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Discourse Three: The Affinities [Muq@rin@t] Of The Salat

Discussed in Eight Sections

Section One: On Some Disciplines of the Adhsn and Iqsmah

Discussed in Five Chapters

Chapter 1: General Secret And Disciplines Of The Adhin And Iqimah

Know that the selik to Allah has to announce attending the Meeting [mahdar], in the adhen, to the heart, which is the sultan of the covert and overt powers, and to other soldiers scattered throughout the visible and invisible realms. As the time of the presence and meeting has drawn near, he is to prepare them, so that, if he is of the eager lovers, he may not lose control at the sudden appearance of a manifestation; and if he is of the veiled, he may not enter the Sacred Presence [mahdar] without making ready the means and the disciplines for the occasion.

Thus, the general secret of the adh n is the announcement to the overt and covert powers and the

divine armies to attend the Meeting. Its general discipline is to be aware of the greatness of the position, its significance and the majesty of the Presence and the Present, and it is the servility, helplessness, poverty, incapability, and shortcoming of the "possible" (existent) in carrying out orders and deserving to attend the Meeting [mahdar], unless the kindness and mercy of Allah, the Most High, extend the helping hand to make up for the shortcomings.

The *iq* mah is to set up the visible and invisible powers in the Presence and to make them present in the Meeting; and its discipline is fear, awe, shyness, shame, and a firm hope in the boundless mercy. The *s* lik, during all the chapters of the *adh* n and the *iq* mah, is to continually inform the heart about the greatness of the Meeting, Presence and the Present, and to continually think of his own humility, inability and shortcoming, in order to bring about (in the heart) fear and awe, while, on the other hand, he is to show to his heart Allah's vast mercy and generous kindness, in order to bring about (in it) hope and eagerness.

So, eagerness and attraction will conquer the loving hearts, and with the steps of love and affection they (the s will proceed to the Presence of Intimacy, and their hearts, by means of that invisible attraction, will, till the end of the *Salat* and through their love of the Presence and the Present, practice mutual embracing and fondling with remembering Allah and thinking of Him.

Imem 'Ale ibn Abe Telib (a) is quoted to have said: "The best of the people is the one who adores worship, embraces it, whole-heartedly loves it, touches it with his body and disengages himself for it. He would not care whether he gains his share of this world with difficulty or with ease." 1

And the fearing hearts will be overpowered by the manifestation of the Greatness, and overwhelmed by the attraction of the Omnipotence, so that they (the silks) will be led to ecstasy, their hearts will melt with fear and awe, and their personal shortcomings and their feeling of humility and inability will hold them back from everything.

In a *had* th Mest ibn Ja'far (a) is quoted to have said: "Amer al-Mu'minen (Ale) (a) said: "Allah has servants whose hearts are broken by fearing Him, causing them to keep silent."2

Sometimes Allah, the Exalted, manifests Himself to His perfect friends in a kind manifestation, and the attraction of love becomes their guide, as the *had* th says that the Messenger of Allah (*s*) used to be waiting for the time of the *Salat*, his longing ever increasing, until at last he would say to Bil (the Messenger's *mu'adhdhin*): "Relieve us, O Bil S." Sometimes He would manifest Himself through greatness and sovereignty, such that they feel they are filled with fear and awe.

Such states are related from the Messenger of Allah (s) and the Im \mathbb{I} ms of guidance (a). Sometimes He manifests Himself in "the Collective Oneness" $[jam'\mathbb{I}-i\ ahad\mathbb{I}]$ according to the endurance of the hearts and the capacities of their vessels. We, the veiled, the busy with the world, the imprisoned in the prison of nature and in the chains of desires and hopes, and the deprived of the divine intellectual happiness, who, because of being drunken with nature, will not come back to sobriety nor get up from the deep

sleep till the dawn of eternity, are out of the calculations of these divisions, and excluded from this declaration.

Thus, the disciplines of the Presence, which suit us are different, and the performance of the cordial duties has a different form. But what should be the first and foremost, before all else, is to drive out of the heart the despair of Allah's mercy, and prevent it from losing hope for His generosity, for these are of Ibl Es' dangerous soldiers and of the inspirations of the human and jinn Satans. We should not imagine that those stations have been cut to suit particular persons, such that our hand of hope is too short to attain them, or man's treadings cannot reach them.

Hence, we should not mistake hand for foot, and with coldness and weakness, remain sticking to the land of nature forever. No, it is not like what has been imagined! But I still say that the special station of the perfect people of Allah is not possibly attainable by everybody. Yet, the spiritual stations and divine knowledge have unlimited degrees and many ranks. Many of those stations, sciences, states and stages are available to the (human) species, if only their coldness and weakness let them, and if only the obstinacy and fanaticism of the people of ignorance and obstinacy take their hands off the hearts of the servants of Allah, and they turn not to be Satans on the road of their travel to Allah.

So, the discipline of the Presence for us is that at the beginning, as we have not yet passed through the stage of sensation and the appearance, and think of nothing except the mundane greatness and splendor, while knowing nothing of the Divine Invisible Greatnesses, we have to look at Allah's Presence [mahdar] as we look at a great sultan's presence whose greatness has been realized by the heart, informing it that all kinds of greatness, majesty and glory are but manifestations of the greatness of the heavenly world which have descended to this world, and the heavenly world ['slam-i malakst] is of little importance compared with the invisible worlds.

Thus, we are to inform the heart that the world is the Sacred Presence of Allah, the Exalted, since He, the Glorified, is Present at all places and spaces, especially the *Salat* which is a special permission for attending the Presence, and a special date for meeting and intimacy with Allah, the Exalted. Now, having incited the heart to feel the Greatness and the Presence, even if at the beginning it was not so easy to do so, the heart gradually becomes familiar with it, and the imagery becomes real.

So, by observing the formal disciplines of dealing with the King of the kings and the Sultan of the sultans, and applying the disciplines of the apparent Presence, the heart will also be affected and will feel the greatness, and will gradually attain man's desired results. Similarly, inciting love and adoration can be achieved by means of perseverance and austerity.

So, at the beginning, one should exhibit the formal mercies and sensual blessings of Allah, the Exalted, to the heart, and then introduce to it the state of Mercifulness, Compassionateness and Bountifulness, until the heart gradually becomes intimate, and the exterior affects the interior, and the kingdom of the interior is illuminated by the effects of the Beauty, and then the desired results will be achieved.

If a man carried out the matter and strove in the way of Allah, the Exalted, He would help him and save him by His invisible hand from the darkness of the world of nature, and would throw the light of His Beauty to the dark earth of his heart, and turn him into a spiritual heaven:

"And whoever does a good deed, We add unto its good for him. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Thankful."4

- 1. Was il ash-Sh ah, vol. 1, "Book of Purity," sec. on "Preliminaries to Worships," ch. 19, had to 2, p. 61, quoted from the Messenger of Allah (s).
- 2. Bih@r al-Anw@r, vol. 75, "Book of ar-Rawdah," ch. 25, had@th 1, p. 309, as cited from Tuhaf al-'Uq@l.
- 3. Refer to footnote I78
- 4. STrah ash-ShTr 42:23.

Chapter 2: Some Disciplines And Secrets Of Takbers In The Adhen And Iqemah

Know that, as the adh n (call to the Salat) is the announcement of the presence [hud n] of the external and internal powers of the soul in the Presence [mahdar] of Allah for the sake of praising His Sacred Essence according to all the Names, Attributes, Affairs and n since the Salat, as has already been mentioned, is a comprehensive praising of the Sacred Essence according to the manifestation of the Greatest Name, which is the state of "the Collective Oneness of the Names" [ahadiyyat-ijam'-iasm'] in His Unity [hadrat-iwnhidiyyat], and the state of manifestation through the collectivity [jam'] differentiation [tafr n], overtness [zuh n] and covertness [but n] in the essences [a'yn] and essential names [asm']-[a'n]-[a'

So, at first, he introduces the said Greatness and Majesty to the invisible and visible powers of his own kingdom. Then, secondly, to the angels of Allah in charge of the invisible powers spread in the kingdom of the soul. Thirdly, to the beings of the invisible and visible worlds, and fourthly, to the angels of Allah in charge of the Kingdom of the heavens and the earths (lands = arad n). So, through these four takb rs (saying: "Allah is Greater") he announces the Majesty of the Grand Name (Greatest Name) to all the dwellers of the invisible and visible worlds of the inward and outward kingdoms.

And this, by itself, is an announcement of his being incapable of undertaking the duty of praising the Sacred Essence, and an announcement of his falling short of performing the Salat. This, in itself, is one of the general affairs of the Salat and of the comprehensive disciplines concerning praising and worshipping, which must be before the Salat eyes during the whole period of performing the Salat.

That is why the *takb*r is repeated in the *adh*n and the *iq*mah, as well as in the *Salat*. It is also repeated when passing from one stage to another so that the *s*lik's innate inability, and the Greatness and the Glory of the Sacred Essence are confirmed in his heart.

As such, its discipline, as it appears, is that the <code>selik</code> should, in each <code>takber</code>, remind himself of his inability and Allah's Majesty. On another supposition, it is possible that each one of these preliminary <code>takber</code> of the <code>adhen</code> points to a state: The first <code>takber</code> means: He is Greater than the attributive Essence; the second means: He is Greater than the attributive Attribute; the third means: He is Greater than the attributive Name; and the fourth means: He is Greater than the attributive Act. Thus, it is as if the <code>selik</code> says: <code>Allehu</code> <code>akbar</code> [Allah is Greater] than your description of His Essence, or of His Essencemanifestations, and He is Greater than your describing Attributes, His Names and His Acts, or their respective manifestations.

In an elaborated speech quoted from Am®r al-Mu'min®n 'Al® ('a) it is said: "...The other aspect is that *All®hu akbar* implies negation of His quality, as if he (the *mu'adhdhin* = the one who speaks out the *adh®n*)" says: "Allah's attribute, with which He is qualified, is far above being comprehended by the describers," for the describers describe Him according to their own measure, not according to the measure of His Greatness and Majesty. He is far above His quality being understood by the describers..." as the *had®th* goes.1

Another important discipline of the *takb*rs is that the *s*lik is to strive, and, by cordial austerities, he is to prepare his heart to be the place for the Majesty of Allah, the Glorified, and to regard Greatness, Glory, Sovereignty and Majesty to be exclusively ascribed to the Sacred Essence of Allah, the Most High, and to exclude the others from Majesty. If he feels in his heart even a tiny bit of anyone else's greatness, without taking it to be the light of that of Allah's, his heart is sick and is controlled by Satan.

It is quite possible that Satan's intrusion would cause the sovereignty of the majesty of other than Allah, in the heart, to be more than that of Allah's, and the heart would regard him greater than Allah. In this case, man would be counted among the hypocrites. The symptom of this devastating disease is that man regards the pleasure of the creatures to be preferred to the pleasure of Allah, and in order to obtain the pleasure of the created, he would incur the displeasure of the Creator.

As-Sediq (a) is quoted to have said: "When you say: Allehu akbar, slight whatever is there between the high (heaven) and the earth, regarding it below His Majesty, because if Allah looked into the heart of the servant while telling the takber, and saw therein something contradicting his takber, He would say: "O you liar! Are you deceiving Me? By My Might and My Majesty, I will deprive you of (tasting) the sweetness of remembering Me, and I will exclude you from My proximity and from getting pleasure through your supplication."2

My dear, the fact that our wretched hearts are deprived of the sweetness of remembering Allah, the Exalted, and that the enjoyment of supplication to the Sacred Essence is not tasted by our spirit, and

that we are prevented from reaching the proximity of His Threshold and deprived of the manifestations of His Beauty and Majesty, is because our hearts are sick and faulty, attracted by the world, stuck to it and wrapped in the veils of the darkness of nature. And this fact deprives us of recognizing Allah's Majesty and of discerning the lights of His Beauty and Glory.

As long as our look at the beings is Satanic and independent, we shall never drink of the wine of intimacy, not attain the pleasure of supplication. As long as we believe that in the world of existence there can be glory, might, majesty, greatness and dignity for any created being, and as long as we are wrapped in the veils of the created specifications [ta'ayyun to the dominion [sult not majesty of Allah, the Glorified, will not manifest in our hearts.

So, of the disciplines of *takb* r is that the *s* lik should not stop at its outer form, or be satisfied with its wordings and with mere pronunciations of the tongue. First, he is to prove to the heart, with the power of argument and the light of divine knowledge, Allah's Glory and the confinement of greatness and majesty only to the Sacred Essence of Allah, Most High, informing it of the poverty, humility and helplessness of all the possible dwellers and all the corporeal and spiritual beings.

After that, with the power of austerity, frequent intimacy [mur®wadah] and complete familiarity, he is to enliven the heart with this divine grace and grant it spiritual and intellectual life and happiness. When the s®lik realizes the poverty and the humility of the possible (the creatures) and Allah's Greatness and Majesty, and puts that before his eyes, while his contemplation and remembrance reach their assigned limit, and the heart attains familiarity and tranquility, he will see with the eye of insight the effects of Allah's Glory and Majesty in all beings, and the diseases and faults of his heart will be cured.

Only then will he taste the deliciousness of supplication and the sweetness of remembering Allah, and the heart will affirm Allah's Sovereign Majesty, and the effects of Majesty will appear in the exterior and in the interior of the kingdom, and the heart, the tongue, the outside and the inside will go in harmony. So, all the external and internal powers, visible and invisible, recite *All* hu akbar, and one of the thick curtains is drawn away, and he gets one stage nearer to the truth of the *Salat*.

There is a reference to some of what has been said in a lengthy <code>had</code> in '<code>Ilal</code> ash-<code>Shar</code>'i', quoting Im Ja'far as-<code>S</code> diq ('a) describing the <code>mi'r</code> He said: "Allah, the Glorified and Almighty, sent down to the Prophet a carriage of light comprised of forty sorts of light which were around the '<code>Arsh</code>. The '<code>Arsh</code> of Allah, Blessed and Most High, blurs the eyes of the onlookers. One of them was yellow, and it became the cause of the yellowness of the yellow.

Another one was red, and it became the cause of the redness of the red..." Then he added: "... He [the Messenger (s)] sat in it and it ascended him to the lower heaven. The angels ran to the outskirts of the heaven, and then they fell in prostration, and said: "All-Glorified and All-Holy is our Lord, the Lord of the angels and the Spirit. How this light is like the light of our Lord!" Jibr [Gabriel] said: "All hu akbar!" The angels stopped talking, and the heaven was opened. The angels gathered and came

to pay tribute to the Prophet (s) group after group..." as the had th goes.3

In this noble *had* th there are great secrets to which the hand of our hopes is too short to reach, and what can be said is now out of our purpose, like the secret of the descension of the carriage of light, the secret of the many lights, the secret of their diversity, the secret of the figure forty, the secret of its being sent down by Allah, the secret of their gathering around the 'Arsh, the truth of the 'Arsh in this respect, the secret of the yellowness of the yellow and the redness of the red caused by them, the secret of the angels' running, their bowing, praising and glorifying, and likening his light to Allah's, and the like. To speak about each of them would be lengthy.

Yet, that which suits this occasion and testifies to our subject is that the angels of Allah quieted down as they heard Gabriel's *takb* r, and gathered around the candle of the meeting of the Absolute Guardian. By that *takb* r the first heaven opened, and one of the curtains, which blocked the way to Allah, was drawn away. It should be noted that the curtains, which are pushed aside by the *adh* r are other than the curtains, which are in the opening *takb* rs. We shall probably refer to this concept later on, *insh* (Allah willing).

- 1. Bih er al-Anwer, vol. 81, p. 131, "Book of the Salat," ch. on "The Adhen and the Iqemah," had the 24.
- 2. Misbsh ash-Sharsah, ch. 13, on "Finishing the Salat"; al-Mahajjat al-Bayds, printed by as-Sadsq Library, vol. 1, p. 385; Mustadarak al-Wassi, "Book of as-Salat, sec. on "The Acts of the Salat," ch. 2, hadsth 9.
- 3. 'llal ash-Shar@'i', vol. 2, p. 312, sec. on "The Causes of the Wud@', the Adh@n and the Salat," had@th 1, p. 312.

Chapter 3: Some Disciplines Concerning Testifying Divinity And Its Connection With The Adhsn And The Salat

Know that divinity has many states [maq met], which, according to "collectivity" [jam'], are explained in two: **First**: Divinity of Essence. **Second**: Divinity of Action. If by testifying that divinity is confined to Allah we mean the Divinity of Essence, its truth, with that of takber, will come close to each other if ileh (divinity) is derived from aliha fe 'sh-shay', i.e. "He became perplexed about it," or derived from leha, i.e. "He became lofty" or derived from leha yalehu, i.e. "He concealed himself."

In this case its connection to the adh n and the Salat becomes known by referring to the chapter of

takb r, and so does its discipline. But to repeat it again, though not void of some advantage, is contrary to brevity. If we take *aliha* to mean: "He worshipped," and *mal* h to mean: "the worshipped," then the silik must make the formal testimony of the confinement of deity to Allah, the Most High, comply with the inner cordial testimony, and he should know that should there be in the heart a deity other than Allah, he would be a hypocrite in his testimony.

So, the $s \otimes lik$ is to convey to his heart, by whatever austerity, his testimony about divinity, and to smash in his heart the big and small idols which have been engraved by the intruding hands of Satan and the evil-commanding soul, and to sweep them away, so that he may become fit to be in the Presence of His Sacred Essence. As long as the idols of loving the world and mundane affairs are still in the ka'bah of the heart, the $s \otimes lik$ will find no way to his goal. So, testifying to divinity is to announce to the worldly and heavenly powers that the false deities and the crooked objectives should be trod upon so as to be able to ascend to Allah's Proximity.

But if the confinement of divinity is intended for Divinity of Action, which is management and effectiveness, the meaning of the testimony will be: I testify that there is no manager and no effective influence in the world of achievement, and in the visible and the invisible save the Sacred Essence of Allah, the Most High. If the selik's heart cherished dependence on any being among the beings, and trusted any individual among the individuals, his heart would be diseased and his testimony false.

Thus, the *s* lik must first strengthen, with judicial proof, the fact that "There is no effecter [*mu'aththir*] in the (world of) existence except Allah." He must not evade the divine knowledge, which is the objective of sending prophets, and not turn away from remembering Allah and from the affairs of the Essence and Attributes, for the source of all (kinds of) happiness is the remembrance of Allah:

"And whoever turns away from remembering me, his shall surely be a straitened life."1

After attaining the truth of this divine delicacy, which is the source of the divine knowledge and the door of the doors of the hidden facts, by way of thinking and reasoning, he is to make his heart, through remembrance and austerity, familiar with them until it believes in them. This would be the first stage of the truthfulness of his words, and it is marked by complete dependence on Allah, and by taking the eye of greed and hope away from all beings, a fact which results in believing in Allah's Unity of Action, being one of the great states of the people of knowledge.

Having ascribed all effects to Allah, and closed the eye of greed against all beings, save His Sacred Essence, the *s* lik becomes worthy attending the Sacred Presence, or rather his heart becomes, by nature, attentive to that Presence. Repeating the testimony may be for confirming it, and by the testimony we mean one of the two testimonies, or it may not be a repetition, but one may refer to the Divinity of Essence and the other to the Divinity of Action. In this instance, its repetition at the end may be to confirm them, and that is why it is not mentioned there with the very words: "I testify."

A Gnostic Note

Know that testimony is of many stages, of which we shall be satisfied with referring to a few, as suits these pages.

The first is the verbal testimony [shah@dat-i qawliyyah], which is already known. If the verbal testimony is not accompanied by cordial testimony, even in a lower stage, it will not be a testimony, but a deception and hypocrisy, as it was mentioned in the had@th concerning takb@r, quoted from Im@m as-S@diq ('a).2

The second is the Practical Testimony [shah@dat-i filiyyah], which means that man testifies through the practices of his organs. For example, he is, in the type and method of his action, to apply the fact that: "There is no effecter [mu'aththir] in the (world of) existence save Allah," and, as his verbal testimony requires him to think that nobody is effective, he should work out the plan of his acts accordingly. Hence, he should not extend the hand of need to anybody except to the Sacred Presence of Allah, the Most High, nor should he open the eye of expectation at any being. He should show himself rich and in no need, before the weak servants, and keep aloof from weakness, humility and inability.

This is frequently referred to by noble *Hadiths*, as is in a narrative stated in the noble *al–K* f. "A believer's dignity is to manage without the help of the people." Showing oneself well off and prosperous is one of the religious commendable practices, while demanding things from people is undesirable. In short, one must put to practice the divine grace: "There is no effecter in the (world of) existence except Allah" in his external kingdom.

The third is the Cordial Testimony [shah@dat-i qalbiyyah], which is the source of the practical and verbal testimonies, as without it, these would not come to actuality. And it is that Allah's Unity of Action manifests in the heart, which realizes, by way of its inner secret, the truth of this grace, and separates itself from other beings.

Most of the narratives quoted from the infallible *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) concerning abandoning looking with greed at what is in the hands of the people, and despairing of the servants, and trusting and confiding in Allah, the Exalted and Most High refer to this situation.

It is in *al-K* on the authority of 'Al on the authority of 'Al on the hands of others, and whoever placed no hope on the people in anything, and entrusted himself to Allah, the Exalted, in all his affairs, Allah would respond to him in all the things." *Hadiths* of this kind are many.

The fourth is the Essence Testimony (Personal Testimony = $shah \mathbb{E} dat - i dh \mathbb{E} tiyyah$), i.e. the existential testimony, and it appears in the perfect holy men. To the holy men, this testimony is present in all beings, in one way or another. Perhaps the $\mathbb{E} yah$:

"Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and the possessors of knowledge,"5

Is a hint at the Essence Testimony, for Allah, the Exalted, in the state of "the Collective Oneness" [ahadiyyat–i dhītiyyah] gives Personal testimony to His own Unity [wahdīniyyat], because mere existence by itself denotes the Essence–Oneness [ahīdiyyat–i dhītiyyah], and in the rising of the Day of Resurrection it appears in Complete Unity [wahdīniyyat–i tīmmah].

This Oneness [ah diyyat] appears first in the mirror of the Collectivity [jam'], then in the mirror of distinctness [tafs]. For this reason He said: "...and the angels and the possessors of knowledge." In this instance there are many states of knowledge [ma'drif] that are out of the obligation of these pages to explain.

Connection

In the exegesis of Muhammad ibn Mas'rd al-'Ayyrshr, quoting 'Abd as-Samad ibn Bashr, it is said: "The beginning of the *adhrn* was mentioned to Abr'Abdullrh (Imr as-Srdiq) ('a), and he said: "The Messenger of Allah (s) was (once) sleeping in the shadow of the *ka'bah*, when Gabriel came to him with a bowl of water from Paradise. He woke him up and told him to wash himself with it.

Then he (the Prophet) was put in a carriage with a thousand colors of light, and he was taken high up to the doors of the heaven. When the angels saw him, they ran away from the doors of the heaven, exclaiming: "Two gods, a god in the earth and a god in the heaven!" Allah commanded Gabriel to shout: "Allahu akbar! "So the angels returned to the doors of the heaven.

The door was opened, and he proceeded until he reached the second heaven. The angels ran away from the doors of the heaven. There he said: "I testify that there is no god but Allah! I testify that there is no god but Allah! "The angels returned, as they realized that he was a creature. Then the door was opened and he went in..." as the *had* to goes on.6

A similar concept is stated in a narrative in '*Ilal ash–Shar*®i'. 7 These *Hadiths* denote that testifying to Allah's Divinity opens the doors of the heaven and penetrates the barriers, and causes the angels of Allah to gather. The veil which is penetrated through by testifying to His Divinity and by confessing it to be exclusively His, is of the thick veils of darkness, and, as long as the *s*®lik is wrapped in it, he will have no way to attend the Presence, and unless this door opens to him, he will not be admitted.

That barrier is the veil of the multiplicity of acts, and to fall in this multiplicating veil results in taking the created beings to be effective and influential, which means regarding them to be independent in their action, which is admitting, the impossible and is a great polytheism, while, on the other hand, the result of testifying to the divinity to be exclusively Allah's, is testifying to the Unity of Action and annihilating the multiplicities in Allah's Act, and denying anyone else to have any effect or effectiveness, and believing

that independence belongs to Allah, the Exalted.

It was by means of this testimony that the angels of the heaven came out of the veil of the multiplicity of "A god in the earth and a god in the heaven," and returned from fleeing away and dispersing to familiarity and gathering, and then the doors of the heaven opened to them. So, the silik must also penetrate through this veil of his darkness by way of this testimony and open the doors of heaven to himself, and step out of the heavy veil of the independence, so that the way of ascension to the milrej of His Proximity becomes closer.

But this cannot be brought about by mere verbal utterances of remembering Allah, as that is why our acts of worship do not cross the limit of the mundane formality, and, thus, no door will be opened to us and no veil will be pushed off our faces.

- 1. STrah TT-HT 20: 124.
- 2. Refer to footnote 190.
- 3. Use al-Kefe, vol. 3, "Book of Faith and Disbelief," ch. on "Doing without the People," hadeth 1, p. 218.
- 4. Ibid., had th 3.
- 5. S፻rah ፻l-i 'Imr፻n 3:18.
- 6. Al-'Ayyashi's Exegesis (on the Qur'an), vol. 1, p. 157, Commenting on S⊡rah al-Baqarah, narrative 530.
- 7. 'Ilal ash-Shar i'i, vol. 2, p. 312.

Chapter 4: Some Disciplines Of Testifying To The (Prophet's) Messengership Implying Testifying To The Guardianship

Be aware that this spiritual journey and faithful ascension cannot be made with this broken leg, ruptured reins, blind eyes and lightless heart:

"And whomever Allah has not given light, for him there is no light" – (Surah Nur, 24:40).

Scientifically speaking, to connect between the novel [h dith] and the Eternal [qad m], the changing and the Unchanging, there should be an intermediate, a connector, with the characteristic of being

unchanging and changing, eternal and novel. Without such an intermediate, the Emanation of the Eternal and the Unchanging would not pass to the changing and the novel in the divine law, and the universal and existential connection would not take place.

As regards the connector between these two, the scientific opinions of the experts in the evidential knowledge ['ul\mathbb{I}m-i burh\mathbb{I}n\mathbb{I}] are diverse, as the gnostic taste is different, to give the details of which is out of the scope of these papers. In the gnostic taste, the connector is the Sacred Emanation [fayd-i muqaddas], the Expansive Existence [wuj\mathbb{I}d-i munbasit], which has the position [maq\mathbb{I}m] of the big isthmus [barzakhiyyat-i kubr\mathbb{I}] and the great intermediate [wasatiyyat-i 'uzm\mathbb{I}], and it is the very position of the spirituality and the guardianship of the Seal of the Prophets, which is united with the position of 'Al\mathbb{I}'s General Guardianship [wil\mathbb{I}yat-i mutlaq-i 'Alawiyyah].

The relevant details are stated in the *Misb®h al-Hid®yah* by the writer.1

Similarly, in the ascending spiritual connection which is the opposite of the descending existential connection, or in other words, it is "the contraction of existence" [qabd-i wuj description] and returning to the Beginning there is need for an intermediate, without which it does not take place, and the connection of the imperfect and the chained hearts, and of the limited descending spirits, with the Complete, Super Complete and the Absolute from all aspects, is not implemented without the spiritual intermediates and the invisible connectors.

If somebody thinks that Allah, the Exalted, is self-subsisting [qayy m] with each being and encompassing each of the entities [akw n] without the intermediation of the intermediates, as is referred to in the noble yah:

"There is no living creature but He holds it by the forelock,"2

He is mixing up the states [maq@m@t] and is making a mistake in the status [i'tib@r@t], mingling the state of the multiplicity of the stages of existence with the vanishing [fan@t] of the individuations [ta'ayyun@t]. This discussion, however, is not so much connected to this paper, and, actually, what has already been said was caused by the overflowing of the pen.

In short, adhering to the masters of graces [awliy -i ni'am] who have themselves found the way of ascension to ma rij and completed their journey to Allah is a must for the travelers to Allah, as is frequently mentioned in the noble Hadiths, such that in Was il (Was il ash -Sh lah) there is a chapter concerning the invalidity of worship without adhering to the guardianship of the Imams (the 12 Imams) and believing in their Imamate.

In Was it is quoted from the noble al-K f, on the authority of its writer quoting Muhammad ibn Muslim who said: "I was told by Im m Baq r al-'Ul m (the fifth Im m) (a) who said: "Know, O Muhammad, that the leaders of despotism and their followers are isolated from Allah's religion. They are misleading and misled. So, their deeds are like the ashes at which a violent wind blows on a windy day and it disperses them." 3

In another narrative from Im[®]m al-B[®]qir, he said: "If a man spent his nights performing the *Salat*, spent his days fasting, gave out all his wealth in charity, and went to *hajj* every year of his life, yet he did not know the guardianship of Allah's friend to follow him and return to him in all his deeds, he would have no right to ask Allah, the Glorious and Almighty, for any reward, nor would he be of the people of faith."4

Shaykh as-Sadeq, quoting Abe Hamza ath-Thumele, says that he said: "Imem 'Ale ibn al-Husayn ('a) asked us: "Which spot is most preferred?" We said "Allah, His Messenger and the son of His Messenger know better." He said: "The best of spots for us is that which is situated between the *rukn* and the *maqem* (two places in the *Ka'bah*). If some one lives as long as the life of Neh who lived among his people for a thousand years less fifty and spends it in fasting in daytime and in worshipping at nights in that spot, and then goes to meet Allah without accepting our guardianship, he will not be benefited by it whatsoever."5

The narratives on this topic are too many to be contained in this summary.

The discipline of testifying to the Messengership is to convey to the heart the testimony of the Messenger's being sent by Allah, as well as the greatness of the state of the Messengership, especially that of the Last Messenger, since the whole circle of existence, the invisible and visible worlds, from the viewpoints of creation, legislation, existence, and guidance, are living on the crumbs of his table.

That great man is the means of Allah's Emanation and the connection between Allah and the creatures. Had it not been for his spiritual status [maq@m] and absolute guardianship, no existing being could have been worthy of being benefited by the state of the Invisible Oneness [ghayb-i ahad@], and Allah's grace would not have passed over to any being, and the light of guidance would not have shone onto anyone of the internal and external worlds. He is the light mentioned in the @yah of N@r (Light):

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth."6

When the greatness of the legislator of the religion and of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds enters a man's heart, the importance of his precepts and rules enter the heart, too. Then, when the heart has comprehended that greatness, the other visible and invisible powers would submit to it, and the sacred *shar* and would be observed in the entire human kingdom. The sign of the truthfulness of the testimony is that its effects will appear in all the invisible and visible powers, and they will keep adherent to it, as has already been stated.

From what has so far been stated, the reason of testifying to the Messengership in the *adh*n, the *iq*mah and the *Salat* has become clear, for the traveler on this spiritual road is in need of adhering to that sacred being, so that he may accompany him and have his helping guidance in performing this spiritual ascension.

Another aspect of this testimony is the announcement to the mundane and heavenly powers that the *Salat*, which is the reality of the ascension $[mi'r \tilde{y}]$ of the believers and the source of the knowledge of the people of gnosticism and of faith, is the result of the complete revelation [kashf] of Muhammad (s),

who, with his spiritual journey, divine attractions and the embers of the Beneficent, attained a position "At the distance of two bows or closer still,"7

Revealing its truth, following the Essential, Nominal and Attributive manifestations and intimate inspirations in the Invisible Oneness. In fact, this is a souvenir, a gift that he brought from his moral and spiritual journey for his *ummah*, which is the best of the *ummah*s, and by that he favored them and overwhelmed them with blessings.

When this belief sets inside the heart and is fixed by repetition, the *s* lik will, as a matter of course, understand the greatness of the state and the place, and will proceed, with fear and hope, to cover this stage, and it is hoped, *insh* All h (Allah willing), if he does his best to perform it, that master will assist him and lead him to the state of "the Proximity of the One" [*qurb-i ahadiyy*], which is the original innate objective. In the divine sciences it has been proved that the return of all beings is implemented by means of the Perfect Man:

"As He brought you forth in the beginning, so shall you also return."8

"With you Allah started and with you He will end, and the return of the creatures is up to you."9

A Gnostic Note

In the honorable *had* th in '*llal ash–Shar* 'i', which gives details about the *Salat* of the *mi'r* is and describes it, it is said that when the Messenger of Allah (s) mounted on the mount of light, which had been sent down by the Lord of Might, and ascended accompanied by Gabriel, and reached the third heaven, the angels ran away, bowed and glorified Allah.

Gabriel said: "I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." The angels gathered and greeted the Messenger of Allah, and asked him about Am®r al-Muˈmin®n (ˈAl®). The doors of the heavens opened and the Messenger ascended to the fourth heaven. There, the angels of Allah said nothing. Then the doors of the heaven opened, and the angels gathered, and Gabriel finished reciting the <code>ig®mah...</code>" 10 etc.

Al-'Ayyshs, in his exegesis of the Qur'an, relates almost the same context.

From this *had* to one may gather that the angels of each of the heavens were incapable of enduring to see the Ahmadian Beauty, and they fell bowing at seeing his sacred light, and dispersed, thinking it was the light of Allah. Then, as they heard the chapters of the *adh* n and the *iq* mah they came back to his intimacy, the doors of the heavens opened and the veils were lifted.

Hence, the $s \mathbb{I} / i k$ is to come out from these veils by means of the said testimonies by testifying to the Messengership he is to completely come out from the veil of the creational individuality $[ta'ayyun-ikhalq \mathbb{I}]$, because the position of Messengership which He assigned to the most honorable of the

creatures, is the position of absolute annihilation [fan] and complete dependence, since the final absolute Messengership is the big divine isthmus *khil* fah (vicegerency, succession).

It is a vicegerency [khil fah] in respect of appearance, manifestation, genesis, and legislation. The vicegerent [khal fah] is not to be independent nor to have individuality in any way; as otherwise, the vicegerency becomes the principalship itself, which is not possible for any of the beings.

So, the s lik is to convey the great state of the Ahmadian khil lat to the innermost of his heart and soul, by means of which he is to remove the veil and penetrate the barriers, and to completely come out of the veils of the creational individuation. Then, the doors of all the heavens will open to him and he will attain, unveiled, his objective.

A Juristic Branch and a Gnostic Principal

In some unreliable narratives it is stated that after testifying to the Messengership in the *adh*n one is to say: "I testify that 'All is *waliyull*h (Allah's friend)" twice. In other narratives, one is to say: "I testify that 'All is truly Amer al-Mu'minen' twice. In some others, one is to say: "Muhammad and his progeny are the best of people." Ash-Shaykh as-Sadeq (may Allah have mercy upon him) took these narratives to be invented and he denied them.11

It is well known among the 'ulam\(\text{u}'\) (may Allah be pleased with them) that these narratives are not reliable. Some narrators regard them among the commendables, due to "the negligence of the proofs of the laws". This opinion, however, is not far from being true, although if "absolute proximity" [qurbat-i mutlaqah] is intended, reciting it is better and more admired, because after testifying to the Messengership, it is desirable to testify to the guardianship and the leadership of the believers.

In the <code>had</code> of <code>ihtij</code> (argumentation) it is said that Qsim ibn Mu'swiyah said: "I said to Imsm as—Sidiq that the people of the <code>Sunnah</code> relate a <code>had</code> about the <code>mi'r</code>, that when the Messenger of Allah was taken on the <code>mi'r</code>, he saw upon the <code>'Arsh</code>: "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and Abs Bakr as—Siddsq." He said: "Glory be to Allah! They changed everything even this!" He said: "Yes". Then he continued: "When Allah, the Exalted, created the <code>'Arsh</code>, He wrote upon it: "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and <code>'Als</code> is the Commander (Leader) of the Faithful.

He ordered these to be written on the water, on the Chair (Throne), on the Tablet, on *Isr* fills forehead, on the two wings of Gabriel, on the shoulders of the heavens and the earth, on the top of the mountains, on the sun and on the moon." Then the Im added: "When anyone of you says: "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," let him say: "All is the Commander (Leader) of the Faithful." 12

In short, this noble remembrance, after testifying to the Messengership is generally recommendable. In

the chapters of the *adh*n especially, it is probably commendable. Nevertheless, as the notable '*ulam*n' have denied those narratives, one may pronounce it by way of precaution and with the general intention of proximity (to Allah), not as a feature of the *adh*n.

As to the gnostic note concerning "writing these words on all the beings, as from the High 'Arsh to the low earth," it is that the truth of the *khil* fah and *wil* yah (successorship and guardianship) is the manifestation of divinity, which is the origin of existence and its perfection. Every being which has a share of existence also has a share of the truth of divinity and its manifestation, which is the truth of the *khil* fah and *wil* yah, and the divine grace is fixed on the foreheads of all beings all over the universe, as from the invisible worlds to the end of the visible world.

The said divine grace is the truth of "the Expansive Existence" [wuj d-i munbasit], "the Breath of the Beneficent" [nafas ar-rahm n] and "the Created-in Right" [haqq-i makhl qun bih n], which are the very inside of the Last Successorship and of 'Al n's General Guardianship. On this, the gnostic Shaykh Sheh bed (may his spirit be sanctified) used to say that the testimony to Messengership implies the testimony to Guardianship, because Guardianship is the inside of Messengership.

The writer says that these two testimonies are both implied in the testimony to His Divinity, and the testimony to Messengership implies the other two testimonies, and also the testimony to Guardianship implies the other two testimonies. Praise be to Allah at the beginning and at the end.

Chapter 5: Some Disciplines Of The Hayya 'AII(S)

When the wayfarer to Allah has announced by his *takb* rs that Allah is greater than any description, and by testifying to His Divinity has exclusively confined all attributes and praise, or, actually, every influence and effect, to Allah, and confessed his incapability of managing the *amr*, and by the testimony to the Messengership and Guardianship, he has chosen his comrade and company and adhered to the sacred position of successorship and guardianship as it is said: "The companion (first) then the journey" 13 then, with quite an explicit tone, he is to prepare his visible and invisible powers for the *Salat*, announcing the presence to them by saying: "Hayya 'al\! 's-Salat," (come to the *Salat*) twice.

Its repetition is intended to complete awakening [$tanb \ b$] and waking up [$tanb \ b$], or one is for the inner powers of the kingdom, and the other is for the outer powers of the kingdom, since they also accompany the $s \ b$ ik on his journey, as has already been said, and will follow, too.

In this stage, the discipline of the $s \otimes lik$ is to tell his heart and powers, even the innermost of the heart, that the time of presence is near so as to prepare himself for that, fully observing the formal and the spiritual disciplines. Then he is to announce the general secret and result of the Salat, by the calling: "Hayya 'al \subseteq 'l-fal \subseteq h" and "Hayya 'al \subseteq khayr 'il-'amal" (come to the best of deeds) so as to wake up the fitrat (disposition = nature), because prosperity and salvation are absolute happiness, and all the human beings love absolute happiness by nature.

The innate nature [fitrat] is in quest of perfection and comfort. The truth of happiness is the absolute perfection and absolute comfort, and that is brought about in the Salat, which is the best of deeds, cordially, formally, outwardly, and inwardly.

This is because the *Salat*, according to its form and appearance, is a great and comprehensive remembrance and a praise of the Greatest Name, which encompasses all the divine affairs [$shu^{t} n$]. For this reason, the adh n and the iq n open with the word "Allah" and end with it, and All n akbar (Allah is Greater) is repeated in all stages of the *Salat*, and the three tawh n (professions of the Unity of Allah), which are the delight of eyes of the holy men, are effected in the *Salat*, in which the form [s n n] of absolute annihilation and complete return are mixed.

According to the interior and the truth, it is ascension to the proximity of Allah, the truth of reaching the Beauty of the Absolute Beautiful and vanishing in that Sanctified Essence, dearly loved by the inborn nature [fitrat]. It is by the Salat that the complete calmness, absolute comfort and the complete mental happiness are achieved:

"Surely by Allah's remembrance are the hearts set at rest."14

Therefore, the absolute perfection, which is attaining to Allah's Court, joining the Necessary Limitless Sea, discerning the Eternal Beauty, and being immersed in the Sea of Absolute Light, is effected in the *Salat*, in which absolute comfort, complete rest and perfect calmness also appear, bringing about the two corners of happiness.

So, the *Salat* is perfect prosperity, and it is the best of the deeds. The *s* lik will have to repeat this divine grace, to remind the heart and to wake up his disposition [*fitrat*], and after having it in his heart, his inner nature would attach importance to it and observe it, since it looks for perfection and happiness. The same point is true in respect of the repetition.

When the selik reaches this stage, he announces his presence by saying: "qad qemati's-Salat" (The Salat has just started). Then, he is to see himself at the Presence of the Master of the kings of the worlds of existence and the Sultan of the sultans and the Absolute Great, and to inform his heart about the dangers of the Presence, all of which are due to the incapability and the inefficiency of "the possible", and to feel ashamed of not carrying out the amr, approaching, with the steps of fear and hope, towards the Generous.

He is not to regard himself possessing traveling provisions and company. He is to see his heart empty of safety, not to think his deeds good ones; rather, worth not a penny. Should this state become firm in his heart, he would hope to get Allah's care:

"Or who answers the distressed one, when he calls unto Him, and removes the evil?"15

Connection and Completion

Muhammad ibn Ya'q®b, quoting Ab® 'Abdull®h as-S®diq ('a), says: "When you recite the adh®n and the iq®mah, two rows of angels will perform the Salat behind you, but if you said the iq®mah (only), one row of the angels would perform the Salat behind you." 16 There are many other Hadiths to the same effect, some of which say that the length of each row is as the distance between the east and the west. 17

Another *had* th says that when Im as-Sidiq (a) was asked about the length of each row, he said: "The length of the shortest row is as the distance between the east and the west, and the length of the longest is as the distance between the heaven and the earth." Is In some narratives it is said that if he said the *iq* mah without the adh n, an angel would stand at his right side and another at his left side 19, and other similar narratives.

The difference among the narratives may be due to the difference among the knowledge and the sincerity of the *musall* n, as can be inferred from some narratives in this respect, such as the narrative concerning performing the *Salat* with the *adh* n and the *iq* nh in the desert or wasteland. 20 In short, when the s leader of the *Salat* for the angels of Allah, and his heart as the leader of his visible and invisible powers, and gathers, with the *adh* n and the *iq* nh, his visible and invisible powers, together with the angels of Allah, he is to regard his heart which is the best of the external and internal powers, and the intercessor for the other powers as an *im* n.

And, as the heart is liable for the recitings of the *ma'm®m®n* [*musall®n*] after its leadership, and as their faults are undertaken by it, the *s®lik* is to be quite keen and a good observant of its presence, and to completely guard the disciplines of the Sacred Presence, making the most of this Sanctified Meeting, admitting the great importance of the attention and the support of the angels of Allah, taking them to be of the favors of the Real Benefactor, and acknowledging his incapability of giving the due thanks to His Sacred Majesty for these great blessings. Surely He is the Benefactor!

- 1. Misb®h al-Hid®yah is a book written in the Arabic language by Im®m Khomein® (may Allah sanctify his honorable soul), explaining some truths and knowledge concerning the caliphate and guardianship. In the Preface to this honorable book he says: "I like to uncover for you, in this paper, by the help of Allah, the guardian of guidance in the beginning and in the end, an indication of the Muhammadan caliphate, and an exudation of the truth of the 'Alawian guardianship (upon them be the greeting from the beginning to eternity) and how they spread through the invisible and visible worlds...,or rather it should be named: Misb®h al-Hid®yah to Caliphate and Guardianship. I ask Allah success, as He is the best assistant and company, and I ask His pure guardians their patronage in this world and in the other world..." The writer finished writing the book in the month of Shawwal, 1349 A.H.
- 2. Srah Hrd 11:56.
- 3. Was il ash-She'ah, vol. 1, sec. on "Preliminaries to Worship," ch. 29, had th 1, p. 90. Use al-Kefe, vol. 1, "Book of Proof," ch. on "Knowing the Imem and Returning to Him," had th 8, p. 259.
- 4. Use al-Kefe, vol.3, "Book of Faith and Infidelity," ch. on "The Pillars of Islam," hadeth 5, p. 30.
- 5. 'Iq®b al-A'm®l, ch. on "He Who Ignores the Merits of Ahl al-Bayt," had®th 2; Was®'il ash-Sh®ah, vol. 1, sec. on "Preliminaries to Worship," ch. 29, had®th 12, p. 93.
- 6. Srah an-Nr 24:35.

- 7. Sirah an-Najm 53:9.
- 8. S rah al-A'r f 7:29.
- 9. 'Uy nu Akhber ar-Ride, vol. 2, p. 272 (Al-Jemi'ah al-Kaberah invocation).
- 10. Refer to footnote 191.
- 11. Man I Yahduruh al-Faqeh, vol. 1, "Book of the Salat," ch. on "The Adhen, the Iqemah and the Reward of the Mu'adhdhins (Those who call for the Salat), comment on narrative 35, p. 188.
- 12. Al-Ihtij⊡j, vol. 1, p. 230.
- 13. Was ill ash-She'ah, vol. 8, "Book of Hajj," sec. on "The Manners of Travel," ch. 30, had th 11, p. 299, as quoted from al-Barqe's Mahesin, p. 357. Similar concepts are in some other narratives, such as: "Inquire about the company before the journey" as in Nahj al-Baleghah, ed. by Fayd al-Islem, p. 936, and "The company (first), then the journey," in al-Ash'athiyyet, ch. on "Bad Neighboring," p. 164.
- 14. Srah ar-Ra'd 13:28
- 15. Sirah al-Naml 27:62.
- 16. Fure ul-Kefe, vol. 3, Book of the Salat, ch. on Starting the adhen and the iqemah, hadeth 8, p. 303.
- 17. Thawib al-A'mil, "The reward of the one who performs the Salat with the adhin and the iqimah," hadiith 2, p. 54.
- 18. Ibid
- 19. Wase'il ash-She'ah, vol. 4, "Book of the Salat," sec. on "The Adhen and the Iqemah," ch. 4, hadeth 4, p. 620.
- 20. Ibid., had the 9: "O Ab Dharr, your Lord boasts over His angels for three persons: a man in a waste land..."

Section Two:Concerning the Qiysm (the Standing Position in the Salat)

Discussed in Two Chapters

Chapter 1: The General Secret of the Qiy®m

Know that the people of knowledge regard the *qiy* m (the standing position in the *Salat*) to be a sign of Unity of Actions. Similarly, they see that the *ruk* downing in the *Salat*) refers to the Unity of Attributes, and the *suj* downing (prostration) refers to the Unity of Essence these will be explained in their proper places. But *qiy* m's reference to the Unity of Action is in the very standing position as well as in the wordings recited while standing.

As to the standing position and its reference to the Unity of Action, it is because it denotes the servant's observation of his duty toward Allah, as well as His position [maq@m] of Self-Existence, manifested in the Sacred Emanation as a manifestation of Action. In this manifestation the position of Allah's Activeness [f@liliyyat] is displayed, and all the beings are absorbed in the manifestation of Action and perished under the Manifest Majesty.

In this instance, the gnostic discipline of the $s \otimes lik$ is to remind his heart of this divine grace and to give up, as much as he can, his personal individuations [$ta'ayyun \otimes t - i nafsiyyah$], and to explain to his heart

the truth of the Sacred Emanation, and to bring to the core of his heart the fact concerning Allah's Self–Existence [qayv@miyvat] and that the creatures are dependent upon Him.

Hence, after the fixation of this fact in the <code>swik</code>'s heart, his recitation will be by the tongue of the <code>Haqq</code> (Allah), and the praiser <code>[dhwir]</code> and the praised <code>[madhkwr]</code> will be the <code>Haqq</code> (Allah) Himself, and some of the secrets of the Fate will be exposed to the gnostic's heart, and "You are as You praised Yourself" <code>1</code> and "I take refuge in You from You" will be disclosed to him in some degrees, and the heart of the gnostic will receive some of the secrets of the <code>Salat</code>, such as looking at the place of prostration, which is of dust, the principal origin (of man), or subjugating the neck and declining the head, as required, implying humility and destitution of "the possible", and the annihilation under the Might and the Sovereignty of (His) Majesty.

"O mankind! It is you who are in need of Allah, and Allah is He who is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised One." 3

As concerning the wordings of the recitation being a reference to the Unity of Action, we shall explain that in details when we come to comment on the blessed serah of al-Hamd, inshe (Allah willing).

Chapter 2: On The Disciplines Of The Qiy®m

These [disciplines] are such that the $s \otimes lik$ is to consider himself present in the Presence [mahdar] of Allah, and regard the world as His Presence, and himself one of the audience at that gathering, standing before Allah, trying to convey the Greatness of the Present and the Presence to his heart, letting it understand the importance and the significance of supplicating to Allah, the Exalted, and, by thinking and contemplating, before starting the Salat, to prepare the heart to understand the importance of the situation, obliging it to humbleness, submission, calmness, fear, hope, humility and modesty till the end of the Salat.

He is to stipulate that his heart should be keen on observing these affairs, and think about the great holy men and guides, and about their moods and how their conducts with the Master of the kings were, so as to learn a lesson from the Im®ms of guidance and imitate them as his models, not being satisfied with just knowing the names of the infallible Im®ms, the date of their birthday, death day, the length of their honorable lives and similar details, which are of little advantage.

Actually, he is to go through their biography and godly conducts, in order to find out the method of their worship and how their journey to Allah was carried out, and how their gnostic stations, which can be inferred from their miraculous speeches, were.

It is much regretted that we are negligent, intoxicated by nature, empty self-conceited and the stooges of the vile Satan in all matters, without there being any sign of our getting up from our deep sleep and endless forgetfulness. We get so little benefit from the positions and the knowledge of the Imms of guidance (a) that it is negligible, satisfying ourselves with the outer appearance of their lives, completely

disregarding the objectives for which the prophets have been sent, and, actually, we are covered by the proverb: "To take a swelling for a fleshy." 4 We shall, therefore, relate some of the relevant narratives, so that some of the believing brethren may have a remembrance. Praise be to Allah and thanks to Him!

Muhammad ibn Ya'q®b, quoting Im®m as-Sadiq ('a), says: "Whenever 'Al® ibn al-Husayn ('a) used to stand for the *Salat*, his face turned pale. Going down for prostration, he would not raise his head until he was wet with perspiration."5

On the same authority he says: "My father used to say, when 'Als ibn al-Husayn (a) used to stand for the *Salat*, he looked like a trunk of a tree, nothing of which would move unless the wind would move it."6

In *al-'llal*, Abin ibn Taghlib, quoting Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, says: "I said to Abi 'Abdullih [as-Sadiq] (a): 'I noticed that when 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (a) stood for the *Salat*, his color changed.' He said to me: By Allah, 'Ali ibn al-Husayn knew before whom he was standing.' 7

In a *had*th in *Fal*h *as-S*li, on the authority of as-Sayyid 'All ibn Tewes, it is said: "...then Ablabdulleh (a) said: 'The *Salat* will not be complete except for the one who has a full purity and a mature completeness, and is away from temptation and deviation, and knows [Allah] and [so] stands [before Him], submits [to Him] and persists.

He, thus, stands between despair and hope, [between] patience and worry, as if the promises to him have been done, and the threats upon him have happened, lowering his fame ['ird'] and manifesting his aim. He sacrifices for Allah his soul, treads upon the road to Him as his goal, not unwillingly, severs the relations of interest for the sake of the One to Whom he bounds and comes, and from whom he seeks help. Should he achieve all these, the *Salat* would be of the ordered type and of the informed about, and it is the very *Salat* which forbids evil and vice."8

Muhammad ibn Ya'q®b, quoting our master, Zayn al-'®bid®n ('a), says that he said: "As regards the rights of the *Salat*, you are to know that it is a visit to Allah and that in it you are standing before Him. If you realized that, you would deserve to be, through it, in the position of a slave who is humble, desirous, horrified, frightened, hopeful, distressed, imploring, and glorifying the state of the One in front of Whom he stands with complete stillness, solemnity, submissiveness of the limbs, humility, well supplicating to Him for himself, requesting Him to free his neck, which is encircled by his faults and consumed by his sins; and there is no power except by Allah.9

The Prophet (s) is quoted to have said: "Worship your Lord as if you see Him. If you do not see Him, He sees you. 10

In *Fiqh 'ur–Rid* it is stated: "When you want to perform the *Salat*, do not go to it lazily, sleepily, hurriedly, or unmindfully. You are to approach it calmly, solemnly and slowly. You are also to display submission, imploringly and humbly, to Allah. You are to show awe and sings of fear and hope, with caution and apprehension. Thus, you are to stand before Him, as an escapee and sinful slave stands at

attention before his master, on the alert, with joined heels, erected trunk, not looking to right and left, reckoning as if you see Him, and if you do not, He certainly does see you..." as the *had* th goes.11

In 'Uddat 'ud-D is it is stated: "It is narrated that the imploring moanings of Ibr is narrated to be heard from a mile's distance, such that Allah praised him by saying:

"Ibr h m was mild, imploring, penitent." 12

When performing his *Salat*, a sound of fizz, like that of a boiler, was heard coming from his chest. A similar sound was also heard from the chest of our Prophet (s). Fetimah (a) used to pant in the *Salat* because of her fear of Allah. And there are other similar *Hadiths*.

There are too many noble narratives on these subjects to be covered in these papers. Contemplating these few narratives suffices the people of thought and remembrance, in respect of the formal, cordial and spiritual disciplines, as well as concerning the way of standing before Allah.

Think a little of the conditions of 'Als ibn al-Husayn, the supplications of that great man and his implorings to Allah, the Exalted as well as his elegant invocations, by which he taught the disciplines of servitude to the servants of Allah. I do not allege that the supplications of those great men were intended to teach how to worship, for it would be an empty and meaningless statement prompted by being ignorant of the state of Lordship and of the knowledge of *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a).

Their fear and awe were much greater than anybody else's, and the Greatness and Majesty of Allah were manifested in their hearts more than in anyone else's heart. I only say that the servants of Allah should learn from them how to worship Allah and how to travel to Him. When you read what they used to say in their supplications and invocations, you should not read them as mere pronunciations of the tongue. They should be pondered upon, and their behavior with Allah, their displaying humility, inefficiency and destitution, are also to be noted.

By the Beloved! 'Als ibn al-Husayn was one of the greatest blessings which Allah, the Most High, had bestowed upon His servants as a grace, bringing him down from the sacred world of Proximity, for the sake of teaching the ways of servitude to His servants:

"Then, on that Day, you shall most certainly be questioned about the bliss." 14

If we are asked: "Why did you not appreciate the value of that bliss and did not get benefit from that great man?" we shall have no reply but to droop down our heads for being ashamed, and to be burnt with the fire of remorse and regret, when no regret would avail.

A Piece of Good Advice

My dear, now that the chance is available, and you are still in the prime of life, the way of journeying to Allah is open, the doors of His mercy are not closed, the soundness of the organs and powers is

obtained and the land of planting [der az-zar'] in the material world is still there, strive to realize the value of these divine favors in order to be benefited by them. Try to acquire the spiritual perfections and the eternal happiness.

Take advantage of all these branches of knowledge which the honorable divine Qur'an and the infallible *Ahl al–Bayt* (a) have spread in the land of the dark nature, and illuminated the world with their divine bright light. Enlighten the land of your dark nature, as well as your eyes, ears, tongue and your other external and internal powers, with the light of Allah, the Exalted, and change this dark earth to another one, luminous, or rather to an intellectual heaven:

"On the day when the earth shall be changed to a different earth," 15

"And the earth shall beam with the light of its Lord."16

On that day, if your earth is not changed to a different one, and if it is not lighted with the light of the Lord, you will encounter darkness, difficulty, horror, pressure, humility and torture.

At present, our external and internal powers are darkened with satanic darkness. Should we remain so, our material earth with its inborn light will gradually change into a dark dungeon, empty of the inborn light and veiled from the rules of the divine disposition.

This is misfortune entailing no happiness, a darkness which comes to no luminosity, a horror which does not see the face of tranquility, and a torment which has no comfort with it:

"... And to whomsoever Allah does not give light, he has no light." 17

I take refuge in Allah, the Exalted, from the satanic conceitedness and from the evil-commanding soul.

The principal objective of the great prophets, in legislating the laws, in establishing the rules and in the coming down of the heavenly books especially the all–embracing Holy Qur'an, the projector of whose pure light is the Seal of the Messengers (*s*) is spreading monotheism and divine knowledge, and uprooting infidelity, atheism, hypocrisy and dualism, for the secret of monotheism and abstraction is flowing in all the cordial and formal worships.

The Shaykh, the gnostic and perfect, Shrhrbrdr, (may my soul be his ransom), used to say: "Worship is the operation of *tawhrd* [monotheism] in the kingdom of the body from the inside of the heart."

In short, the sought–for result of worship is acquiring knowledge, confirming monotheism and other knowledge in the heart. This objective cannot be attained except when the $s \mathbb{E}/ik$ vindicates his cordial shares of worship, and passes from the shape and form to the core and the truth, without lingering in this world and the surface, for loitering in such affairs is a hindrance [thorn] in the way of mankind.

Those who call for the mere external appearance $[s \mathbb{E} rat]$, preventing the people from the internal disciplines, alleging that religion has no meaning and no reality other than its appearance and surface, are but the satans on the road to Allah, and the thorns in the way of humanity. To be saved from their

evil, one has to take refuge in Allah, the Exalted, for they extinguish the divine inborn light, which is the light of [divine] knowledge, *tawh* d, guardianship and other kinds of knowledge, and draw the covers of imitation, ignorance, tradition [dat] and fancies [awh do n) on it, deter the servants of Allah, the Exalted, from advancing to His threshold, and from reaching to His Beautiful Beauty, and block the way of knowledge.

They direct the pure and sincere hearts of Allah's servants in which He, with His hand of Beauty and Majesty, hid the seeds of knowledge in their disposition, and sent the great prophets and heavenly Books to breed and bring them upto the world, to its ornaments, to its materialities and corporalities, and to its falsities, and divert them from spiritualities and intellectual happiness, confining the invisible world and the promised paradises exclusively to food, drink, sex and other animal desires.

They think that Allah, the Exalted, has laid out His table-cloth of mercy, sent down, with so much ceremony, His Books, employed His noble angels and assigned great prophets, just for the sake of satisfying hunger and sex. The most they know is: Take care of your stomach and sex drive so that you may satisfy your desire in the other world. The importance which they attach to a sexual intercourse lasting for five hundred years [in Paradise according to a narrative] they do not attach to *tawh* d and prophethood, and they take knowledge to be a preliminary to satiate their libido and gluttony.

If a godly philosopher, or a divine gnostic, wanted to open a door of mercy to the servants of Allah, or to read a paper of divine wisdom to them, they would spare no abuse, curse and forged accusations without throwing them at him. They are so indulged in mundane affairs, and so concerned about sex and stomach, unknowingly, that they do not desire any other happiness in this world except satisfying their animal lust, despite the fact that the intellectual happiness, should they care for it, would not injure their lust for sex and food.

Like ourselves, since we have not yet crossed the limit of animality, we think of nothing but food and sex, to which we may attain by the grace of Allah, the Exalted. We are not, however, to believe that happiness is confined to that, and that the paradise of Allah, the Exalted, is restricted only to this paradise of animals. As a matter of fact, Allah, the Exalted, has such worlds that no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and never occurred to any heart. Yet, the people of divine love and knowledge pay attention to none of those paradises, and are interested in neither of the invisible and visible worlds. To them, paradise is meeting Allah.

If we want to relate the relevant Qur'anic **yahs** and the *Hadiths* quoted from the infallible *Ahl al-Bayt*, it would not be within the scope of these papers. Actually, even what has been said was out of the overflowing of the pen. Our major objective is to direct the attention of the hearts of the servants of Allah to what they have been created for, that is, to know Allah, which is superior to all sorts of happiness, and everything else is but a preliminary to it.

By referring to "the thorns on the road of the *sul* *Ek", we did not mean the great '*ulam* *E' of Islam, nor the

honorable *faq* hs of the Ja'far school (may Allah's contentment be upon them), but we do mean some of the people of ignorance and those who pretend to be of the people of knowledge by means of insufficiency [*qus* r] and ignorance [*jahl*], not by means of negligence [*taqs* r] and abstinacy ['*in* rd], and who became highway robbers of the servants of Allah. I take refuge in Allah from the evil of an overflowing pen, bad intention and false objective. Praise be to Allah at the beginning and the end, externally and internally.

- 1. Of an invocation from the Messenger of Allah (s) in his prostration. Fur ul-Kut, vol. 3, p. 324; Misbuh ash-Sharuah, ch. 5; 'Awuliy 'ul-La'ul, vol. 1, p. 389, haduth 21
- 2. Ibid.; Misbh al-Mutahajjid wa Silh al-Muta'abbid, p. 308.
- 3. Srah al-Frtir 35:15.
- 4. It means: "To be by the appearance" or "To take an unreal matter for a real one."
- 5. Fure ul-Kefe, vol.3, p. 300. Book of the Salat, ch. On "Submission in the Salat and Disapproving Toying," had to 5.
- 6. Ibid.,had th 4.
- 7. 'Ilal 'ush-Shar@i' p. 88, as in Was@il ash-Sh@ah, vol. 4 p. 685, "Book of the Salat" sec. on "The Acts of the Salat" ch. 2, had@th 4.
- 8. Falth 'us-Stil, ch.2, "On the Description of the Salat", p. 23.
- 9. Mustadrak al-Wasiil, "Book of the Salat," sec. On "The Acts of the Salat," ch. 2, had to 3.
- 10. Bihtr al-Anwtr, vol. 74, p. 74, Book of Flower Garden," "The Prophet's Preachings," ch. 4, hadth 3; Maktrim al-Akhltq, p. 59.
- 11. Mustadrak al-Was lil, "Book of the Salat," sec. on "The Acts of the Salat," ch. 1. had lth 7, extracted from Figh ar-Rid lth., p. 101, ch. On "The Obligatory Salats."
- 12. Serah Hed 11:75.
- 13. Mustadrak al-Wasıı'il, "Book of the Salat," sec. on "The Acts of the Salat," ch. 2, hadıth 15.
- 14. Serah at-Takethur 102:8.
- 15. Sgrah Ibrghgm 14:48.
- 16. Srah az-Zumar 39:69.
- 17. Srah an-Nr 24:40.

Section Three: On the Secret of the Niyyah [Intention]

Discussed in Five Chapters

Chapter 1: The Truth Of The Niyyah In Worship

Know that the *niyyah* [intention] is to decide or to determine to do something. It is the soul's decision on performing some acts after conceiving it and then acknowledging its advantage and judging its necessity. It is a psychological and conscientious condition, which appears after the said procedures. It is, then, expressed as a decision, a determination, a want, a will, an objective and the like. It appears in

all voluntary actions, as there can be no voluntary act without undergoing the said process, and it is there in the entire action, in reality, not allegorically.

It does not need, however, that the details should be in the mind from the very beginning or even during the process, nor should one necessarily imagine the objective and the decision in detail. It sometimes happens that man does the act according to a decision, and yet he is completely unaware of the detailed picture of the act and the decision, while the fact is there, and it takes place in the outside, motivated by that fact. This is quite consciously obvious in the voluntary acts.

In sum, this decision and determination, which is the *niyyah* in the terminology of the *faq* hs (may Allah be pleased with them), is, inevitably in every act, such that if one wanted to do a voluntary act without it, it would not be possible.

Nevertheless, the whisperings of the wicked Satan and the sportings of fancy overrule reason and disguise the necessities in the eyes of the helpless man, and man, instead of spending his precious life in improving and purifying his deeds, and in freeing them from internal evils, and instead of spending it in acquiring monotheistic knowledge, godliness and being in quest of Allah, the vile Satan whispers in his ears and induces him to spend only half of his life in quest of a necessary and obligatory matter.

Satan's snares and artifices are too many one may be induced by him to give up the act altogether, while the other whom he despairs of inducing to drop the act, induces him to commit other follies, such as self-conceitedness and hypocrisy. If Satan could not succeed in this, he would try to falsify one's worship by way of causing him to pretend holiness: by slighting the worships of the people in his eyes, and by causing him to regard the people indifferent [heedless].

Then he induces him to spend all his life on matters such as the *niyyah*, which is inseparable from the act, or the *takb* or the recitation, which are common and ordinary acts. At any rate, Satan would not leave man alone before nullifying his worship by one way or another.

Satanic whisperings come through diverse ways, which we cannot discuss for the time being, nor scrutinize them all. But the whispering in the *niyyah*, from among them, may be the most ridiculous and the strangest, because if someone tried, with all his powers, to do a voluntary act in all his life, without a *niyyah* [an intention], it would be impossible for him to do it.

Nevertheless, you may find some wretched, sick and feeble-minded person who spends a considerable time at every *Salat* just to have a firm intention. Such a person is more like the one who thinks a long time whether he is to decide to go shopping or to go for a lunch. This helpless man, to whom the *Salat* should be his ascension to His proximity, and the key to his happiness, and, by applying its cordial disciplines and realizing the secrets of this divine grace he should perfect his essence [*dh* to and secure his growth [*nash'ah*] of life, he, on the contrary, neglects all these matters, or, much worse, besides regarding them unnecessary, he takes them all to be false, and uses his dear and valuable capital to serve Satan and to obey his slinking whispers, placing the God-given reason ['aq/], which is the light of

guidance, under the rule of *lbl*s.

'AbdullTh ibn SinTn says: "I mentioned before ImTm as-Stdiq ('a) [a case concerning] a man who was afflicted with frequently performing the *Wudu'* and the *Salat*, and described him to be a man of reason. The ImTm said: "What reason has he in obeying Satan?" I asked him: "How is it that he is obeying Satan?" He said: "If you ask him wherefrom his hesitation comes to him, he will tell you it is of the work of Satan."1

In short, man should uproot this by whatever means of austerity and strife, for it deprives him of all happiness and good. It may be that forty years of a man's worship are not correctly performed even in the outer appearance or according to the juristic formal details, let alone the internal religious disciplines.

More ridiculous is that some such fastidious persons think that the worships of all people are invalid and take them to be negligent in respect of religion, whereas their religious authorities whose instructions they follow are also among the ordinary people. If he is a learned man, let him refer to the Prophet's tradition to see that the Messenger of Allah (*s*) and the Im\(\text{Im}\) ms of guidance ('a) were also like the ordinary people in these matters.

From among all the people only this group of fastidious persons, act contrary to the Messenger of Allah (s), the infallible Im ms (a), the jurists of religion and the scholars of the ummah, regarding the acts of worship of all of them worthless, believing their own to be done according to precaution and that they take good care of religion. Take, for example, the case of the Wudu'. The narratives about the Wudu' of the Messenger of Allah (s) are many and successively transmitted. It seems that the Messenger of Allah (s) used a single handful [of water] to wash his face, another for his right hand and a third for his left hand.2

The Imeme faqehs are unanimous on definitely regarding this Wudu' to be the correct one. The Book of Allah, too, apparently confirms it. As to the second washing, or the second handful, it is objected by some, while there is no harm in the second handful, or the second washing, although its recommendation is questionable. But the third washing is undoubtedly an innovation and renders the Wudu' invalid, according to both the narration and the fatwer.

Now, look at the acts of this helpless fastidious person who is not satisfied with twenty handfuls [of water], each one of which is enough to fully wash the hand and to consider it a "complete wash". In this case his *Wudu'* is undoubtedly invalid. But this wretched, feeble-minded person, who performs this act in obedience to Satan's orders and whispers, thinks that what he does is correct and according to precaution; then, by contrast, he takes the acts of all others to be incorrect and invalid.

Here the noble $had \mathbb{E} th$ proves true in respect of calling this man insane. The one who thinks correct an act, which is contrary to the act of the Messenger of Allah (s), and regards an act, which is in conformity with the Prophet's to be incorrect, is either a renegade or an insane. But as this desperate person is not a renegade, he must be insane, obedient to Satan and disobedient to the Beneficent $[ar-rahm \mathbb{E} n]$.

There is no remedy for this acute disease except through contemplation and reflection on the aforementioned matters; making a comparison between his act and that of the pious, the scholars and the *faq* hs (may Allah be pleased with them). If he sees that his act differs from theirs, he is to push Satan's nose into the dust and to completely ignore that evil creature. Then, after that if Satan tries and whispers in his ears several times: "Your act is invalid," let him reply: "If the acts of all the *faq* hs of the *ummah* are invalid, mine is invalid, too."

It is hoped that after some time spent contradicting Satan, taking refuge in Allah, the Exalted, with invocations and imploring, from his evils, this disease will be cured and Satan's greedy eye will be lifted from him. The same instructions are also recommended in the noble *Hadiths* to remedy excessive doubt, which is also of the satanic inspirations.

In the noble $al-K f_{-}$, on the authority of Im f_{-} m al-B f_{-} qir (f_{-} a), it is stated that he has said: "When doubts in the f_{-} alat become too frequent, do not give heed to them, and regard the f_{-} alat to be correct. It is hoped that this state would leave you, as it is not caused but by Satan."3

In another narrative, Imem al-Beqir (a), or Imem as-Sediq (a), is quoted to have said: "Do not make it Satan's habit to frequent you by breaking your *Salat*, as this will stir his greed against you. Satan is evil and gets accustomed to what he is habituated to."

Zur®rah says that the Im®m added: "That malignant wants to be obeyed. So, if he is disobeyed he will not come back to you."4

This is an important cure for all cases of Satan's intrusions and of the jestings of devilish fancies. In some *Hadiths* invocations are also recommended. You may, in this respect, refer to *Was* ill ash—Sh ill ash ill a

Chapter 2: Sincerity

One of the important disciplines of the *niyyah*, which is of the important parts of all worships and of the general and comprehensive instructions, is "sincerity". Its nature is purging the act of worship from the impurity of doing it for other than Allah, and clearing the heart from discerning anything other than Allah, the Exalted, in all formal, intellectual, external, and internal acts.

It achieves its perfection by absolutely neglecting the other [than Allah], and decisively pounding upon Iness, selfishness, the other and the otherness. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"Surely Allah's is the pure religion."5

So, if the religion was mixed with any selfish and satanic desires, it would not be pure; and that which is not pure is not acceptable to Allah, and that which has a blemish of otherness and selfishness is outside the limits of Allah's religion.

Allah, the Exalted, says:

"And they were not enjoined except that they should worship Allah, making the religion His sincerely."6

And He also says:

"...And whoever desires the tillage of this world, We give him thereof, but in the Hereafter he will have no portion."

It has been narrated that the Messenger of Allah (*s*) said: "Every person gets according to his intention. So, the one whose intention is to migrate to Allah and His Messenger, his migration will be to Allah and His Messenger; and the one whose intention of migration is to attain to this world [to get something of it] or to marry a woman, his migration is to what he has intended."8

Allah, the Exalted, says:

"And whoever leaves his house migrating to Allah and His Messenger, and then death overtakes him, his reward is, indeed, with Allah."9

Maybe this noble **Eyah** covers all degrees of sincerity: One is the formal migration of the body. If this migration was not purely for the sake of Allah and His Messenger, but was for the sake of personal desires, then it would not be a migration to Allah and His Messenger. This is the formal juristic degree of sincerity.

Another one is the spiritual migration, and internal journey, which starts from the dark house of the self, with its goal being Allah and His Messenger. It, after all, returns to Allah Himself, because the Messenger, as a messenger, has no independence of his own; rather, he is an yah, a mirror and a representative. So, to migrate to him means migrating to Allah: "The love of Allah's close friends is loving Allah."

So, the gist of the meaning of the noble **E**yah, based on this possibility, is that the one who leaves the house of the self, and gets out of the mansion of selfishness, on a spiritual migration and a gnostic cordial journey to Allah, disregarding his self, dignity and prestige, his reward will be with Allah.

Therefore, if the journey is within the limits of the self [nafs] for the sake of attaining self-perfections, it will not be a journey to Allah, it is, in fact a journey from self to self. Nevertheless, the silk in his journey to Allah, will, inevitably, experience this kind of travel. No one, except the perfect wals [friends of Allah]

($^{\prime}a$) can commence his divine journey without a journey within himself, as that exclusively belongs to the perfect ones ($^{\prime}a$). Perhaps the noble $\mathbb{E}_{V}ah$:

"Peace it is till the break of the dawn,"10

is a hint at this safety from the Satanic and selfish conducts during all the stages of the journey in the dark nights of nature, which is the night of *Qadr* in respect of the perfect ones, till the dawn of the Resurrection Day, which means, to the perfect ones, seeing the Beauty of the One. But the others would not be safe in all the stages of the journey. As a matter of fact, no *selik* would be free from Satan's intrusions in the early stages.

So, it has become clear that this degree of sincerity whose first stage in the journey to Allah is safety, till its last, which is the attainment of real death, or rather till after the second real life, which is the "sobriety [sahw] after the self-effacement [mahw]" would not happen to the people of sul®k and the common people of gnosticism and of austerity. The sign of this kind of sincerity is that Satan's temptation will have no way into those possessing it, and Satan's covetous eye will turn in complete despair away from them, as is said by Satan in the Qur'an:

"By Your Might I will tempt them all, except your sincere servants from among them."11

Here, sincerity is ascribed to the servant himself, not to his act, which is a state loftier than sincerity in act. Perhaps the well–known noble *had* th of the Prophet (s) who said: "The one who keeps being sincere to Allah for forty mornings, fountains of wisdom will flow from his heart to his tongue," 12 refers to all the degrees of sincerity, i.e. sincerity of act, of attribute and of essence, and probably it appears in sincerity of essence, for which the other degrees of sincerity are requisites.

To explain this noble *had* th, and to state what is meant by "fountains of wisdom", the way they flow from the heart to the tongue, the effect of sincerity in this flowing and the significance of "forty mornings", are out of the scope of this thesis, as they need a separate book. The thesis titled *Tuhfat 'ul-Mul\(\frac{1}{2}k\) f\(\frac{1}{2}s-Sayri was-Sul\(\frac{1}{2}k\), ascribed to the knower of Allah, the late Bahr al-'Ul\(\frac{1}{2}m\), is mostly concerned with the explanation of this noble <i>had\(\frac{1}{2}th\)*. It is a nice thesis, though somewhat arguable. For this reason some say that it was not written by the said great personality, which is quite possible.

Chapter 3: A Brief Account On Some Stages Of Sincerity To Fit Within These Papers

One of these stages is to purge the act, whether cordial or formal, from the blemish of acquiring the creatures' pleasure and attracting their hearts for the sake of a praise, and advantage or anything else. And the counterfeit of it is the act performed hypocritically, which is a juristic hypocrisy and is the meanest of all degrees of hypocrisies, and such a hypocrite is the lowest and meanest of all hypocrites.

Some jurisprudents (may Allah's mercy be upon them) regard this degree of sincerity to be necessary for the correctness of the acts of worship, in case the objective of performing the act is to attain it. But this is contrary to investigation according to the juristic rules. Yet, this *sal* thas no value, whatsoever, in the eyes of the people of knowledge, and it is like all other lawful gains, or maybe even lower.

The third stage is to purge the act from trying to attain corporeal paradises, houris, luxurious abodes and the likes of the corporeal pleasures. Its counterfeit is the worship of the traders, as is described in the noble *had* ths. This, too, is, to the people of Allah, similar to other gains, though the wage of the acts of this trader is more and higher, in case he carries them out and rids them from the formal viles.

The fourth stage is to purify the act from being afraid of the threatened bodily punishment and torture. The counterfeit of this is the worship of the slaves, as is mentioned in the narratives. 13

To the people of the heart, this kind of worship is also of no value and far from being a service to Allah, while, to the people of knowledge, it makes no difference if a man performs an act out of fearing the penalties and punishments of this world or the tortures of the Hereafter, or for the purpose of possessing worldly women, or for obtaining the paradisiac women, none of them will be for Allah, and they [only] show the intention [reason=d[f] for the performance of an act, which, according to juristic rules, takes the act out of formal invalidity. But in the market of the people of knowledge this stuff is of no value.

The fifth stage is to purge the act from trying to attain intellectual happiness and everlasting spiritual pleasures, and to join the cherubim, the group of the sacred intellects and the favorite angels. Its counterfeit is acting for this purpose. Although this stage is great and an important goal, and the wise men and researchers attach great importance to this stage of happiness and regard it very valuable, yet, in the ways of the people of Allah, this stage has also its shortcomings in sul x k, and its sx k is also regarded as a trader or a worker, though his trade and business are different, in many ways, from those of others.

As regards this stage, I mean the sixth one; it is to purge the act from being afraid of not attaining those pleasures and of being deprived of this happiness. Its counterfeit is to act for this stage out of fear. Although this is a lofty stage and is beyond the desire of one like the writer, yet, to the people of Allah, this is also the worship of the slaves, for it has causes.

The seventh stage is to purge it from attaining the delights of the Divine Beauty and enjoying the pleasures of the lights of limitless glories, which are the Paradise of Meeting [the Lord]. This stage, I mean the stage of Meeting Allah, is one of the most important goals of the people of knowledge and

those of heart, and the hands of the hopes of the common people are too short to reach it. Only a few of the people of knowledge are favored with the happiness of this honor.

And the people of love and attraction are of the perfect ones among the people of Allah and His chosen ones. Yet, this perfection is not the most perfect degree of the people of Allah. It is one of their many common states. What we read in some invocations, such as the *Sha'b®niyyah* supplication, that Im®m 'Al® ('a) and his pure progeny demand the said state, or allude to their being in that state, does not mean that their states are limited to this one, since the eighth stage, which is on the same level as this one, and which is purging the act from the fear of separation, is also not of the perfect states of the perfect ones. Im®m 'Al®'s saying: "How could I forbear separating from You?" 14 is just a reference to a brim–full common state of him and of one like him.

Generally speaking, purging the act from these two stages is also a must to the people of Allah, for to act with them will be endued with causes and not free from selfish wants. It is, thus, perfect sincerity. Next, there are other stages that are out of the limits of sincerity, and fall under the criterion of monotheism, abstraction and guardianship, all of which do not fit here.

Chapter 4: Refuting A Group Of Ignorants

Now as you have got acquainted with the stages of sincerity and states of the acts of worship to some extent, get ready to acquire them, since to have knowledge without putting it to practice is worthless, and knowledge is a stronger evidence against the claimant and he is more exposed to argument. Alas! It is regretted that we are completely deprived of the divine knowledge, the spiritual states of the people of Allah and the lofty positions of the men of heart.

A group of us completely deny all the states and regard their people to be erroneous, and their acts $b ext{ ext{ iny }} ext{ iny } ext$

"Surely you cannot guide everyone whom you love;" 15

"... You cannot make those in the graves hear." 16

Yes, those who, like the helpless writer, know nothing at all, and whose hearts are not living up to the life of knowledge and divine love, are but dead ones, for whom the bodily covers are their rotten graves. This dust of the body and dark narrowness of the skeleton have shut them off from all the worlds of light and light upon light:

"...And he for whom Allah has not assigned light, for him there is no light." 17

Much as you try to recite of had the and of the Qur'an to these groups concerning divine affection and

love and concerning longing for meeting [Him], and exclusively being attached to Him, they still try to interpret, justify and explain them according to their own opinions. All those **yahs** about meeting Allah and divine love they interpret to be a meeting with the trees of Paradise and the beautiful women.

I wonder what these groups would do with the texts of the *Sha'b* niyyah Supplication, which says: "O Allah! Grant me to be completely devoted to you, and lighten the eyes of our hearts with the light of looking at You until the eyes of the hearts penetrate the barriers of light to reach the Source of Greatness, and our souls hang to the Might of Your Sanctity. O Allah! Make me one of those whom You called and he responded, and when You looked at him, he was stunned because of Your Majesty." 18

So, what do "barriers of light" mean? Does "looking at Allah" mean looking at the palaces of Paradise? Does "the Source of Greatness" mean heavenly palaces? Does "the hanging of the souls to the Might of Sanctity" mean hanging to the skirts of the houris for sensual desires? This "being stunned because of His Majesty", does it mean being spellbound at the beauties of the women of Paradise?

Those ecstasies and faintings which used to befall the Messenger of Allah (*s*) during his ascending $sal \mathbb{I}t$, and those lights of grandeur, and the things loftier than them, which he used to discern, in that meeting in which the Archangel Gabriel (*a*) was not admitted and he dared not to advance even for an inch farther, were those ecstasies for one of the very good women? Or did he discern lights like those of the sun and the moon or much brighter? That sound heart, which was referred to by the infallible $[ma's \mathbb{I}m]$ (*a*) in explaining the verse:

"Except him who comes to Allah with a sound heart," 19

By saying: "A sound heart is the one which meets Allah while there is nothing in it save Him," 20 does it mean that "there is nothing in it save Allah" denotes "nothing save the generosity of Allah," which is to mean an allusion to "nothing save [say] pearls and apricots"?

Woe to me for letting the rein of the pen be loose and engage in ecstatic phrases. But, by the life of the beloved, no particular aim was intended by those words, except that there might be, for my brothers in faith, especially the learned, a sort of warning, so that they might not, at least, deny the states of the people of Allah, for such a denial would be the origin of every wretchedness and misfortune.

We did not intend to say who *Ahlull* h [the people of Allah] are. Actually, our intention was that their states should not be denied. As to who the owners of those states are, Allah alone knows them, since it is a matter of which no one is informed: "The one who got an information did not come back."21

There is another group who do not deny the states of the people of knowledge and are not against the people of Allah. But their indulgence in worldly matters, trying to obtain them, and their taking to the transient pleasures, have prevented them from acquiring knowledge, practice, intellectual intuition [dhawq] and ecstasy [h].

They are like those sick people who do know they are sick, but their stomach would not let them be cautious and accept taking bitter medicine, while the former group are like the patients who would never believe in the existence of such patients and such a disease in actuality, and despite the fact that they themselves are afflicted with this disease, they deny its existence.

Another group took to acquiring knowledge and engaged in learning theories, but as regards the truths of knowledge and the states of the people of Allah, they satisfied themselves with terms and vocabularies, and with the gaudiness of phrases and expressions. They tied themselves and other wretched ones in the chains of words and terms, and out of all "states," they satisfied themselves with mere talk.

Among them there are a few who do know themselves, but, in order to preside over some other unfortunate persons, they use these meaningless terms as a means of winning a living, and, with their deceitful expressions and attractive talks, they capture the pure hearts of the servants of Allah. These are the human Satans whose harm is no less than that of the accursed *Ibl®s* himself against the servants of Allah.

These unfortunate ones do not know that the hearts of the servants of Allah are the abode of Allah, and no one has the right to occupy them. They are usurpers of Allah's abode and destroyers of the real ka'bah. They carve out idols and place them in the hearts of the servants of Allah, which are the ka'bah, or rather al-Bayt al-Ma'm r [Allah's Populous House]. They are the sick people who pretend to be physicians, and involve the servants of Allah in diverse deadly diseases.

The members of this group are distinguished for being more interested in guiding the wealthy people and the notable personalities than in guiding the poor and the indigent, and their followers are more of the well-off and notable people. Even they themselves appear in the apparel of the wealthy people. They play on such deceptive talks that while they are polluted with a thousand kinds of mundane impurities, they can show themselves as purifiers and of the people of Allah. The wretched fools and their followers close their eyes against all their tangible faults, and flatter themselves with empty terms and utterances.

Now as we have reached this stage of our speech, it is worthwhile to relate one or two *had* ths narrated in this respect, although it would be out of the content of our discourse. However, getting the blessings of the *had* ths of *Ahl al-Bayt* (a) is a good thing:

Shaykh as–Sad q (may Allah have mercy upon him) in his book *Al–Khis* duoting Ab Abdull [as–Sidiq] (a), says: "There are among the scholars those who like to compile their knowledge, and do not like to be quoted. These are at the first step of the Fire. Other scholars are proud when they admonish, but they disdain being admonished. These are at the second step of Fire. Some scholars prefer to put their knowledge at the disposal of the noble and the wealthy, excluding the poor from it. These are at the third step of the Fire.

Other scholars behave like the tyrants and the monarchs in their knowledge, and if they were redressed

or neglected in some of their affairs, they would become angry. These are at the fourth step of the Fire. Some scholars look for the *had* ths of the Jews and the Christians in order to support their own knowledge and increase their own *had* ths.

These are at the fifth step of the Fire. Other scholars appoint themselves to give out religious decrees, telling the people: "Ask me," whereas they may not be right even in a single letter, and Allah does not like the pretentious. These are at the sixth step of the Fire. There are among the scholars those who take knowledge to be a sense of honor and intellect. These are at the seventh step of the Fire."22

Al-Kulayn (may Allah have mercy upon him), in his comprehensive [book] al–K quoting Im al–B qir (a), says: "The one who seeks knowledge in order to vie with the scholars, or to argue with the fool, or to attract the people to himself, let him have his seat in the Fire Presidency does not be fit except its deserver." 23

Also quoting Im®m as-S®diq (a) he says: "Whenever you see a scholar loving this world accuse him of being against your religion, as the lover of a thing seeks to get what he loves." And he said: "Allah, the Exalted, revealed to David (a): Do not place between Me and yourself a scholar who is infatuated with this world, as he would prevent you from the way of My love, for those are the robbers of My loving servants. The least I would do to them is to extract the sweetness of supplication to Me from their hearts."24

Those from among this group, who are not impostors or fraudulent, and are themselves s liks on the road to the Hereafter, striving to acquire knowledge and high states, it sometimes happens that they are fooled by Satan, the highway robber, and get conceited, thinking that the states and knowledge [ma'lrif] are really nothing but the very scholarly terms and expressions which they themselves or others, have coined.

They spend the prime of their years and the best of their lives, in multiplicating those terms and composing books and papers, such as a group of versed *mufassirs* (exegetes of the Qur'an) who think that the advantage of the Qur'an is confined to recording a collection of different ways of its recitation, the meanings of its vocabularies and conjugation of its verbs, its verbal and moral beauties, aspects of its miraculous inimitability, its conventional meaning, and its different impressions on different persons, but they are completely ignorant of the Qur'an's message, its spiritual dimensions and divine knowledge [ma'srif].

They are more like a sick man who has gone to a physician and received his prescription, and thinks that he will be treated by way of recording and preserving the recipe and by the mode of its ingredients. This disease will kill such people, for knowing the recipe and going to the doctor come to no avail at all.

O dear! All sciences are practical. Even the science of *tawh* d (monotheism) also consists of cordial and formal acts. *Tawh* d, grammatically, denotes turning plurality into singleness a spiritual and cordial act. Unless you recognize the real and the true cause in the multiplicity of acts, unless you have a truth-finding eye to discern Allah in nature, unless you regard the natural and non-natural multiplicities as

All of the hypocrisy of acts and most of the cordial hypocrisies are caused by the incompleteness of the unity of acts. The one who regards the weak and unfortunate people to be effective in this world, and occupying the domain of Allah, how can he regard himself in no need of attracting their hearts, and purge and purify his act from Satan's polytheism? You will have to make the spring clean so that clear water may come out of it, as otherwise, from a muddy spring you may not expect to get clear water.

If you regard the hearts of Allah's servants to be at the disposal of Allah, and make your heart taste the meaning of: "O You Who change the hearts," and let your heart hear it, you, with all your weakness and helplessness, will not try to capture the hearts. If you make your heart understand the truth of

"...In His Hand is the dominion of everything,"25

"His is the (whole) dominion,"26

And

"In His Hand is the dominion,"27

You will need not attract any hearts, nor think that you are in need of the weak hearts and the weak people, and you will attain a state of cordial satisfaction. You felt yourself being in need of something, and took the people to be undoers of knotty problems, and thus you thought you needed to attract the hearts of the people, thinking that by pretending holiness, you would have at your disposal the hearts of the people.

Hence, you needed to be a hypocrite. Had you taken Allah to be the solver of all difficulties, and that you do not have the universe at your disposal, you would not have needed those acts of polytheism.

O you, the polytheist who claim to be a monotheist! O you, an *Ibl* s [a devil] appearing in the shape of a human being! You have inherited this legacy from the accursed Satan, who, thinking himself effective, calls out:

"I will lead them astray"28.

That wretched, miserable being is wrapped in veils of polytheism and self-conceit. Those who believe themselves and the world to be independent and not under management, neither controlled nor owned, have inherited that from *lbl*s' mischief. So, wake up from [your] deep sleep and convey to your heart the noble syahs of the Divine Book, the Lord's Luminous Page.

These great **1** yahs have been sent down for me and you to wake up, yet, we confine all our shares to reciting it in formal artistic intonation, disregarding its informative knowledge, until Satan overcomes and

rules us such that we become under his control.

For the time being, we end the discourse here, leaving it for a later time. We shall, <code>insh®'All®h</code>, talk about the disciplines of recitation, opening the way for ourselves and for the servants of Allah to be benefited by the Glorious Qur'an, with Allah's permission and His good help. <code>Was-sal®m</code> [And that is an end to the matter].

Chapter 5: Some Other Stages Of Sincerity

Now as the string of the speech has reached this point, I have but to state some other stages of sincerity befitting this state.

One of the stages of sincerity is to purge the act from thinking of deserving a reward. The counterfeit of it is the act blemished with demanding the expected reward. This is not free from a degree of admiring the act, and the $s \otimes lik$ is to rid himself of it. The assumption of deserving reward is caused by the deficiency in one's knowledge of his condition and of the right of Allah, the Exalted.

This is also a fruit of the satanic evil tree stemming from being proud of oneself, one's act, I-ness and selfishness. How hopeless man is! As long as he is wrapped in the veils of being proud of his acts, believing them to be of his own, and regarding himself the manager of the affairs, he will not be cured from this disease, and will not be able to purge his act and purify his intention.

Therefore, the $s \mathbb{I}ik$ is to strive to inform his heart, through cordial austerity and mental and gnostic conduct, that all acts are of Allah's blessings and gifts which He carries out by the hand of His servant. Should the Unity of Acts get fixed in the heart of the $s \mathbb{I}ik$, he would not regard his acts as to be of himself, therefore he would not demand any reward, and, actually, he would regard the reward to be a favor and the blessings to be new beginnings.

This divine delicacy is frequently stated in the words of the pure Imems (a), especially in as-Sahefah as-Sajjadiyyah (a book of invocations and supplications by Imem Ale ibn-Husayn as-Sajjed), a divine and luminous book, which has descended from the gnostic heaven of the knower of Allah, the luminous intellect, Sayyid as-Sejiden [the Master of the Prostrating Worshippers], for the sake of salvation of the servants of Allah from the prison of nature, demonstrating the discipline of servitude and of being at the service of the Lord. In the thirty-second invocation he says: "...so praise be to you for your beginning with great favors, and for Your inspiring gratitude for [Your] benevolence."29

He also says on another occasion: "...since all your benevolence is favor and every one of your blessings is a new beginning."30

In *Misb®h ash-Shar®ah* it is said: "The least limit of sincerity is the servant's doing all his best, then he should not attach to his act [of worship] any value with Allah, by which he would impose on his Lord [to give him] a reward for his act."31

Another stage of sincerity is to purge the act from demanding much and being pleased with it and depending on it. This is also one of the important tasks of the $s \otimes lik$, lest he should be retained back from joining the caravan of the travelers to Allah, confining himself to the dark dungeon of nature. This is a situation stemming from the vile satanic tree, and from the selfishness inherited from the legacy of Satan who has said:

"You created me of fire and created him of clay."32

This is but man's ignorance of his own state $[maq \ m]$ and of the state $[maq \ m]$ of Allah, the Glorified.

If this wretched "possible (existent)" could only recognize his own state of deficiency, incapability, weakness and helplessness, and realize Allah's state of greatness, grandeur and perfection, he would never boast of his act and of performing an act. Wretched! His act [of worship], which would be worth only a few pence for a whole year, should it prove to be complete and correct, he would ask, for only two of its *rak'ats*, unlimited expectations. It is this expectation and much demanding that originates many immoralities and other acts of mischief, which cannot be mentioned here for fear of becoming lengthy.

The noble *had* ths frequently refer to this subject, as is in the noble *al-K* f, quoting Im M s ibn Ja'far (a) to have said to some of his sons: "My son, you are to be diligent, never to clear yourself from falling short of fully worshipping and obeying Allah, the Most High, for He can never be worshipped as He deserves."33

In another $had \odot th$, he ('a) said: "Any act you do for Allah, take yourself as falling short of it, since all the people, in their acts, between themselves and Allah, are derelict [muqassir], except the one whom Allah, the Exalted, protects against that."34

He ('a) is also quoted to have said: "Do not consider plenty the plenty good deeds."35

The complete Sah fah, describing the angels, says: "Those who, looking at Hell breathe out to the people of disobedience, say "Glory to you, O Allah, we have not worshipped you as you deserve to be worshipped." 36

O you helpless! When the Messenger of Allah (*s*), who was the most knowledgeable among Allah's creatures, and whose act [of worship] was the most luminous and the greatest of all others', admitted his shortcoming and inability, and who says: "We have not known You as You ought to be, and we have not worshipped You as You deserve it," and when the infallible Imems ('a), in the Presence of His Sanctity, display their shortcomings and deficiencies, what can a tiny gnat do?38

Yes, their status and knowledge urged them to admit the incapability of "the possible existent" and the Greatness and Glory of the "Necessary Existent", Allah, the Exalted, whereas we, the helpless, because of ignorance and diverse veils, arrogantly show off our ostentation and pride in our acts. Glory be to Allah! How right Amer al-Mu'minen 'Ale (a) was when he said: "Man's self-admiration is one of the

Is it not irrational that Satan should make obscure for us a necessary matter, and we should not try to intellectually reason it? We ourselves, know, of necessity, that our acts [of worship] and the acts of mankind as a whole, as well as the acts of the angels of Allah, and the spiritual people, cannot be compared with the acts of the Messenger of Allah (s) and the Im®ms of guidance (a), as ours can have no value whatsoever, and cannot be of any regard at all.

Yet, those great ones confess their shortcomings and do not conceal their incapability of performing the worship due to Allah, the Exalted, according to so many successive *had* ths. These two necessary cases make us to conclude that we should not be pleased with any of our acts. Or even if we spend as long as the life of the world in worshipping and in acts of obedience, we should still be ashamed, abashed and disgraced.

Nevertheless, Satan has so deeply established himself in our hearts, and so strongly has his control over our minds and senses, that the states [ahw] of our hearts have been changed to the contrary, let alone our failure in deriving the necessary conclusions from those preliminaries.

The great man ('Al $\$ ibn Ab $\$ T $\$ ibn), whose strike on the Day of the Trench was more merited than the worship of all *jinn* and *ins* (mankind), according to the confirmation of the Messenger of Allah (s) $\frac{40}{40}$ and 'Al $\$ ibn al-Husayn, with all his worships and austerities, though known to be the greatest worshipper of all Allah's creatures, shows his inability to attain his state of worshipping $\frac{41}{40}$ declares his shortcoming in this respect more than we do.

The Messenger of Allah (*s*) at whose threshold 'Al® al-Murtad® and all, other than Allah, are servants and live on the crumblings of his blessed table of knowledge and are the students of his teachings after receiving the cloak of honor of the Final Prophethood, the complete circulation of perfection and the last brick of knowledge and *tawh*®d, continued, for ten years, to stand on his feet in Hir® cave, performing his worshippings in obedience to Allah, until his feet swelled such that Allah revealed:

"TI-HI, We have not sent down the Qur'an upon you that you should be distressed,"42

i.e.: "O "pure" and "guide"! We did not reveal the Qur'an to you to cause you difficulty. You are pure and you guide the people, and if they disobey you, it is because of their own shortcoming and misfortune, not because of any shortcoming in your conduct or guidance." Nevertheless, he still announces his inability and falling short.

Sayyid ibn Tewes (may his soul be sanctified) quotes from 'Ale ibn al-Husayn ('a) a hadeth which we shall relate to honor our thesis and, although it is a bit lengthy, since it is an explanation of the position of that master, yet the smelling sense of the souls will be scented by it and the palate of the hearts will take a delight in it.

He (may his soul be sanctified), quoting az–Zahr®, in *Fath al–Abw®b*, says: "I, together with 'Al® ibn al–Husayn ('a), called upon 'Abdul Malik ibn Marwan.'Abdul Malik, regarding it as magnificent to see the mark of prostration between the two eyes of 'Al® ibn al–Husayn ('a), said: "O Ab® Muhammad, perseverance is obvious on your face, and Allah has already been beneficent to you, as you are a part of the Messenger of Allah (s), a close relative with a firm relation to him, and you have a great favor upon your family and your contemporaries.

You have been given such merits, knowledge, godliness and piety that have been given to no one like you or before you, except your past ancestors." He continued praising and extolling him. 'All ibn al–Husayn ('a) said: "All that which you have described is of Allah's favor, support and grace. But how is [my] thanking Him on what He has favored [me], O Amt al–Mu'mintn? The Messenger of Allah (s) used to stand in his salt on his feet till they got swollen, and he remained thirsty during his fasting such that his mouth would dry up.

He was asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Did not Allah forgive what has passed and what is to come of your sins?" He replied: "Am I not to be a thankful servant?" Praise be to Allah for what He has favored us with and for His testing us, and praise be to Him in the Hereafter and in this world. By Allah, even if my limbs were cut to pieces and my eyeballs ran down my chest just to pay tribute to Allah, the Most Glorified, for just a tenth of one tenth of a single one of all His favors, which no reckoner can reckon, nor the praise of the praisers can pay the tribute due to a single one of them, I could not pay the due tribute to Him.

Never, by Allah, unless He grants me that nothing should keep me from praising and remembering Him all days and nights, secretly and publicly. Had I not been under obligations to my family and to other people, in particular and in general, who have rights from me, and which I cannot but fulfill to them as it is possible and as is in my capacity, I would have turned my eye to the heaven, and my heart to Allah, and then I would have never taken them back till He would take my breath He is the best of judges." Then he ('a) wept, and so did 'Abdul Malik..." as the had to goes.43

We forgo mentioning other stages of sincerity, which do not suit the position of these papers, lest it should be lengthy and boring.

- 1. Usel al-Kefe, vol. 1, "Book of Reason and Ignorance," hadeth 10, p. 13.
- 2. Fur® ul-K®f®, vol. 3, "Book of Purity," ch. on the "Description of the Wud®, p. 24.
- 3. Ibid., "Book of the Salat," ch. on "The One who Doubts in His Salat, had th 8, p. 359.
- 4. Ibid., had th 2.
- 5. Srah az-Zumar 39:3.
- 6. Sirah al-Bayyinah 98:5
- 7. STrah ash-ShTr 42:20.
- 8. Mustadrak al-Was 1:il, sec. on "Preliminaries to the Acts of Worship," ch. 5, had 1:th 5.
- 9. Srah an-Nisr 4:100
- 10. Srah al-Qadr 97:5.
- 11. STrah STd 38:82, 83.

- 12. Bih r al-Anwer, vol. 67, "Book of Faith and Disbelief," ch. on "Sincerity", had to 10, p. 242, quoting 'Uyenu Akhber ar-Ride, vol. 2, p. 69, with a slight difference. The same content is stated in the latter source, had to 25, p. 249.
- 13. See, for example, Was il ash-She ah, vol. 1, sec. on "The Preliminaries to the Acts of Worship," the narratives of chapter 9, p. 45; Usel al-Kefe, vol. 3, "Book of Faith and Disbelief," ch. on "Worship", narrative 5, p. 131.
- 14. Misb h al-Mutahajjid, p. 778 (Supplication of Kumayl).
- 15. Srah al-Qasas 28:56.
- 16. S[®]rah F[®]tir 35:22.
- 17. Srah an-Nr 24:40.
- 18. Refer to footnote 5.
- 19. STrah ash-Shu'arT 26:89
- 20. Usel al-Kefe, vol. 3, "Book of Faith and Disbelief," ch. on "Sincerity," hadeth 5, p. 26.
- 21. "Those who claim to be in quest of it are uninformed,

The one who got an information did not come back." Sa'd®

- 22. Al-Khis 1, vol. 2, ch. 7, had 1 th 33, p. 352.
- 23. Us al-K on "The One who Gains His Living from His Knowledge," ch. on "The One who Gains His Living from His Knowledge," had of the Merit of Knowledge," ch. on "The One who Gains His Living from His Knowledge,"
- 24. Ibid., had th 4.
- 25. STrah YT-STn 36:83
- 26. S@rah F@tir 35: 13
- 27. Srah al-Mulk 67:1
- 28. Srah Srd 38:82
- 29. As-Sahifah as-Sajjadiyyah, invocation 32
- 30. Ibid., invocation 12.
- 31. Misbsh ash-Sharsah, ch. 76, on "Sincerity."
- 32. Serah al-A'ref 7:12; Serah Sed 38:76.
- 33. Usel al-Kefe, vol. 3, "Book of Faith and Disbelief," ch. on "Admitting Shortcomings," hadeth 1, p. 116.
- 34. Ibid., had th 4.
- 35. Ibid., vol. 3, "Book of Faith and Disbelief", ch. on "Slighting the Sin," had⊡th 2, p. 394; also vol. 4, ch. on "Reckoning the Deeds," had⊡th 17, p. 196.
- 36. As-Sah fah as-Sajjadiyyah, invocation 3.
- 37. Mir'st 'ul-'Uqsl vol. 8, "Book of Faith and Disbelief," ch. on "Thanks-Giving," p. 146.
- 38. "Where a falcon drops its feathers, what can a tiny gnat do?" Amth®l and Hikam, by Dehkhud®, vol. 2, p. 579. The poet's name is not mentioned.
- 39. Nahj al-Bal@ghah, ed. by Fayd al-Isl@m, maxim 203, p. 1172.
- 40. Bih@r al-Anw@r, vol. 39, "T@r@kh-i Am@r al-Mu'min@n," p. 2.
- 41. Ibid., vol. 46, "Terekh-i 'Ale ibn al-Husayn" ch. 5, hadeth 65, p. 75.
- 42. Strah Tt-Ht 20:1, 2.
- 43. Bih r al-Anw r, vol. 46, "Fath al-Abw b," p. 57.

Section Four: The Discipline Of Reverence

One of the important disciplines of reciting the Divine Book, shared by the gnostic and the common man, and which brings about good results causing luminosity for the heart and the interior life, is to regard it with "reverence", which depends on realizing its greatness and majesty.

This, however, is actually out of the scope of explanation and beyond the human capacity, because understanding the greatness of a thing depends on understanding its truth, while the truth of the Divine Holy Qur'an, before being sent down to the stages [man zil] of creation and before undergoing practical modes [atw r], is of the affairs [shu'sn] of His Essence and of the facts of Knowledge in His Unity [hadrat-i wshidiyyat].

It is the truth of a "Self–Speech" [kal m-i nafs], which is the "Essential Argument" [muq riat-i dh tiyyah] in His Names. This truth appears to no one, neither by means of formal sciences or cordial knowledge nor by unseen disclosure, except through complete divine revelation to the blessed person of the Final Prophet (s), in the intimacy of q ba qawsayn [at the distance of two bows' length], or even in the secret privacy of aw adn for nearer].

The hand of hope of the human species is short of that, except, that of the sincere of Allah's friends who, according to the spiritual lights and the divine facts, share in the spirituality of the Prophet's sacred essence and, through their complete subordination, they vanished in him. They receive the disclosing knowledge by inheriting it from him, and the truth of the Qur'an may be reflected in their hearts, with the same luminosity and perfection with which it appeared in the heart of that great personality, without its descending to [mundane] stations and taking [mundane] forms.

That Qur'an is without change and alteration, and it is of the book of divine revelation. The one capable of carrying this Qur'an is the noble person of the absolute friend of Allah, 'Als ibn Abi Tslib ('a).

Others cannot take this fact in, unless it descends from the station of *ghayb* [the invisible] to the station of visibility and takes the seen form, wearing the apparel of mundane words and letters. This is one of the meanings of "changing" [tahr f] or alteration which has occurred in all Divine Scriptures as well as the Qur'an, changing all the noble gyahs, which, with a change, or rather many changes, according to the stations and stages which continue from His "Names" to the last of the worlds of vision and visibility, are placed within the reach of man.

The number of the stages of the change corresponds to the number of the stages of the *but*n of the Qur'an exactly. The meaning of the change [tahrn | f | here is the descent from absolute ghayb to absolute visibility, in accordance with the degrees of the worlds, whereas the butn is the return from absolute visibility to absolute ghayb. So, the beginning of the change, and the beginning of the butn are opposed.

Whenever a selik attains a stage of the buten, he gets rid of a degree of the change. When he arrives at the absolute buten, which is the seventh, according to the general classification, he absolutely gets rid of the change [tahref]. So, perhaps the Qur'an appears to some to be full of different changes. To another, it may appear with few changes, while to a third it appears with no change at all. It may also appear to somebody changed in some instances and unchanged in some others, or with some sorts of changes in a third instance.

As you know, understanding the greatness of the Qur'an is beyond the capacity of the intellect. Yet, a general hint at the greatness of this Divine Book, which is within the reach of everybody, is of many advantages.

Do know, dear, that the greatness of a speech or a book is derived from the greatness of the speaker and the writer, from the greatness of its contents and objectives, from the greatness of its results and fruits, from the greatness of its intermediate conveyer, from the greatness of its receiver and its carrier, from the greatness of its keeper and protector, from the greatness of its commentator and explainer or from the greatness of the time of its being sent down and how it was sent.

Some of these, however, are by nature the causes of greatness, others are indirectly so, and some are proofs of the greatness. All the said matters are contained in this luminous Book in their very best and satisfaction or, actually they are its distinguished characteristics. No other book shares them with it, or covers all of them comprehensively.

As regards the greatness of the speaker, the composer and its owner, He is the Absolute Great, for all kinds of greatness that can be imagined on the earth and in the heavens, and all powers descending in the visible and the invisible, are but seepage of the manifestations of the greatness of the act of His Sacred Essence.

Allah, the Exalted, would not show Himself to anybody through manifesting His Greatness from behind thousands of veils and curtains, as a *had* th says: "Allah has seventy-thousand veils [of light and darkness; if removed away, the lights of His Face would burn everything other than Him.]." To the people of knowledge, this noble Book has been issued from Allah, the Exalted, the Origin of all affairs of the Essence, Attributes and Acts, and of all manifestations of Beauty and Majesty. The other divine Books do not enjoy a similar status and position.

As regards the greatness of the contents, objectives and subjects, it requires a separate chapter, or, say, separate chapters, sections, a thesis or a book, so that one may relate only a part of that. We shall, nevertheless, generally refer, in a separate chapter, to its universal principles. In the said chapter we shall point out, *insh* of Allsh, its greatness in respect of its results and outcome.

As regards the greatness of the messenger and the conveyer of its revelation, he is the Faithful Gabriel, the Great Spirit. After that the noble Messenger of Allah (s) had quitted the apparel of the nature of the flesh and directed the heart towards His Majesty, he got in touch with that Great Spirit.

He is one of the four pillars of the House of Realization; or rather he is the greatest of its pillars and the most honorable of them, since that noble and luminous Archangel is the guardian of knowledge and wisdom, and the conveyer of the spiritual provisions and moral nourishments. From the Book of Allah and the noble *had* the one realizes the greatness of Gabriel and his preference to other angels.2

As regards the greatness of its receiver and carrier, it is the pure and pious, Ahmadian single [ahmadi-yi

ahad [], Muhammadan collective [jam'i–yi muhammad [] heart, to which Allah, the Exalted, appeared in all affairs [shu' [n]] of the Essence, Attributes, Names and Acts. He [the Prophet] is the Seal of prophethood and the absolute guardian, the most generous of all creation, the best of the human beings, the gist [khul [sah]] of the universe, the essence [jawharah] of existence, the substance ['us [rah]] of the House of Realization, the last brick and the owner of the big isthmus and great vicegerency [khil [fat]].

As regards the greatness of its keeper and guardian, He is the Sacred Essence of Allah, the Exalted as He says in the noble **1** *yah*:

"It is we who have sent down the Reminder [the Qur'an], and verily we are its keeper."3

As regards its commentators and explainers, they are the pure infallible ones beginning with the Messenger of Allah and ending with "the Proof of the Time" [hujjat-i 'asr], may Allah enhance his advent who are the keys of existence, the repositories of dignity, the sources of wisdom and inspiration, the origins of knowledge and learning, and the possessors of the state of collectivity [jam'] and distinctness [tafs].

As regards the time of revelation, it is *Laylat al–Qadr* [The Night of Majesty], which is the greatest of nights and "**better than a thousand months**". It is the most luminous of times. In fact, it is the time of the attainment [wus of the General Guardian [wal -yi mutlag]] and the Seal of the Prophets (s).

As regards how it was revealed and its relevant ceremonies, they are beyond the limits of the capacity of these few papers. They require a special chapter, which, owing to its elaboration, will have to be omitted.

- 1. Bih er al-Anwer, vol. 55, p. 45. This had th is (also) related by the Sunne sources.
- 2. See Serahs ash-Shu'are 26:193, an-Najm 53:5-9 and at-Takwer 81:19-24. See also Biher al-Anwer, vol. 56, "Book of the Heaven and the World," sec. on "The Angels" and "Another Chapter on Describing the Favorable Angels," had the 23-24, p. 258.
- 3. Srah al-Hijr 15:9

Section Five: Brief Hints At The Objectives, Subjects And Contents Of The Glorious Divine Book

Know that the Glorious (Divine) Book, as it declares itself, is a book of guidance, showing the way to human conduct, to educate the souls, to cure the spiritual sicknesses and to throw light on the road to Allah.

Generally speaking, Allah, due to His All–Embracing mercy upon His servants, sent this Glorious Book from His Sacred state of proximity, down, in proportion to the descending worlds until it reached this world of darkness and prison of nature and was put in the dress of words and letters in order to release those imprisoned in this world's dark dungeon and to unite those chained by the fetters of hopes and desires, lifting them from the lowest level of shortcomings, weakness and animality to the peak of perfection, strength and humanity, taking them away from Satan's neighborhood to the company of heavenly people, and to lead them to the state of "proximity" so as to let them attain the stage of meeting Allah, which is the highest objective and the want of the people of Allah.

So, this is the Book of inviting to Allah and happiness, and explaining how to attain that stage. Its contents, generally, concern this same journey to Allah, or help the selik and traveler to Allah. In short, one of its important objectives is to invite [mankind] to know Allah, and [another is] to explain divine knowledge concerning the affairs of the Essence, Names, Attributes and Acts. At the top of this is the Unity of Essence, Names and Acts, some of which are explicitly mentioned and some others are only hinted at.

It should be noted that this comprehensive Divine Book deals with the above-mentioned information, from knowing the Essence to knowing the Acts, in such a way that each class of the people comprehends of it according to its capacity. The noble **gyahs** on *tawh***g**d, and on the Unity of Acts in particular, are explained by the literalist scholars, the traditionalists and the *faq***g**hs (may Allah be pleased with them) in such a way that their explanations are entirely contrary to the explanations of the people of knowledge and the scholars of the latent meaning of the Qur'an.

The writer believes that each of these explanations is correct in its own place, since the Qur'an cures the internal pains, and treats each patient in a certain way. See different noble **1** *yah*s, such as:

"He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden,"1

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth,"2

"And He it is who in the heaven and in the earth is God,"3

"And He is with you,"4

"Wherever you turn there is Allah's Face,"5

And many others on the Unity of Essence, and the last $\Im yah$ s of the $\Im rah$ of al-Hashr and other ones on the Unity of Attributes, and the $\Im yah$ s:

"And you threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw," 6
"All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds," 7

"All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorify Allah,"8

Of its other objectives and topics is its call for purifying the souls and purging the insides from the impurities of nature, and attaining happiness. Generally, it shows how to travel to Allah. This noble subject is divided into two important branches: One is taqw in all its stages, including bewaring of other than Allah, and complete negligence of all other than Him. The other is faith in all its stages and affairs, including devotion to Allah, and return and repentance to His Sacred Essence. These are of the important objectives of this noble Book as most of its subjects, directly or indirectly, connote them.

Another subject of this Divine Book is to relate the stories of the prophets, Allah's friends and the wise men, and how He educated them, and how they educated the people. These stories are of great advantages and cover many instructions. They include so many pieces of divine information, teachings and divine educational instructions, either openly or allegorically that perplex the mind. Glorious is Allah and praise and gratitude are for Him.

Just take the story of the creation of Adam ('a), the angels' being ordered to bow down to him, the teaching of the names and the cases of *Ibl* s and Adam ('a) which are repeatedly narrated in the Book of Allah. They offer so many teachings, educational instructions, knowledge and information for

"Him who has a heart or lends ear and he is a witness" 10

That bewilders man. The stories of the Qur'an, such as the stories of Adam, Moses, Abraham and other prophets ('a) are repeatedly stated in order to show that this Book is neither a book of stories nor of history, but a book of journeying to Allah, a book of *tawh* def, knowledge, admonitions and aphorisms.

In such matters repetition is required so as to fix them in the hard-hearted souls and to have effects as an admonition to them. In other words, whoever wants to educate, teach, warn and bring good tidings, has to express his intentions in different styles and diverse ways, such as narrations and tales, or historical stories, and sometimes in quite an explicit way, and sometimes by way of allusion and indirect hints, symbols and examples, so that different souls and scattered hearts can each be benefited by them.

As this noble Book is intended for the happiness of all classes and the human race, and as the human species differ in the condition of their hearts, in their customs, behaviors, time and place, they cannot be attracted in the same way. Many of them may not be prepared to accept the instructions and the original

matter in a direct, clear and explicit language, or to be affected by it.

They are to be approached in accordance with the construction of their brains in order to make them comprehend what is intended. Some others are not interested in stories, tales and histories, as they are in quest of the cores of the matters and the real aims. They cannot be taken on the same basis with the former ones.

Many hearts are fit for being frightened and warned; other hearts are attracted by promises and hopes. Consequently, this noble Book uses different methods, styles and ways for its invitation of the people. Thus, such Book has inevitably to resort to repetition. Attracting and admonishing, without repetition, would be far from eloquence. The expected effect in the souls cannot be obtained without repetition.

Nevertheless, in this noble Book, the topics are so sweetly related that their repetition never bores the hearers. Furthermore, each repetition of a subject brings fresh details and features that have not formerly been mentioned, or rather in each repetition there is an additional important gnostic or ethical point around which the case revolves. In order to expand upon this, one has to carefully study the stories of the Qur'an, which cannot be contained within the summaries of these papers.

This weak person [the writer] has a fixed hope to write, with Allah's help, a book about the stories of the Qur'an, deciphering their puzzles and explaining their teachings and educational qualities, as much as possible, though carrying out this task by somebody like the writer is but a raw desire, or a false fancy.

At any rate, relating the stories of the prophets ($^{\prime}a$), describing their conducts and behaviors, how they educated the people, and remembering their advices, admonitions and good arguments are of the largest chapters of knowledge and philosophies, and of the loftiest passages to happiness and instructions which Allah, the Exalted and Most Glorified, opened to His servants.

Although the people of knowledge, $sul \mathbb{R}^k$ and austerity have their share plentifully, other people also have their boundless portion, as is stated in the noble $\mathbb{E}yah$:

"When the night over-shadowed him, he saw a star. He said: "This is my Lord." But when it set, he said: "I do not love the setting (ones)."11

The people of knowledge understand well the spiritual *sul k* and the conduct of Abraham (*a*). They also learn how to travel to Allah, and perceive the truth of the self's spiritual journey from the farthest (deepest) darkness of nature, expressed in "**the night over-shadowed him**," till absolutely casting down the egoism and egotism, leaving Oneness and self-worship, attaining the state of sanctity and joining the meeting of intimacy, which is expressed in: "I have turned my face toward Him who created the heavens and the earth…" 12

Others learn from it the outer journey and how *Khal®l ar–Rahm®n* (the intimate friend of the Beneficent) educated his people. Likewise, there are other stories and tales, such as the stories of Adam, Ibr®h®m (Abraham), Moses, Y®suf (Joseph), '®s® (Jesus) and the meeting between al–Khidr (Elias) and Moses,

by which the people of knowledge, austerity and hardship, and others are benefited differently.

In this part included, or in a separate objective, are the aphorisms and the admonitions of His Sacred Essence, Who, on every suitable occasion, has invited the people, with His tongue of Power, to divine knowledge, $tawh \mathbb{E} d$ and glorification, such as the blessed $S \mathbb{E} rah$ of $lkhl \mathbb{E} s$, the last $\mathbb{E} yah$ s of the $S \mathbb{E} rah$ of al-Hashr and the early $\mathbb{E} yah$ s of the $S \mathbb{E} rah$ of $al-Had \mathbb{E} d$ and other instances in the noble divine Book.

The people of heart and of good past enjoy a good share of it. For example, when the people of knowledge recite:

"And whoever leaves his house migrating to Allah and His Messenger, then death overtakes him, his reward is, indeed, with Allah..." 13

They understand from it the proximity of the $n \cdot filah$ [supererogatory act] and $far \cdot fah$ [obligatory act], while, at the same time, others understand from it a bodily migration, say, to Mecca or to Medina, or they understand it to be an invitation to purifying the soul and internal austerity, as in the noble $\cdot fah$:

"He will, indeed, be successful who purifies it, and he will, indeed, be unsuccessful who seduces it,"14

And the like; or it is a call to good deed, as it is obvious; or it is a warning against anyone of these things. This part also includes the aphorisms of Luqmen and of other notables and believers that are sporadically mentioned in this divine Book, such as the case of the "Companions of the Cave."

Another subject of this luminous Book concerns the states of the disbelievers, the deniers and the opposers of the truth and reality, and those who act obstinately towards the prophets and the Im®ms (¹a). It explains their fates and how they were annihilated, such as the episodes of Pharaoh, Korah, Nimrod, Shadd®d, the Companions of the Elephant, and other disbelievers and sinners, in all of which there are admonitions, aphorisms and even knowledge for those who deserve them.

This part includes the cases of the accursed $Ibl \mathbb{S}_s$, as well as the expeditions of the Messenger of Allah (s), (or in a separate part) from which noble subjects are also learnt, such as how the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (s) used to fight in order to awaken the Muslims from the sleep of negligence, and to incite them to fight for the sake of Allah to uplift the word of truth and to abolish the $b \mathbb{E} til$ (falsehood).

Another subject dealt with in the Glorious Qur'an is explaining the pure laws of the literal meaning of the *shar* and the disciplines and divine rules, which are stated in this luminous Book, in a general way, the most important of which is introducing the principal subjects and disciplines, such as the chapters of the *sal t*, *zak t*, *khums*, *hajj*, *sawm*, *jih d*, marriage, inheritance, penalties, punishments, trading, and the like.

This section, which is the science of the appearance of the *shar* \mathbb{E}^lah , is a public concern and is for all the classes, and it is intended to build up this world and the Hereafter. All the classes of people can benefit

from it according to their individual capacities. This is frequently invited to in the Book of Allah, as well as in the *had* ths and narratives, which freely expand upon the characteristics and details. The works and writings of the religious scholars on this section are more and higher than on other sections.

Another topic dealt with in the Glorious Qur'an is the conditions of the *ma'd* [Resurrection], arguments proving it, its torments, punishments and rewards, and the details of Paradise, Hell, punishing, and of putting in a state of comfort and ease.

This section handles matters such as the conditions of the people of happiness and their ranks, like the people of knowledge, the favorites, the people of austerity, the travelers to Allah, the devotees, and the ascetics, as well as the conditions and degrees of the people of wretchedness, such as the infidels, the veiled, the hypocrites, the deniers, the disobedient and the sinners. But that which has more advantages to the conditions of the common people is more expanded upon and is in a more explicit language, whereas that which is more advantageous to a particular class of people is referred to by way of allegories and allusions, such as:

"And an approval from Allah is far greater" 15,

And other **yahs** about meeting Allah, and such as:

"Nay, surely they shall on that day be veiled from their Lord,"16

In respect to another group. In this section, i.e. the section concerning details about the Resurrection and the Return to Allah, countless information and difficult secrets are stated, such that, without a demonstrative conduct [sulek] or a gnostic light, their nature cannot be comprehended.

Another subject of this divine Book is the proofs and evidences which Allah, the Exalted, Himself presents to prove the truthful matters and divine knowledge, like the argument proving [the existence of] Allah and His Oneness, His transcendence, His Knowledge, His Power and His other attributes of perfection.

In this section one can sometimes find very refined proofs from which the people of knowledge derive complete benefit, such as:

"Allah bears witness that there is no god but He." 17

One also finds proofs which are used by the scholars and philosophers in one way, and by the people of formalism and the common people in another way, such as the yah:

"Had there been in them any gods other than Allah, they both would have been corrupted," 18

And the **gyah**:

"... otherwise each god would have certainly taken away what he had created," 19

And like the first yahs of the Strah of al-Hadtd and the blessed Strah of at-Tawhtd and other yahs. Also there are arguments proving the Resurrection and the return of the spirits and originating another creation, and the arguments proving the existence of Allah's angels and the great prophets, stated in many occasions in this Glorious Book.

These were the arguments of the Sacred Essence Himself, and there are the arguments and proofs of the prophets and wise men quoted by Allah to prove the divine knowledge, such as the arguments of lbrshsm, the intimate Friend of Allah ('a), and other arguments.

These were the important subjects of this Book, though there are many other different subjects, which require considerable time to count.

- 1. Srah al-Hadd 57:3
- 2. Srah an-Nr 24:35
- 3. Sirah az-Zukhruf 43:84
- 4. Srah al-Hadd 57:4
- 5. Sirah al-Baqarah 2:115
- 6. Serah al-Anfal 8: 17
- 7. STrah al-FTtihah 1:2
- 8. Sirah al-Jumu'ah 62:1; Sirah at-Taghibun 64:1
- 9. Usel al-Kefe, vol. 1, "Book of at-Tawhed," ch. on "Lineage," hadeth 3, p. 123.
- 10. Sgrah Qgf 50:37
- 11. Srah al-An'm 6:76
- 12. Ibid.: 79
- 13. S@rah an-Nis@' 4:100
- 14. Srah ash-Shams 91:9-10
- 15. Srah at-Tawbah 9:72
- 16. Srah al-Mutaffifn 83:15
- 17. Serah al-Mutaffifen 83:15
- 18. Srah al-Anbiy 21:22.
- 19. S∑rah al-Mu'min⊡n 23:91

Section Six: How To Be Benefited By The Qur'an

Now that you have got acquainted with the subjects and the objectives of the Divine Book (the Qur'an), you will have to take into consideration an important point, as by doing so the door of being benefited by it will be opened to you, and the passage to knowledge and wisdom will be wide open to your heart. This point is to look at this Glorious Book as an educational one, a teaching book by which you should be benefited, regarding it your duty to learn from it.

By learning, teaching, benefiting and being benefited we do not mean its different literary, syntactical and

morphological aspects, nor its eloquence and rhetoric and other stylistic points, nor being interested in its stories, tales and episodes from the historical point of view in order to get information about the past nations. None of these is included in the objectives of the Qur'an, and they are, in fact, far away from the main objective of this divine Book.

The fact that our advantage from this great Book is quite small is because we usually do not take it to be a book of teaching and education. We recite the Qur'an just for its reward. So, we pay attention only to our intonation when reciting it. We want our recitation to be perfect and correct so as to obtain its reward, and then we stop at that and feel satisfied with it. Thus, we spend some forty years reciting the Qur'an without being benefited by it, except the reward for reciting it.

If we do look at its teaching and educational side, we concern ourselves with its eloquence and syntax and its miraculous aspects, or even somewhat higher, we engage ourselves with its history, the occasions of the revelation of the **yahs**, the times of their revelation, which **yah** was revealed in Mecca and which in Medina, the differences in recitations and in the exegeses of the Sunnis and the Shelah and other secondary affairs which are outside the main objective and they themselves cause us to be barred from the Qur'an and to neglect remembering Allah. Even our great commentators of the Qur'an are very much concerned about one or another of the said affairs, without opening the door of learning to the people.

The writer believes that so far no *tafs* [exegesis] has yet been written to the Book of Allah. Generally, to write a *tafs* for a book means to explain the objectives of the book and to draw the attentions to what its author wants to say. This noble Book, which Allah, the Exalted, testifies to be a book of guidance and teaching, and the light of the road of man's journey, its exegete should find in each one of its stories, or even in each yah, a directive guiding to the invisible world, so as to show to the learner the road to happiness, to knowledge and to humanity.

A *mufassir* (commentator or exegete) is the one who tells us what was the "objective" of the revelation, not the "occasion" of the revelation as is explained in the exegeses. In the very story of Adam and Eve and their affairs with *Ibl* s, from the very moment of their creation till their descent to the earth, story of which is repeated by Allah several times in the Qur'an, there are so many overt and covert teachings [ma rif] and admonitions, and it reminds us of so many of spiritual faults and Satanic characters, as well as many perfections of the soul and human knowledge which it introduces to us, whereas we still disregard them.

In short, the Book of Allah is a book of knowledge and ethics, and an invitation to happiness and perfection. So, its exegesis should also be a book of gnosticism and ethics, explaining the gnostic and ethical points of view, and other aspects of inviting to its happiness [satat]. The commentator who neglects these points, disregards them or attaches no importance to them, is actually neglecting the objective of the Qur'an and the main aim of revealing the (divine) books and sending the messengers.

This is a grave mistake that has prevented the *ummah* for many centuries from being benefited by the Glorious Qur'an, and it has blocked the road of guidance in their faces. We have to learn the objective of the revelation of the Qur'an disregarding the intellectual and argumentative aspects, which show us the goal by themselve s from the Qur'an itself. The author of a book knows better his own objective.

So, let us have a glance at what the author of this Book Himself says concerning the affairs of the Qur'an. He says:

"This is the Book, wherein is no doubt, a guide for the muttagen (those who fear Allah)."1

He describes His Book as being a book of guidance. In a short s rah He repeats saying:

"We have made the Qur'an easy for remembrance, but is there any one who will mind?"2

He says:

"... We have revealed to you the Reminder that you may explain to mankind what has been sent down to them and that haply they will reflect,"3

And

"A Book We have revealed to you, blessed, that they may ponder over its \(\mathbb{L} \) yahs and that men of understanding may remember," 4

And many other noble **1** *yah*s, to restate which would be lengthy.

This opinion of ours is not intended to criticize the *tafs* rs, as every one of their authors has taken great pains and striven hard in order to write a noble book, so, may Allah bless them and grant them good reward. We intend just to say that the door must be open before the people to be benefited by this Book, which is the only one leading to Allah and the only one for educating the souls with the divine disciplines and laws, the greatest means of connection between the created and Creator, the strong handle and the firm cord of adhering to the Might of Divinity.

Let the scholars and commentators write Persian and Arabic exegeses with the aim of explaining the gnostic and ethical teachings and instructions, showing the way of connecting the created to the Creator, and expounding the migration from $D \mathbb{T} r$ al-Ghur $\mathbb{T} r$ (the House of Conceit = this world) to the $D \mathbb{T} r$ as- $Sur \mathbb{T} r$ wal-Khul $\mathbb{T} d$ (the House of Pleasure and Eternity)], according to what has been deposited in this noble Book.

The author of this Book is not as-Sakk®k® or the Shaykh, whose objectives were eloquence and rhetoric, nor is He S®bawayh or al-Khal®l, whose objectives were grammar and syntax, nor is He al-Mas®d® or Ibn Khillak®n, whose objectives revolved around the history of the world. This Book is not like the stick of Moses or his White Hand, nor is it like the breath of Christ who could raise the dead (by

Allah's permission), to have been sent down only as a miracle to prove the true prophethood of the Holy Prophet.

This divine Book is, as a matter of fact, a book of enlivening the hearts with the everlasting life of divine knowledge. It is Allah's Book that invites to divine affairs. So, the commentator has to teach these divine affairs to the people, and the people have to refer to his commentary to learn those affairs, so that they may attain its advantage:

"And we reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the wrongdoers."5

Which perdition is graver than that we keep reciting the Divine Book for thirty or forty years and refer to the exegeses, and yet we do not get its real objectives?

"Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we shall certainly be of the losers."6

- 1. Sirah al-Baqarah 2:2
- 2. Srah al-Qamar 54:17
- 3. Srah an-Nahl 16:44
- 4. Srah Sd 38:29
- 5. Srah al-Isr 17:82
- 6. Srah al-A'rrf 7:23

Section Seven: The Obstacles And Barriers Preventing Being Benefited By The Qur'an

Now that the greatness of the Book of Allah has been understood by considering all the required aspects of greatness, and the way of being benefited by it has been opened, it will be necessary for the learner of, and the benefit-deriver [mustaf d] from, the Book of Allah to apply a further important discipline in order to get [the best] advantage. It is removing the causes which prevent the advantage, and which we call "the veils" between the benefit-deriver and the Qur'an. These veils are many, to some of which we shall refer presently.

One of these thick veils is self-conceit, through which the learner sees himself, because of this veil, in no need of getting any benefit from the Qur'an. This is one of Satan's important masterpieces, by which he always tries to inspire man with imaginary perfections, telling him to be contented with what he has, and to disregard everything other than that which he already has.

For example, he makes the people of $tajw \mathbb{E} d$ [reciting the Qur'an with intonation] contented with this small knowledge which they have, making it quite big in their eyes, slighting other knowledge to them, and making them compare the carriers of the Qur'an with themselves, causing them to be deprived of understanding the luminous divine Book and of getting any advantage from it. Similarly, he causes the men of letters to be contented with the meaningless from making them believe that all the Qur'anic affairs are only those that they have.

He engages the exegetes, as usual, with the ways of recitation, the different opinions of the linguistics, the times of revelation, the occasions of revelation, whether the **gyah** was revealed in Mecca or in Medina, the number of the **gyahs**, their letters and the like. The scholars are also kept indulged in only learning the different aspects of indications, the diverse ways of arguments and the like.

Even the philosopher, the wise man and the gnostic are imprisoned by Satan behind the thick veil of terminology, concepts and so on. The benefit-deriver [mustaf deriver] must tear open these veils in order to look at the Qur'an from behind them, taking care not to stay at any one of these veils, so as not to be left behind the caravan of the travelers to Allah, nor be deprived of the sweet divine invitations. The Glorious Qur'an itself instructs that one should not remain still and should not be satisfied with a certain limit.

This is frequently referred to in the stories of the Qur'an. Moses (a), a great prophet as he was, was not contented with that position, nor was he satisfied with his high position of knowledge. He no sooner met that perfect man, al-Khidr, than he addressed him, quite humbly and modestly, saying:

"May I follow you that you may teach me right knowledge of what you have been taught?"1

He kept following him and acquired the knowledge he wanted to learn. Prophet Abraham (a) also was not satisfied with the great state of faith and the special knowledge of the prophets (a). He asked the Lord:

"My Lord! Show me how you give life to the dead."2

He wanted to proceed from the state of cordial faith up to the state of tangible confidence. Higher even than that is when Allah, the Exalted, told the Seal of the Prophets, the most learned person of all Allah's creatures, to say:

"...Say: O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge."3

Such instructions of the divine Book and relating the stories of the prophets, are but for us to learn from them, and to bring us to conscience and wake us from our negligent sleep.

Another one of the veils is that of the false ideas, and the *b*1 ways, which are sometimes caused by the inabilities of the person himself, and they are mostly the outcome of subordination and imitation. This veil particularly conceals from us the Qur'anic knowledge. For example, if, by listening to our fathers,

mothers, or some ignorant preacher, we got a false idea fixed in our hearts, it would be a veil, a barrier between us and the noble divine **grahs** [of the Qur'an].

Thus, even if there were thousands of **1** yahs and had the defying that idea, we would either dismiss them on the basis of their exoteric meanings, or we would not consider them with the aim of understanding. Regarding beliefs and knowledge there are numerous examples, but I shall abstain from counting them, as I do know that this veil cannot be torn by the sayings of someone, like me.

Nevertheless, just to present a sample, I will refer to one of them, which is somewhat easier to understand: Despite all the *yah*s which have been revealed in respect of meeting Allah and knowing Him, all the narratives that were related to the same subject and all the indications and allusions, open and hidden, in the invocations and the supplications of the Im *yah*, some uninformed and vulgar persons have spread the belief that the way to knowing Allah was completely closed.

The door of knowing Allah and discerning the Beauty [of Him] is interpreted to be the same as meditating upon the very Essence of Allah, which is prohibited, or rather impossible. They may even refrain from entering this field and prefer not to acquaint themselves with such knowledge, which is the delight of the eyes of the prophets and holy men [awlive].

It is much to be regretted by the people of Allah to see a chapter of knowledge, which can very aptly be described as the goal of sending the prophets and the most cherished demand of the holy men, should be so prohibited to the people that a simple mentioning it would be regarded complete disbelief and mere heresy. These people take the knowledge [ma rif] of the prophets and the holy men [awliy rif] to be the same as the knowledge [ma rif] of the common people and [unlettered old] women about Allah's Essence, Names and Attributes.

Sometimes they say even more than that: "So-and-so has good, vulgar beliefs. We wish we kept to the same vulgar belief." This is quite correct, because when this wretched person utters these words, he has already lost his vulgar beliefs, and, at the same time, regards other beliefs, which are the beliefs of the elite and the people of Allah, to be false. This wish is quite similar to the wish of the disbelievers who, as in the noble yah, say:

"...and the disbeliever shall say: O would that I were dust!"4

Should we want to relate in detail the **Eyahs** and the narratives concerning the meeting with Allah, in order to expose this corrupt belief caused by ignorance and Satanic conceit, we would need to write a separate book. Especially, if we wanted to explain the knowledge which has been neglected due to this thick satanic veil, it would be clear that this negligence is one of the stages of neglecting and discarding the Qur'an, and it is probably the most regretful stage, as is described in the Qur'an:

"And the Messenger said: O my Lord! My people have treated this Qur'an as a forsaken [thing]."5

Forsaking the Qur'an has many stages and countless degrees, and we may possess a good number of them.

If we bound this divine Book in a nice and valuable cover, and we kissed it and put it on our eyes whenever we wanted to recite it or to take an *istikh* rah (consulting the Qur'an to do or not to do something) with it, would it mean that we did not forsake it?

If we spent most of our lives perfecting our intonation when reciting the Qur'an, and improving our linguistic and rhetorical knowledge of it, would it mean that we brought the Qur'an out of being forsaken?

If we learnt the different ways of reciting the Qur'an and other relevant subjects, would we be declared not guilty of deserting it?

If we took in all the aspects of the miraculousness and the artistic beauties of the Qur'an, would we be excluded from the complaint of the Messenger of Allah? Never! None of these is intended by the Qur'an and its Great Revealer! The Qur'an is a divine Book, and it contains divine affairs.

The Qur'an is the string connecting the creatures to their Creator, and through its instructions there should be a spiritual and invisible tie between the servants of Allah and their Lord. From the Qur'an there should emerge divine sciences and intuitive knowledge. The Messenger of Allah, according to a narrative in the noble $al-K \frac{r}{s}$, said: "Knowledge is of three kinds: a clear $\frac{r}{s}$ yah, a fair obligation and a current tradition."

The Glorious Qur'an is the bearer of these sciences. If we could take them in, we would not be deserting the Qur'an. If we accepted the calls of the Qur'an, and learnt from the stories of the prophets ('a) which are full of admonishments, information and philosophies, and if we absorbed the admonitions of Allah, the Exalted, of the prophets and of the wise men, as stated in the Qur'an, we would not be deserting it, as indulging in the formal picture of the Qur'an is also keeping to the earth, and is of Satan's whisperings, from which one must seek refuge with Allah.

Another veil that prevents us from being benefited by this luminous Book is to believe that except what the exegetes have written or understood, no one has the right to make use of the noble Qur'an. Contemplating and thinking about the noble **Tyahs** are mistakenly regarded to be interpretation, as interpretation according to one's own opinion is not allowed, and thus, because of this false belief and invalid opinion, the Glorious Qur'an was deprived from being utilized in any way and, consequently, it was completely deserted, despite the fact that to utilize it morally, faithfully and gnostically has nothing to do with exegesis, be it according to opinion or else.

For example, suppose someone could get out some lessons from the dialogue between the prophets Moses and al-Khidr ('a), how they talked to one another, how severely Moses, great a prophet as he was, traveled in order to acquire the knowledge which he lacked, and he implored al-Khidr ('a) in the way stated in the noble yah:

"May I follow you that you may teach me right knowledge of what you have been taught?"7

Then al–Khidr's reply, the excuses of Moses ('a), the greatness of the station of knowledge, and how a student should behave toward his tutor, in which there may be twenty disciplines. What connection all these have with exegesis, or exegesis according to opinion? Many advantages of the Qur'an are of this kind. Take, for example, someone, who, in respect of Islamic teachings, understands from Allah's saying: "All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds" that all praise and extolments are exclusively Allah's.

He learns from it His Unity of Actions, and says that from the noble **yah** he deduces that every perfection, beauty, might and majesty which are in the world and which the eye of the squint-eyed and the heart of the veiled ascribe to the beings are Allah's and no being has itself any share of them. Therefore, praise and extolment are solely Allah's, and nobody shares them with Him.

But has this anything to do with exegesis, be it according to opinion or not? There are so many other affairs from which many usages can be obtained, though having no connection with exegesis whatsoever.

Besides, to exegete according to opinion is still arguable, as probably it does not concern the *yahs* about knowledge and the speculative sciences, which conform with the criteria of intellectual proofs, nor the ethical *yahs* which have to do with intellect, since such exegeses coincide with the strong intellectual proofs or with explicit rational indications, such that if an exterior does not conform with them, they are to be turned away from that exterior.

For example, the noble **gyahs**:

"And your Lord comes, and the angels rank on rank,"8

Or

"The Beneficent has settled on the Throne,"9

In which the conventional ['urf] understanding contradicts the proof, to refute the exterior and to explain them by proof is not explaining according to opinion, and can never be prohibited.

Therefore, it is possible, or believed, that exeges according to opinion concerns the **!** *yah*s of precepts, of which the hand of opinion and intellect is short, and they must be devotionally and obediently taken from the treasurers of revelation and the descending places of the angels of Allah, as most of the noble *had* **!** *th*s in this respect defy the Sunni jurisprudents who wanted to comprehend Allah's religion by way of their own intellects and by comparisons.

Some noble narrative says: "Nothing is farther away from the intellects of men than the exegesis of the Qur'an." 10 Another noble narrative says: "Allah's religion cannot be conceived well by intellects." 11 Such narratives prove that by "Allah's religion" they mean devotional obedience to the religious precepts, or

else, proving the Maker, *tawh* d, Glorification, the Resurrection Day and Prophethood, or rather all sorts of knowledge are within the intellect's lawful right and field of specialty.

That which is in the expressions of some notable narrators who said that proving monotheism depends on traditional proof is strange, or, more aptly, it is one of the disasters from which we must take refuge with Allah. This speech does not need to be condemned and disgraced, but our complaint is to Allah.

Another veil that prevents understanding this heavenly Book and being benefited by its knowledge and admonitions is the veil of disobediences [ma'ss] and the opacity caused by rebellion against the sanctity of the Lord of the worlds. By this veil the heart is prevented from understanding the truths.

It must be noted that just as there is a corresponding image for each of the good and bad deeds in the heavenly world, there is a similar one inside the soul, through which the innermost part of the soul gets either luminous and likewise the heart gets purified and luminous, in which case the soul becomes clear and polished like a mirror, prepared to receive the invisible manifestation and the appearance of the truths and knowledge, or the soul gets dark and devilish, in which case the heart becomes like a rusty and tarnished mirror, unable to reflect any divine knowledge and invisible truths.

A heart in such a condition will gradually fall under the authority of Satan, and *Ibl* s becomes the possessor of the kingdom of the spirit, and the hearing and seeing, and the other senses and powers, too, become at the disposal of that evil creature. The hearing becomes completely blocked against the divine teachings, and the eyes do not see the splendid divine signs and they become blind to Allah's truth, signs and gyahs.

The heart does not become learned in religion, and is deprived of meditating on the clear signs of Allah, His Names and His Attributes, as Allah, the Exalted says:

"They have hearts, with which they do not understand, and they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. They are as cattle nay, they are even worse..."12

Their look at the world is like the look of the cattle and the animals at it, void of value and deliberation. Their hearts, like the hearts of the animals, lack meditation and remembrance, or rather, the more they think of the **gyahs** and hear admonitions and instructions, the more their negligence and haughtiness increase. Thus, they are even lower than the beasts and graver in going astray.

Another one of the thick veils, which is a heavy curtain between us and the teachings and admonitions of the Qur'an, is the veil of loving this world, which causes the heart to be completely devoted to it, and the inclination of the heart entirely turns towards mundane matters, neglecting remembering Allah and turning away from both remembrance and the One to be remembered. The more the love for this world and its affairs, the thicker the veil and the curtain on the heart.

Sometimes this love so overwhelms the heart, and the power [sult n] of endearing post and position becomes so influential that the light of the divine nature [fitrat ull n] in the heart is put off, and the doors of happiness are closed to man's face. It is, however, possible that the locks of the hearts mentioned in the noble yah:

"Will they, then, not meditate on the Qur'an, or are there locks on the hearts?" 13

Are those locks of mundane attachments. The one who wants to be benefited by the Qur'anic knowledge and to make use of the divine admonitions will have to purge the heart from such impurities, and drive away the pollution of cordial sins, which are being engaged with other than Him, because the non–purified [heart] is no place for these secrets. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"It is surely a noble Qur'an, in a protected Book; none shall touch it save the purified ones." 14

Just as the touching of the external body of this Book is not allowed for the one whose external body is not purified, by both legislation and obligation, similarly its knowledge, admonitions and secrets are prohibited to the one whose heart is smeared with the filths of the mundane longings. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"This is the Book, wherein is no doubt, a guide for those who fear Allah." 15

The one who does not fear Allah and is faithless according to the God-fearing and faith of the common people is deprived from the formal lights of the admonitions of the Qur'an and of its true beliefs, while the one who does not fear Allah and is faithless according to other degrees of fearing Allah, which are the fearing of the elite, of the upper elite and of the uppermost elite is deprived from the other degrees of the Qur'an.

However, going into the details and relating other yahs to the same effect would lengthen the subject. Nevertheless, we are going to end this chapter with an honored yah, which will be sufficient for the wakeful people, provided that it is well pendered upon.

Allah, the Exalted, says:

"...Indeed there has come to you from Allah a light, and a clear Book, with which Allah guides him who seeks His pleasure unto the ways of safety, and brings them out of darkness into the light by His permission, and guides them unto a straight path."16

There are many specific points in this noble $\mathbb{I}yah$, and to explain them we would need to write a separate thesis, for which there is no opportunity now.

- 1. Srah al-Kahf 18:66
- 2. Sirah al-Baqarah 2:260
- 3. Srah T-H 20:114
- 4. Srah an-Naba 78:40

- 5. Serah al-Furgen 25:30
- 6. Us al-Kefe, vol. 1, "Book of the Merits of Knowledge," ch. on "The Description of Knowledge and its Merits," had to 1, p. 37.
- 7. Sgrah al-Kahf 18:66
- 8. S rah al-Fajr 89:22
- 9. Srah Tr-Hr 20:5
- 10. Bih er al-Anwer, vol. 89, "The Book of the Qur'an," ch. 8, hadeth 48, p. 95; 'Ayyeshe's Exegesis, vol. 1, p. 12.
- 11. Bih ral-Anw r, vol. 2, "Book of Knowledge," had th 41, p. 303, as quoted from Ikm ad-D n (Completing the Religion).
- 12. S@rah al-An'@m 7:179
- 13. Sirah Muhammad 47:24
- 14. Serah al-Weqi'ah 56:77-79
- 15. Sirah al-Baqarah 2:2
- 16. Srah al-M'idah 5:15-16

Section Eight: Meditation

One of the disciplines of reciting the Qur'an is the presence of heart, to which we have already referred in this book, when we discussed the general disciplines of the acts of worship; so, there is no need to repeat it.

Another one of its disciplines is meditation, by which we mean that the reciter of the noble $\[]$ yahs should look for the destination and the objective. Now as the objective of the Qur'an, as the very luminous Book says, is guiding the people to the ways of safety, bringing them out of the stages of darkness into the world of light, and leading them to the straight path, one must, by way of meditating on the noble $\[]$ yahs, attain the stages of safety, from its lowest stage, which belongs to worldly dominion, up to its final stage, which is the realization of a sound heart $\[]$ qalb-i $\[]$ yalim $\[]$, according to the explanation received from $\[]$ al-Bayt $\[]$ all yalim $\[]$ saying that a sound heart meets Allah when it is occupied by none other than Him. 1

The soundness of the worldly and heavenly powers should be the quest of the reciter of the Qur'an, as he will certainly find it in this heavenly Book if he meditates on it. When the human powers become safe from Satan's intrusion, and when the way to safety is found and followed, man, in each stage of safety, will be saved from a degree of darkness, and the bright light of Allah will inevitably shine in him.

If he gets rid of all sorts of darkness, the first of which is the darkness of the world of nature, with all its affairs, and the last of which is the darkness of being inclined to multiplicity with all its affairs, the absolute light will shine in his heart, leading him to the straight path of humanity, which is, in this instance, the path of the Lord:

Contemplation is very much invited to, praised and applauded in the Glorious Qur'an. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"And we have revealed to you the Remembrance that you may explain to mankind what has been sent down to them and that haply they may reflect."3

In this noble **1** yah reflection is strongly applauded, because the aim of sending down this great heavenly Book, the great luminous paper, is that "haply they may reflect." This is quite significant that the mere possibility of reflection causes the revelation of this great generosity [kar mat]. In another **1** yah He says: "Therefore, narrate the narratives [qasas] that they may reflect."4

There are so many \mathbb{I} *yah*s of this like or almost the like, as well as narratives [$riw\mathbb{I}$ $y\mathbb{I}$ t] which invite to reflection. The Messenger of Allah (s) is quoted to have said, on the revelation of the \mathbb{I} yah

"Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men of understanding"5

"Woe to the one who reads it and does not reflect upon it." An important point in this respect is that one should know what the commended reflection is, as there is no doubt in the fact that it is praiseworthy to think about the Qur'an and the *had* ths. The best expression for it is that of the Khtjah 'Abdullth al-Anstre (may Allah sanctify his soul).

He says: "Do know that reflection is the insight's attempt to understand the purpose." That is, reflection is a seeking by the "insight" [bas rat], which is the eye of the heart, wanting to attain the aim and the result, which are the utmost perfection. It is quite clear that the destination [maqsad] and the aim [maqsed] are the absolute happiness, attainable through theoretical and practical perfection.

Therefore, it is man's duty to obtain the humane objective and result, being happiness, from the noble yahs of the divine Book and from its stories and tales. And, since happiness is to attain absolute safety, the world of light and the straight path, man should find through the honored Qur'an the ways to safety, the source of the absolute light and the straight path, as was stated in the previously mentioned noble yah.

When the reciter gets the aim, he becomes clear-sighted in getting to it, and the door of being benefited by the Qur'an opens to him and with it the doors of the mercy of Allah open, too. He, then, would not spend his dear and short years and his capital for obtaining happiness on matters which are not intended by the Message, preventing himself from indulging in useless discussion and talk about such an important subject.

Having directed his heart's eye for some time to this purpose, neglecting other matters, the eye of the heart gets sharp in observing, and meditating on the Qur'an becomes common to him, and the ways of utilization open to him, and there open to him such doors that had not already been open to him, and he

obtains from the Qur'an such matters and knowledge that he had never obtained before. At that time he can understand the meaning of the Qur'an being a cure for the spiritual ailment, as is confirmed by the noble @yah:

"And we reveal from the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers and it adds only to the perdition of the wrongdoers,"8

And the meaning of the saying of Im m 'Al (a): "Learn the Qur'an, for it is the spring [rab] of the hearts; and seek cure with its light, since it is the cure for the hearts." He does not seek from the Qur'an the cure of only the physical ailments, but regards the main aim to be the cure of the spiritual ailments, which is the very objective of the Qur'an.

The Qur'an has not been sent down to cure the physical ailments, although such ailments do get cured by it. The prophets ('a), too, did not come to cure physical ailments, although they did cure them. As a matter of fact, they were the doctors for the souls, and the curers of the hearts and the spirits.

- 1. Use al-Kefe, vol. 3, p.26, "The Book of Faith and Disbelief", ch. on "Sincerity," hadeth 5.
- 2. Srah Hrd 11:56
- 3. Sirah an-Nahl 16:44
- 4. Srah al-A'rf 7:176
- 5. S©rah ©l-i 'Imr©n 3:190
- 6. Nor ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 1, p. 350 (with a slight literal difference).
- 7. Man@zil as-S@'ir@n, section "The Beginnings," ch. on "Reflection."
- 8. S@rah al-Isr@ 17:82.
- 9. Nahj al-Bal

 ghah, sermon 109 (with some change in the wording).

Section Nine: Application To One's Own Condition

One of the important disciplines of reciting the Qur'an that causes one to get so many good results and advantages is "application" [tatb [q]; that is, each [yah] which he recites and thinks about, he is to apply its concept to his own condition, to make up for his shortcomings by resorting to it, and to cure his ailments with it. Take, for example, the honored story of Adam ('a).

See what caused Satan to be expelled from the Sacred Threshold of Allah, despite his countless acts of worship and long devoted bowings, so that you may purge yourself of it, because the state of Allah's proximity belongs to the pure ones, and with satanic conducts and character no one can be admitted to that Sacred Presence. From the noble **yah**s one can learn that the reason behind **lbls**' refusing to bow down was self-conceit and self-admiration:

"I am better than he. You have created me of fire while him you have created of clay."1

This self-conceit led him to selfishness and ostentation, which is arrogance. This led him to obstinacy, which is independence and disobedience, and hence he was expelled from the Sacred Court. We, from the beginning of the life, call Satan as the accursed and the discarded, and yet we ourselves possess his very vile characteristics.

It has not occurred to us that anyone possessing the same reasons, which caused the dismissal of Satan, will be dismissed, too. Satan has no particular specialty; whatever reason expelled him from the threshold of Allah's proximity would never let us into that proximity. I am afraid that the curses, which we send to *lbl*Es, are to be shared by us, too.

We may further think of the same noble story, and what caused the superiority of Adam ('a) over Allah's angels, so that we ourselves may acquire them, too, as much as possible. The cause was "teaching the names," as the Qur'an says:

"And He taught Adam all the names."2

The high degree of teaching the names is realizing [tahaqquq] the state of Allah's Names, such as the high degree of counting the Names as in the noble had th: "Allah has ninety-nine names; whoever reckons them enters Paradise" which means realizing [tahaqquq] their truth, by which man obtains the Paradise of the Names.

Man, by way of cordial austerities, can be the manifestation [mazhar] of Allah's Names and the great divine sign, and his existence becomes a divine one, and the hand of the divine Beauty and Majesty manages his kingdom. In another had to it is also said: "The connection of a believer's soul to Allah, the Exalted, is stronger than the connection of the sun's ray to it or to its light."4

In another authentic *had* th it is said: "When the servant approaches me through his supererogatory acts, I love him, and when I love him I become his ears with which he hears, and I become his eyes with which he sees, and I become his tongue with which he speaks, and I become his hand with which he takes."5

In a *had* th it is said: "All is Allah's eye and hand" and similar ones, as in a *had* th: "We are His Most Beautiful Names." In this respect, rational and traditional proofs are plenty.

Generally speaking, whoever wants to get a good share and advantage from the Qur'an have to apply each of the noble \P *yah* so his own condition so that he may get its complete benefit. For example, the noble \P *yah* of the S \P *rah al-Anf* \P *says*:

"The believers are those whose hearts feel fear when Allah is mentioned, and when His Eyahs are recited to them they increase them in faith, and in their Lord do they put their confidence."8

A silik must see whether he falls in line with these three attributes or not: Does mentioning Allah make his heart collapse and fear fall upon him? When the noble divine yahs are recited to him, will the light of faith increase in his heart? Are his confidence and trust in Allah, the Exalted? Or is he void of any one of these stages and devoid of these attributes? If he wants to know whether he fears Allah and that his heart falls down because of that, let him look at his deeds.

The one, who fears Allah, would not dare to do an act of pertness, or to violate any divine law in the Presence of His Sacred Majesty. If his faith increases by the divine **yahs**, the light of faith flows to his external kingdom, too. It is impossible for the heart to be luminous while the tongue, the speech, the eye, the sight, the ear and the hearing remain in the dark.

A luminous person is the one whose entire worldly and heavenly powers are radiant, diffusing light, and, besides guiding him to happiness and the straight path, they throw light on the road for others and guide them along the road to humanity. Likewise is the one who depends upon Allah and puts his trust in Him, in which case he cuts his eye of covetousness off others, and puts down his burden of need and poverty at the threshold of the Absolute Self–Sufficient, and regards others as poor and helpless as himself.

So, the duty of the traveler to Allah is to expose himself to the Glorious Qur'an, and, as the criterion to tell a true and valid *had* th from a false and invalid one is to expose it to the Book of Allah, and the one which is not in harmony with it is to be judged as false and nonsense, similarly, the criterion for telling straightness from crookedness, and happiness from wretchedness, is that it is to turn out in the Book of Allah to be straight and correct.

And, as the character of the Messenger of Allah is the Qur'an, he [the $s \mathbb{E} lik$] should make his character coincide with the Qur'an, so that it corresponds to that of the perfect friend of Allah. The character which is contrary to the Book of Allah is nonsense and false. Likewise, he is to conform all his [other] knowledge, [$ma' \mathbb{E} rif$], condition of heart, internal and external deeds with the Book of Allah, so as to be in harmony with it, and the Qur'an becomes the image of his inside:

You are the clear Book that, By its letters the hidden is exposed.9

There are other disciplines in this field, some of which have already been mentioned early in this book under the title "the general discipline of worship," and some others are mentioned here. Going on explaining further disciplines will lengthen our discourse; therefore, we relinquish them, and Allah is the Knowing.

- 1. Srah al-A'rrf 7:12
- 2. Sirah al-Baqarah 2:31
- 3. Bih r al-Anw r, vol. 4, pp. 186-7.
- 4. Us al-K fe, vol. 3, "The Book of Faith and Disbelief" ch. on "The Believers' Brotherhood to One Another," had th 4, p. 242.
- 5. Use al-Kefe, vol. 4, "The Book of Faith and Disbelief", ch. on "The One Who Hurts the Muslims and Slights Them," hadeth 7, p.53.

- 6. In a sermon by Imem 'Ale ('a), it is said: "I am Allah's eye and His truthful tongue and His hand." Ma'eniy 'ul-Akhber, hadeth 14, p. 17; At-Tawhed, ch. 22, hadeth 2, p. 65.
- 7. Usel al-Kefe, vol. 1, "The Book of at-Tawhed", ch. on "Wonders," hadeth 4, p. 196.
- 8. Srah al-Anfrl 7:2.
- 9. This is a line of a poem which begins with:

You think you are a small matter, While in you is contained the biggest world.

The poem is ascribed to Imm 'Alm ('a).

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