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Chapter 4: Spiritual And Moral Aspect

The spiritual and moral aspect is important in Islamic theory, because it is associated with the issues of feelings, emotions, and spiritual and moral senses. Coming after doctrine, ethics and culture, this aspect occupies the fourth rank in importance, since it is founded on the fact that man's behavior, which is the natural consequence of willpower and determination, directly acts upon this aspect, whereas the other three aspects represent the basis, background, and foundation on which these sentiments and feelings rely. They are also the starting point of these three aspects. Feelings, emotions and sentiments stand for the stirring energy that supplies human behavior with motion, activity, and agitation although such behavior is submissive to man's willpower and its cause.

By virtue of this, there is a balanced relationship between man's feelings and actions. Man's determination, steadfastness and willpower become stronger and more powerful when there is compatibility between these feelings and reasonable, ethical, and cultural foundations.

For this reason, the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) took much interest in the spiritual and moral aspect. They worked on directing it on the course that was compatible with both general goals of building a virtuous community and doctrinal, ethical, and cultural foundations.

We can observe the major lines that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) established to implant the spiritual and moral aspect in the virtuous community from their reported traditions and instructions for their followers and the treatment of issues. We can observe the major lines that the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) established to implant the spiritual and moral aspect in the virtuous community from their reported traditions and instructions for their followers and the treatment of issues.

Spirit of Piety and Combining Faith with Practice

The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) fed their followers with the spirit of piety and the combining of faith with practice through the following features:

First Feature: They worked towards enhancing the spirit of piety and establishing a firm connection with Almighty Allah through the following three major ways:

First Way: The Holy Imams (‘a) laid stress on and instructed the course of prayer, supplication, and confidential talk with Almighty Allah. Their great interest in supplication and their superb supplicatory prayers are numerous.

Their prayers and supplications cover all times and circumstances and take various forms, such as post-prayer supplications, supplications at each hour of the day and night, special supplications on special occasions and during religious seasons, such as supplications in the months of Ramadhan, Sha‘ban, Rajab, and Dhi‘l-Hijjah as well as occasions like feast days. There are also various prayers offered on special occasions. The supplicatory heritage of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) encompasses many books that are voluminous, well known, and common to all ages.

They have left for us extensive supplications that carry educational and cultural features. Some of these include:

Imam ‘Ali’s supplication reported by Kumayl ibn Ziyad al-Nakha‘i (known as *Du‘a’ Kumayl*)

Imam al-Husayn’s supplication on the Day of ‘Arafah (the ninth of Dhu‘l-Hijjah)

Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin’s supplication that is reported by Abu-Hamzah al-Thumali, the supplication known as *Du‘a’ al-Jawshan*

Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin’s supplications in *Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah*, and many more.

In addition to their previously noted cultural aspects, these supplications and prayers represent a great spiritual domain that builds in the inner selves of worshippers a connection with Him through piety and a combination of fear and hope in Him.

Second Way: The Holy Imams (‘a) entered upon the styles of written or specifically delivered bequests (*wasiyyah*) and excellent exhortation. As has also been mentioned, not only do such styles represent cultural and educational aspects but they also embody spiritual and moral trends.

Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq (‘a) has reported the following from his infallible fathers (‘a):

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

مَنْ لَمْ يُحْسِنِ الْوَصِيَّةَ عِنْدَ مَوْتِهِ كَانَ نَقْصاً فِي عَقْلِهِ وَمُرُوءَتِهِ.

Whoever fails to write his will before his death lacks reason and manliness.

He (S) was asked, “How should writing of one’s will be, Allah’s Messenger?”

He (S) instructed:

إِذَا حَضَرَتْهُ الْوَفَاةُ وَاجْتَمَعَ النَّاسُ إِلَيْهِ قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، عَالِمَ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ؛
إِنِّي أَعْهَدُ إِلَيْكَ أَنِّي أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ وَحْدَكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُولُكَ، وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ
فِيهَا، وَأَنَّكَ تَبَعْتُ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ، وَأَنَّ الْحِسَابَ حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حَقٌّ، وَمَا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ فِيهَا مِنَ النَّعِيمِ وَمِنَ الْمَأْكَلِ
وَالْمَشْرَبِ وَالنِّكَاحِ حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ النَّارَ حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ الْإِيمَانَ حَقٌّ، وَأَنَّ الدِّينَ كَمَا وَصَفْتَ، وَأَنَّ الْإِسْلَامَ كَمَا شَرَعْتَ، وَأَنَّ
الْقَوْلَ كَمَا قُلْتَ، وَأَنَّ الْقُرْآنَ كَمَا أَنْزَلْتَ، وَأَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ. وَإِنِّي أَعْهَدُ إِلَيْكَ فِي دَارِ الدُّنْيَا أَنِّي رَضِيتُ بِكَ
رَبًّا وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ نَبِيًّا وَبِعَلِيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِمَامًا، وَبِالْقُرْآنِ كِتَابًا، وَأَنَّ أَهْلَ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّكَ
عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ أُمَّتِي. اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ تَقْتِي عِنْدَ شِدَّتِي، وَرَجَائِي عِنْدَ كُرْبَتِي، وَعِدَّتِي عِنْدَ الْأُمُورِ الَّتِي تَنْزِلُ بِي، وَأَنْتَ
وَلِيِّي فِي نِعْمَتِي، وَالْهَيُّ وَالْأَبَائِي، صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَلَا تَكْلِنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ أَبَدًا، وَأَنْسَ فِي قَبْرِي
وَحَشْتِي وَاجْعَلْ لِي عِنْدَكَ عَهْدًا يَوْمَ أَلْفَاكَ مَنْشُورًا. فَهَذَا عَهْدُ الْمَيِّتِ يَوْمَ يُوصِي بِحَاجَتِهِ. وَالْوَصِيَّةُ حَقٌّ عَلَى كُلِّ
مُسْلِمٍ.

In the last hours of his life and when people gather around him, he must say: “O Allah! O Designer of the heavens and the earth! O Knower of the unseen and seen! O Most Beneficent! O Most Merciful! I confide in You that I bear witness that there is no god save You alone, without Your having any associate. I bear witness that Muhammad (S) is Your servant and messenger and that the Hour shall undoubtedly come. You shall raise the dead from their graves, and the Questioning will take place. Paradise is true, and that which You have promised to be therein—such as bliss, eating, drinking and marriage—is true. Hellfire is true, and Faith is true, and the (true) religion is as exactly as You have described, and Islam is exactly as You have established, and all that which You have said is exactly the truth, and the Qur’an is as exactly as what You have revealed, and You are verily Allah, the Manifest Truth. I also confide in You in this world that I submit to You being my Lord, Islam being my religion, Muhammad being my Prophet, ‘Ali being my Imam, the Qur’an being my Book, Your Prophet’s Household—peace be upon him and them—being my Imams. O Allah, in You I trust at the time of tribulation. You are my only provision when misfortunes befall me, You are my patron in blessings, and You are my God and the God of my ancestors. So send blessings upon Muhammad and his Household and do not make me depend on my own self even for the twinkling of an eye. Please, entertain me in my grave and my loneliness and keep my confidence in You active for the day on which I shall meet You.”

This is the covenant of the moribund when he makes his will, which is obligatory upon each Muslim individual.”¹

Third Way: The Holy Imams (‘a) worked towards connecting faith with deed. In addition to its doctrinal contribution to understanding the reality of faith and unbelief, this course carries a spiritual and moral aspect that builds the spirit of piety and connection with Almighty Allah. As a rule, faith is not realized unless it is connected with deed, behavior, and commitment.

Shortly in this book, I will cite many traditions confirming that true Shi’ah are those who represent actual piety, diligence, and steadfastness in tribulations and ordeals and are forerunners in worship and

asceticism. Shortly in this book, I will cite many traditions confirming that true Shi'ah are those who represent actual piety, diligence, and steadfastness in tribulations and ordeals and are forerunners in worship and asceticism.

Real Supporters of the Truth

Second Feature: The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) worked towards creating an emotional and sentimental connection with the virtuous community. They laid emphasis on affiliation with the virtuous entity by:

- (1) Ingraining genuineness and reality in their followers
- (2) Providing them with profound historical roots
- (3) Securing their belief in the Ahl al-Bayt's school to the highest levels
- (4) Promoting as righteous the creed in which a righteous individual believes by means of standards, proofs and logical evidence so that belief evolves from mere reason-based states to spiritual, psychological and emotional commitments to faith. Such evolution depends on testifying that:
 - (a) Their doctrines are the true and genuine doctrines of Islam, utterly free from doubt and spuriousness
 - (b) Their community is the best of all communities and groups
 - (c) They are part of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) because they are the worthiest in loyalty and the nearest to them
 - (d) They are the only group that fulfils the Divine Covenant as it should be fulfilled
 - (e) Their love for and loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) are the things that shall benefit them on the Day of Resurrection
 - (f) They shall resort to the Holy Prophet (S) on the Day of Resurrection according to the glad tidings conveyed to them by the Holy Imams ('a)

More than one Imam has confirmed these facts to increase their followers' level of faith. From these confirmations, we conclude that the Holy Imams ('a) aimed to achieve a certain degree of emotional and sentimental momentum and deepen their followers' commitment to and confidence in the virtuous community.

Let us now refer to some examples so that the idea will be clearer:

1. 'Imran ibn Maytham has reported that Habbabah al-Walibiyah said to him, "I will tell you about a discourse that I have heard from your master, al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ('a). He said:

وَالَّذِي جَعَلَ أَحْمَسَ خَيْرَ بُجَيْلَةٍ، وَعَبْدَ الْقَيْسِ خَيْرَ رَبِيعَةٍ، وَهَمْدَانَ خَيْرَ الْيَمَنِ؛ إِنَّكُمْ خَيْرُ الْفِرَقِ. مَا عَلَى مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

إِلَّا نَحْنُ وَشِيعَتُنَا.

*I swear by Him Who has caused (the clan of) Ahmas to be the best of (the tribe of) Bujaylah, has caused 'Abd al-Qays to be the best of Rabi'ah, and has caused Hamdan to be the best of the Yemen, you are verily the best of sects. None is following the faith of (Prophet) Abraham ('a) except us and our Shi'ah (partisans).*²

2. 'Umar ibn Yazid has reported that Abu-'Abdullah (Imam al-Sadiq) ('a) once said:

أَنْتُمْ، وَاللَّهِ، مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ.

By Allah, I swear that you all are verily part of Muhammad's Household ('a).

I asked, "May Allah accept me as ransom for you! Do you mean that we are part of them?"

The Imam ('a) answered:

نَعَمْ، وَاللَّهِ، مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ.

Yes! I swear by Allah. You are part of Muhammad's Household ('a) itself.

He repeated it three times. He ('a) then gazed at me, I gazed at him and he said:

يَا عُمَرُ؛ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى يَقُولُ فِي كِتَابِهِ: "إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ"

*O 'Umar, Allah the Blessed and Exalted says in His Book: "Most surely, the nearest of people to Abraham ('a) are those who followed him and this Prophet (S) and those who believe and Allah is the guardian of the believers. (3:68)"*³

3. Abu-Dharr is reported to have said:

وَاللَّهِ، مَا صَدَقَ أَحَدٌ مِمَّنْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَهُ فَوَفَى بَعَهْدِ اللَّهِ غَيْرُ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّهِمْ وَعِصَابَةِ قَلِيلَةٍ مِنْ شِيعَتِهِمْ. وَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ "تَعَالَى: " وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لِأَكْثَرِهِمْ مِنْ عَهْدٍ ۗ وَإِنْ وَجَدْنَا أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَاسِقِينَ"

By Allah I swear, none of those with whom Almighty Allah made His covenant fulfilled this covenant except their Prophet's Household ('a) and a small group of their partisans. This is the meaning of Almighty Allah's saying (in the Holy Qur'an), "And We did not find in most of them any faithfulness

to the covenant, and We found most of them to be certainly transgressors. (7: 102)”⁴

4. Yunus ibn ‘Abd al–Rahman has reported Kulayb al–Asadi as saying that he heard Imam al–Sadiq (‘a) saying:

أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ، إِنَّكُمْ لَعَلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ. فَأَعِينُونَا عَلَى ذَلِكَ بِوَرَعٍ وَإِجْتِهَادٍ. عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالْعِبَادَةِ. عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْوَرَعِ

*By Allah, I swear positively, you are following the religion of Allah and of His angels. So, help us by means of piety and diligence. Abide by prayer and worship. Abide by piety.*⁵

5. Abu’l–Tufayl has reported that Imam ‘Ali Amir al–Mu’minin (‘a) once ascended the pulpit and said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ بِالنُّبُوَّةِ وَإِصْطَفَاهُ بِالرِّسَالَةِ، فَأَنَالَ فِي النَّاسِ وَأَنَالَ. وَعِنْدَنَا أَهْلُ الْبَيْتِ مَفَاتِيحُ الْعِلْمِ وَأَبْوَابُ الْحِكْمَةِ وَضِيَاءُ الْأَمْرِ وَفَصْلُ الْخُطَابِ. وَمَنْ يُحِبَّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ يَنْفَعُهُ إِيمَانُهُ وَيُتَقَبَّلُ مِنْهُ عَمَلُهُ. وَمَنْ لَا يُحِبَّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ لَا يَنْفَعُهُ إِيمَانُهُ وَلَا يُتَقَبَّلُ مِنْهُ عَمَلُهُ وَإِنْ أَدَّابَ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارَ لَمْ يَزَلْ

*Verily, Almighty Allah has sent Muhammad—peace be upon him and his Household—with prophethood and chosen him for conveying His Message. Therefore, he promulgated the religion for the people some of whom accepted and others rejected. We, the Ahl al–Bayt (‘a), hold the keys to knowledge, the doors to wisdom, the light of all affairs, and the most decisive speech. Whoever loves us—the Ahl al–Bayt (‘a)—will benefit from his faith and will have his deeds accepted, but whoever does not love us will not benefit from his faith and will not have his deeds accepted even if he works every day and night ceaselessly.*⁶

6. Burayd al–‘Ajali, Zurarah ibn A’yun, and Muhammad ibn Muslim—all these are authentic reporters who have said that Imam Muhammad al–Baqir (‘a) said to them:

مَا الَّذِي تَبْغُونَ؟ أَمَا لَوْ كَانَتْ فَرْعَةٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ لَفَرَعْتُ كُلُّ قَوْمٍ إِلَى مَا مَنِهْمُ، وَلَفَرَعْنَا إِلَى نَبِينَا وَفَرَعْتُمْ إِلَيْنَا. فَأَبْشِرُوا ثُمَّ أَبْشِرُوا ثُمَّ أَبْشِرُوا! لَا وَاللَّهِ، لَا يُسَوِّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَغَيْرِكُمْ، وَلَا كَرَامَةَ لَهُمْ

*What more are you seeking? If a horrible thing happens in the heavens and people resort to a place to protect them, we shall resort to our Prophet (S) and you shall resort to us. So, enjoy the glad tidings! Enjoy the glad tidings! Enjoy the glad tidings! By Allah I swear, He shall never treat you like others and they will have no dignity with Him.*⁷

Love for and Loyalty to the Ahl al–Bayt (‘a)

Third Feature: With regard to their relationship with the virtuous community, the Holy Imams (‘a) not only provided authentic proofs and valid demonstrations but also made use of emotions and feelings in

order to strengthen love and loyalty. They also connected it to many significant values and ideals on the one hand and relevance people's lives on the other.

As a result, love for the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) has played a major role in keeping their followers steadfast against the pressures and pains they had to encounter. They have even given up their lives and properties and faced all sorts of ordeals and pains for the sake of the love they had for the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

This sort of education, which was initially established by the Holy Qur'an, had a great impact not only on the Ahl al-Bayt's partisans and followers but also on Muslims in general. Consequently, the issue of love for the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) has become a standard by which a Muslim individual, sober in behavior and conduct, is distinguished from other Muslims pretending to follow Islam but lacking in human and Islamic feelings. Such individuals have been afflicted with hostility and malice towards the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

Love of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), in the capacity of their having been the Holy Prophet's kith and kin has been confirmed by the Holy Qur'an that reads:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (42:23)

This love for the "near relatives" has been also confirmed by authentically reported uninterrupted traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) in both meaning and words. Moreover, invoking Almighty Allah's blessings upon the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) is a part of the obligatory prayers so that love for them naturally has an impact on Muslims in general and becomes a common trend among them.

The merit, outcome, and reward of invocations of Divine blessings upon the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) will be discussed in further details in the coming book on Acts of Worship within this series.

Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i is well-known for composition of poetic verses proving the existence of this common trend among Muslims and referring to some political tendencies that opposed this trend for political and non-religious reasons.

Some of al-Shafi'i's poetic verses are as follows:

O Household of Allah's Messenger, love for you is a duty imposed by Allah and revealed in the Qur'an.

It is sufficient for you that he who does not send blessings upon you will have his prayers nullified.

He has also composed the following:

If love for Muhammad's Household ('a) is a protest (against religion), then let both men and jinn witness that I am protesting (rafidhi).[8](#)

Besides its great moral value, this love has cultural and political functions.

As for its cultural function, it has turned hearts towards true guidance, uprightness, and surrender to the culture and instructions of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

As for its political function, it defends the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and their followers and provides ample opportunity to believe in their Divinely ordained leadership and their efficacious role in the history of Islam.

For these reasons, the political enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) waged political campaigns against them and attempted to extinguish the torch of this love and loyalty and presented alternatives and other loyalties. They also attempted to debilitate this loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and fight the issue of love for them. In order to achieve these vicious goals these political enemies used fanaticism, antagonism and hatred as weapons, always ready to commit inhumane crimes against the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and their followers.

In fact, the issue of love and affection for the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) has always been clear at all levels, including authentic religious texts, historical facts, and practices in the ages of the Holy Prophet (S), the Companions (*Sahabah*), the Followers (*Tabi'un*) and the other righteous Muslims.

Hundreds of traditions that are reported from the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) have laid the foundation of this love and considered it to be a basic goal and a means of winning Almighty Allah's reward, pleasure, and forgiveness. In this regard, the Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said,

الإِسْلَامُ عُرْيَانٌ؛ فَلِبَاسُهُ الْحَيَاءُ، وَزِينَتُهُ الْوَقَارُ، وَمُرُوءَتُهُ الْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ، وَعِمَادُهُ الْوَرَعُ. وَلِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ أَسَاسٌ، وَأَسَاسُ
الإِسْلَامِ حُبُّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ.

Islam is naked. Modesty is its dress, faithfulness its adornment, good deeds its personality, and piety its pillar. Everything should have a basis. The basis of Islam is the love for us—the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).[9](#)

Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) is reported to have said,

عَلَيْكُمْ بِحُبِّ آلِ نَبِيِّكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ حَقُّ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَالْمُوجِبُ عَلَى اللَّهِ حَقِّكُمْ. أَلَا تَرَوْنَ إِلَى قَوْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى: " قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ
عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى

You are advised to love your Prophet's Household ('a). This is your duty towards Almighty Allah due to which He shall fulfill His promise to you. Have you not considered Almighty Allah's saying:

“Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives. (42:23)”¹⁰

Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq (‘a) has reported Imam ‘Ali (‘a) as saying:

ذَكَرْنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ شِفَاءً مِنَ الْوَعَكِ وَالْأَسْقَامِ وَوَسْوَاسِ الرَّيْبِ. وَحُبُّنَا رِضَا الرَّبِّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

To mention us, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), is the cure of apathy, disease, and suspicion. To love us is the pleasure of the Blessed and Exalted Lord. [11](#)

Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq (‘a) has also reported the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

أَنَا شَافِعٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لِأَرْبَعَةٍ أَصْنَافٍ وَلَوْ جَاؤُوا بِذُنُوبِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا: رَجُلٌ نَصَرَ ذُرِّيَّتِي، وَرَجُلٌ بَدَلَ مَالِهِ لِذُرِّيَّتِي عِنْدَ الضِّيْقِ، وَرَجُلٌ أَحَبَّ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِاللِّسَانِ وَالْقَلْبِ، وَرَجُلٌ سَعَى فِي حَوَائِجِ ذُرِّيَّتِي إِذَا طُرِدُوا أَوْ شَرِدُوا.

On the Day of Resurrection I will certainly intercede for these four categories of people, even if they are overburdened with the sins of the inhabitants of this world: (1) those who support my descendants, (2) those who spend their wealth for my descendants when they are in distress, (3) those who express love for my descendants through their speech and with their heart, and (4) those who exert efforts to satisfy the needs of my descendants when they are pursued and banished. [12](#)

Hannan ibn Sadir has reported Imam al-Baqir (‘a) as saying:

مَا ثَبَّتَ اللَّهُ حُبَّ عَلِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي قَلْبِ أَحَدٍ فَزَلَّتْ بِهِ قَدَمٌ إِلَّا ثَبَّتَتْ لَهُ قَدَمٌ أُخْرَى.

As for one in whose heart Almighty Allah fixes the love for ‘Ali (‘a), if one of his feet slips (from the Discriminating Bridge), the other foot will certainly be steady. [13](#)

Al-Fudhayl reported Imam al-Ridha (‘a) to have quoted Imam al-Baqir (‘a) as saying:

حُبُّنَا إِيمَانٌ وَبُغْضُنَا كُفْرٌ.

To love us is faith and to hate us is unbelief. [14](#)

Self-Sacrifice and Altruism

Fourth Feature: The Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) solidified in the souls of their followers the spirit of self-sacrifice, altruism, and readiness to give up worldly pleasures for the sake of faith and principles. They (‘a) also spread among them the spirit of struggle for the sake of principles and supreme goals.

In order to achieve these goals, the Holy Imams (‘a) used various means and exposed themselves to various tribulations. They (‘a) suffered all sorts of pain and ordeals patiently and sacrificed personal matters for the sake of achieving the public interests of Islam. They (‘a) were also ready to make any sacrifice required, including giving up their lives, the lives of their family members and companions. They (‘a) made their household subject to captivity and their wealth and prestige to usurpation and aggression for the sake of achieving these goals.

They (‘a) always became the targets of enemies’ assaults and conspiracies, struggling to save Islamic principles.

The issue of Imam al-Husayn’s martyrdom has thus become the climax and the most eminent symbol of self-sacrifice. The same thing can be applied to all the Holy Imams (‘a) who never desisted in giving up everything possible in all fields of life for the sake of safeguarding Islam.

The Holy Imams (‘a) trained their followers in the spirit of self-sacrifice and altruism demonstrated by Imam al-Husayn’s astounding tragedy in the history of Islam to make self-sacrifice manifest itself as a signpost indicating the path to the truth. It also revealed the injustice that befell the Holy Prophet’s Household (‘a) and unmasked the hideous face of the Umayyad dynasty. astounding tragedy in the history of Islam to make self-sacrifice manifest itself as a signpost indicating the path to the truth. It also revealed the injustice that befell the Holy Prophet’s Household (‘a) and unmasked the hideous face of the Umayyad dynasty.

Moral Features of Imam al-ḥusayn's (‘a) Uprising

In the previous discussions on the cultural aspects of building a virtuous community, I have dealt with the issue of Imam al-Husayn’s martyrdom from the cultural, ethical, and doctrinal viewpoints. Under this title, I will attempt to study the moral features of this uprising in a methodical way.

The following spiritual and moral features are found in Imam al-Husayn’s uprising:

Clash between Right and Wrong

The issue of Imam al-Husayn’s martyrdom is the clearest representation of the conflict between right and wrong and belief and disbelief with regard to the extreme deviations that eventually led to unbelief and vacated the Islamic concept of its actual components within the Muslim community. The issue also depicts the incontrovertible situation of the righteous party who were exposed to this great injustice, irresponsible behavior and disgrace because of their principled stand.

Imam al-Husayn’s situation and attitude to this clash is incontestable and agreed upon by all Muslims without exception despite the political and cultural efforts the Umayyad rulers and their followers exerted to disfigure the great uprising and paint the position of Yazid and the Umayyad ruling authorities with a color of religious legality.

Also, they made other attempts to keep the public silent and made them surrender to the unjust rulers and submit to their rule by presenting themselves as religiously legal authorities. This culture spread among the public after the ruling authorities despotically controlled and dominated the Islamic homeland. [15](#)

Hence, the issue of Imam al-Husayn's martyrdom has survived as a signpost which directs towards true guidance those who stray off and wander in the murk of distortion and deception and from which the strivers, revolutionists, and freedom fighters obtain accurate potential, power, and determination.

Moral Values

Imam al-Husayn's historic uprising and then martyrdom upholds all human and moral values. It therefore embodies a school of genuine Islamic teachings.

The secret of the endurance of this great uprising in influence and interaction lies in its tremendous moral content, which is compatible with basic human nature. The uprising of Imam al-Husayn ('a) embodied dignity, decorum, self-esteem, courage, altruism, kindness to everyone including enemies, steadfastness on principles, and endurance in misfortunes, pain, and difficulties.

It also demonstrated exertion of all possible efforts to guide and save the lives of the people as well as maintain an ideal relationship with one's relatives, friends, and followers and the leadership, the community, and other people of different nationalities. In fact, representatives of other peoples and nationalities stood by Imam al-Husayn ('a) and suffered part of his astounding tragedy.

When put into practice during times of tribulation and colored with blood and sacrifice, these values and ideals attain a special significance that is different in profundity, rank and level from all other values and ideals when raised as mere cultural slogans.

The Massive Dimension of Sacrifice

Imam al-Husayn's uprising is distinguished by its high rank and massive magnitude of sacrifice for the sake of Islam and the Muslim nation. Besides giving up his soul and wealth as well as the souls of his sons, brothers and companions, Imam al-Husayn ('a) sacrificed other family members and his women exposing them to the ordeal of captivity and aggression.

However, Almighty Allah protected them and saved them from the consequences and other tragic ramifications of captivity.

Moreover, Imam al-Husayn ('a) sacrificed himself and the group of virtuous, righteous, and honorable scholars and individuals who stood with him. Each one of these companions could have become a great school of knowledge and ethics or a prominent guide and instructor of the Muslim community.

When facing such perils in the conflict against unbelief and deviation, one might hang back or choose to

keep silent and surrender because the conflict would require a massive amount of sacrifice. Throughout history, many people who had good intentions, sound ideas, and clear prospects stopped, developed reservations, or failed to carry on their conflicts against injustice because of the massive pressure of the enemies.

This fact was visible in the responses of some virtuous personalities during the time of Imam al-Husayn ('a). Some advised the Imam ('a) not to head for Iraq, such as Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, 'Abdullah ibn Ja'far, and 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas who were the closest to him ('a) and shared his views about the ruling regime. However, they did not agree with his views about self-sacrifice and altruism.

Clarity in Seeking the Truth

Imam al-Husayn's uprising and martyrdom contrasts the fairness and truth of his own stance and the injustice with which he was treated. At the same time it reveals the falsity and viciousness of the party led by Yazid. Due to this clarity, feelings were shaken and the way was opened before the Muslim nation to aggressively participate in this tragedy and its objectives.

This clarity was one of the main objectives that Imam al-Husayn ('a) planned in his uprising. He ('a) paved the way for his uprising through dexterous informative work, powerful political speech, efficacious interaction with the masses and by adopting the preferable approach to the prerequisites and needs of that stage of Islam.

As a result, the Muslim community asked the Imam ('a) to take the leadership and confront the despotic rulers. Public support was gathered by educating and spiritually arousing the masses to respond to the Imam's uprising. Although the people did not have enough willpower, courage, and determination to participate in his revolutionary action, they believed in the validity of the objectives and motives of the uprising.

Undoubtedly, the clarity of objective in the uprising of Imam al-Husayn ('a) was obvious but the Muslim nation had cold feet and responded to his calls for uprising with dejection and betrayal. These two factors had a great impact on stirring up the moral spirit of the virtuous community whose members felt sorrow, pain, and regret and vowed to do something lest such a painful encounter take place again.

It was improbable that those who had committed the sin (of abandoning the Imam ('a)) would feel sorry and regretful. What was possible was that all those who could comprehend and apply the incident to their lives would understand this aspect and feel sorry and regretful for having missed contributing to the Imam's uprising. Maybe they would not allow the political conditions of their own time to descend to such level of lowliness and retardation and thus avoid falling in the same trap in which the others had fallen or face the same fate the others had faced.

Multifaceted Tragedy

The tragedy of Imam al-Husayn (‘a) has multifaceted misfortunes including crimes like the following committed by Yazid’s followers:

- (1) They brutally killed Imam al-Husayn’s sons, brothers, cousins and children, including infants and adults.
- (2) They also killed many leaders, chiefs, scholars, young and old men, women, friends and followers of Imam al-Husayn (‘a).
- (3) His family members and those of the martyrs were subjected to plundering, robbery, captivity, and mayhem.
- (4) Psychological and physical torture, material and mental aggression, that took various forms, was inflicted on the bereaved members of his (‘a) and the martyrs’ families.

These excesses supplied Imam al-Husayn’s great uprising with a spiritual and moral momentum.

Determination for Martyrdom

Imam al-Husayn’s group of active supporters was fully determined to attain martyrdom and sacrifice everything for the sake of the matter and question, and were prepared for the consequences even if they had to face them seventy times. This was the state of Imam al-Husayn (‘a) and his devotees who knew the consequences and the fact that their uprising was not powerful enough to overthrow Yazid’s ruling regime.

In conclusion, the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn (‘a) and his followers came after their determination to achieve martyrdom. This fact gives their martyrdom a spiritual level difficult to imagine. Generally, martyrdom that is determined and chosen bears great spiritual and moral fruit.

Heir of the Divine Message and the Messenger (S)

Imam al-Husayn (‘a) was heir to the divine message of Islam and the Messenger (S) who nurtured him in childhood. He was also of Allah’s Messenger (S) who showed deliberate care towards the sons of his daughter Fatimah (‘a) and cousin ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib (‘a) in order to heavily burden Muslims’ consciences when this son would be martyred. Imam al-Husayn (‘a), together with Imam al-Hasan (‘a), Lady Zaynab and Lady Kulthum (‘a)—his brother and sisters—represented the remaining offspring of the Holy Prophet (S).

The Tragedy and the Morale

Fifth Feature: In addition to their sacrifices and emphasis on self-sacrifice by bringing to the fore the issue of Imam al-Husayn's uprising and martyrdom, the Holy Imams ('a) confirmed that their followers will be exposed to various sorts of tribulations and ordeals.

In this respect, Sharif al-Radhi (the compiler of *Nahj al-Balaghah*) has recorded that when Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Sa'idi passed away in Kufah immediately after his return from the Battle of Siffin, Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) was visibly grieved because he was one his best friends. He ('a) said:

لَوْ أَحَبَّنِي جَبَلٌ لَتَهَافَتَ.

Even if a mountain loves me, it will definitely collapse. [16](#)

Explaining this word, Sharif al-Radhi states that ordeals pounce upon one who loves Imam 'Ali ('a) and afflict him with various sorts of misfortunes. Such ordeals attack none but the pious, upright, well-chosen, and good people. Similar to this meaning is another maxim of Imam 'Ali in which he says:

مَنْ أَحَبَّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ فَلْيَسْتَعِدَّ لِلْفَقْرِ جَلْبَابًا.

Whoever loves us, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), must ready himself for poverty with which he must dress himself. [17](#)

Moreover, trials and tests are among the inevitable necessities of true faith, since they measure the degree of faith one has.

Shaykh al-Kulayni, through a valid chain of authority, has reported 'Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hajjaj as saying that when the trials that smite the faithful believers in particular were discussed before Imam al-Sadiq ('a), he commented as follows:

سُئِلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: مَنْ أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ بَلَاءً؟ فَقَالَ: النَّبِيُّونَ، ثُمَّ الْأَمْتَلُ فَأَلَامَتَلُ. وَيُبْتَلَى الْمُؤْمِنُ بَعْدَ عَلَى قَدْرِ إِيمَانِهِ وَحُسْنِ أَعْمَالِهِ. فَمَنْ صَحَّ إِيمَانُهُ وَحَسُنَ عَمَلُهُ إِشْتَدَّ بَلَاؤُهُ، وَمَنْ سَخُفَ إِيمَانُهُ وَضَعُفَ عَمَلُهُ قَلَّ بَلَاؤُهُ.

Allah's Messenger (S) was asked, "Who are the most afflicted with ordeals in this world?" He (S) answered, "They are the Prophets ('a) and then the nearest to them descending downwardly. A faithful believer is tested according to the amount of his faith and good deeds. Those whose faith is sound and deeds are excellent will be tested more intensely than the others. Those whose faith is deficient and deeds are weak are tested the least." [18](#)

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

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَتَعَاهَدُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِالْبَلَاءِ كَمَا يَتَعَاهَدُ الرَّجُلُ أَهْلَهُ بِالْهَدِيَّةِ مِنَ الْغَيْبَةِ وَيَحْمِيهِ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا يَحْمِي الطَّبِيبُ الْمَرِيضَ.

Verily, Almighty Allah is attentive towards the faithful believers through calamities in the same way as an absent husband attends to his wife with gifts. He also protects them from worldly seductions in the same way that a physician protects his patient. [19](#)

Al-Husayn ibn 'Alwan has reported that Imam al-Sadiq ('a) said the following to Sadir:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ عَبْدًا غَتَّهُ بِالْبَلَاءِ غَتًّا. وَإِنَّا وَإِيَّاكُمْ، يَا سَدِيرُ، لَنُصْبِحُ بِهِ وَنُمْسِي.

Verily, when Almighty Allah loves one of His servants, He will thrust him abruptly into tribulations. O Sadir, you and we are entering upon morns and eves with such tribulations. [20](#)

Addressing their partisans, the Holy Imams ('a) confirmed that none deserves to be Shi'ite except certain individuals who are ready to make such high-ranking sacrifices. They ('a) used to test the sincerity and honesty of their true Shi'ah (i.e. followers) through their propensities towards self-sacrifice.

Describing the righteous among his companions, Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) ascribed this feature to them, saying:

أَنْتُمْ الْأَنْصَارُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ، وَالْإِخْوَانُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَالْجُنُنُ يَوْمَ الْبَأْسِ، وَالْبِطَانَةُ دُونَ النَّاسِ، بِكُمْ أَضْرِبُ الْمُدْبِرَ، وَأَرْجُو طَاعَةَ الْمُقْبِلِ، فَأَعِينُونِي بِمَنَاصِحَةِ خَلِيَّةٍ مِنَ الْعِشْرِ، سَلِيمَةٍ مِنَ الرَّيْبِ؛ فَوَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالنَّاسِ.

You are the supporters of the Truth, the brethren in faith, the shield on the Day of Tribulation, and (my) trustees among the rest of the people. With your support, I strike he who turns away and hope for the obedience of he who comes forward. Therefore, extend to me your support, which is free from deceit and pure from doubt because, by Allah, I am the most preferable of all for the people. [21](#)

Similarly, many traditions have been reported from the Holy Imams ('a) concerning their encouragement of their followers to sacrifice themselves, risk themselves, give, offer, and strive for the sake of Almighty Allah.

Let us display some of these facts, instructions, and guidelines:

Abu-Jamilah has reported Imam al-Sadiq ('a) as saying that Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin's precept for his companions was as follows:

إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْقُرْآنَ هُدَى اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَتُورُ اللَّيْلِ الْمُظْلِمِ عَلَى مَا كَانَ مِنْ جَهْدٍ وَفَاقَةٍ. فَإِذَا حَضَرَتْ بَلِيَّةٌ فَاجْعَلُوا
 أَمْوَالَكُمْ دُونَ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَإِذَا نَزَلَتْ نَازِلَةٌ فَاجْعَلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ دُونَ دِينِكُمْ. وَإِعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْهَالِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ دِينُهُ، وَالْحَرِيبُ مَنْ
 حُرِبَ دِينُهُ. أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ لَا فِقْرَ بَعْدَ الْجَنَّةِ، أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ لَا غِنَى بَعْدَ النَّارِ؛ لَا يُفَكُّ أُسِيرُهَا وَلَا يَبْرَأُ ضَرِيرُهَا

Be it known to you that the Qur'an is guidance during night and day and in the dim of gloomy nights, because it suffices from all fatigue and indigence. If you are afflicted with a tribulation, you must protect yourselves with your wealth, but if a catastrophe afflicts you, you must then protect your religion with your souls. Know that one who has truly perished is he whose religion has perished, and one who has truly been despoiled is he whose religion has been despoiled. Verily, there shall be no poverty after Paradise and there shall be no wealth after Hellfire whose captive shall never be released and whose blindness shall never be cured. [22](#)

Imam 'Ali ('a) is reported to have said:

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْجِهَادَ بَابٌ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ لِخَاصَّةِ أَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَهُوَ لِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى، وَدِرْعُ اللَّهِ الْحَصِينَةُ، وَجَنَّتُهُ
 الْوَثِيقَةُ، فَمَنْ تَرَكَهُ رَغْبَةً عَنْهُ أَلْبَسَهُ اللَّهُ تَوْبَ الذُّلِّ، وَشَمَلَهُ الْبَلَاءُ، وَدَيَّبَتْ بِالصَّغَارِ وَالْقَمَاءِ، وَضُرِبَ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ
 بِالْأَسْهَابِ، وَأُذِيلَ الْحَقُّ مِنْهُ بِتَضْيِيعِ الْجِهَادِ، وَسِيمَ الْخَسْفِ، وَمُنِعَ النُّصْفَ

Now then, surely jihad (i.e. striving for Almighty Allah's sake) is one of the doors of Paradise, which Allah has opened for His chief friends. It is the dress of piety and the protective armor of Allah and His trustworthy shield. Whoever abandons it, Allah covers him with the dress of disgrace and the clothes of distress. He is kicked with contempt and scorn, and his heart is veiled with screens (of neglect). Truth is taken away from him because of missing jihad. He has to suffer ignominy, and justice is denied to him. [23](#)

3. Shaykh al-Kulayni, in his book of *al-Kafi*, has reported on the authority of Imam al-Sadiq ('a) that the Holy Prophet (S) said,

الْخَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي السَّيْفِ وَتَحْتَ ظِلِّ السَّيْفِ. وَلَا يُقِيمُ النَّاسَ إِلَّا السَّيْفُ. وَالسُّيُوفُ مَقَالِيدُ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ

The entirety of goodness lies in swords and under their shadows. Nothing amends people except swords. Swords are verily the keys of Paradise and Hellfire. [24](#)

Although this evaluation and comprehensive understanding of jihad has expansive denotations, the Holy Imams ('a) did not stop at it; rather, they expounded and explained its laws and gave it more expansive significance in practical life—significance that includes honest words, distinguished behavior, and virtuous deeds.

We can observe that these high spirits of propensity towards self-sacrifice and strife for Almighty Allah's sake are among the basic features identifying the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). They also perpetuate

this spiritual momentum in the Muslim nation to face the various circumstances to which they are exposed.

Perseverance

Sixth Feature: The Holy Imams (‘a) imbued their followers with the spirit of resistance and perseverance and tolerance at times of misfortune, pain and ordeal during confrontations in order to overcome their enemies.

The Holy Qur’an has laid great emphasis on perseverance. The Holy Prophet (S), too, expresses the significance of perseverance through many pieces of advice and teaches us to learn lessons from the experiences of the earlier Prophets (‘a). The Holy Qur’an thus reads:

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ

Therefore, bear up patiently as did the messengers endowed with constancy bear up with patience. (46:35)

قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهَ كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أقدامَنَا وَأَنْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

Those who were sure that they would meet their Lord said, “How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host by Allah’s permission, and Allah is with the patient.” And when they went out against Goliath and his forces they said, “Our Lord, pour down upon us patience, make our steps firm, and assist us against the unbelieving people.” So, they put them to flight by Allah’s permission. (2:249–251)

To arouse the spirit of steadfastness and perseverance in their followers, the Holy Imams (‘a) used many methods that we can observe in their discourses, precepts, and practices:

(1) They emphasized the significance and role of perseverance in the accomplishment of man’s spiritual perfection and success in this world and the Hereafter by drawing their attention to what the Holy Qur’an had corroborated in this field, and through their discourses. Many traditions have been reported from them in this field. For instance, the famous book of *Wasa’il al-Shi’ah* has an independent chapter dealing with this subject. The Holy Imams (‘a), through numerous traditions, intended to implant this aspect in their followers’ mentalities.

Hafs ibn Ghiyath has reported Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) as addressing him with the following words:

يَا حَفْصُ! إِنَّ مِنْ صَبْرٍ صَبْرَ قَلِيلٍ، وَإِنَّ مِنْ جَزَعٍ جَزَعٌ قَلِيلٌ. عَلَيْكَ بِالصَّبْرِ فِي جَمِيعِ أُمُورِكَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ
{بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فَأَمَرَهُ بِالصَّبْرِ وَالرَّفْقِ، فَقَالَ: وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا} 10

:وَدَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولِي النَّعْمَةِ وَمَهْلَهُمْ قَلِيلًا {11} وَقَالَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ {34} وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو
{حِطِّ عَظِيمٍ} 35

:فَصَبْرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ حَتَّى نَالُوهُ بِالْعِظَائِمِ وَرَمَوْهُ بِهَا. فَضَاقَ صَدْرُهُ، فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

{وَلَقَدْ نَعَلْنَا أَنكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرَكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ} {97} فَسَبَّحَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ} 98

:ثُمَّ كَذَّبُوهُ وَرَمَوْهُ، فَحَزِنَ لِذَلِكَ. فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

قَدْ نَعَلْنَا إِنَّهُ لِيَحْزُنَكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ ۚ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ {33} وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِنْ
{قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوا عَلَى مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأُوذُوا حَتَّى أَتَاهُمْ نَصْرُنَا} {34}

فَأَلْزَمَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ نَفْسَهُ الصَّبْرَ. فَتَعَدَّوْا فَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى وَكَذَّبُوهُ. فَقَالَ: قَدْ صَبَرْتُ فِي نَفْسِي
:وَأَهْلِي وَعِرْضِي، وَلَا صَبْرَ لِي عَلَى ذِكْرِ إِلَهِي. فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

{وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ} 10

:فَصَبْرَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فِي جَمِيعِ أَحْوَالِهِ. ثُمَّ بَشَّرَ فِي عِزَّتِهِ بِالْأَيْمَةِ وَوَصَفُوا بِالصَّبْرِ، فَقَالَ جَلَّ تَنَاوُهُ

{وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَيْمَةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لِمَا صَبَرُوا} ۚ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ} 24

فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ قَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: الصَّبْرُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ كَالرَّأْسِ مِنَ الْجَسَدِ. فَشَكَرَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ذَلِكَ لَهُ، فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
:عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا ﴿٩﴾ وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا
يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

فَقَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: إِنَّهُ بُشِّرَىٰ وَإِنْتِقَامٌ. فَأَبَاحَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَهُ قِتَالَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ فَأَنْزَلَ:

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا ﴿٩﴾ وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ

فَقَتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَأَحْبَابِهِ، وَجَعَلَ لَهُ ثَوَابَ صَبْرِهِ مَعَ مَا ادَّخَرَ لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ. فَمَنْ
صَبَرَ وَاحْتَسَبَ لَمْ يَخْرُجْ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا حَتَّىٰ يُفَرَّ اللَّهُ لَهُ عَيْنُهُ فِي أَعْدَائِهِ مَعَ مَا يَدَّخِرُ لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ.

O Hafs, whoever perseveres will in fact persevere for a short while²⁵ and whoever breaks down will break down for a short while.

You must thus persevere in all your affairs. Verily, Almighty Allah has sent Muhammad (S) (as His messenger) and ordered him to be patient and lenient. He thus says,

“Bear patiently what they say and avoid them with a becoming avoidance. Leave Me to deal with the rejecters, the lords of ease and plenty. (73: 10–11)”

He also says, “Repel evil with what is best, when lo! He who was your enemy would be as if he were a warm friend. None is made to receive it but those who are patient and none is made to receive it but those who have a mighty good fortune. (41:34–35)”

*So, the Holy Prophet (S) continued to deal with them patiently until they forged unbearable things against him and accused him falsely of these things; therefore, he was distressed at what they had forged against him. As a result, Almighty Allah revealed to him the following: **“Surely, We know that your breast straitens at what they say! Therefore, celebrate the praise of your Lord and be of those who make obeisance. (15:97–98)”***

*They then belied and accused him of fabrications that made him sad. So, Almighty Allah revealed to him the following: **“We know indeed that what they say certainly grieves you, but surely they do not call you a liar, but the unjust deny the communications of Allah. Certainly, messengers before you were rejected, but they were patient on being rejected and persecuted until Our help came to them. (6:33–34)”***

Although the Holy Prophet (S) committed himself to patience, they transgressed all limits when they began to speak irreverently of Almighty Allah and belied Him. So, the Holy Prophet (S) said, “I have borne patiently what they said about myself, my family, and my honor, but I cannot stand anymore what

they are speaking profanely of my Lord.” So, Almighty Allah revealed the following: **“Bear patiently what they say. (73: 10)”** So, the Holy Prophet (S) remained patient under all conditions.

Then, Almighty Allah gave him the good tidings of the Imams being from his offspring and ascribed perseverance to them, saying, **“We made of them Imams to guide by Our command when they were patient and they were certain of Our communications. (32:24)”** Only then, the Holy Prophet (S) declared, **“The position of patience to faith is as the position of the head to the body.”**

For this situation, Almighty Allah thanked His Prophet (S) and revealed to him the following:

“The good word of your Lord was fulfilled in the children of Israel because they bore up (sufferings) patiently and We utterly destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had wrought and what they built. (7: 137)”

The Holy Prophet (S) understood the good tidings and the punishment of Almighty Allah mentioned in this verse.

Then, Almighty Allah allowed him to fight against the polytheists, saying, **“Slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush. (9:5)”** **“Kill them wherever you find them. (2: 191)”** So, Almighty Allah slew them at the hands of His Messenger (S) and those who love Him. He also kept for His Messenger (S) the reward of patience along with what He had already kept for him in the Hereafter.

Succinctly, whoever draws on patience will never depart this world before Almighty Allah delights him concerning his enemies not to mention what He has stored for him in the Hereafter. [26](#)

Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq (‘a) has also reported the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

سَيَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يُنَالُ فِيهِ الْمُلْكُ إِلَّا بِالْقَتْلِ وَالنَّجْبِ، وَلَا الْغِنَى إِلَّا بِالْغَصْبِ وَالْبُخْلِ، وَلَا الْمَحَبَّةُ إِلَّا بِاسْتِخْرَاجِ الدِّينِ وَاتِّبَاعِ الْهَوَى. فَمَنْ أَدْرَكَ ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانَ فَصَبَرَ عَلَى الْفَقْرِ وَهُوَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى الْغِنَى، وَصَبَرَ عَلَى الْبُغْضَةِ وَهُوَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى الْمَحَبَّةِ، وَصَبَرَ عَلَى الذُّلِّ وَهُوَ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى الْعِزِّ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ تَوَابَ خَمْسِينَ صِدِّيقًا مِمَّنْ صَدَّقَ بِي.

After me, there shall come upon people an age in which sovereignty cannot be gained except by means of killing and arrogance, wealth cannot be obtained except by means of usurpation and stinginess, and amicability cannot be attained except by means of disregarding the religious affairs and pursuing the whims. So, as for him who lives in that time and tolerates poverty while he can be rich, tolerates humility while he can be a master, and tolerates people’s displeasure while he can obtain their respect, Almighty Allah will give him the rewards of fifty veracious men who have believed in me. [27](#)

(2) The Holy Imams (‘a) interpreted tribulations and ordeals (that afflict the faithful believers) to be means of nearness to Almighty Allah and divine favor. Providing examples, they referred to their

personal tribulations and ordeals. Previously, I have introduced some traditions demonstrating this issue.

(3) The Holy Imams (‘a) averred that submission to and satisfaction with such tribulations and ordeals are in themselves high ranks of belief in Almighty Allah Who confers them upon none but His elite servants. Of course, this fact stirs up in souls the feelings of satisfaction, tranquility, steadfastness, and resistance. A statement in a famous formula of *ziyarah* reads:

اللَّهُمَّ فَاجْعَلْ نَفْسِي مُطْمَئِنَّةً بِقَدْرِكَ، رَاضِيَةً بِقَضَائِكَ... صَابِرَةً عَلَى نُزُولِ بَلَائِكَ

O Allah, cause my soul to be fully tranquil with Your decrees, satisfied with Your providence... and steadfast against affliction of Your tribulations. [28](#)

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

رَأْسُ طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ الصَّبْرُ وَالرِّضَا عَنِ اللَّهِ فِي مَا أَحَبَّ الْعَبْدُ أَوْ كَرِهَ. وَلَا يَرْضَى عَبْدٌ عَنِ اللَّهِ فِي مَا أَحَبَّ أَوْ كَرِهَ إِلَّا كَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ فِي مَا أَحَبَّ أَوْ كَرِهَ.

The apex of obedience to Almighty Allah is perseverance and satisfaction with Allah regardless of whether His servant likes or dislikes the circumstances. Whenever a servant is pleased with Almighty Allah in what he likes or dislikes, this shall certainly be better for him than the matter that he liked or disliked. [29](#)

Imam ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn (‘a) is reported to have said:

الزُّهْدُ عَشْرَةٌ أَجْزَاءٍ؛ فَأَعْلَى دَرَجَاتِ الزُّهْدِ أَدْنَى دَرَجَاتِ الْوَرَعِ. وَأَعْلَى دَرَجَاتِ الْوَرَعِ أَدْنَى دَرَجَاتِ الْيَقِينِ. وَأَعْلَى دَرَجَاتِ الْيَقِينِ أَدْنَى دَرَجَاتِ الرِّضَا.

Asceticism is of ten grades the highest of which is the lowest grade of piety. The highest grade of piety is the lowest grade of conviction. The highest grade of conviction is the lowest grade of satisfaction. [30](#)

(4) The Holy Imams (‘a) assured their followers that their fate and future was the same as their own.

(5) The Holy Imams (‘a) also explained in detail the great rewards that their followers will win for attaching themselves to them and suffering because of it.

Such attachment and sufferings shall be the reason for acceptance of their deeds and redemption on the Day of Resurrection.

Al-‘Ala’ ibn Muhammad has reported that he asked Imam al-Baqir (‘a) about the meaning of the following holy verse:

فَأُولَئِكَ يَبْدِلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

These are they of whom Allah changes the evil deeds to good ones, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (25:70)

The Imam (‘a) answered:

يُؤْتَى بِالْمُؤْمِنِ الْمُذْنِبِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُقَامَ بِمَوْقِفِ الْحِسَابِ، فَيَكُونُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى هُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَلَّى حِسَابَهُ لَا يُطْلَعُ عَلَى حِسَابِهِ أَحَدًا مِنَ النَّاسِ. فَيَعْرِفُهُ ذُنُوبَهُ، حَتَّى إِذَا أَقْرَأَ بِسَيِّئَاتِهِ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لِلْكَتَبَةِ: “بَدِّلُوهَا حَسَنَاتٍ وَأَطْهَرُوهَا لِلنَّاسِ.” فَيَقُولُ النَّاسُ حِينَئِذٍ: “أَمَا كَانَ لِهَذَا الْعَبْدِ سَيِّئَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ؟!” ثُمَّ يَأْمُرُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِهِ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ. فَهَذَا تَأْوِيلُ الْآيَةِ، وَهِيَ فِي الْمُذْنِبِينَ مِنْ شِيعَتِنَا خَاصَّةً.

A faithful believer, who has committed sins, will be brought on the Day of Resurrection for questioning. It will be Almighty Allah Who takes upon Himself the calling to account of such servants so that none will witness it. Then, Almighty Allah displays the sins that servant had committed and the servant will confess to them. After that, Almighty Allah will order the Noble Writers to change these sins into good deeds and then show them to the people. As they see these records, the people will say to each other, “This servant has not committed any single sin all his life.” Then, Almighty Allah will determine Paradise for that servant. This is the interpretation of the verse. This is for our Shi‘ah exclusively.³¹

On the authority of his fathers, Imam al-Ridha (‘a) has reported the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

حُبُّنَا، أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ، يُكَفِّرُ الذُّنُوبَ وَيُضَاعِفُ الْحَسَنَاتِ. وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَيَتَحَمَّلُ عَنْ مُحِبِّينَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ مَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ مَظَالِمِ الْعِبَادِ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ مِنْهُمْ فِيهَا عَلَى إِضْرَارٍ وَظُلْمٍ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ. فَيَقُولُ لِلْسَيِّئَاتِ: “كُونِي حَسَنَاتٍ”.

To love us, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), erases the sins and doubles the rewards. Verily, Almighty Allah shall take upon Himself the responsibility of our lovers’ wrong deeds against others except for the deeds that have caused loss and injustice to other faithful believers. He shall order the wrongdoings to change into good deeds.³²

In vol. 68 of *Bihar al-Anwar*, there is a section entitled ‘*bab al-safh* (Section: Pardoning)’ comprising many authentic traditions that demonstrate the same purport of this tradition.

If we combine these traditions with the other ones that specify piety and diligence as stipulations for joining the community of Shi‘ism, we can conclude that the virtuous community cannot include anyone except those who are characterized by piety and diligence; however, if such individuals commit sins, they shall be forgiven by Almighty Allah on account of their loyalty to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and their sufferings because of this loyalty.

Treatment Of Psychological Pressures

Seventh Feature: The Holy Imams (‘a) dealt with all the elements of the psychological campaigns and political and informational attacks that their enemies waged against their followers.

There are two strong negative issues, which mentally influenced the virtuous community:

First Issue: The virtuous community was a minority compared to the majority of Muslims, especially during the ages of the Holy Imams (‘a). Despite fewness in number, the virtuous community used to live within the expansive Muslim communities without having an independent entity or community. This fact made the members of the virtuous community feel mental and spiritual distress.

Such psychological distress has been usual for all the small faithful communities throughout the history of divine messages. In many verses, the Holy Qur’an has treated this problem by referring to the small and big numbers of the parties of right and wrong, indicating that fewness in number is usually observed for virtuous communities, while deviation and perversity usually accompany the larger communities. For instance, the Holy Qur’an reads,

وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

Most men will not believe though you desire it eagerly. (12: 103)

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ

Very few of My servants are grateful. (34: 13)

وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

Most of them will not believe. (26:8)

وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لَيَبْغِي بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ

Most surely, most of the partners act wrongfully towards one another save those who believe and do good. Very few are they. (38:24)

Second Issue: The followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) were accused of protesting (*rafdh*), sowing dissension among the Muslims, and opposing the larger Muslim community that aimed at imposing sieges on the virtuous community attempting to make it seem unorthodox and remote from the truth

isolating it from the larger Muslim community.

Some such charges developed into formal verdicts claiming members of the virtuous community to be atheistic, perverted, apostate, and therefore, killing or banishing them!

The followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) used to feel great distress because of such charges and besiegement; The Holy Imams ('a) treated these two issues directly by finding solutions to them; and indirectly by confirming that it was Almighty Allah Who selected certain individuals to be their followers. As a result, to tolerate these charges and accompanying suffering patiently would bring about great rewards.

They also assured their followers that their fate is connected to their Imams' ('a) fate and that the Holy Qur'an makes exclusive references to them in the capacity of their being the only followers of the true religion of Almighty Allah.

The following are some examples of such confirmations:

'Utaybah, the reed trader, has reported that he told Imam al-Sadiq ('a) that a man said to him, "Do not ever be a *Rafidhi*." The Imam ('a) commented:

وَاللَّهِ، لِنِعْمِ الْإِسْمِ الَّذِي مَنَحَكُمْ اللَّهُ مَا دُمْتُمْ تَأْخُذُونَ بِقَوْلِنَا وَلَا تَكْذِبُونَ عَلَيْنَا.

By Allah I swear, how excellent this title is, which Almighty Allah has bestowed upon you, as long as you carry out our commands and avoid forging lies against us. [33](#)

Abu-Basir has reported that he said to Imam al-Baqir ('a), "We have been given a title because of which the ruling authorities are shedding our blood, confiscating our properties, and persecuting us."

The Imam ('a) asked, "What is that title?"

Abu-Basir answered, "It is *Rafidhah*!"

The Imam ('a) commented,

إِنَّ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا مِنْ عَسْكَرِ فِرْعَوْنَ رَفَضُوا فِرْعَوْنَ فَأَتَوْا مُوسَى . فَلَمْ يَكُنْ فِي قَوْمِ مُوسَى أَحَدٌ أَشَدَّ إِجْتِهَادًا وَأَشَدَّ حُبًّا لِهَارُونَ مِنْهُمْ . فَسَمَّاهُمْ قَوْمَ مُوسَى الرَّافِضَةَ . فَأَوْحَى اللَّهُ إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ أَتَيْتَ لَهُمْ هَذَا الْإِسْمَ فِي التَّوْرَةِ، فَإِنِّي نَحَلْتُهُمْ . وَذَلِكَ إِسْمٌ قَدْ نَحَلَكُمُوهُ اللَّهُ

Seventy men from the military forces of Pharaoh had protested (rafidh) against Pharaoh and joined (Prophet) Moses ('a). They thus were the most diligent and they loved (Prophet) Aaron ('a) more than anyone else did in the community of Moses ('a). As a result, the other followers of Moses ('a) called

them Rafidhah. Almighty Allah revealed to Moses ('a) to record this title for them in the Torah, as gifted by the Lord to them. Hence, this title has been gifted to you by Almighty Allah. [34](#)

'Ali ibn 'Aqabah ibn Khalid has reported the following from his father:

Mu'alla ibn Khunays and I visited Abu-'Abdullah (Imam al-Sadiq ('a)) When he looked at us, he welcomed us. He then sat down and said,

أَنْتُمْ، وَاللَّهِ، أَوْلُوا الْأَلْبَابِ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ. قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْلُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

فَأَبْشِرُوا، أَنْتُمْ عَلَى إِحْدَى الْحُسَيْنَيْنِ مِنَ اللَّهِ. أَمَا وَإِنَّكُمْ إِنْ بَقِيتُمْ حَتَّى تَرَوْا مَا تَمُدُّونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْنَاقَكُمْ، شَفَى اللَّهُ
صُدُورَكُمْ وَأَذْهَبَ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَدَا لَكُمْ عَلَى عَدُوِّكُمْ. وَهُوَ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى

وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَيُذْهِبُ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ

وَإِنْ مَضَيْتُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَرَوْا ذَلِكَ، مَضَيْتُمْ عَلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي رَضِيَهُ لِنَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَبَعَثَهُ عَلَيْهِ

By Allah (I swear), you are verily those described in the Book of Allah as being endued with understanding. Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, says,

“It is those who are endued with understanding that receive admonition. (13: 19)”

You are the object of Almighty Allah's glad tidings of winning one of the two weighty things.

If you survive until you witness that thing to which you are extending your necks (i.e. what you ardently wish), then Almighty Allah will heal your breasts, remove the rancor of your hearts, and give you a hand over your enemies.

This is the word of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, in the Qur'an saying, “...and He heals the breasts of Believers and stills the indignation of their hearts. 9: 14-15)”

If you pass away before you can witness that, then you will have passed away following the very religion of Allah that He has accepted for His Prophet (S) and for which He has appointed him. [35](#)

Muhammad ibn Ishaq al-Tha'labi has reported that he heard Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq ('a) saying:

نَحْنُ خَيْرَةُ اللَّهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَشِيعَتُنَا خَيْرَةُ اللَّهِ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ نَبِيِّهِ

We are the elite choice of Allah among His creatures and our Shi'ah are the elite choice of Allah among the community of His Prophet (S). [36](#)

Muhammad ibn Qays and 'Amir ibn al-Simt reported Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a) to have quoted the Holy Prophet (S) as saying:

يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ قَوْمٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ثِيَابٌ مِنْ نُورٍ، عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ نُورٌ، يُعْرِفُونَ بِأَثَارِ السُّجُودِ. يَتَخَطَّوْنَ صَفًّا بَعْدَ صَفٍّ حَتَّى يَصِيرُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. يَغِطُّهُمْ النَّبِيُّونَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالشُّهَدَاءُ وَالصَّالِحُونَ. أُولَئِكَ شِيعَتُنَا، وَعَلِيُّ إِمَامُهُمْ

On the Day of Resurrection, a group of people dressed in clothes of light with luminous faces identified by the signs of prostration will come. They will pass the rows until they stand in front of the Lord of the Worlds. The prophets ('a), the angels, the martyrs, and the righteous people will be glad for them... These are our Shi'ah, and 'Ali ('a) is their Imam. [37](#)

Abu-Basir has reported that he heard (Imam) Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq ('a) saying:

نَحْنُ أَهْلُ بَيْتِ الرَّحْمَةِ، وَبَيْتِ النِّعْمَةِ، وَبَيْتِ الْبَرَكَةِ. وَنَحْنُ فِي الْأَرْضِ بُنْيَانٌ، وَشِيعَتُنَا عُرَى الْإِسْلَامِ. وَمَا كَانَتْ دَعْوَةُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا لَنَا وَشِيعَتِنَا. وَلَقَدْ إِسْتَنْنَى اللَّهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِلَى إِبْلِيسَ فَقَالَ:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ

We are the Household of mercy, the House of grace, and the House of blessing. In the earth, we are the structure and our Shi'ah are the handles of Islam. The supplicatory prayer of (Prophet) Abraham ('a) was for none save our Shi'ah and us. Up to the Day of Resurrection, Almighty Allah has excluded us from the sway of Satan (Iblis), saying,

“Surely, as regards My servants, you have no authority over them. (15:42)” [38](#)

Ibn 'Abbas is reported to have said,

لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: هُوَ أَنْتَ يَا عَلِيُّ وَشِيعَتُكَ. تَأْتِي أَنْتَ وَشِيعَتُكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَاضِينَ مَرْضِيَيْنَ،
وَيَأْتِي عَدُوَّكَ غَضَابًا مُفْمَحِينَ.

As revealed in this holy verse:

“As for those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men. (98:7)”

When it was revealed, Allah’s Messenger (S) said, “These are your Shi’ah and you, ‘Ali (‘a). On the Day of Resurrection, your Shi’ah and you shall be pleased and well-satisfied, while your enemies shall be enraged and have their heads raised aloft. [39](#)

Being pleased and well-satisfied is an indication to this verse, which follows the earlier one:

جَزَاؤُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۗ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ
خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

Their reward with their Lord is gardens of perpetuity beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein forever; Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him; that is for him who fears his Lord. (98:8)

Inextinguishable Torch of Hope

Eighth Feature: The Holy Imams (‘a) endeavored to keep the torch of hope and the far-reaching view of human perfection active to help endure all suffering in the future and ensure the continuity of human progress and achievement of goals.

Islam has always urged its followers to maintain hope and has forbidden despair no matter how difficult the circumstances be, how unsurpassable the obstacles, and how unbearable the pain.

In this respect, Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur’an,

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اسْتَيْسَسَ الرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِّبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا فَنُجِّيَ مِنْ نَشَاءٍ ۗ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُنَا عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

Respite will be granted until the messengers give up hope of their people and come to think that they were treated as liars. Then Our help reaches them and they are delivered into safety as We will. Never will those who are in sin escape Our punishment. (12: 110)

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ۗ مَسْتَهْمِبِينَ ۗ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ
الرُّسُلُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَىٰ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

Do you think that you shall enter the Garden of bliss without such trials as came to those who passed away before you? They encountered suffering and adversity and were so shaken in spirit that even the Messenger (S) and those of faith who were with him cried, "When will come the help of Allah?" Ah! Verily, the help of Allah is always near. (2:214)

Under the harshest circumstances, the Holy Prophet (S) used to talk to his companions about hope and a bright future. In the battles of Uhud and al-Ahzab (the Allies), he promised them the conquest of the countries of Khosrow the Persian, and Caesar the Roman, which were two great powers of that time.

The enemies of Islam, the hypocrites, and the ill-hearted ones attempted to arouse doubts and implant despair and despondency among Muslims so as to achieve their wicked goals, as is cited in *Surah al-Ahzab* (No. 33) because as soon as the torch of hope is extinguished and desperation creeps into the soul, man is defeated after which he buckles before surrounding pressures and his despair becomes a lethal weapon. At all times, psychological wars focus on one chief goal, which is, extinguishing the spirit of hope.

However, the most important reason for building the virtuous community was the issue of expecting the advent of the Rising⁴⁰ Imam, Mahdi ('a). The Holy Imams ('a), besides confirming the advent of the last Imam ('a) after his occultation and asking their followers to believe in and wait in eager expectation of him, strove to make their followers live the state of actual expectation of the Imam's advent in all ages including the ages of the Holy Imams ('a) themselves.

Accordingly, their followers used to experience the likelihood that each Imam ('a) might be the promised and expected one to undertake the mission. This state supplied the virtuous community with a dynamic and spiritual motive of achieving the final victory by overcoming the corrupt conditions of society caused by its doctrinal and moral deviations.

However, this presentation had some negative impacts on the virtuous community who were contemporaries of some of the Holy Imams ('a). They believed that the Imam of their age was the expected Imam and were not mentally prepared to accept the death of that Imam. This very thing occurred to Imam Musa ibn Ja'far al-Kazim ('a), because his political movement was so powerful that his companions believed him to be the Promised Imam. Hence, when he was poisoned in prison, these companions could not believe that he had died. Consequently, some of them believed that Imamate ended with him and a problem took place in the milieu of the virtuous community after his martyrdom. However, some of them believed in the Imamate of his successor, Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Ridha ('a) who managed to overcome this problem afterwards.⁴¹

In fact, such negative consequences soon vanish when the Holy Imams ('a) overcome them because of their capacity to convince their followers with the truth. The positive consequence always remains prevalent in the milieu of the virtuous community.

In this manner, the expectation of the Promised Imam became a sort of worship—which the Holy

Prophet (S) maintained to be the most favorable of all devotional acts—that the virtuous community practiced and took action on its basis. Subsequently, paving the way for the advent of the Promised Imam has become one of the features of this expectation and one of the effective factors of moving towards setting up the government of ultimate justice.

To conclude, the issue of expecting the advent of the Promised Imam—may Allah hasten his advent—and the confirmation of the particularities and features of this expectation during the Minor and the Major Occultation have had a huge impact on the spiritual aspect that distinguishes the virtuous community from other communities. Such an impact is not visible in other Muslim communities. The reason is not that they do not believe in the idea of Imam Mahdi (‘a) because it is one of the issues about which all Muslims agree unanimously. The actual reason is that belief in the existence and life of Imam Mahdi (‘a) is not found in the other Muslim communities at the same level and in the same form as is adopted by the individuals of the virtuous community.

It seems appropriate to take a general look at the matter of Imam Mahdi (‘a) as well as its spiritual and moral outcomes.

The Issue of Imam Mahdi (‘a)

Like Imam al-Husayn’s uprising and martyrdom the issue of Imam Mahdi (‘a) has great relevance to the building of the virtuous community. The relevance is doctrinal, ethical, educational, and spiritual. Of course, to display the details of all of the pertinent items requires a lengthy dissertation⁴² because this issue represents an entire interpretation of history that corresponds with the Qur’anic idea entailing that the earth shall be eventually inherited by the righteous servants of Allah:

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

Verily, We have written in the Scripture, after the Reminder: My righteous servants will inherit the earth. (21: 105)

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۗ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۗ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

Allah has promised such of you as believe and do good work that He will surely make them succeed the present rulers in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed others. Also, that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has approved for them and will give them in exchange safety after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe nothing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve henceforth, they are the miscreants. (24:55)

The moral and spiritual aspect contributes to understanding the Holy Imams' ('a) reason for building the virtuous community on the basis of expecting the advent of Imam Mahdi ('a).

According to the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) Imam Mahdi ('a) represents a living embodiment of the aforementioned historical fact (of the inheritance of the earth by the virtuous servants of Almighty Allah) not only at the level of the unpredicted future but also at the level of the experienced present. (In Iran, Iraq and Lebanon) this belief has begun to embody the actual existence and life of Imam Mahdi ('a). These followers and partisans believe in the existence and birth of Imam Mahdi ('a) and the fact that he is witnessing all the harsh conditions through which Muslims are passing. He is observing and interacting in all human and social experiments and will execute the government of ultimate Divine justice in the future of human progress.

A faithful believer who suffers distress, doubt or confusion in the credibility of facts and norms of history which the Holy Qur'an talks about, such as the final win of the righteous over the wicked and the final victory of right over wrong must read the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ ۗ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

Say: The truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Surely, falsehood is a vanishing thing. (17:81)

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ

Most surely, We help Our messengers and those who believe in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses shall testify. (40:51)

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse. (9:33)

Another Divine norm is the custom of replacement in human communities:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

O you who believe, whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people. He shall love them and they shall love Him, lowly before the believers, and mighty

against the unbelievers. They shall strive hard in Allah's way and shall not fear the censure of any censurer. This is Allah's Favor bestowed on whom He pleases. Allah is the Ample-Giver, Knowing. (5:54)

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَكُمْ

If you turn back, He will bring in your place another people. Then, they will not be like you. (47:38)

Another Qur'anic norm is the relationship between piety and the descent of boons and blessings:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ {96}

If the people of the towns had believed and guarded (against evil), We would certainly have opened up for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they rejected so We overtook them for what they had earned. (7:96)

Another norm is the progress of human nature towards perfection and belief in Almighty Allah:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِن أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ {30}

Then, set your face upright for religion in the right state—the nature made by Allah in which He has made men. There is no altering of Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most people do not know. (30:30)

Another norm is the fact that man represents Almighty Allah on earth and man's preference over angels as a result of this representation:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۚ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۚ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ {30}

When your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to place in the earth a viceroy." They said, "What! Will You place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood and we celebrate Your praise and extol Your holiness?" He said, "Surely, I know what you do not know." (2:30)

All these norms and facts may bring about an important question in the mind of the faithful individual

when he sees pain, ordeals, and corruption prevail in the entire earth and notice that right is not practiced and wrong is rampant. However, when he contemplates the existence of Imam Mahdi (‘a) who will achieve all his hopes and put into practice the credibility of all these norms and facts, things become very clear and evident for him.

Moreover, the issue of Imam Mahdi (‘a), which is a central concern in the building of the virtuous community, entails the following moral facts:

Clarity in Carrying out Religious Duties

An individual who believes in the existence of Imam Mahdi (‘a) and in his expected advent can clearly feel divine duty and religious commandments when he intends to perform any religious activity. He can also feel that all his deeds, service, struggle and sacrifices are being carried out under the blessed standard and the special care of Imam Mahdi (‘a).

This clarity in carrying out the religious duties grants a huge moral impetus to proceed and work—an impetus that is similar to the moral one obtained by those who fought under the standards of the prophets and messengers and achieved great triumphs and made sweeping changes in human society.

With the increase of man’s feelings of the approaching divine reality, looming divine care, and getting closer to the actual power as represented by Almighty Allah, man’s feelings of achieving victory and carrying out duty grow manifold. Of course, to feel the care of the Holy Imam (‘a) and to associate oneself with him in motion and activity make one feel a nearness to Almighty Allah and His care as well as desire to comply with His commands.

Maintenance of Divine Values

The belief in the advent of Imam Mahdi (‘a) maintains one’s principles, values and divine ideals. It also encourages ceaseless endeavor to achieve human perfection away from the worldly concepts of gain and loss, material profit or the attainment of authority, power, and domination.

All these principles, values, and ideals are inspired from the concept of Imam Mahdi (‘a) and from the objectives he is divinely ordained to achieve; namely, the establishment of the ultimate Divine justice on earth.

Generally, any progression that is intended for Almighty Allah and the Divine message which are ascribed to the Unseen World, and to Imam Mahdi (‘a)—who is ascribed to the perceived world—can derive all these significances from him, because he plays the greatest role in the history of humanity, which shall be eventually realized.

Perception of these concepts will be steadier and more profound for those who believe in the advent of the Promised Imam (‘a) than for others; therefore, they can preserve a high spirit, which moves on the

strength of gallant human values and ideals in tandem with their own progression.

Perseverance and Steadfastness

Those who believe in Imam Mahdi (‘a) attain spirits of perseverance and steadfastness from him. They can attain perfection through these two features and act as models bearing suffering and trials. Through his blessed existence, Imam Mahdi (‘a) represents the great and most excellent example of perseverance and steadfastness, because he can see, incur, feel, and interact with all the pain and ordeals during his lifetime. Nevertheless, he perseveres, exposes himself to Almighty Allah’s trial for the sake of achieving great goals and waits for the appropriate opportunity to undertake his stately role.

On the other hand, the long duration of his occultation, despite his actual existence gives him the chance of being subjectively perfect because of experiencing such ordeals and tribulations. His progression will be perfect so that he will undertake his mission, which is unique in the history of humanity, completely and competently. Besides, the political, social, ideological, and mental conditions of humanity, which are other outcomes of such experience and suffering, will make it necessary to establish such a Divine government.

Such perfection will eventually give great impetus and high moral spirits of perseverance and steadfastness to those who believe in the advent of Imam Mahdi (‘a) and help them move towards human perfection.

Contribution to Justice

The belief in the advent of Imam Mahdi (‘a) makes one feel that all deeds and activities contribute to his historical role and pave the way for the establishment of his government of ultimate justice.

It is unreasonable to weigh up the role, deeds and activities of a faithful individual on the balance of the goals he achieved in his relatively short span of life, or on the balance of what he could achieve and what reformations could be achieved in one’s society. It is unfair to renounce all these deeds and activities because they seem to have been worthless in influence and in achieving goals. An individual who believes in the advent of Imam Mahdi (‘a) feels that he is undertaking his private role in the sequence of events, goals and deeds that, altogether, end up with the establishment of the virtuous human society in the future.

Naturally, such feelings raise the moral spirit of man vis-à-vis his activities, deeds and sacrifices. They make his goal so great that it covers all such activities, deeds, efforts, and sacrifices no matter how major and difficult, or how minor and limited his efforts might be.

Great Hope

The belief in the advent of Imam Mahdi (‘a) furnishes its believer with a great, incessant, and

inextinguishable hope in the achievement of victory regardless of the time that it takes. It also grants the feeling that the round must reach its finish and that looking forward to a better future must be incessantly continuous.

Hope is undoubtedly one of the greatest motivations that supplies people with the capacity to go on with steadfastness, perseverance and sacrifice.

A soldier who believes that his progress will be completed by other soldiers who will achieve victory after him is ready to give himself up and make greater sacrifices than a soldier who believes that when he falls in the battlefield, his progress will stop and he will lose the battle.

Similarly, a soldier who is engaged in a battle while he believes that there are other battles to enter in order to obtain victory does not stop when he loses the first round; rather, he continues to move forward. Such feelings cannot be found except with those who believe in the idea of Imam Mahdi's promised advent, because he shall lead the battle persistently until he reaches the end. This belief makes hope so lively and ablaze that it pushes man towards motion and activity under all circumstances.

Revenge for the Oppressed

Those who believe in Imam Mahdi ('a) as the Divinely commissioned reformer who will establish a government of ultimate Divine justice and give each one his due, feel that they will eventually be able to avenge the torment which the faithful believers were exposed to and punish the criminals who committed such crimes and offenses against humanity.

Apart from the individual's role in this process of vengeance, which is related to the idea of the Return (*raj'ah*)⁴³ and its political and social purports, revenge will be imposed upon those who imitated their criminal ancestors. It is logically proven that the past and the present criminals form one trend of the same thought, behavior, goals, and fate; therefore, to take revenge upon the last of them is to take it upon the former generations, also.

The idea of taking revenge and retaliating—which stands for making reprisals for the values and principles of right and justice—is a sound Islamic idea to which the Holy Qur'an has referred on more than one occasion, such as the following:

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ

Fight them; Allah will punish them with your hands and bring them to disgrace, and assist you against them and heal the hearts of a believing people. (9: 14)

Traditions have also spoken about this idea when they described Imam al-Husayn ('a) as the Vengeance of Allah⁴⁴ and that Imam Mahdi ('a) will avenge his murder and raise the slogan of

“Revenge for Husayn.”⁴⁵ A formula of *ziyarah* of Imam al-Husayn (‘a) comprises the following statement:

وَأَقْرِنْ تَأْرَنَّا بِتَأْرِهِ.

*(Please) bind our revenge with his revenge.*⁴⁶

This feeling symbolizes a great spiritual power in the inner selves. Almighty Allah has conferred upon man such a feeling and man inclines to it naturally in his lifetime because it represents one of the motives of man’s progress.

Islam has taken much interest in this motive and feeling lest it may swerve and change into a meager expression of one of man’s instincts and miss its target—human perfection. However, Islam has subordinated the feelings of taking revenge, retaliating, and giving vent to one’s anger to certain values and principles to save them from becoming mere expressions of certain psychological feelings and sensual tendencies. It is clear that the question of revenge and retaliation in the issue of Imam Mahdi (‘a) does not involve taking revenge from certain persons; rather it is punishing the corrupted reality of man which inevitably brings about justice, right, and goodness.

1. – ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 13:193, H. 1 as quoted from Sayyid Ibn Tawus, Falah al-Sa’il.
2. – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1 :243, H. 449–450. Following the faith of Prophet Abraham (‘a) stands for true and utter commitment to his religion.
3. – Tafsir al-Qummi 1: 105 (the tradition is reported through a valid chain of authority); ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:84, H. 1 (as quoted from the previous reference book).
4. – Tafsir al-’Ayyashi 2:23, H. 59; ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:85, H. 7 (as quoted from the previous reference book).
5. – Muhammad ibn ‘Ali al-Tabar, Bisharat al-Mustafa, pp. 84–85, H. 15; p. 225, H. 50; ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:87, H. 14 (as quoted from the previous reference book).
6. – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1:316, H. 629.
7. – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1:261, H. 105.
8. – Ibn Hajar, al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqah, p. 133 ; al-Shablanji, Nur al-Absar, p. 104.
9. – Al-Hurr al-’Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 11:141, H. 6.
10. – ‘Abd al-Wahid al-Amudi, Ghurar al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim, No. 6244.
11. – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1: 135, H. 171.
12. – Al-Hurr al-’Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 11:556, H. 2.
13. – Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali, pp. 132–133, H. 212; ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:199, H. 3 (as quoted from the previous reference book).
14. – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1:247, H. 463.
15. – Further details about this topic have been cited in some of my other studies.
16. – Nahj al-Balaghah, Maxim No. 111.
17. – Nahj al-Balaghah, Maxim No. 112.
18. – Al-Hurr al-’Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 2:6–9, H. 1. In the same chapter of this reference book, there are several authentically reported traditions demonstrating the same thing.
19. – Al-Hurr al-’Amili, Wasa’il al-Shi’ah 2:6–9, H. 9.

[20.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 2:6–9, H. 11.

[21.](#) – Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 118.

[22.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:216, H. 2.

[23.](#) – Nahj al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 27.

[24.](#) – Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 11:5, H. 1.

The authenticity of this tradition is corroborated by other traditions that are mentioned in the same chapter of this reference book.

[25.](#) – The Holy Imam ('a) means that one who is patient will be so for a short while, because he is either patient for his whole life, which is relatively short (when compared to the other life, which is the reward of his patience) or for the time of tribulation, which is also short.

[26.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:88–89, H. 3; Al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 11:207, H. 1 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[27.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:91, H. 12; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 11:208, H. 2 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[28.](#) – Shaykh 'Abbas al-Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, Ziyarah of Amin Allah.

[29.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:60, H. 1.

[30.](#) – Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:62, H. 10.

[31.](#) – Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Amali, pp. 298–299, H. 8; Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali, pp. 72–73, H. 105; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:100, H. 4 (as quoted from the earlier reference books).

[32.](#) – Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali, p. 164, H. 274; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:100, H. 5 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[33.](#) – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin: 1:256, H. 487; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:96, H. 1 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[34.](#) – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1:257, H. 489; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:97, H. 3 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[35.](#) – Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin 1:272–273, H. 137; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:93, H. 35 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[36.](#) – Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Tabari, Bisharat al-Mustafa, p. 32, H. 17; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:43, H. 88 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[37.](#) – Shaykh al-Saduq, Fadha'il al-Shi'ah, pp. 30–31, H. 26; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:68, H. 123 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[38.](#) – Tafsir al-'Ayyashi 2:243; 'Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 68:35–36, H. 75 (as quoted from the earlier reference book).

[39.](#) – Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali, pp. 405–406, 671, H. 1414 (with little difference in the order of words but not in the meaning); Tafsir al-Tabari 30:171; Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, al-Durr al-Manthur 8:589; Ibn Hajar, al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, p. 161.

[40.](#) – The Arabic word al-Qa'im means one who rises to undertake the mission. It is the chief title of Imam Mahdi, the promised and expected.

[41.](#) – These circumstances will be discussed in further detail in one of the coming books of this series when we discuss the situations of each of the Holy Imams ('a) independently.

[42.](#) – The issue of Imam Mahdi ('a) requires a survey of many aspects some of which are as follows:

In its doctrinal aspect, we need to introduce concepts and evidence that prove the existence of the ostensibly absent Imam as well as explanations of this unique phenomenon in human life.

The cultural aspect deals with the philosophy, perfection, perpetuity, theoretical compatibility with the idea of the infallibility of the Imams ('a) and commitment to the instructions and guidelines of this issue. Accordingly, this issue is included in the core of the cultural establishments and courses.

The historical aspect deals with the life and political conditions of Imam Mahdi (‘a), his occultation, signs of his advent and, the future of humanity when he undertakes his mission.

The moral aspect deals with the practice of a certain system of morals during the expectation of the Imam’s advent.

The spiritual aspect correlates with the moral aspect.

The dear reader can refer to hundreds of books that have dealt with Imam al-Mahdi, one of which is the unique, though small, thesis that my mentor, Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, wrote under the title of ‘bahth hawla al-mahdi (A Study on Mahdi (‘a))’.

[43.](#) – The Return (or raj’ah) is an idea mentioned in the traditions reported from the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), entailing that the virtuous and the righteous, as well as the unbelievers and hypocrites shall be returned to this world after their death so as to witness the victory of right over wrong and the wronged persons shall defeat the wrongdoers. More light shall be shed on this idea in one of the coming books of this series.

In their doctrinal books, scholars of the Imamiyyah Shi’ah have dealt with this topic in detail. (See, for instance, the Faith of the Imamiyyah Shi’ah, by Shaykh al-Mu‘affar, Chapter: Our Doctrine concerning the Return (Raj’ah)).

[44.](#) – In the famous Ziyarah of Warith, the following statement is mentioned:

“Peace be upon you, O Allah’s revenge and the son of His revenge...” See Mafatih al-Jinan.

[45.](#) – (ya litharat al-husayn): Refer to Shaykh al-Saduq, ‘Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha 2:268–269, Shaykh al-Saduq, al-Amali, pp. 192–193, H. 202; ‘Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 44:286, H. 23 (as quoted from the earlier reference books).

[46.](#) – Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Mazar, pp. 410–411.

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