu Shayban. He attended the assembly of Abu Hanifa for two years. He studied Islamic jurisprudence under Abu Yousif. He wrote many books. He spread the knowledge of Abu Hanifa. Al-Shafi'i has said: "I have took from the knowledge of Muhammad b. al-Husayn as equal as a camel's load." He has also said: "When someone asked (me) a question, I knew the hatred on his face except Muhammad b. al-Husayn." Al-Shaybani died in al-Ray in the year 187 A. H. He was then fifty-eight years old. This has been mentioned in the book Tabaqat al-Fuqaha'
- [59.](#) Al-Rabi' b. Yunus was the chamberlain of al-Mansur. Then he became his minister after Abu Ayyub. Al-Mansur inclined to him and depended on him very much.
- [60.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 298
- [61.](#) Abi al-Fida', Tarikh, vol. 2, p. 12.
- [62.](#) Al-Anwar al-Bahiyya, p. 93
- [63.](#) He was among the great worshippers and ascetics in the Islamic world. In the beginning, he was a doubter, and then he turned to Allah in a sincere repentance. He gave as alms his money amounted three hundred thousand dirhams. He also gave as alms his three hundred villages. When he died as a martyr at the Battle of Golan, he had no shroud. He wore

coarse woolen garments for twenty years.

He said: "I have put the Qur'an into practice for twenty years, to the extent that I have distinguished the world from the hereafter through one these words of Him, the Exalted: And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of this world's life and its adornment, and whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting. He died as a martyr at the Battle of Golan in the year 194 A. H.

[64.](#) Akhbar al-Duwal, p. 112. Jawharat al-Kalam, pp. 140–141.

[65.](#) Matalib al-Sa'ul, p. 84. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 55. Al-Manaqib.

[66.](#) Al-Manaqib, vol. 2, p. 379.

[67.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 265.

[68.](#) Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 247.

[69.](#) Yousif b. Hatam al-Shami, al-Durr al-Nazim. It is a precious handwritten book available in the Library of al-Hakim.

[70.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 265.

[71.](#) Usool al-Kafi, vol. 2, p. 134.

[72.](#) Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 13, p. 28. Kanz al-Lugha, p. 766.

[73.](#) 'Umdat al-Talib, p. 185.

[74.](#) Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 13, p. 27.

[75.](#) Ibid. P. 28.

[76.](#) Ibid., pp. 29–30. Al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya, vol. 10, p. 183.

[77.](#) Ibid. p. 29. Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 243.

[78.](#) Al-Wasa'il, Chapter on al-Amr bi al-Ma'ruf.

[79.](#) Qur'an, Surat Saad, verse 39.

[80.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, Baab al-Wala'im.

[81.](#) Al-Wasa'il.

[82.](#) Al-Nizam al-Tarbawi fi al-Islam.

[83.](#) Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 13, pp. 28–29. Kashf al-Ghumma, p. 247.

[84.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 11, p. 277

[85.](#) Ibn al-Sabbagh, al-Fusool al-Muhimma, p. 220.

[86.](#) Al-Kuna wa al-Aqab, vol. 2, p. 150.

[87.](#) Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 7, p. 73.

[88.](#) Al-Kawakib al-Durriya, vol. 1, p. 208.

[89.](#) Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 7, p. 77.

[90.](#) Bishr died in Baghdad in the year 227. His grave is beside the Mesjid of al-Imam al-'Azam.

[91.](#) Al-Manaqib, vol. 3, p. 407, al-Najaf edition.

[92.](#) Al-Ithaf Bihub al-Ashraf, p. 55.

---

#### Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/life-imam-musa-bin-jafar-al-kazim-baqir-shareef-al-qurashi/chapter-4-his-i-deals#comment-0>