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## Choosing the Tragedy of al-Zahra' as a Topic

There are two reasons behind choosing the tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa) as the subject-matter with which I will deal in a series of many topics the right wherein I would like to bring forth; they affect the issues of the creed and the sect; these are:

FIRST: This single issue, the tragedy of al–Zahra' (sa), demands an explanation and a clarification in order to remove whatever doubts that may entertain some people's minds, procedural or scientific inquiries, as some people label them, which they have frequently encountered during scores of radio interviews, in the printed press, or in many meetings, correspondence or debates during a lengthy period of time. Many various "evidences" were provided to deny that any violence took place against al–Zahra' (sa) at her home, or against Ali (as) at the home of al–Zahra' (sa). Such "evidences" and "proofs" were granted "modern ideological labels" such as "provocations," "question marks," or "researched doubts," up to the end of such expressions which have all become well known.

For this reason, I wanted to study this subject by dealing with such "provocations" in detail in order to be able to absorb all issues causing such doubts, and so that I may then be able to dismiss the "question marks" in their regard. Thus, I will perhaps deserve to be thanked as promised by someone who said once to me, "We appreciate the effort of those who respond to the question marks which we have made," 1 hoping that the subject will thus come to a conclusion and the doubts will be dispelled.

The "appreciation" promised by some people is actually distinguished in its type and is unique in its classification as we, by the will of Allah, will point out.

SECOND: The issue of al–Zahra' (sa), due to certain circumstances, transcended its specific scholarly nature, becoming a label pointing out to a general trend that goes beyond history's sphere to other aspects of Islamic concerns, such as issues relevant to the creed, scholastic theology, *usul*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, exegesis, and even linguistics, in addition to many other doctrinal and non–doctrinal issues. Yes, the issue of al–Zahra' (sa) has become the symbol, or the guiding title, that sums up its own diction and has its own specific stamp. It has its own spheres and characteristics, what it permits and what it abandons.

For the sake of all the above, I wished that my discussion of the said subject-matter be a contribution to

accomplishing the duty realized by every believing Muslim, one who finds no justification in aimlessly standing by, a spectator witnessing the attempts launched against the beliefs and tenets of this creed the impact of which affects its aspects and renown personalities.

I shall do so *not* based on upholding the "holy legacy" of the faith of the forefathers, as some people accuse us of doing while also accusing all adherents of the creed of Ahl al–Bayt (as) and righteous Shi'ite scholars. 2 Rather, I shall uphold the criterion of any decisive scholarly evidence that leaves no excuse whatsoever, thus laying the firm foundations of the truth.

When all such statements are made in order to raise doubts about theological issues, shaking their very foundations, everyone will have the right and the freedom to appropriately and scholarly respond to them, no matter from what source, without any compromise. Such is the responsibility of anyone who possesses the means of knowledge and scholarship that enable him to do so. This is what we actually witnessed when the foremost scholars of theology, in addition to many other scholars of the nation, did in order to denounce what someone has stated, declaring their rejection of the latter's statements. We expect them to continue to carry out their religious duty in this regard, and we shall remain steadfast with them on the same path.

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____, Fikr and Thaqafi newsletter, No. 18 (October 19, 1996).
____, Bayyinat (October 25, 1996).
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