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Imam Ali And Judgment

Islam is the most blissful grace that Almighty Allah has conferred upon His servants. It is the very illumination that guides them to the straightest path in order to set aright their crookedness, reclaim their affairs, and spread security and stability in their associations and communities.

Through its brilliant contents and articles, the message of Islam aims at raising the level of the human behavior, discipline, and moral standards, keeping humanity away from all motives of retardation, and bringing up human beings on such a noble and upright upbringing that is prevailed by awareness and feelings of the necessity for carrying out all the duties towards themselves, their families, and their communities.

Thus, Islam prevents humanity from falling in the abysmal mazes of the unexplored aspects of life that are founded on chaos and disputes that make man live under horror, and experience poverty and deprivation.

However, all of the other heavenly revealed religions and social doctrines, when legislating laws, have not hit upon all the issues and affairs of humanity; rather, they adopted certain aspects of life without full comprehension.

Thanks to Almighty Allah, Islam, on the other hand, through its religion- based and positive laws and regulations, has had a handle on all affairs of humanity, deciding for them such decisive solutions that uproot any social disease, eliminate all problems, and leave no single gap unsealed.

One of the most inspired legislations of Islam in the field of social and individual reformation is that it has created strong ties between the Muslim communities when it established fraternity ties between each couple of Muslims and decided that the religious brotherhood is stronger than lineal brotherhood.

According to this law, Muslims are true brothers of each other and each Muslim must love for his brother-in-faith whatever he loves for himself and hates for him whatever he hates for himself. Islam then decided that Muslims should act as the eye and guide of each other.

Unfortunately, had this brotherly spirit endured among Muslims, they would certainly have saved themselves from disputes and clashes, the doors of courts would have been closed, and the offices of lawyers would have been covered with curtains.

When the Holy Prophet (S) established his government in Yathrib, he formed a judicial council in the Mosque, because judgment between litigants was part of his message that aimed at protecting the rights, guaranteeing the benefits of people, and giving social justice free hand to prevail on the community.

The Holy Prophet (S) assumed judgment between people and ruled according to the revelations of Almighty Allah. He thus established the foundations of judgment, developed its methods, consolidated its issues, and declared the functions of both the plaintiffs and the defendants. Of course, this act is considered one of the most wonderful fields of development in human life.

The Islamic judgment, along with its legislations and laws, is one of the repertoires of the Islamic thought from which jurisprudents all over the world quoted many of their laws. The Islamic judgment is characterized by its independence and non-submission to any of the ruling authorities. Besides, it is obligatory upon all authorities, including the supreme authority, to submit to whatever is issued by the judicial power.

It goes without saying that the prosperity of any nation is contingent upon the decency of judicature, which is expected to spread public security, put off all sorts of transgression and wronging, and smooth out justice. Conversely, if judicature is corrupt and passive to external factors, crime will be prevalent, intellectual and social paralysis will cover up the community, and chaos and indifference will spread to remove any sort of security in the society.

In the following lines, we will discuss the judgment of Imam Ali ('a) who was the founder of the majority of the principles of jurisprudence and was the most brilliant Muslim personality in the field of judicature.

He ('a) could solve the most complicated problems, removed ambiguity, revealed the truth, and did away with all confusions. As a result, scholars of law and judges were the first to be highly admired by the Imam ('a) and to derive from him very much information related to judging between the litigants and putting their hands on the truth.

During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (S), Imam Ali ('a) assumed the office of judicature when he was sent to Yemen. However, the Holy Prophet (S) did not need to put Imam Ali ('a) to the test with regard to his experience in this field, because he was sure of that; rather, he only supplied him with some advices concerning the etiquette of judgment. Thus, the Holy Prophet (S) said to him,

When the two parties of a lawsuit present themselves before you, you should not issue a verdict before you listen to both of them in the same way. If you do so, it will be easy for you to issue a fair judgment.

Imam Ali (‘a), commenting on this advice, said,

Since then, I could master the job of judgment and I have never suspected any issue. [1](#)

Imam Ali (‘a) distinguished himself in the fields of judgment and issuance of verdicts so highly that none could ever match him. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet (S) awarded him such a superb medal that distinguished him from the other Companions when he declared,

Ali is the most versed in the field of judgment of all of you. [2](#)

Historicists state that Imam Ali (‘a) was the supreme referential authority in the fields of judgment and verdicts during the reigns of the first three caliphs who never violated his view in any case. More specifically, the second caliph ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab depended totally upon Imam Ali (‘a) in the issues of jurisprudence and judgment that were provided before him so much so that he declared more than once that he would have perished if Ali had not been there to save him.

The excellence of Imam Ali’s judgment amazed many of the ancient and modern scholars and instigated them to compile books that comprised all issues related to the Imam’s adjudication and judgmental decrees. Let us now list some of these books:

- (1) Qasaya Amir Al-Mu'minin by Muhammad ibn Qays Al-Bujali, one of the companions of Imam Al-Sadiq and Imam Al-Kazim. [3](#)
- (2) Qasaya Al-Imam Amir Al-Mu'minin by Al-Mu’alla ibn Muhammad Al- Basri. [4](#)
- (3) ‘Aja’ib Ahkam Al-Imam Amir Al-Mu'minin by Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Ibrahim (a manuscript).
- (4) ‘Aja’ib Ahkam wa-Qasaya wa-Masa’il Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi- talib Al-’Ajibah by Sayyid Muhsin Al-Amin (published in AH 366).
- (5) Qasaya Amir Al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib by Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Al-Tustari (published by Al-Matba’ah Al-kaydariyyah Press in AH 1373).

The issues of Imam Ali (‘a) in judgment and adjudication reveal the broadness of his knowledge, his unmatched scientific faculties, and his capability to solve the most complicated issues that all judges could not solve.

Before presenting the judgmental issues that Imam Ali (‘a) encountered and solved marvelously, let us have a short pause with some secondary issues related to adjudication and judgment.

Significance Of Adjudication

About the significance of the office of judge, Imam Ali (‘a) said to Shurayh the judge,

O Shurayh, you have sit in a place that none should assume except a prophet, a successor of a prophet, or, otherwise, a man bringing to himself wretchedness.[5](#)

Imam Ali (‘a) paid very much attention to the issue of judgments; he therefore ordered Shurayh the judge not to execute any of his verdicts before showing them to the Imam (‘a) so that the Imam would be sure of the accuracy of the sentence.[6](#)

In the field of the etiquettes of judging between people, it is reported that a Jew, once, disputed with Imam Ali (‘a) about an armor he claimed to have been his. ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab, who was the judge in this case, said to the Imam (‘a) in the court, ‘O Abu’l-Hasan, you may stand up next to your litigant.’ This word upset the Imam (‘a) very much that the impression was clear on his face.

When the trial was over, ‘Umar asked the Imam (‘a) about the reason for his anger. The Imam (‘a) answered,

‘You have not regarded me equal to the Jew. You have called me by surname and have not done the same to him!’

Imam Ali’s Judgments During The Holy Prophet’s Lifetime

Imam Ali (‘a) was appointed by the Holy Prophet (S) as the chief judge of Yemen. Before he had left, the Imam (‘a) said to the Holy Prophet (S),

O Allah’s Messenger, you are sending me to assume this office while I am still too young to gain mastery in adjudication.

The Holy Prophet (S) answered,

Set out! Allah shall guide your heart and fix your tongue on the truth.[7](#) Waki’, a famous writer and judge, says, ‘The most prominent of all judges is Ali ibn Abi Talib, because the Holy Prophet (S) entrusted him with the office of judge during his lifetime.’[8](#)

Admired by the judgments of Imam Ali (‘a), the Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said,

All praise be to Allah Who has endued us the Ahl Al-Bayt with wisdom.[9](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), describing the trials of the Holy Prophet (S), says,

When two men litigated before the Messenger of Allah (S), he would say to the plaintiff, ‘Do you have a proof?’ If the plaintiff provided an accepted and admitted proof, the Holy Prophet (S) would pass judgment against the defendant, but if the plaintiff could not provide a proof, then the defendant would take an oath by Allah to prove the falsity of the litigation of the plaintiff against him.

If witnesses were brought, the Holy Prophet (S) would ask them about their tribes, quarters, and houses. If they answered, he would order the parties of litigation and the witnesses to stop before him. He then ordered the clerk to write down the names of the plaintiff, the defendant, and the witnesses and the details of their testimonies.

He would then give a copy of these records to two of his virtuous companions and order each of them separately, so that the other one would not know, to go to the tribes, marketplaces, quarters, and houses of the witnesses and ask about them.

If the two secret agents brought good news from these places, the Holy Prophet (S) would then summon the witnesses and the people who had praised them and ask the praising people to identify the witnesses. If they identified the witnesses acceptably and confirmed their words of praise of them, the Holy Prophet (S) would then pass a judgment against the defendant according to the testimonies of the witnesses.

On the other hand, if the secret agents came with bad news, the Holy Prophet (S) would summon the people who had dispraised the witnesses and ask them to identify them. He would then summon the witnesses.

If it was proved, in this way, that their testimonies had been false, he would not expose them to scandal, reproach them, or carp at them; rather, he would insistently encourage the litigants to make peace with one another so that the witnesses would not be exposed to scandal. The Holy Prophet (S) was very kind, compassionate, and merciful to his people.

If the witnesses were not recognized (i.e. they had no tribe, marketplace, quarter, and house), the Holy Prophet (S) would ask the defendant, 'What is your opinion about them?' If the defendant confirmed that he had not seen anything evil from them but their testimony had not been accurate, the Holy Prophet (S) would admit their testimonies, but if the defendant censured and condemned them, the Holy Prophet (S) would try his best to make peace between the two litigants, order the defendant to take an oath, and cut off their dispute. [10](#)

Who Is The Father?

A group of men shared in purchasing a she-slave and they all copulated with her in the same period of her purity from menstruation. She was thus pregnant. When she gave birth to a male baby, each one of the men claimed the baby to have been his son. They provided the case before Imam Ali ('a) who cast lots and decided the father of the baby accordingly.

He then sentenced the father to the payment of the two thirds of the amount of the blood money to the other partners. The Imam ('a) reproached them and warned against interfering in such matters. When the judgment was provided before the Holy Prophet (S), he, praising Imam Ali's sagacity, said,

All praise be to Allah Who made one of us the Ahl Al-Bayt pass judgment according to the laws of Prophet David. [11](#)

A Pit Dug For A Lion

It is reported that a lion fell into a pit that was made to trap it. When people crowded on the edge of the pit to look at the lion, a man jumped on the edge of the pit and his foot slipped. Trying to save himself, he hung to another man who hung to a third one who hung to a fourth one and all of them fell in the pit. As a result, they all preyed upon to death by the lion.

Their heirs disagreed about the blood money that should be paid to each one of them; they therefore submitted the case before Imam Ali (‘a) who decided that the heirs of the first man should pay one third of the blood money to the second man, the heirs of the second man should pay two thirds to the heirs of the third man, and the heirs of the third man should pay a whole blood money to the heirs of the fourth man.

When the judgment was transferred to the Holy Prophet (S), he said,

Abu’l-Hasan has judged among them with the judgment of Allah the Almighty and All-majestic.

The Three She-Slaves

Playfully, a slave girl shouldered another slave girl and a third slave girl pinched the one who carried the second girl on her shoulder, causing her to drop her. She thus fell to the ground and died.

When this case was provided before Imam Ali (‘a), he judged that the pinching slave girl should undergo one third of the blood money while the shouldering slave girl should also undergo one third and the remaining one third of the blood money should be cancelled, because the dead girl had climbed the shoulder of the second girl in a meaningless way.

When this judgment was transferred to the Holy Prophet (S), he decided to pass it. [12](#)

The Killed Under The Wall

A wall fell on a group of people and killed them. Among them, there was a slave woman with her child and a free woman with her child, too. The father of the free woman’s child was free while the father of the slave woman’s child was slave. Hence, the free child was not distinguished from the slave.

When the issue was provided before Imam Ali (‘a), he judged between them according to lot that would be cast. He thus judged that the child on whom the lot of freedom fell would be free while the child on whom the lot of slavery fell would be slave. He then decided the enslaved child to be freed. He also judged that the free child would be subjected to the laws of inheritance.

When this judgment was transferred to the Holy Prophet (S), he decided to pass it. [13](#)

A Cow That Killed A Donkey

Two men brought a dispute before the Holy Prophet (S) about a cow that had killed a donkey. One of the men said, ‘O Allah’s Messenger, this man’s cow has killed my donkey.’

The Holy Prophet (S) ordered,

‘Go to Abu-Bakr and ask him to judge between you.’

They came to Abu-Bakr and told him their story. He asked,

‘Why have you left the Messenger of Allah (S) and come to me?’

They answered, ‘He told us to do that.’

Abu-Bakr said, ‘A beast has killed a beast and therefore its owner has no responsibility for the dead beast.’

They returned to the Holy Prophet (S) and told him of that. He said to them,

‘Go to ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab and tell him your story. Ask him for a judgment about it.’

They went to ‘Umar and told him their story. He asked, ‘Why have you left the Messenger of Allah (S) and come to me?’

They answered, ‘He told us to do so.’

‘Umar further asked, ‘Why did he not tell you to go to Abu-Bakr?’

They answered, ‘We were ordered to do that; therefore, we went to him.’ ‘Umar enquired, ‘What did he say to you about this case?’

They thus informed him about Abu-Bakr’s reply.

‘Umar thus said, ‘My view agrees with Abu-Bakr’s.’

They returned to the Holy Prophet (S) and gave him a report of that.

The Holy Prophet (S) instructed,

‘Go to Ali ibn Abi Talib so that he may judge between you.’

They went to Imam Ali (‘a) and told him their story.

The Imam ('a) thus judged,

'If the cow entered into the stable of the donkey, then the owner of the cow must pay the price of the donkey to its owner. But if the donkey entered into the stable of the cow, and the cow killed it, the owner of the donkey has no payment due from the owner of the cow.'

The two men went back to the Holy Prophet (S) and told him about Imam Ali's judgment between them. The Holy Prophet (S) said,

Ali ibn Abi Talib has given the same judgment of Allah the All-exalted. All praise be to Allah Who has created among us the Ahl Al-Bayt one who can give judgment in the manner of Prophet David. [14](#)

Imam Ali's Judgments In The Reign Of Abu-Bakr

Ignorance About The Law

It is reported that a man was brought before Abu-Bakr. The man had drunk wine; so, Abu-Bakr decided to administer the prescribed punishment of drinking intoxicants on him. However, the man pleaded, 'I drank it without having knowledge that it was forbidden, because I grew up among people who regarded it as lawful. I have not known that it was forbidden until now.'

Abu-Bakr failed to deliver a decision in the matter. He did not know the way to judge him. Some of the present persons advised him to seek information from Imam Ali ('a) about the decision in that matter.

He sent someone to ask him about it. Imam Ali ('a) advised,

'Tell two trustworthy Muslims to go around the gatherings of the Muhajirun and the Ansar to ask them whether any of them had recited to the man the Quranic verse about the forbiddance of intoxicants or had reported it to him on the authority of the Holy Prophet (S). If two of them testify that the man had been informed about the forbiddance of wine, then he should be subjected to the prescribed punishment. If no one testifies, Abu-Bakr should order the man to repent and let him go.'

Abu-Bakr did so. No one of the Muhajirun or the Ansar gave evidence that they had recited the Quranic verse forbidding wine or had reported it to him on the authority of the Holy Prophet (S). So, Abu-Bakr asked man to repent and then let him go. [15](#)

Wet Dream

One man said to another, 'I have wet dreamt of your mother!' This word enraged the man so intensely that he went to Abu-Bakr and complained against the other. Abu-Bakr was too confused to solve the issue; he therefore asked Imam Ali ('a) for a solution. The Imam ('a) answered,

'You may lead the man under sunlight and execute the lashing punishment to his shadow, because

dream is just like shadow. However, we should whip that man in a disciplinary way so that he would stop injuring Muslims. [16](#)

Imam Ali's Judgments In The Reign Of 'Umar

The Story Of Qudamah Ibn Mas'un

'Umar ibn Al-Khattab decided to execute the penal law of drinking wine on Qudamah ibn Mas'un, but the latter said to 'Umar, 'I should not be subjected to the penal law, because Allah says in the Quran, 'On those who believe and do good deeds there is no blame for what they eat, when they are careful of their duty and believe and do good deeds, then they are careful of their duty and believe, then they are careful of their duty and do good to others; and

Allah loves those who do good to others. (5:93)"

Thus, 'Umar stopped executing the punishment on him.

When Imam Ali ('a) was informed, he criticized 'Umar and asked him,

'Why have you refrained from executing the punishment on Qudamah after he had drunk wine?'

'Umar answered that Qudamah recited a Quranic verse that might bear an indication of exception of states like his. However, Imam Ali ('a) clarified the matter by saying,

Neither Qudamah nor any one who follows him in committing what Allah has deemed forbidden is included with those mentioned in the holy Quranic verse involved. Those who believe and do good deeds never violate any prohibition.

Now, you must summon Qudamah and order him to repent from what he had claimed. If he repents, then you must execute the penal law on him. If he does not repent, then you must sentence him to death penalty, because he has abandoned the religion.

'Umar, having consented to the Imam's words, summoned Qudamah who repented from what he had said. So, 'Umar warded off the death penalty from him. However, he did not know how to execute the penal law on Qudamah; he therefore sought the advice of Imam Ali ('a) who instructed him to lash him eighty lashes. So, 'Umar did. [17](#)

False Accusation Of Adultery

A man who used to travel frequently had owned a slave girl. When the slave girl attained puberty, the man's wife feared lest her husband would marry the slave girl. She therefore gathered some other women and ordered them to grasp the slave girl so forcibly that she would be able to deflower her with her finger and accuse her of committing adultery.

The women then did and testified to the false claim of the wife. When the case was brought before ‘Umar by the husband, ‘Umar did not know what to do. He therefore led the slave girl, the man, and the other women to Imam Ali (‘a) and asked for a solution.

The Imam (‘a) first asked the man’s wife whether she could provide evidence. The wife answered, ‘I have witnesses. My neighbors testify to my claim.’

The Imam (‘a) ordered these women to be present before him. Once they came, he unsheathed his sword and put it in front of him. He then summoned the man’s wife, who insisted on her claim. He then ordered her to go back home. He then summoned one of the other women, rested on his knees, and said to her,

‘Do you know me? I am Ali ibn Abi Talib. This is my (famous) sword. The man’s wife has just said what she had said, and retreated from her claim to say the truth. I guaranteed immunity for her. If you now will not tell me of the whole truth, I will fill up the sword with your blood.’

The woman turned her face towards ‘Umar and said, ‘Grant me immunity (from killing) so that I will say the truth.’

The Imam (‘a) said,

‘So, tell the truth.’

The woman thus said, ‘No, by Allah. The man’s wife saw the beauty and attraction of the slave girl and feared lest this would seduce her husband into her. She therefore forced the slave girl to drink an intoxicating drink and deflowered her with her finger.’

Upon hearing this, Imam Ali (‘a) shouted,

‘Allah is the Most Great! I am the first to separate between the witnesses after Prophet Daniel.’

The Imam (‘a) then sentenced the man’s wife to the punishment of false accusation and sentenced the other women to the payment of compensation amount of four hundred dirhams. He also ordered the man to divorce his wife and marry the slave girl. [18](#)

False Accusation

A woman was very fond of a young man from the Ansar who was too chaste to respond to her frequent seductions. When she despaired of any response, she took an egg, poured its albumen on her dress and between her thighs, and then came to ‘Umar claiming that the young man had led her to a certain place and raped her.

Immediately, ‘Umar summoned the young man and decided to punish him. The young man begged

‘Umar and asked him to investigate the case. ‘Umar then turned his face towards Imam Ali (‘a) and asked, ‘O Abu’l-Hasan, what do you think?’

When the Imam (‘a) looked at the white of the egg, he suspected it. He therefore ordered that some boiling water should be brought to him. He poured the boiling water on the place of the white of the egg and it turned white. He took piece of it and put it on his tongue to discover its reality. He then insisted on the woman to tell the truth and she finally did. [19](#)

Disavowal Of A Son

A young man complained to ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab against a woman whom he claimed to be his mother while she disavowed him. When ‘Umar summoned her, she came along with her four brothers and other forty persons who were ready to swear that she had no family relation with that young man and that she was still unmarried.

Imam Ali (‘a), who was present, asked ‘Umar to permit him judging between the two litigants. ‘Umar shouted, ‘How strange this is! How can I not permit you judging in this case after I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, ‘The most knowledgeable of all of you is Ali ibn Abi Talib?’

The Imam (‘a) turned his face towards the woman and asked,

‘Do you have witnesses?’

‘Yes, I do,’ she said.

The witnesses thus testified to the woman.

The Imam (‘a) said to the attendants,

‘This day, I will issue such a judgment that will please the Lord from above His Throne. I learnt it from my dear the Messenger of Allah (S).’

He then said to the woman,

‘Do you have a guardian?’ [20](#)

She answered, ‘Yes, I do. My guardians are these brothers of mine.’

The Imam (‘a) then said to her brothers,

‘Do you allow me to decide about your sister and you?’

‘Yes, we do,’ they answered.

The Imam (‘a) thus said,

'I call Allah and the Muslims who are attendant to witness that I have given this woman to this young man in marriage with a dowry of four hundred dirhams, which I will pay.'

He ('a) then shouted at his servant,

'O Qambar, bring me four hundred dirhams.'

Qambar thus fetched the dirhams and the Imam ('a) immediately put them in the hand of the young man to pay them as dowry to the woman and ordered him to prepare himself for the wedding party. The young man did what Imam Ali ('a) had ordered him and ordered the woman to accompany him.

Immediately, the woman cried out of fear, 'This is the Fire! This is the Fire! O cousin of Muhammad, do you want to give me in marriage to my own son? By Allah, this young man is my son. My brothers gave me in marriage to a man whose tribe was not known (i.e. of no good reputation among the other tribes). So, I gave birth to this young man. When he became young, my brothers ordered me to disavow and reject him. By Allah, this young man is my son.'^{[21](#)}

The Widow Of An Old Man

A woman was given in marriage to an old man who died after he had copulated with her. He thus impregnated her and she gave birth to a male baby. The other sons of the old man claimed that the woman was adulteress and the baby was not their half-brother. Accepting their claim, 'Umar decided to stone her to death.^{[22](#)} When Imam Ali ('a) passed by the woman, she sought his help, saying, 'O cousin of Allah's Messenger, I have my own evidence.'

The Imam ('a) ordered her to be brought before him. She gave him a written document in which the date of her marriage and the date of her husband's death were registered. The next day, Imam Ali ('a) ordered the sons of the dead old man to be present before him. He then asked them to bring a group of boys including the son of that woman.

He then said to the boys, 'Now, you can play.' As they played for a while, the Imam ('a) ordered them to have a rest. He then ordered them to play again. When they tried to stand up, the Imam ('a) noticed that the son of the second young wife stood up after he had leaned on the palms of his hands. Conclusively, the Imam ('a) decided that the boy should have his share from the inheritance of the old man, his father, and ordered that the brothers should be lashed.

This decision astonished 'Umar very much that he asked, 'How could you reach such conclusion.'

The Imam ('a) answered, 'I saw the weakness of the old man in the leaning of the boy on the palms of his two hands while he was trying to stand up.'^{[23](#)}

Two Women Claiming A Male Child

Two women quarreled over a male child, each claiming him to be her son. ‘Umar sent for Imam Ali (‘a) and requested him to solve the strange problem. The Imam (‘a) tried to persuade the women to come out with the truth. He reminded them of the punishment for false testimony in this world and in the next.

When neither of the women yielded, Imam Ali (‘a) said,

‘Now, I have no option but to send for my sword.’

The women asked,

‘What will you do with a sword?’

Imam Ali (‘a) replied,

‘It is but proper that I do justice by cutting the baby into two halves and give one half to each of you!’

One of the women said, ‘By Allah, O Abu’l-Hasan! Do not do it. I made a mistake. The child is not mine but he belongs to my rival. I relinquish my claim.’ Imam Ali (‘a) praised the Lord and said,

‘The child belongs to you. As the mother of the child, you could not bear to see the child being harmed. The other woman had no such feeling because she was not the mother of the child.’

This is a wonderful conclusion, because the boy has inherited weakness from his father whose agedness caused him physical weakness.

Upon this, the other woman admitted that she was not the mother of the child.

‘Umar was very pleased with the outcome and he blessed and prayed for Imam Ali (‘a).[24](#)

A Crazy Woman Committing Adultery

During the reign of ‘Umar, a man seduced a mad woman into adultery. Evidence for that was established against her; therefore, ‘Umar ordered her to be flogged according to the prescribed punishment. She was brought past Imam Ali (‘a) on her way to be flogged.

‘Why is the mad woman of the family of so-and-so being dragged along?’

he asked. ‘A man seduced her and fled and the evidence of fornication has been established against her. So, ‘Umar ordered her to be flogged,’ he was told.

‘Take her back to him,’

Imam Ali (‘a) told them, ‘and ask him:

Do you not know that this is a mad woman and the Messenger of Allah (S) has said, 'The order of punishment should be withheld from the mad person until he recovers?' Her reason and her soul have been overcome.'

She was taken back to 'Umar and he was told what Imam Ali ('a) had said.

'Umar said, 'Allah has rescued me from it. I was almost destroyed through whipping her.' He thus withdrew the prescribed punishment from her.[25](#)

Five Different Punishments For A Single Offence

Five persons were arrested on charges of adultery and brought before 'Umar who ordered all of them to be stoned to death. Imam Ali ('a) who was then present in the assembly protested that the judgment was illegal. 'Umar asked the Imam ('a) to decide the matter, and the Imam ('a) ordered one of them to be sentenced to death, the second to be stoned, the third to be flogged, the fourth to suffer half the penalty, and the fifth to be admonished and let off.

This decision surprised 'Umar and the rest of the gathering. 'Umar thus asked, 'How come you imposed different sentences in respect of a single offence?' Imam Ali ('a) replied,

'The first one was a Dhimmi (a non-Muslim enjoying the protection of the Muslim government) and by committing the offence, he lost the protection given to a Dhimmi and thus became liable to be sentenced to death penalty.

The second was a married man and the punishment for committing adultery by a married man is to be stoned to death. The third was a bachelor and his punishment is to be whipped. The fourth was a bondsman and therefore he was to suffer only half the penalty. The last one was an insane person and he is thus exempted from any punishment.'[26](#)

Adultery Under Compulsion

It is reported that witnesses gave evidence against a woman that they had found her at one of the watering places of the Bedouins and a man who was not her husband was having intercourse with her. 'Umar ordered her to be stoned because she had a husband (i.e. married). She declared, 'O Allah, You know that I am innocent.'

'Do you impugn the witnesses as well?' remarked 'Umar.

Imam Ali ('a), who was present, said,

'Let them bring her back and let them question her. Perhaps, she has an excuse.'

She was brought back and questioned about the circumstances of what she had done. She said, 'My

family had some camels. I went out with my family's camels and took with me some water. There was no milk in the camels.

A neighbor of ours had camels with him and there was milk in his camels. The water I had had with me was used up and I asked him to give me a drink. He refused to give me a drink unless I submitted myself to him. I refused. When my life was about to depart, I submitted myself to him unwillingly.'

Imam Ali ('a) shouted,

'Allah is the Most Great. Whoever is compelled to do something without desiring to do it is not a transgressor and no sin is counted against him. This is what Allah the Almighty and All-majestic has declared. You must now free her, because she was neither transgressor nor desirous for committing the sin.' Upon hearing so, 'Umar freed her.[27](#)

The Punishment Of The Absent From Their Wives

'Umar ordered to stone to death a man from Mina who had committed adultery with a woman from Al-Madinah. However, Imam Ali ('a) said to 'Umar,

'This man is not liable to the punishment of stoning to death, because he is absent from his wife who lives in another city. In such cases, the punishment of lashing must be applied.'[28](#)

A Three-Time Larceny

A larcener was brought before 'Umar who had already ordered of cutting his hand once and his leg at the second time, because he committed larceny for the second time. Because this time was the third, 'Umar decided to sentence the larcener to death. However, Imam Ali ('a) intruded and said,

'Do not sentence him to death penalty, because you have already cut off his hand and leg. Rather, you should detain him.'[29](#)

The Two Cheaters

Two men entrusted one hundred dinars with a woman from the tribe of Quraysh, stipulating that she should deliver the amount only if the two of them came together to claim it and that at no cost should she give the amount if only one of them came to claim it. After about a year, one of them came and claimed the amount stating that his friend was dead. The woman refused to give the money stating that as per the stipulation both have to come together and receive the money.

The man argued that in view of the death of one of them, the stipulation did not stand any more and that it was unreasonable and unjust to demand the production of a dead person. Cornered by the persistent demand and arguments, the woman delivered the amount. A year later, the second man came and demanded the amount. The woman replied, 'Your friend had forced me to give the money stating that

you were dead. How can I now pay you again?’

The man said, ‘You should not have paid the money to him when he came alone, particularly when we had stipulated that the money should be paid only if the two of us came together. You should at least have insisted on the proof of my alleged death, like I am doing now.’

The man produced evidence of his friend’s death. He took the woman to ‘Umar and wanted him to punish her for breach of trust. ‘Umar asked the woman, ‘Did you receive the money in trust on the stipulation alleged by this man?’ The woman became frightened and said, ‘I beseech you not to judge this case. Instead, ask Ali to decide the matter.’

‘Umar sent for Imam Ali (‘a) who heard the entire dispute. He realized that the two men had played fraud on the woman. However, he asked the man to fear Allah and tell the truth. The man persisted on his demand. Then, Imam Ali (‘a) said,

‘Is it not true that you stipulated that the amount should be paid only if both of you came together?’

The man replied in the affirmative. Imam Ali (‘a) said,

‘Then, go and bring your friend. We shall then pay you the amount.’

The man ran away with disappointment.

Hearing this, ‘Umar praised the Lord and thanked Imam Ali (‘a) saying, ‘O Lord! Let ‘Umar not survive a day without Ali.’[30](#)

Stoning A Pregnant

A pregnant woman who had committed adultery was brought before ‘Umar who ordered her to be stoned. Imam Ali (‘a), who was present, said,

‘If you have the right to stone her, then you do not have the right to take action against what is in her womb. Allah the All-exalted says,

‘Nor does any bearer of a burden bear the burden of another.’(35: 18)

‘Umar declared, ‘May I never live to see a problem with which Abu’l-Hasan is not competent to deal.’

Then, ‘Umar asked the Imam (‘a), ‘What shall I do with her?’

The Imam (‘a) instructed,

‘Take care of her until she gives birth. When she has given birth and you have found someone to nurse her child, then administer the prescribed punishment on her.’[31](#)

Purchasing A Camel

At Mina, ‘Umar ordered Anas to purchase some camels for him, and Anas did. The seller then refused to hand the camels over to ‘Umar along with their saddles and saddlecloths, saying, ‘I sold you these camels bare.’ The two litigated before Imam Ali (‘a) who said,

‘If you have stipulated that the saddles and the saddlecloths would be within the deal, then they must be yours, but if you have not, then they are the seller’s.’

‘Umar said, ‘In fact, I have not specified such stipulation.’

Hence, ‘Umar gave back the saddles and the saddlecloths to the seller.^{[32](#)}

Distribution Of The Public Funds

An amount of the public fund was brought to ‘Umar, who decided to distribute it among the Muslims. A little amount of it remained, and ‘Umar took counsel with his companions as to what he should do with it. They suggested that he would take it for himself, because the amount was too little to be distributed among them. However, Imam Ali (‘a) objected and said,

‘Distribute it among them no matter how much of it the share of each one of them will be. The little of the public funds must be treated as same as the much amount of it.’^{[33](#)}

Divorcement Before And After Islam

A man presented this case before ‘Umar:

‘Before Islam, I had divorced my wife once and in Islam, I divorced her twice in addition to that one. What do you judge in this issue?’

‘Umar was too confused to give any answer; he therefore waited for the coming of Imam Ali (‘a) and when he came, he provided the case before him. The Imam (‘a) said,

‘Islam demolishes every act that was done before embracing it.’

Thus, the Imam (‘a) adjudged the earliest time of divorce as null, because it took place before conversion to Islam.^{[34](#)}

Abortion On Account Of Fear

‘Umar once summoned a woman who had been conversing with men at her house. When his messengers came to her, she was frightened and afraid. She had a miscarriage and her child fell to the ground crying, but it then died. When he was informed, ‘Umar gathered the Companions and asked them about the law concerning this issue. They all said, ‘We consider that you were acting correctly. You

only wanted to establish the truth and there is no blame for anything against you in it.'

Imam Ali ('a) was sitting without saying anything about that. However,

'Umar asked him, 'What is your view about this, Abu'l-Hasan?' 'You have heard what they said,' Imam Ali ('a) answered.

'Yet, what is your view?'

Umar insisted.

Imam Ali ('a) replied,

'The people have said what you heard.'

'Umar further insisted, 'I adjure you to give your view.'

Imam Ali ('a) thus spoke,

'If people have been trying to come close to you, they have deceived you. If they thought about their advice, then they have disregarded the fact that the blood money is required to be paid by you, because you were the one responsible for the death of the fetus and you thereby incur the blood money, because the killing of the child was as a result of a mistake connected with you.'

'Umar expressed, 'By Allah, you have advised differently from them. By Allah, I will not be reluctant to pay the blood money from the funds of my clan, the Banu-'Adi, under your supervision.

Imam Ali ('a) thus supervised the process of fining.[35](#)

Six-Months Pregnancy

A woman who had given birth to a child six months after her marriage was brought before 'Umar who decided her as adulteress and sentenced her to the punishment of adultery. However, Imam Ali ('a) said to him,

'If you present the issue to the Book of Allah, I will dispute with you. Allah the All-exalted says, 'The period of pregnancy and weaning of a child is thirty months.' He the Most High also says, 'Mothers suckling their children for two complete years for anyone who wants to carry out the full period of suckling.'

When the woman has carried out the suckling for two years and the period of pregnancy and suckling of the child is thirty months, the remaining is six months, which is a legal period of pregnancy. At the moment, she has only fulfilled their responsibility of suckling for six months and therefore cannot be killed.'

‘Umar thus freed the woman and confirmed the decision concerning that.[36](#)

Advice Of Imam Ali

Imam Ali (‘a) is reported to have given ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattab a precious advice concerning the issue of passing judgments. The advice is as follows:

If you maintain and act upon the following three pieces of instruction, you will dispense with anything else, but if you neglect acting upon them, nothing else will help you: (1) Execute the penal laws on the close (i.e. relatives and friends) and the remote (i.e. non-relatives and strangers) equally. (2) Adopt the judgment of the Book of Allah in states of satisfaction and anger. (3) Distribute allowances equally among people apart from their races, colors’ etc. (1)

Imam Ali’s Judgments In The Reign Of ‘Uthman

A Slave Woman Committing Adultery

In the reign of ‘Uthman, a slave woman who was in the process of buying her freedom committed fornication. She had already purchased three-quarters of her freedom. ‘Uthman asked Imam Ali (‘a) whether he should have her lashed according to the amount required for a free woman or the amount required for a slave.⁽²⁾ He also asked Zayd ibn Thabit the same question. The latter said that she should be lashed according to the amount required for a slave.

However, Imam Ali (‘a) asked,

‘How can she be lashed according to the amount required for a slave when she has already purchased three-quarters of her freedom? Should you not whip her according to the amount required for a free woman as long as she is much more of that?’

Zayd answered, ‘If that is the case, then she ought to inherit according to the amount required for a free woman.’

Imam Ali (‘a) said,

‘Indeed, that is necessary.’

Zayd was silenced, but ‘Uthman disagreed with Imam Ali (‘a) and followed Zayd’s statement without paying attention to the proof, which had been given to him by the Imam (‘a).[37](#)

The Pregnant Wife Of An Old Man

An old man married a woman who became pregnant, but the old man claimed that he had not had intercourse with her and he thus denounced her pregnancy. The matter was unclear to ‘Uthman. He

asked the woman, 'Did the old man make you lose your virginity while you were a virgin?'

'No,' she replied.

'Uthman thus ordered to administer the prescribed punishment on her.

Imam Ali ('a), who was present, denied 'Uthman's decision and said,

(1) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:413.

(2) According to the law of Islam, slaves must undergo half of the punishments prescribed.

'A woman has two orifices; the orifice for the menstrual flow and the orifice for urine. Perhaps, the old man was close to her and his semen managed to flow into her menstrual orifice. Then, she became pregnant through him.'

When the old man was asked about that, he answered, 'I used to discharge semen while kissing her, but without ever going to sufficient of making her lose her virginity.'

Imam Ali ('a) declared,

'The pregnancy is due to him and the child is his child. I consider that he should be punished for his wrongful denunciation.' Amazed by the Imam's judgment,

'Uthman had to carry it out.[38](#)

Yahya And Safiyyah

Both Yahya and Safiyyah were captives of a war. However, Safiyyah committed adultery and, as a result, she gave birth to a child whom both Yahya and the man who had committed adultery with her claimed to have been their child. When the case was provided before 'Uthman, he became too perplexed to pass a judgment. He therefore referred the case to Imam Ali ('a) who said,

'In this case, I will judge the same judgment of the Messenger of Allah (S) who has said, 'The child is for the owner of the bed (on which his mother was impregnated), while the share of the adulteress is nothing but stoning.'

Then, the Imam ('a) judged that each one of them should be sentenced to fifty- time lashing.[39](#)

Imam Ali's Judgments During His Reign

When caliphate was returned to Imam Ali ('a), he used to assume the affairs of judgment between people directly in addition to his other responsibilities as the leader of the Muslim community. To save time, he might refer some issues of judicature to Shurayh the judge, but he ordered him not to pass any

judgment before providing it to him (i.e. the Imam) so as to make sure that the judgments would not violate the laws of Islam.

Whenever an issue was provided before him, the Imam ('a) would not pass any judgment unless he would listen to the whole claim of the two parties of litigation. Only then, he would issue a verdict according to the facts wholly inferred from their statements.[40](#)

The Imam ('a) would also suspend passing a judgment before he would listen to the reply of the other party to the rival's claims. He learnt such procedures from the Holy Prophet (S) who, upon assigning him to convey the contents of Surah Bara'ah to the polytheists, said to him,

People will litigate before you. When two parties of a lawsuit present themselves before you, you must not pass any judgment for the good of one party before you listen to the defense of the other party. By doing so, you will distinguish the right from the wrong.[41](#)

Instructing Imam Ali ('a), the Holy Prophet (S) also said to him when he assigned him as the chief judge of Yemen,

When two persons sue one another before you, you must not pass a judgment for one of them before you ask the other (and investigate the case).[42](#)

When a piece of the testimony of a witness contradicts another piece (of the same witness), the Imam ('a) would consider the earlier piece and reject the latter. This was also one of the instructions of the Holy Prophet (S) to him when he said,

When one testifies to a matter and then contradicts his testimony, we will consider his first testimony and reject the other.[43](#)

When he would discover the falsity of the testimony of a witness, Imam Ali ('a) would punish him severely; he would send him to the marketplace to expose him so that all people would recognize him as false witness, and would then detain him for several days.[44](#)

Whose Testimony Is Admitted?

In the conception of Imam Ali ('a), the testimony of those whom had been subjected to a punishment prescribed by the religious law should be of two types. First, the testimony of those who repented from their crimes and stopped sinning after they had encountered a punishment should be accepted. In this regard, Imam Ali ('a) is reported to have said,

The testimony of one who declared repentance after he had been exposed to a punishment is admissible.[45](#)

Second, the testimony of those who insisted on their crimes after a penal law had been practically

applied to them should be rejected. In this respect, Imam Ali ('a) is reported to have said to Salamah ibn Kuhayl,

Be it known to you that Muslims are considered decent witnesses⁴⁶ when they testify to or against each other, except those whom had been exposed to a punishment (prescribed by the religious law) but they did not repent from the crime for which they had been punished, or those whom are notoriously known as false witnesses.⁴⁷

Retreat From Testimony

When a witness retreats from his testimony after the issuance and execution of a verdict, Imam Ali ('a) would impose a fine on him.

It happened that two men testified against a man that he had committed larceny. Accordingly, Imam Ali ('a) sentenced the man to the hand-cutting punishment, which is the punishment of larceny according to the Islamic code of religious law.⁴⁸

However, the same two witnesses brought another man before the Imam ('a) and claimed that they had mistaken that man with this man who was the actual larcener! Imam Ali ('a) rejected their testimony and imposed on them the payment of the blood money of the man whose hand was cut off according to the testimonies of these witnesses.⁴⁹

On another occasion, four men testified that they had seen a man committing adultery with a woman while they were looking at them. Accordingly, the man was thus stoned as a punishment for committing adultery. After that, one of the witnesses retreated from his testimony. Imam Ali ('a) thus issued this judgment:

The witness, who had retreated from his testimony, claiming that he had mistaken the man with another, must pay one quarter of the blood money (of the man against whom he had testified). If two witnesses retreated from their testimony, claiming that they had mistaken the man with another, they should pay half of the blood money as fine. If the four witnesses retreated from their testimony for the same claim, then they should be fined the entire amount of the blood money.⁵⁰

Regard For The Health Of The Punished

Another feature of Imam Ali's judgment was that he used to execute the religious punishments as soon as possible without any delay. In the Islamic code of religious law, the crime of committing adultery cannot be proven without the testimony of four witnesses under certain conditions. One day, three persons testified against a man to have committed adultery.

When the Imam ('a) asked about the fourth witness, they answered that he would soon come. However, the Imam ('a) did not grant them respite. He ordered the executors of the punishments to take these

three men and execute the punishment of false testimony on them. He ('a) then declared,

In the execution of the religious punishments, there must not be any respite, be it for one hour only.[51](#)

However, the Imam ('a) would not apply the punishments to the wounded persons; rather, he would delay that, until they would be cured. Justifying the matter, the Imam ('a) feared lest the punishment would cause death to the wounded man because of his wounds.[52](#)

Imam Ali ('a) also admitted the testimonies of boys when they insist on their testimonies after they attain maturity.[53](#) He is thus reported to have said that the testimonies of boys against one another are admissible before they depart or return home (i.e. as long as they are still in the scene of the crime).[54](#)

Likewise, Imam Ali ('a) admitted the testimonies of the slaves, after they are proven decent, without citing any difference between the free and the enslaved persons in this regard.[55](#)

Testimonies Of Women

In the Islamic code of religious law, the testimony of two women is regarded as equal to the testimony of one man. However, Imam Ali ('a) did not apply this rule to such situations like the following:

- 1) When a murder is committed and the witnesses are only women, the testimony of two women only is admitted (since murders are proven by the testimony of two men, which is equal to the testimony of four women in general).
- 2) Two women's testimony is admissible in issues that men are not allowed to witness (i.e. feminine issues).

It is reported that a group of people led a woman before the Imam ('a) and claimed that she had committed fornication. The Imam ('a) ordered women to check her virginity. When they told the Imam ('a) that she was still virgin, the Imam ('a) declared, 'I will never whip a woman on whom the seal of Allah is still preserved.'[56](#)

- 3) In situations attended by women only, their testimony should be decided as admissible. A moribund man could not find anyone except his wife to make his will. When the issue was provided before Imam Ali ('a), he decided the admissibility of the woman's testimony, yet in only one quarter of the legacy.[57](#)
- 4) Women's testimony to matrimonial contracts is admissible. Imam Ali ('a) thus admitted the testimony of a woman who had testified to the concluding of a matrimonial contract between a man and a woman.[58](#)

Multiplicity Of Confessions

Just as crimes of adultery cannot be proved unless four decent witnesses testify that they have seen the

perpetration of the crime with their own eyes, so also the confession of committing adultery cannot be admitted unless it is repeated four times on different occasions.

In this respect, it is reported that a pregnant woman came to Imam Ali ('a) and said, 'Please, purify me! May Allah purify you from any sin! Chastisement in this world is very much easier than the ceaseless chastisement of the other world.'

The Imam ('a) asked,

'From what should I purify you?'

She answered, 'I have committed adultery!' The Imam ('a) asked,

'Are you married?'

'Yes, I am,' she answered.

'Was your husband present (i.e. at home) or absent (i.e. on a journey or the like) when you committed adultery?'

Asked the Imam ('a).

'He was present,'

she answered.

The Imam ('a) however ordered her to go home and keep herself there until she would give birth.

As soon as she gave birth, she hurried to the Imam ('a) and asked him to purify her.

The Imam ('a) repeated the same previous questions and she gave the same answers.

He ('a) then ordered her to go home and suckle her baby for two whole years. Hence, the Imam ('a) said,

'O Allah, these are two testimonies.'

After the two years, the woman came to the Imam ('a) and asked him to purify her.

Once more, the Imam ('a) repeated the same questions and she gave the same answers.

The Imam ('a) then ordered her to go home and tend for her child until he would be able to discern the right from the wrong and understand what he would do. The woman left, weeping.

The Imam ('a) thus said,

'This is the third testimony.'

On her way back after she had met Imam Ali ('a) for the third time, the woman met 'Amr ibn kurayth Al-Makhzumi who asked her about her story.

She said, 'I have come to the Leader of the believers to purify me, but he ordered me to nurture my child until he would be sensible enough to eat and drink and save himself from falling from a roof and from falling in a well, for instance. I now fear lest death would come upon me before I will be purified by the Leader of the believers.'

'Amr thus suggested that she would right now return to Imam Ali ('a) and inform him that 'Amr had committed himself to taking care of the child.

When she did, Imam Ali ('a) said,

'O Allah, they are now four testimonies.'

He thus sentenced her to the punishment of committing adultery; i.e. stoning to death.(1)

A similar story, it is reported that a man came to Imam Ali ('a) and said, 'I have committed adultery; so, please purify me.'

The Imam ('a) asked,

'What is your clan?'

The man answered, 'I am from Muzayyanah.'

The Imam ('a) asked,

'Can you read any part of the Holy Quran correctly?'

'Yes,' the man answered.

The Imam ('a) then ordered him to read part of the Holy Quran, and the man read excellently.

The Imam ('a) then asked,

'Do you experience any mental defect?'

'No, I am not,' answered the man.

The Imam ('a) then ordered him to leave so that he would ask about his manners.

(1) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 88.

The man left, but he, after a while, returned to the Imam ('a) and asked him to purify him.

The Imam ('a) asked,

'Do you have a wife who lives with you?'

'Yes, I do,' answered the man.

The Imam ('a) again ordered him to leave and sent some people to the quarter of the man, asking about his manners. The folks of the man approved of the soundness of his mind.

For the third time, the man returned to Imam Ali ('a) and repeated the same request, confessing that he had committed adultery.

The Imam ('a) once more ordered him to leave.

When the man returned for the fourth time and confessed of the same crime, the Imam ('a) ordered Qambar, his servant, to detain him. He then ordered him to apply the punishment of stoning to death to the man.[59](#)

Imam Ali ('a) used to stop executing the punishments prescribed by the religious law when any suspicion or confusion surrounded the case. He ('a) is reported to have said,

Ward off the executing of punishments when suspicion is aroused. [60](#)

Executors Of Punishments

Imam Ali ('a) believed that those who participate in executing a punishment should not have committed the same crime for which the punishment would be executed.

It is reported that when a woman confessed four times of having committed adultery before Imam Ali ('a), he ordered Qambar to gather people. When they gathered before him, he delivered a speech to them, saying,

All praise and thanks be to Allah. O people, your leader (Imam) will lead this woman to the outskirts of Al-Kufah to execute the punishment on her, if Allah wills. I, the Leader of the Believers, order you all to join me carrying your stones while you are so disguised that one of you must not recognize the other. Now, you may leave to your houses.

People thus left. The next morning, the Imam ('a), accompanied by people who were disguised and who masked their faces and held stones in their hands and carried others in their dresses and sleeves, led the woman out of the city. He then dug a pit and ordered the woman to go down. He then said to the attending people,

Verily, Allah has ordered His Prophet and, in turn, the Prophet ordered me that one who is supposed to be punished by Allah for a crime must not participate in executing the punishment on others who have

committed the same crime. Now, any one of you who deserves to be punished the same punishment that will be applied to this woman must not execute the punishment.

All of a sudden, all people left except Imam Ali and his two sons Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn who, alone, executed the punishment![61](#)

Judgment In Issues Of Misappropriation

Imam Ali (‘a) was sitting in the Al-Kufah Mosque when Abdullah ibn Qufi Al-Tamimi passed by him carrying an armor that had been possessed by Talhah ibn ‘Ubaydullah before he was killed in the Battle of the Camel. Upon seeing the armor, Imam Ali (‘a) said,

‘This armor is Talhah’s. It was wrongly stolen from the spoils of the war in Al-Basrah.’

However, Abdullah asked Imam Ali (‘a) to present himself before court to prove his claim, and the Imam (‘a) responded.

Before Shurayh the judge, Imam Ali (‘a) confirmed,

‘The armor was Talhah’s. It was wrongly stolen from the spoils of the war in Al-Basrah.’

Shurayh asked Imam Ali (‘a) to provide evidence proving his claim; so, the Imam (‘a) brought Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) to testify to the accuracy of his claim. However, Shurayh the judge said, ‘This is one witness only (while a claim is proved accurate by the testimony of two, not one, witnesses)! I do not pass a judgment due to the testimony of one witness only!’

Imam Ali (‘a), responding to the judge and brought Qambar who testified to the truth of his claim.

Yet, Shurayh the judge said, ‘This man is slave!’ He therefore rejected the testimony of Qambar.

This procedure enraged Imam Ali (‘a) who said to Abdullah,

‘Take the armor for yourself. This judge has passed three wrong judgments.’

Astounded by the Imam’s word, Shurayh said, ‘I will not give my final verdict before you tell me how I passed three judgments wrongfully.’

The Imam (‘a) explained,

When I told you that this armor was Talhah’s and it was stolen from the spoils of the war, you asked me to provide evidence. The Messenger of Allah (S) said, ‘Whenever there is theft in the spoils of war, no evidence is required to prove it.’ However, I said to myself that you might have not heard this Prophetic saying. This is one of your wrong judgments.

I then brought to you Al-Hasan to testify to the truth of my claim, but you rejected his testimony, claiming

that the testimony of one witness is not admissible unless there would be another witness with him. The Messenger of Allah (S) accepted the testimony of one witness along with an oath. This is the second wrong judgment of you.

I then brought to you Qambar to testify to me, and he did, but you rejected his testimony, claiming that he was slave. In fact, the testimony of a slave is acceptable provided he is proven decent. Woe to you! The leader of Muslims is entrusted with greater affairs than this one![62](#)

Lot

In cases of confusion and contradiction of evidence, judges depend upon lots to settle the disputes.

It is reported that two men litigated before Imam Ali ('a) about an animal that each one of them claimed that it had thrown a young one at his manger. Each one of them provided evidence proving the validity of his claim. The Imam ('a) cast lot on two parts and marked each part with a different mark. He then prayed to Almighty Allah saying,

O Allah; O Lord of the seven heavens and the seven layers of earth; O Lord of the Great Throne; O Knower of the unseen and the seen; O All-beneficent; O All-merciful, please let the true owner of the animal take it. So, I beseech You to let this lot fall on the name of the true owner.

Thus, the Imam ('a) decided the one on whose name the lot fell to be the true owner of the animal.[63](#)

Litigation Against A Deaf

Before Imam Ali ('a), a man disputed with another man who was deaf, claiming that the deaf had owed him money. However, the claimant had no evidence to provide. Judging between them, Imam Ali ('a) said,

'All praise be to Allah Who has not caused me to depart from this world before He made me elucidate to this community whatever is needed by its individuals.'

The Imam ('a) then ordered them to bring him a copy of the Holy Quran. He showed it to the deaf and asked, 'What is this?' The deaf raised his head towards the sky to indicate that that was the Book of Allah. The Imam ('a) then ordered the guardian of the deaf to be brought before him. When the guardian, who was the deaf person's brother, came, the Imam ('a) ordered Qambar to bring him a paper and an inkpot. When Qambar did, the Imam ('a) said to the brother of the deaf,

'This is between you and me.'

The Imam ('a) then wrote down these words:

'By Allah save Whom there is no god and Who is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the All-

beneficent, the All-merciful, the Interrogator, the Overcomer, the Able to harm, the Source of benefits, the King, and the Overtaker, Who knows the covert and the overt by Him I swear that so-and- so (i.e. he wrote the name of the claimant) has no debt that so-and-so (i.e. the defendant) owes him and has no due that he might demand from him for any reason.'

The Imam ('a) then washed the paper and ordered the deaf person to drink the ink of these words. However, the deaf refrained from doing so. As a result, Imam Ali ('a) judged that the deaf should pay the debt to the claimant.[64](#)

Detaining The Sinful Scholars And The Incompetent Physicians

Imam Ali ('a) used to detain the sinful scholars and the incompetent physicians. Confirming this law, he ('a) said,

It is obligatory upon an Imam (i.e. leader) to detain the sinful scholars and the incompetent physicians.[65](#)

Unjust Rulers

The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said to Imam Ali ('a),

When the Angel of Death descends to take the soul of an unbeliever, he carries with him a skewer made of fire. He thus pulls out the unbeliever's soul with that skewer so violently that even Hellfire cries.

Imam Ali ('a) asked, 'Does this thing happen to any one of your community?'

The Holy Prophet (S) answered,

Yes, it does. It happens to the unjust rulers, those who swallow the property of the orphans wrongfully, and the false witnesses.[66](#)

Administering Oaths On The Jews And The Christians

When a lawsuit was provided against a non-Muslim who was required to take an oath to defend himself, Imam Ali ('a) would not make him take oaths in the sacred places of Muslims such as mosques; rather, he would order him to take oath in a synagogue if he was Jew or a church if he was Christian. If the defendant was Magus, he would take an oath in his temple. In such cases, Imam Ali ('a) used to say,

'Put them under stress so that Muslims would learn lessons from them.'[67](#)

Sentence To Imprisonment

Imam Ali ('a) used to sentence the following three categories of people to detention: (1) the usurpers, (2) those who misappropriate the financial dues of orphans, and (3) those who deny the trusts that were put with them.[68](#)

The Imam ('a) would investigate the properties of such categories of people; if he found that they had possessed property, he would confiscate their property and give them to those whose dues were stolen by them. In some issues of debt, Imam Ali ('a) also sentenced the debtors to imprisonment.

If he discovered that such a nonpayer was truly bankrupt or too poor to pay his debt, he would release him so that he would be able to give back the debts in such ways like working. The Imam ('a) also sentenced the debtor who played tricks on the creditors to imprisonment. He would then distribute his property among the creditors according to the system of shares.[69](#)

Some Marvellous Judgments Of Imam Ali

The Mysterious Crime

One day, Imam Ali ('a) went into the mosque and found a young man weeping while some people were surrounding him. The Imam ('a) asked about the matter and the young man said, 'Shurayh has judged a case against me and he has not done justice to me.'

The Imam ('a) asked,

'What is the nature of your affair?'

Indicating to a group of people who were present, the young man replied, 'These people took my father out on a journey with them. They came back but he did not come back. I asked them about him and they said that he had died. I asked them about the money that he had taken with him and they denied any knowledge about the money. Then, Shurayh the judge put them under oath and they took an oath. Consequently, the judge ordered me to stop interfering with them.'

Imam Ali ('a) immediately called his servant Qambar and ordered him to gather the people and summon the military police. Then, he sat down and asked these persons to come before him and the young man with them. He asked him about what he had said, and the young man repeated his claim and began to cry, saying, 'By Allah, I accuse them of killing my father. They tricked him so that they could take him with them out of a desire to steal his money.'

Then, Imam Ali ('a) questioned these persons. They told him exactly what they had told Shurayh: 'The man died and we do not know about any money of his.'

Then, he looked into their faces and said,

'What do you think? Do you think that I do not know what you have done with the father of this youth? If so, I would have little knowledge.'

The Imam ('a) ordered them to separate from each other and they separated from each other within the mosque. Each one of them was made to stand next to one of the pillars in the mosque. Next, the Imam

(‘a) summoned

‘Ubaydullah ibn Abi-Rafi’, his scribe at that time, and ordered him to sit down. Then, he called one of them and said,

‘Tell me on which day you left your houses while the father of this boy was with you. As you answer, try to use the lowest tone of your voice.’

The man answered and the Imam (‘a) asked ‘Ubaydullah to write his answer down. The Imam (‘a) then asked him a number of questions about the month, the year, the sickness that killed the young man’s father, the person who washed the dead body, the person who shrouded it, the person who performed the ritual Prayer of the Deceased, and such similar questions the answers of all of which were written down by ‘Ubaydullah by the command of Imam Ali(‘a).

Immediately, Imam Ali (‘a) raised his voice with the statement of Allahu– Akbar in such a tone that all people in the mosque could hear him. Then, he ordered the man to be taken back to his place.

The Imam (‘a) then summoned another man of the group and made him sit close to him. He questioned him in the same way as he had questioned the first man, but he gave answers, which disagreed with the answers of the first man throughout his interrogation.

All the time, ‘Ubaydullah was writing the answers down. When he had finished his questioning, he again raised his voice with the statement of allahu–akbar in such a tone that all people in the mosque could hear him.

The Imam (‘a) then ordered the two men to be taken out of the mosque to the prison, but they were made to stand and wait at the door.

He summoned the third man and questioned him in the same way as he had questioned the first. The man gave answers that contradicted what both of the two previously interrogated men had said. However, the answers of this man were confirmed. The Imam (‘a) repeated raising his sound with the same statement and ordered the third man to be taken out to his two friends.

He then summoned the fourth man whose words were confused and who stuttered. Imam Ali (‘a) warned him. Therefore, the man confessed that his friends had killed the man and taken his money and that they had buried him in a place near Al-Kufah.

Imam Ali (‘a) then raised his voice with the statement of Allahu–Akbar and ordered the man to be taken to prison.

He then summoned one of the previously interrogated men and said to him,

‘You have claimed that the man died in bed. Yet, you killed him. Tell me the truth about your situation;

otherwise, I will punish you as a warning to the others that I should be told the truth in your case.'

The man confessed of killing the young man's father in the same way the previous man had mentioned.

Then, the Imam ('a) summoned the rest of them and they all confessed the murder. They were at a loss to do anything. Their statements about the man's murder and the theft of his money concurred.

He ordered some of his men to go with some of them to the place where they had buried the money and to get it out and hand it over to the young man, the son of the murdered man.

Who Is The Master And Who Is The Slave?

One of the mountaineers went on pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah along with his slave.

However, the slave made some mistakes that made his master punish him. The slave angrily said, 'You are not my master; rather, I am your master and you are only a slave of mine!' They thus quarreled and threatened each other. When they reached Al-Kufah, they provided their case before Imam Ali ('a) to judge between them.

The master said, 'O Leader of the Believers, this man is my slave. I disciplined him when he made mistakes, but he, all of a sudden, revolted against me and claimed that he was my master.'

The slave then spoke, 'By Allah, this man is one of my slaves. My father sent me with him so that he would guide me. Nevertheless, he revolted against me, claiming that I am his slave, so that he would seize my money.' Each one of them took oaths and gave the lie to the other. Imam Ali ('a) postponed their case to the next day.

The next day, Imam Ali ('a) ordered Qambar to make two holes in a wall. When the two men presented themselves before the Imam ('a), he requestioned them and they both insisted on their previous claims.

The Imam ('a) ordered them both to put their heads in the two holes. When they did, Imam Ali ('a) ordered Qambar to fetch him the sword of Allah's Messenger (S). When Qambar did, the Imam ('a) shouted at him,

'Hurry to behead the slave!'

Immediately, one of them pulled his head out of the hole while the other kept his head there! The Imam ('a) then said to the slave, 'You have claimed that you are not that man's slave!' The slave confessed that because the man hit him severely, he, out of rage, claimed that he was not his slave. The Imam ('a) thus delivered the slave to his master.[70](#)

The Eight Loaves Of Bread

Two men traveled together on a journey. They sat eating together. One of them took out five loaves of

bread and the other three. A man passed by them and greeted them. They invited him to eat and he responded. When he had finished eating, he put down eight dirhams saying, 'This is compensation for your food which I have eaten.' The two men began to dispute over it. The owner of the three loaves said, 'This should be shared between us half each.'

However, the owner of the five loaves answered, 'Rather, I should have five dirhams and you should have three.'

They came before Imam Ali ('a) seeking for a fair judgment between them. When they told their story, the Imam ('a) first urged them to forsake rivalry and reach an agreement peacefully. He thus said, '

This is a matter in which meanness and rivalry are not proper. Reconciliation would be better.'

However, the owner of the three loaves refused and insisted on judgment. The Imam ('a) thus said,

'Since you will only be satisfied by the giving of judgment, your share must be only one of the eight dirhams while your companion must have seven.'

Both of them were astounded by this judgment; so, they asked for clarification.

The Imam ('a) thus said,

'You had three loaves only while your companion had five. If multiplied by three (because the eight loaves were eaten by three persons equally), the loaves will be twenty-four pieces. So, you ate eight, your companion eight, and your guest eight.'

Thus, he gave you eight dirhams, which means that he gave you one dirham for each loaf of bread. Hence, seven of these dirhams belong to your companion (as he supplied seven-eighths of the guest's food) and one to you (as you supplied one-eighth of the guest's food).'

The two men departed, reflecting on the perspicacity of the judgement of their case.[71](#)

Whose Is The Male And Whose Is The Female?

Two women were brought before Imam Ali ('a) to decide their quarrel over a male and female infant, each claiming that the male child belonged to her. Imam Ali ('a) heard both the women in detail. On their persistence on their respective stands, he ('a) asked two bottles of identical weight to be brought to him.

He asked the two women to fill the bottles with milk from their breasts. He then asked the bottles to be weighed. One bottle weighed more than the other did. Imam Ali ('a) said,

'Indeed, the woman whose milk is heavier than that of the other woman is the mother of the male child and the woman whose milk is lighter in weight is the mother of the female.'[72](#)

The Four Drunken Persons

Four men drank intoxicants and then started stabbing each other with knives. Each one of them was wounded. An account of their action was brought to Imam Ali (‘a) who ordered them to be put in prison until they became sober. Two of them however died in the prison but two survived. The families of the two dead men came to the Imam (‘a) and demanded to retaliate against these two men, claiming that the two surviving men had killed their relatives.

Imam Ali (‘a) asked,

‘How can you be sure of that? Perhaps the dead men killed each other.’

They answered, ‘In fact, we do not know. So, judge between them according to what Allah has taught you.’

The Imam (‘a) said,

‘The blood money of the two men who were killed must be paid by the tribes of the four men after the account has been settled by the payment for the two who are alive of the blood money for their wounds.’^{[73](#)}

The Drowned

Six men went down to the River Euphrates and dived into it to play. One of them drowned. Two of them testified that the other three men had made him drown, while the three testified that the two made him drown.

Imam Ali (‘a) adjudged the division of the blood money into fifths on the five. The two were to pay three-fifths according to the amount of testimony against them, and the three were to pay two-fifths in accordance with the amount of testimony against them.^{[74](#)}

The Two-Head Newborn

A woman gave birth on the bed of her husband to a child who had two heads and two bodies attached to one waist. The husband’s family members were confused as to whether it was one or two persons. They went to Imam Ali (‘a) to ask him about the issue so that they might know the law with regard to him. The Imam (‘a) said,

‘Watch him when he goes to sleep. Then, wake up one of the bodies and heads. If they both wake up at the same time, then they are a single human being. If one of them wakes up and the other remains asleep, they are two persons and their rights in inheritance are the rights of two persons.’^{[75](#)}

The Lost Money

Two persons had entrusted three dinars with a man; two dinars were owned by one of them and one dinar by the other. However, the entrusted man lost one dinar. When they brought the case before Imam Ali (‘a), he adjudged that the owner of the two dinars should be given one and a half dinar as compensation and the owner of the one dinar should be given half a dinar only.[76](#)

Pardoning A Larcener

A man came to Imam Ali (‘a) and confessed that he had committed larceny, asking the Imam to execute the punishment on him. However, the Imam (‘a) asked him,

‘Can you read a part of the Holy Quran?’

The man replied in the affirmative and said that he memorized Surah Al- Baqarah. The Imam (‘a) said,

‘Thus, I exempt your hand from being cut off for the sake of Surah Al-Baqarah.’

This judgment enraged Al-Ash’ath ibn Qays, the hypocrite, who thus asked the Imam (‘a) astonishingly, ‘How come you cancel off the execution of one of the punishments ordered by Almighty Allah?’

The Imam (‘a) answered,

‘What is the scope of your knowledge about such matters? When evidence is proven admissible, the leader (i.e. the religious authority) has no right to pardon; but if one confesses of committing a crime, then the leader has the option to execute the punishment or to pardon.’[77](#)

The Punishment Of The Highway Robbers

Imam Ali (‘a) adjudged that highway robbers should be sentenced to death, their property should be confiscated, and they should be crucified.[78](#)

However, as for highwaymen who neither kill people nor rob their properties, but they only spread horror among the passersby, Imam Ali (‘a) adjudged that they should be banished to another town up to their death. He (‘a) declared that such highwaymen are intended in the following holy Quranic verse:

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His messenger and strive to make mischief in the land is only that they should be murdered, or crucified, or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides, or they should be expelled out of the land. This shall be as a disgrace for them in this world; and in the hereafter, they shall have a grievous chastisement. (5:33)

The Hitting And The Hit Ships

In a case of two ships one of which hit the other and both of which incurred damage, Imam Ali ('a) ruled that the hitting ship should guarantee the damage of the hit ship, which should not undergo any fine.^{[79](#)}

A Share Of A Legacy

When a man had willed that a share of his legacy should be given as alms, his heirs disagreed about the amount that they should give as alms. When they provided the case before Imam Ali ('a), he decided that one eighth of the legacy should be given as alms.

Demonstrating evidence, Imam Ali ('a) recited this holy Quranic verse:

Alms are only for (1) the poor, (2) the needy, (3) the officials appointed over them, (4) those whose hearts are made to incline to truth, (5) the ransoming of captives, (6) those in debts, (7) in the way of Allah, and (8) the wayfarer; an ordinance from Allah; and Allah is knowing, Wise. (9:60)

Commenting, Imam Ali ('a) said,

'The beneficiaries of alms are thus eight categories; the share of each category is one-eighth.'^{[80](#)}

Similar to this case, it is reported that a man was about to die when he bequeathed part of his wealth without designating it. His heirs differed on that after his death. They came to Imam Ali ('a) and presented their difference. He ('a) instructed them to exclude one-seventh of the wealth as the bequest. He ('a) then recited this holy Quranic verse:

It has seven gates; for every gate, there shall be a separate party of them. (15:44)^{[81](#)}

The Old Saves

Before his death, a man willed his heirs to manumit all of his old slaves. However, the heirs could not find a way to distinguish the old slaves from the new ones. When they asked Imam Ali ('a), he instructed,

'You may manumit the slaves whom have been owned by him (i.e. the testator) for six months.'

The Imam ('a) then recited this holy Quranic verse:

And as for the moon, We have ordained for it stages until it becomes again as an old dry palm branch. (36:39)

Scientifically, it has been established that the branch of a date-palm tree becomes similar to the moon in its strength exactly six months after fruit is taken from it.^{[82](#)}

Fasting For A Season

About the case of one who had vowed to observe fasting for a hin (i.e. season), but he could not identify the exact period, Imam Ali ('a) instructed,

'You may observe fasting for six months.'

The Imam ('a) then recited the following holy Quranic verse:

Yielding its fruit in every season (hin) by the permission of its Lord. (14:25)

The Imam ('a) then commented, 'A tree usually yields its fruit every six months.'[83](#)

A Married Woman Asking For A Husband

A woman came to Imam Ali ('a) and asked, 'What do you judge about a woman who, after obtaining her father's permission, asks for a husband although she is married and having a husband? Is this legal?'

The Imam ('a) ordered her to bring her husband before him. When the Imam ('a) talked to the husband, the latter confessed that he was impotent (i.e. unable to have sexual intercourse or to reach orgasm).

So, the Imam ('a) ordered him to divorce his wife and he then gave her in marriage to another man.[84](#)

Accidental Homicide

About the case of a man who was accidentally killed after he had bequeathed the third of his legacy to a certain body, Imam Ali ('a) adjudged that one-third of the blood money to be paid as expiation, because the accidental homicide should be within the bequest.[85](#)

A Dog Or A Sheep

A Bedouin asked Imam Ali ('a), 'I saw a dog copulating with a ewe, and it gave birth to an animal. Is it legal or illegal to eat the meat of that animal?'

Imam Ali ('a) answered,

'Look how it eats: if it eats meat, then it is dog; but if it eats grass, then it is sheep.'

The Bedouin said, 'I saw it eating meat once and grass at another time.'

The Imam ('a) said,

'Look how it drinks: if it sips, then it is sheep; but if it licks, then it is dog.'

The Bedouin said, 'I saw it sipping once and licking at another time.'

The Imam ('a) said,

'Look how it walks with the herd; if it is in the rear, then it is dog; but if it is in the middle or the front of the herd, then it is sheep.'

The Bedouin said, 'I saw it in the rear once and in the middle at another time.'

The Imam ('a) said,

'Look how it sits: if it kneels down, then it is sheep; but if it squats, then it is dog.'

The Bedouin said, 'It sometimes kneels down and other times squats.'

Finally, Imam Ali ('a) said,

'You may then slaughter it; if it has rumen, then it is sheep; but if it has intestine, then it is dog!'^{[86](#)}

A Magus Lady Converting To Islam

A magus lady who had converted to Islam before her husband consummated their marriage was brought before Imam Ali ('a) to judge between her husband and her. The Imam ('a) summoned her husband and asked him to convert to Islam, but he refused. Hence, the Imam ('a) decided their matrimonial contract as invalid^{[87](#)} and adjudged that the husband should pay the wife half of the dowry. He then commented, 'Islam has increased this woman nothing but more dignity.'^{[88](#)}

Right Of Divorcement

About the case of a woman who, in her matrimonial contract, specified as condition that she would have the right to divorce and the right of engagement in sexual intercourse with her husband, Imam Ali ('a) adjudged that the right of divorcement and the right of engagement in sexual intercourse should be the husband's only.

Hence, the woman's condition was in violation of the Prophetic practice that entails that husbands are responsible for covering the expenses of their wives, have the right to have sexual intercourse with their wives, and have the right to divorce them.^{[89](#)}

Homicide, Larceny, And Drinking Wine At The Same Time

A man who had committed the crimes of homicide, larceny, and drinking intoxicants altogether was brought before Imam Ali ('a) who adjudged that the man should be lashed eighty times (for violating the prohibition of drinking wine), had his hand cut off (for committing larceny), and sentenced to death penalty (for murdering a human being).^{[90](#)}

Fraud

In the case of two merchants each of whom sells his stock to the other and they both flee from one country to another, Imam Ali (‘a) sentenced them to the hand-cutting punishment, because he considered them to have stolen people and stolen each other.[91](#)

Rejecting The Testimonies Of The Jews

Before Imam Ali (‘a), two Jews testified against a man to have converted to Islam. However, the Imam (‘a) rejected their testimonies and justified that the Jews deem lawful distorting the words of Almighty Allah and witnessing falsely.[92](#)

Admitting The Testimonies Of The Christians

Imam Ali (‘a) admitted the testimonies of the Christians in the cases of conversion to Islam as well as other cases. He thus recited this holy Quranic verse as evidence:

Certainly you will find the most violent of people in enmity for those who believe to be the Jews and those who are polytheists, and you will certainly find the nearest in friendship to those who believe to be those who say, ‘We are Christians.’ This is because there are priests and monks among them and because they do not behave proudly. (5:82)

Commenting on the meaning of this holy verse, Imam Ali (‘a) added,

He who does not behave proudly against serving Almighty Allah will not testify falsely.[93](#)

Retaliation Between Fathers And Sons

Imam Ali (‘a) adjudged that no retaliation should be made on fathers who kill their sons, but in cases that sons kill their fathers, they should be subjected to the law of retaliation.[94](#)

False Accusation Of A Group Of People

Imam Ali (‘a) adjudged that a person who accuses a group of people falsely should be subjected to one-time punishment.

Commenting on this judgment, Shaykh Al-tusi, a master scholar in Shi’ite Muslim jurisprudence, states, ‘If one person accuses a group of people falsely in one utterance, he should be then subjected to one-time punishment of false accusation. However, if the same person accuses a group of people separately on more than one occasion, then he should be subjected to the punishment of false accusation as many times as he said the utterance of false accusation.

Fabricated Stories

Unfortunately, some books of history have mentioned stories about the judgments of Imam Ali ('a), but their stories lacked accuracy, because they either violate good reason or violate the laws of Islam in general.

Examples of such false stories are the case of the man who was found murdered in a site of ruins,^{[95](#)} the case of the husband who copulated with his menstrual wife and impregnated her,^{[96](#)} the case of the man who bequeathed one thousand dinars of his legacy to be paid as alms,^{[97](#)} the case of the six-month-old baby to whom the Imam ('a) spoke in a strange language,^{[98](#)} the case of the share of inheritance of a widow along with her two daughters and parents-in-law,^{[99](#)} the case of the six-hundred dinars,^{[100](#)} the case of the husband who had not copulated with his wife and yet she gave birth to a child,^{[101](#)} the case of deciding anal copulation with the wife as sodomy,^{[102](#)} the case of the illegal oath,^{[103](#)} and many other false stories that contradict the principles of Muslim jurisprudence.

All such stories have been fabricated against Imam Ali ('a) within so many other fables that can unfortunately be seen in many books of history of Islam.

Knowledge And Learning In The View Of Imam 'Ali

During his caliphate, one of Imam Ali's most important political programs was to spread knowledge, eradicate illiteracy, and make it accessible for all people to learn the various sciences and fields of erudition. To achieve this goal, the Imam ('a) used the Al-Kufah Mosque as faculty of learning.

He used to deliver scientific lectures and give lessons in such fields like wisdom, intellectual concepts, monotheism, theology, and spirituality in the light of decisive and scientific proofs that were beyond dispute and suspicion, not to mention his valuable sermons that penetrated into the most profound parts of mentality.

From this school, many great personalities graduated, such as 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Kujr ibn 'Adi, Kumayl ibn Ziyad, Abu'l-Aswad Al-Du'ali, and Maytham Al-Tammar.

Let us now listen to some words of Imam Ali ('a) concerning knowledge and the honorable ranks the knowledgeable:

Praise Of Knowledge

In his discourse with Kumayl ibn Ziyad, Imam Ali ('a) says,

O Kumayl, these hearts are containers. The best of them is that which preserves its contents. So, preserve what I say to you. People are of three types: One is the scholar and divine, then the seeker of knowledge who is also on the way to deliverance, and lastly the common rot who run after every caller and bend in the direction of every wind.

They seek no light from the effulgence of knowledge so as to be guided and they do not take protection of any reliable support so that they will be saved.

O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you, while you have to guard the wealth. Wealth decreases by spending, while knowledge multiplies by spending. Knowledge is the ruler while wealth is ruled.

O Kumayl, adoration to the knowledgeable is belief, which is acted upon. With it, man acquires obedience during his life and a good name after his death. The benefit of wealth vanishes when wealth vanishes. Those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living while those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world lives.

Their bodies are not available but their figures exist in the hearts. Look, here is a heap of knowledge. I wish I could get someone to bear it¹⁰⁴. Yes, I did find such a one; but either he was one who could not be relied upon.

He would exploit the religion for worldly gains, and by virtue of Allah's favors on him, he would domineer over the people and through Allah's pleas, he would lord over His devotees. Or he was one who was obedient to the hearers of truth but there was no intelligence in his bosom. At the first appearance of doubt, he would entertain misgivings in his heart.

So, neither this nor that was good enough. Either the man is eager for pleasures, easily led away by passions, or is covetous for collecting and hoarding wealth. Neither of them has any regard for religion or wisdom and conviction in any matter. The nearest example of these is the loose cattle. This is the way that knowledge dies away with the death of its bearers.

However, the earth is never devoid of those who maintain Allah's plea either openly and reputedly, or being afraid. As hidden in order that Allah's pleas, proofs, and relaters of His Book should not be rebutted. Where are they?

By Allah, they are few in number, but they are great in esteem before Allah. Through them, Allah guards His pleas and proofs until they entrust them to others like themselves and sow the seeds thereof in the hearts of those who are similar to them.

Knowledge has led them to true understanding and so they have associated themselves with the spirit of conviction. They take easy what the easygoing regard as hard. They endear what the ignorant take as strange. They live in this world with their bodies here but their spirits resting in the high above.

O Kumayl, they are the trustees of Allah on His creatures, the vicegerents of Allah on His earth, His lamps in His countries, and the callers to His religion. Oh, oh, how I yearn to see them! I seek Allah's forgiveness for you and me. ¹⁰⁵

Imam Ali (‘a) is reported to have said,

Knowledge is one of the two lives. [106](#)

He ('a) is also reported as saying,

Knowledge is a masterpiece in sessions, a companion in journeys, and a source of entertainment in loneliness. [107](#)

About the significance of knowledge, Imam Ali ('a) says,

When a scholar passes away, a notch is made in Islam that cannot be mended up by anything up to the Resurrection Day. [108](#)

Recommending of conferring honor upon the knowledgeable people, Imam Ali ('a) says,

Within your duties towards the scholars, you must not put loads of questions to them, you must not precede them in answering, you must not insist on them when they avoid (answering a question), you must not grasp their dresses when they show lethargy, you must not point to them by extending a finger (at them), you must not wink at them, you must not talk confidentially to them in their sessions, you must not inspect their flaws, you must not address them by stating the other opinions that are contradictory to theirs, you must not unveil their secrets, you must not backbite anybody in their presence, you must defend them in their presence and when they are absent alike, you must salute everyone generally and greet them exclusively and sit before them and precede all others to do what they need to do, and you must not become weary of long companionship with them.

Verily, scholars are just like date-palm trees; therefore, you must be patient while waiting for the benefits of them to fall on you. A scholar occupies the same standing of one who permanently fasts, performs acts of worship, and strives for the sake of Almighty Allah. Verily, a knowledge-seeker, when passing away, is escorted by seventy thousand angels from the favorable inhabitants of the heavens. [109](#)

Imam Ali ('a) is also reported to have said,

Knowledge is too much to be numerated; therefore, choose for the best of every field (of knowledge). [110](#)

Encouraging people on learning, Imam Ali ('a), once, declared from the minbar of Al-Kufah Mosque,

Is there any one to purchase knowledge with one dirham?

Responding to the Imam ('a), Al-harith Al-A'war bought some papers and brought them to the Imam ('a), who wrote down in them much knowledge. [111](#)

In many of his discourses, Imam Ali ('a) laid much stress on acting upon knowledge. He once said,

Knowledge is contingent upon acting upon it. Hence, he who learns knowledge must act upon it. Knowledge is always calling upon acting; if acting does not respond, then knowledge will leave (i.e. Allah

will divest one who does not act upon his knowledge of knowledgeability). [112](#)

On another occasion, the Imam ('a) said,

He who acts without knowledge is like one who treads without a path. Then, his deviation from the path keeps him at a distance from his aim. He who acts according to knowledge is like one who treads the clear path. Therefore, he who can see may see whether he should proceed or return. [113](#)

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

The lowliest knowledge is that which is suspended on the tongue, while the loftiest knowledge is that which reflects on the organs and the limbs. [114](#)

He ('a) is also reported to have said,

Many bearers of knowledge are killed by their ignorance while the knowledge they bear does not save them (because they do not put it into practice). [115](#)

About the categories of knowledge-seekers, Imam Ali ('a) says,

Those who seek knowledge can be classified into three groups. You can distinguish them from each other by their characteristics and signs. There are those who seek knowledge due to their haughtiness and ignorance. There are those who seek knowledge so that they may rebel and deceive others. There are also those who seek knowledge to learn and become intelligent.

Those who seek knowledge due to their haughtiness and ignorance disturb the people with their acts when they are in a group. They have a God-fearing outer look, while they are void of any piety. May Allah break their backs and cut off their noses!

Those who seek knowledge in order to rebel and deceive others always rush ahead of their colleagues and make a lot of noise. They bow down to those who are lower than they are but are wealthy. They always feed on them and sell their religion. May Allah make them blind and uproot them!

Those who seek knowledge to learn and become intelligent do not look so well and they are sad. They wake up during the darkness of the night to pray. They will bend down while wearing their nightwear. They act with fear and avoid everyone except their brethren to whom they are accustomed. May Allah strengthen them and save them on the Resurrection day. [116](#)

Referring to the same meaning, Imam Ali ('a) says,

Had the bearers of knowledge carried knowledge properly, Allah and the angels as well as all people of obedience to Him would have cherished them. Unfortunately, they carried knowledge for seeking worldly pleasures; therefore, Allah abominated them and people disgraced them. [117](#)

Encouraging on spread of knowledge among all people, Imam Ali (‘a) says,

Allah had no commitment from and covenant with ignorant people to seek knowledge, before He had a commitment from and covenant with scholars to give knowledge as charity to the ignorant ones. Knowledge existed before ignorance. [118](#)

Within his teachings to his officials, Imam Ali (‘a) instructed them to use nice handwriting. He thus said,

Nice handwriting increases the clarity of the truth. [119](#)

It is worth mentioning that the letters in the copies of the Holy Quran had not been dotted until Imam Ali (‘a) instructed and taught Abu’l-Aswad Al-Du’ali how to use dots on letters. [120](#)

New Fields Of Knowledge

Imam Ali (‘a) founded about thirty fields of knowledge that had not been known by the Arabs and the other peoples before him. Dividing science into four major divisions, Imam Ali (‘a) said,

Sciences are classified into four classes: (1) jurisprudence, which is the science of religions, (2) medicine, which is the science of bodies, (3) grammar, which is the science of speech, and (4) astronomy, which is the science that acquaints with times. [121](#)

Arabic Grammar

Grammar is defined as the rules of a language governing the sounds, words, sentences, and other elements, as well as their combination and interpretation. It can be also defined as the branch of language study or linguistics, which deals with the means of showing the relationship between words in use.

Undoubtedly, Imam Ali (‘a) founded the Arabic Grammar (‘ilm Al-nahw) and established its basic rules.

It is reported that when Imam Ali (‘a) taught Abu’l-Aswad Al-Du’ali the principles and rules of the Arabic Grammar, he said to him, ‘How excellent this way (nahw) is!’ Accordingly, the Arabic Grammar is known as nahw. Historicists have mentioned many reasons for the founding of the Arabic Grammar by Imam Ali (‘a).

One narration reads that a Bedouin came to Imam Ali (‘a) and asked, ‘How should we read this holy verse: *‘la ya’kuluhu illa Al-khatun (None eats it but the steppers).*’ *All of us step!*’ Imam Ali (‘a) smiled and said, ‘No, you have read it erroneously. The verse reads, *“la ya’kuluhu illa Al-khati’un (None eats it but the wrongdoers).*” [122](#)

The Bedouin said, ‘You are true, by Allah. Allah will never wrong His servants.’

Consequently, Imam Ali (‘a) said to Abu’l-Aswad Al-Du’ali,

'The non-Arabs have embraced the religion (of Islam). You may add something to the writing of the Quran through which they can read the Quran properly and habituate their tongues to it.'

The Imam ('a) then drew the diacritical marks, defining a mark to be for the indicative mood (raf'), another for the accusative and subjunctive moods (nasb), and one for the genitive mood (jarr or khafs). [123](#)

The Imam ('a) handed over to Abu'l-Aswad Al-Du'ali a paper in which the following words were written:

Speech is entirely composed of three things: (1) noun, (2) verb, and (3) particle. Noun is the word used to designate the nominated things. Verb is a word used to designate what is to be designated, and particle is a word that refers to a certain meaning. As for nouns, they are of three types: explicit, implicit, and neither explicit nor implicit etc.

Muslim Jurisprudence

Imam Ali ('a) was the founder of Muslim Jurisprudence (fiqh: the science of ascertaining the precise terms of the Islamic law) along with its terms and methods.

In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid states, '(Imam) Ali ('a) is the originator and founder of 'ilm Al-fiqh and all Muslim jurists depended upon and derived their jurisprudential opinions and secondary issues from him. As for the students of Abu Hanifah, such as Abu-Yusuf, Muhammad, and others, all of them derived their knowledge from Abu Hanifah.

Al-Shafi'i studied under Muhammad ibn Al-Hasan, which means that he derived his jurisprudential opinions from Abu Hanifah who studied under Ja'far ibn Muhammad (Al-Sadiq). Ja'far studied under his father, and the chain of his teachers, when taken upwards, ended with (Imam) Ali. Malik ibn Anas studied under Rabi'ah Al-Ra'y who studied under 'Ikrimah the student of Abdullah ibn 'Abbas. Finally, Abdullah derived his knowledge in the field of jurisprudence from (Imam) Ali. If you claim that Al-Shafi'i studied under Malik, you will conclude the same result.

As for the Shi'ite jurisprudence, it is obvious that the Shi'ah received their knowledge from (Imam) Ali.

Moreover, among the Companions who were versed in the field of jurisprudence are 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab and Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, both of whom derived their knowledge from (Imam) Ali. To prove that Abdullah ibn 'Abbas received his knowledge in the field of jurisprudence from (Imam) Ali is too clear to require evidence.

As for 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab, he very frequently referred the jurisprudential questions that neither he nor were the other Companions clever enough to solve to (Imam) Ali. In this field, 'Umar declared more than once that he would certainly have faced perdition if Ali had not been there to save him. On another occasion, 'Umar declared, 'No one is allowed to issue any verdict in the mosque as long as Ali will be there.'

Despite their sects and variety of jurisprudential schools, all Muslims have reported the Holy Prophet (S) as declaring (Imam) Ali ('a) to be the best judge and the most versed in the field of issuing verdicts. The same all Muslims have also reported that the Holy Prophet (S), when he sent Ali as the chief judge of Yemen, prayed to Almighty Allah, saying,

'O Allah, please guide his heart and make his tongue firm (on the truth).'

Commenting on this prayer, (Imam) Ali ('a) said,

'Since ever then, I have not suspected in any issue of judgment between two persons.' etc. [124](#)

Quranic Exegesis

Tafsir (the science of explanation of the Holy Quran, or the science of Quranic commentary) is one of the sciences that were derived from Imam Ali ('a) either directly or indirectly through Abdullah ibn 'Abbas who learnt this science from Imam Ali ('a). Abdullah was once asked, 'What is the ratio of your knowledge to that of your cousin Ali?' He answered, 'It is the same ratio of a drop of water to an ocean.' [125](#)

The book that is known as Mushaf, Ali must be full of the reasons for the revelations of the Quranic verses, the meanings of the Quranic words and expressions, and the explication of the Quranic laws.

Astronomy And Arithmetic

Astronomy ('ilm Al-falak: The science of celestial objects, including the earth in relation to them, of space, and of the universe as a whole) and Arithmetic ('ilm Al-hisab: The science of numbers; the properties and manipulation of numbers) are within the sciences the basics of which were taken from Imam Ali ('a) who, about the creation of the heavens, says,

Then He (Almighty Allah) decorated them (the heavens) with stars and the light of meteors and hung in it the shining sun and effulgent moon under the revolving sky, moving ceiling, and rotating firmament. [126](#)

He ('a) further says,

He (Almighty Allah) called it (the sky) when it was yet in the form of vapor. At once, the links of its joints joined up. Then, Allah opened up its closed door. [127](#)

Some modern scholars of cosmology believe that the evolution of the universe was the result of a big bang. According to the big-bang theory, the universe cooled enough to allow the formation of certain nuclei. The theory predicts that definite amounts of hydrogen, helium, and lithium were produced.

Their abundances agree with what is observed today. About one million years later, the universe was sufficiently cool for atoms to form. The radiation that also filled the universe was then free to travel through space. [128](#) Because of the big bang, atoms started accumulating in certain sites, forming

celestial bodies that changed into light-giving matters due to chemical reactions.

In the previous quotation, Imam Ali ('a) likened the stars of the galaxy to rings that are linked to each other by the connection of gravity and the reciprocal influence on each other. After the creation of the blazing and revolving stars, they started casting lava-like substances that formed such planets like Earth. Expressing this procession, Imam Ali ('a) describes it as opening up its closed doors.

Imam Ali ('a) continues:

And (Allah) put the sentinels of meteors at its holes, and held them with His hands (i.e. power) from falling into the vastness of air. He commanded it to remain stationary in obedience to His commands.

This is a reference to the recently proven fact that meteoroids feed some of parts of the planets with particles to fill up the perforated parts, according to the process of closing up the opened parts.

Imam Ali ('a) continues:

He made its sun the bright indication for its day and its moon the gloomy indication for its night. He then put them in motion in their orbits and ordained their pace of movement in the stages of their paths in order to distinguish with their help between night and day, and in order that the reckoning of years and calculations may be known by their fixed movements.

Diameter Of The Sun

In the field of arithmetic, it is reported that Imam Ali ('a), when asked about the diameter of the sun, said, *'Diameter of the sun is to multiply 900 miles with 900; that is 810,000 miles.'*

In the early era of Islam, a mile was equal to 4000 arms calculated from the elbow to the fingertips. If we measure the distance between the elbow and the fingertips of an ordinary man by inches and then convert 4000 arms to inches, then to yards, and then to miles, we will discover that the 810,000 miles according to the measure in the early era of Islam is equivalent to the 865,380 English miles in its capacity as a unit of distance equal to 1.906 km.

The Seventeen Camels

Three persons who owned seventeen camels in a common manner came to Imam Ali ('a) and stated that half of these camels should be given to one of them, one third of them to the other, and one-ninth to the third. Imam Ali ('a) added one camel that belonged to him to the seventeen camels, and they became eighteen. He gave one of them half of the camels (that is 9), gave the other one-third (that is 6), gave the third person one-ninth (that is 2), and took back the camel he had added.

Zoology

Imam Ali (‘a) entered upon zoology (‘ilm Al-haywan: The science of the structure, physiology, behavior, classification, and distribution of animals).

Describing the common features of birds, Imam Ali (‘a) says,

Allah has provided wonderful creations including the living, the lifeless, the stationary, and the moving. He has established such clear proofs for His delicate creative power and great might that minds bend down to Him in acknowledgement thereof and in submission to Him, and arguments about His Oneness strike our ears. He has created birds of various shapes, which live in the burrows of the earth, in the openings of high passes, and on the peaks of mountains.

They have different kinds of wings and various characteristics. They are controlled by the rein of Allah’s authority. They flutter with their wings in the expanse of the vast firmament and the open atmosphere. He brought them into existence from nonexistence in strange external shapes, and composed them with joints and bones covered with flesh.

He prevented some of them from flying easily in the sky because of their heavy bodies and allowed them to use their wings only close to the ground. He has set them in different colors by his delicate might and exquisite creative power.

Among them are those which are tinted with one hue and there is no other hue except the one in which they have been dyed. There are others tinted with one color and having a neck ring of a different color than that with which they are tinted.

The Peacock

About the creation of the peacock, Imam Ali (‘a) says,

The most amazing among them in its creation is the peacock, which Allah has created in the most symmetrical dimensions, and arranged its hues in the best arrangement with wings whose ends are interleaved together and whose tail is long.

When it moves to its female, it spreads out its folded tail and raises it up so as to cast a shade over its head, as if it were the sail of a boat being pulled by the sailor. It feels proud of its colors and swaggers with its movements. It copulates like the cocks. It leaps on the female for fecundation like lustful energetic men at the time of fighting.

I am telling you all this from observation, unlike he who narrates on the basis of weak authority, as for example, the belief of some people that it (peacock) fecundates the female by a tear which flows from its eyes and when it stops on the edges of the eyelids the female swallows it and lays its eggs thereby and not through fecundation by a male other than by means of this flowing tear.

Even if they say this, it would be no amazing than what they say about the mutual feeding of the crows

for fecundation. You would imagine its feathers to be sticks made of silvers and the wonderful circles and sun-shaped feathers growing thereon to be of pure gold and pieces of green emerald.

If you likened them to anything growing on land, you would say that it is a bouquet of flowers collected during every spring. If you likened them to cloths, they would be like printed apparels or amazing variegated cloths of Yemen. If you likened them to ornaments then they would be like gems of different colors with studded silver.

The peacock walks with vanity and pride, and throws open its tail and wings, and laughs admiring the handsomeness of its dress and the hues of its necklace of gems. But when it casts its glance at its legs, it cries loudly with a voice which indicates its call for help and displays its true grief, because its legs are thin like the legs of Indo-Persian cross-bred cocks.

At the end of its shin, there is a thin thorn and on the crown of its head there is a bunch of green variegated feathers. Its neck begins in the shape of a goblet and its stretch up to its belly is like the hair-dye of Yemen in color or like silk cloth put on a polished mirror which looks as if it has been covered with a black veil, except that on account of its excessive luster and extreme brightness it appears that a lush green color has been mixed with it. Along the openings of its ears, there is a line of shining bright daisy color like the thin end of a pen. Whiteness shines on the black background.

There is hardly a hue from which it has not taken a bit, and improved it further by regular polish, luster, silken brightness, and brilliance. It is therefore like scattered blossoms which have not been seasoned by the rains of spring or the sun of the summer.

It also sheds its plumage and puts off its dress. They all fall away and grow again. They fall away from the feather stems like the falling of leaves from twigs, and then they begin to join and grow until they return to the state that existed before their falling away.

The new hues do not change from the previous ones, nor does any color occur in other than its own place. If you carefully look at one hair from the hairs of its feather stems it would look like red rose, then emerald green, and then golden yellow.

How can sharpness of intellect describe such a creation, or faculty of mind, or the utterances of describers manage to tell of it? Even its smallest parts have made it impossible for the imagination to pick them out or for tongues to describe them.

Glorified is Allah who has disabled intellects from describing the creation which He placed openly before the eyes and which they see bounded, shaped, arranged and colored. He also disabled tongues from briefly describing its qualities and also from expanding in its praise. [129](#)

The Bat

Describing the creation of bats, Imam Ali (‘a) says,

Praise be to Allah Who is such that it is not possible to describe the reality of knowledge about Him, since His greatness has restrained the intellects, and therefore they cannot find the way to approach the extremity of His realm. He is Allah the True and the Manifesting of Truth. He is too True and too Manifest to be seen by eyes.

Intellects cannot comprehend Him by fixing limits for Him since in that case to Him would be attributed shape. Imagination cannot catch Him by fixing quantities for Him for in that case to Him would be attributed body. He created creatures without any example, and without the advice of a counsel, or the assistance of a helper. His creation was completed by His command, and bowed to His obedience. It responded to Him and did not defy Him. It obeyed and did not resist.

An example of His delicate production, wonderful creation, and deep sagacity which He has shown us is found in these bats which keep hidden in the daylight although daylight reveals everything else, and are mobile in the night although the night shuts up every other living being; and how their eyes are dazzled and cannot make use of the light of the sun so as to be guided in their movements and so as to reach their known places through the direction provided by the sun.

Allah has prevented them from moving in the brightness of the sun and confined them to their places of hiding instead of going out at the time of its shining. Consequently, they keep their eyelids down in the day, treat night as a lamp, and go with its help in search of their livelihood. The darkness of night does not obstruct their sight nor does the gloom of darkness prevent them from movement.

As soon as the sun removes its veil and the light of morning appears, and the rays of its light enter upon the lizards in their holes, the bats pull down their eyelids on their eyes and live on what they had collected in the darkness of the night. Glorified is He Who has made the night as day for them to seek livelihood and made the day for rest and stay.

He has given them wings of flesh with which, at the time of need, they rise upwards for flying. They look like the ends of ears without feathers or bones. Of course, you can see the veins quite distinctly. They have two wings which are neither too thin so that they are turned in flying, nor too thick so that they prove heavy.

When they fly, their young ones hold on to them and seek refuge with them, getting down when they get down and rising up when they rise. The young does not leave them until its limbs become strong, its wings can support it for rising up, and it begins to recognize its places of living and its interest. Glorified is He Who creates everything without any previous sample by someone else. [130](#)

The Locust

Imam Ali ('a) says about the creation of the locust:

If you wish, you can tell about the locust (as well). Allah gave it two red eyes, lighted for them two moon

like pupils, made for it small ears, opened for it a suitable mouth, and gave it keen sense, gave it two teeth to cut with and two sickle-like feet to grip with.

The farmers are afraid of it in the matter of crops since they cannot drive it away even though they may join. The locust attacks the fields and satisfies its desires of hunger from them although its body is not equal to a thin finger.

The Ant

About the creation of the ant, Imam Ali ('a) says,

Had they pondered over the greatness of His power and the vastness of His bounty, they would have returned to the right path and feared the punishment of the Fire; but hearts are sick and eyes are impure.

Do they not see the small things He has created, how He strengthened their system, opened for them hearing and sight, and made for them bones and skins? Look at the ant with its small body and delicate form. It can hardly be seen in the corner of the eye, nor by the perception of the imagination; how it moves on the earth and leaps at its livelihood.

It carries the grain to its hole and deposits it in its place of stay. It collects during the summer for its winter and during strength for the period of its weakness. Its livelihood is guaranteed and it is fed according to fitness. Allah the Kind does not forget it and Allah the Giver does not deprive it, even though it may be in dry stone or fixed rocks.

If you have thought about its digestive tracts in its high and low parts, the carapace of its belly, and its eyes and its ears in its head, you would be amazed at its creation and you would feel difficulty in describing it. Exalted is He Who made it stand on its legs and erected it on its pillars of limbs. No other originator took part with Him in its origination and no one having power assisted Him in its creation.

If you tread on the paths of your imagination and reach its extremity, it will not lead you anywhere except that the Originator of the ant is the same as He Who is the Originator of the date-palm, because everything has the same delicacy and detail, and every living being has little difference. [131](#)

Theology

Imam Ali ('a) established the foundations and principles of theology ('ilm Al-kalam: The branch of knowledge that deals with Islamic theistic religion and the organized body of knowledge dealing with the nature, attributes, and governance of God). All theologians have derived the methodologies of their researches from the Imam ('a).

In this respect, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid says, 'Theologians have quoted his (i.e. Imam Ali) words and transmitted his language. Hence, theology ends up with him and starts with him. For instance, the Mu'tazilah (a

theological Muslim school) who are the people of true monotheism, moderation, and exact views and from whom all people learnt the art of theology, [132](#) are pupils and companions of Imam Ali ('a).

Their founder, Wasil ibn 'Ata', studied under Abu-Hashim Abdullah the son of Muhammad ibn Al-Hanafiyyah the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib. Abu-Hashim studied under his father, and his father studied under his father, the Imam ('a). The students of the Ash'ariyyah School that is traced back to Abu'l-Hasan Ali ibn Isma'il Abu-Bishr Al-Ash'ari also derived their school from Imam Ali. Abu-Bishr, the founder, was the student of Abu-'Ali Al-Jiba'i.

Accordingly, the Ash'ariyyah finally trace back to the mentor and founder of Al-Mu'tazilah; namely, Ali ibn Abi Talib. To prove the tracing back of the Al-Imamiyyah and the Al-Zaydiyyah to Imam Ali is too obvious to require evidence.' [133](#)

The book of Nahj Al-Balaghah is full of theological articles with regard to the faith of monotheism, which is the key to and fundament of theology.

Physics

Imam Ali ('a) was the founder of the principles and methods of physics (phizya': The science that deals with the nature and properties of matter and energy). Concerning one of the theories of physics, Imam Ali ('a) says,

Every seer other than Him (i.e. Almighty Allah) is blind to see the hidden colors and the delicate bodies. [134](#)

Many animals are unable to see the colors; rather, they see everything either white or black. Human beings can see the seven colors that are the colors of the visible spectrum. They range from 0.4 micron at the violet end of the spectrum to 0.8 micron at the red end. Human beings cannot see the lights whose wavelengths are beyond these two ends, such as the ultraviolet and the infrared. This means that the visibility of human beings is limited.

Almighty Allah sees all bodies and all colors apart from their lights and delicacy. Recently, it has been discovered that bees can distinguish the kinds of flowers from the highest point to which they can fly.

Imam Ali ('a) says,

There is hidden knowledge in the experiments.

Accordingly, we must regard Imam Ali ('a) as the founder of experimentalism (i.e. the principles of the empirical approach in science).

Electricity

Imam Ali ('a) talked about electricity which is the key to evolution in human progress. One day, he was

sitting on the bank of the River Euphrates and holding a rod in his hand. He struck the surface of water with the rod and said,

If I wish, I can produce light and fire from water.

This is an indication of the energy that lies in water, which can produce light; that is electricity, and fire; that is thermal energy.

About his hidden knowledge that he could not show because of the educational low level of the people who lived in his time, Imam Ali ('a) says,

I have hidden knowledge; if I disclose it, you will start trembling like ropes in deep wells. [135](#)

Medicine

In his statements and golden words, Imam Ali ('a) presented many medical prescriptions and facts that reveal his skillfulness in this field of knowledge. About the wonderful systems of human body, the Imam ('a) says,

You (i.e. human being) think that you are a small body, while in fact the greatest world is involved in you. Your remedy is inside you, but you cannot see it. Your malady is also because of you, but you do not feel it.

Protective System

Imam Ali ('a) established a nutritional program that protects from illnesses and procures physical hygiene. He thus says,

Never eat unless you are hungry. Stop eating while you are still hungry. Chew everything you eat very well. Go to toilet before going to bed. If you follow these instructions, you will never need any medication. [136](#)

On another occasion, Imam Ali ('a) says,

People bring harm to themselves in three things: (1) in overeating, depending upon their health, (2) in overburdening things, depending upon their strength, and (3) in overworking, depending upon their endurance. [137](#)

Breast Milk

Revealing the nutritional importance of breast milk, Imam Ali ('a) says,

No milk that is suckled by a baby can be more blissful to it than the mother's milk. [138](#)

Geology

In his speeches, Imam Ali ('a) referred to many geological facts. About the creation of the earth, he ('a) says,

He created the earth and suspended it without being busy, retained it without support, made it stand without legs, raised it without pillars.

He ('a) also says,

He brought forth creation through His Omnipotence, dispersed winds through His Compassion, and made firm the shaking earth with rocks. [139](#)

He ('a) says in another sermon,

Allah flowed springs of water from its high tops, distributed them through plains and low places, and moderated their movement by fixed rocks and high mountaintops. Then, its trembling came to a standstill because of the penetration of mountains in various parts of its surface and their being fixed in its deep areas, and their standing on its plains.

Philosophy

Imam Ali ('a) was the first to establish the principles and rules of divine philosophy and the first to penetrate deeply into philosophy in general according to the method of argumentation and logic evidence.

It is reported that a Bedouin stood near Imam Ali ('a) on the day of the Battle of the Camel and asked, 'O Leader of the Believers, do you say that Allah is One?'

The people rushed to him and said, 'O Bedouin, do you not see the condition of the Leader of the Believers ('a)? His mind is busy with several matters. It is not the time to ask such questions.'

However, Imam Ali ('a) said to them,

'Leave him alone. This Bedouin wants just what we want from these people (i.e. the enemies).'

The Imam ('a) then said to the man,

O Bedouin, there are four meanings implied for 'Allah is One.' Two of these implications are not proper for Him the Almighty, while the other two hold true. The two implications that are not proper are:

(1) It is improper to say, 'Allah is One,' in the sense of numeration. This is not proper since what has no second cannot be counted in numbers. Do you not see that whoever says 'Allah is the third of the three' is considered unbeliever?

(2) It is improper to say, 'Allah is One,' in the sense that He is one of the people, implicitly meaning that

He is of a type of gender. This is not proper either, since it is a form of comparison while our Lord the Sublime is too great to make this comparison.

However, the two implied meanings that hold true are as follows:

(1) It is proper to say, 'Allah is One,' to imply that He is One and there exists nothing similar to Him. Our Lord is such.

(2) It is proper to say, 'Allah is One,' to imply that He, the Exalted and Sublime, is essentially and necessarily One. He is not divisible in the outside world, in the mind, or in the imagination. Our Lord the Exalted and Sublime is such. [140](#)

Forbiddance Of Witchcraft

Imam Ali ('a) forbade the use and practice of magic because it spreads deviation among people and leads to retardation. He ('a) is thus reported to have said,

A sorcerer is like the nonbeliever; and the nonbelievers will be in Hellfire. [141](#)

Forbiddance Of Fortune-Telling

Imam Ali ('a) warned against fortune-telling. When he decided to march towards Al-Nahrawan to suppress the rising of the Khawarij, 'Afif ibn Qays Al-Kindi said to him, 'This hour is not good. If you set out at this time, then instead of victory and success, you will face defeat.'

However, Imam Ali ('a) paid no heed to his view and ordered the army to march that very moment. In the result, the Khawarij suffered such a clear defeat that, out of their nine thousand combatants, only nine individuals survived by running away while the rest were killed.

Imam Ali ('a) argued about astrology being wrong or incorrect in three ways; firstly, if the view of an astrologer were accepted as correct, it would mean falsification of the Holy Quran, because an astrologer claims to ascertain hidden things of the future by seeing the stars, while the Holy Quran says,

Say: 'None either in the heavens or in the earth knows the unseen save Allah. (27:65)'

Secondly, under his misconception, an astrologer believes that he can know his benefit or harm through knowing the future. In that case, he would be regardless of turning to Allah and seeking His help, while this indifference towards Allah and self-reliance is a sort of heresy and atheism, which puts an end to his hope in Allah.

Thirdly, if he succeeds in any objective, he would regard this success to be the result of his knowledge of astrology, as a result of which he would praise himself rather than Almighty Allah, and will expect that whomever he guides in this manner, he too should be grateful to him rather than to the Lord.

These points do not apply to astrology to the extent it may be believed that the astrological findings are in the nature of effect of medicines which are subject to alteration at the will of Allah.

Hence, when the Imam ('a) decided to set out for the Battle of Al-Nahrawan, it was said to him, 'If you set out at this moment, then, according to astrology, I fear lest you will not be successful in your aim.'

The Imam ('a) answered,

Do you think that you can tell the hour when a man goes out and no evil befall him or can warn of the time at which if one goes out harm will accrue? Whoever testifies to this falsifies the Quran and becomes unmindful of Allah in achieving his desired objective and in warding off the undesirable. You cherish saying this so that he who acts on what you say should praise you rather than Allah because according to your misconception you have guided him about the hour in which he would secure benefit and avoid harm.

Then, Imam Ali ('a) advanced towards the people and said,

O people, beware of learning the science of stars except that with which guidance is sought on land or sea, because it leads to divining and an astrologer is a diviner, while the diviner is like the sorcerer, the sorcerer is like the unbeliever, and the unbeliever would be in Hell. Get forward in the name of Allah. [142](#)

[1.](#) Ibn Al-taqtaqi, Al-Adab Al-Sultaniyyah, pp. 46.

[2.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Fath Al-Arbali, Kashf Al-Ghummah 1:114.

[3.](#) Rijal Al-Najashi, 226.

[4.](#) Rijal Al-Najashi, 296.

[5.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:7.

[6.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:407.

[7.](#) Waki', Akhbar Al-Qusah 1:84.

[8.](#) Waki', Akhbar Al-Qusah 1:5.

[9.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:355.

[10.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:174.

[11.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 36.

[12.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 16.

[13.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:354.

[14.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad 1:96.

[15.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad 1:107.

[16.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:356.

[17.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:366.

[18.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:216.

[19.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:304.

[20.](#) A guardian of a woman is her closest relative who, according to the laws of Islam, has the right to give her in marriage.

[21.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:206.

[22.](#) In the Islamic code of religious law, the punishment of a married adulterer is stoning to death.

[23.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:304.

[24.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 68.

[25.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 97.

- [26.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:265.
- [27.](#) Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, Al-turuq Al-Hukmiyyah, pp. 53.
- [28.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:360.
- [29.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:363.
- [30.](#) Ibn Al-Jawzi, Al-Adhkiya', pp. 32.
- [31.](#) Shaykh Al-Saduq, Man-La-Yahsuruhu'l-Faqih 4:28.
- [32.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:363.
- [33.](#) Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib Ali Abi Talib2:364.
- [34.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 66.
- [35.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 109.
- [36.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 95.
- [37.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 101.
- [38.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 113.
- [39.](#) Musnad Ahman ibn Hanbal 1:104.
- [40.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:458.
- [41.](#) Tafsir Al-'Ayyashi 2:75.
- [42.](#) Shaykh Al-Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar Al-Ridha 2:65.
- [43.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:239.
- [44.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:244.
- [45.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:397.
- [46.](#) A decent witness (shahid 'adl) is a testifier whose testimony meets the conditions of admissible testimonies according to the law of Islam.
- [47.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:295.
- [48.](#) It is worth mentioning that the punishment that the Holy Prophet (S) and Imam Ali ('a) applied to larceners, according to some narrations, was cutting off their fingertips rather than their hands, because the fingertips have been also referred to as hands in many texts.

Besides, according to Arabic language, a part of a thing can hold the name of that thing as a whole. Sharif Al-Murtadha, a famous master jurisprudent in the field of Shi'ite Muslim jurisprudence, depending upon a report mentioned by Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi in Kanz Al-'Ummal 5:522, H. 13923, and Ibn kazm in Al-Muhalla 11:357, as well as many other reference books, entailing that Imam Ali ('a), executing the religiously prescribed punishment on a larcener, cut off his hand from the roots of the fingers, decides that the hand of larceners should be cut off from the roots of the fingers, as same as Imam Ali ('a) did. (Al-Intisar, pp. 529)

However, scholars of Muslim jurisprudence have various opinions about this issue as regards the amount of the hand of a larcener that should be cut off. [Translator]

- [49.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:219.
- [50.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:243.
- [51.](#) Shaykh Al-Saduq, Man-La-Yahsuruhu'l-Faqih 4:24.
- [52.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:244.
- [53.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:252.
- [54.](#) Shaykh Al-Saduq, Man-La-Yahsuruhu'l-Faqih 3:27.
- [55.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:389.
- [56.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:261.
- [57.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:136.
- [58.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:263.
- [59.](#) 'Ali ibn Ibrahim Al-Qummi, Tafsir Al-Qummi 1:451.
- [60.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:399.
- [61.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:185; Shaykh Al-Saduq, Man-La-Yahsuruhu'l-Faqih 4:22; Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-

Shi'ah 18:341.

[62.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 7:485.

[63.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:186.

[64.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Al-Tahdhib 6:319.

[65.](#) Shaykh Al-Saduq, Man-La-Yahsuruhu'l-Faqih 6:319.

[66.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 3:253.

[67.](#) Al-kimyari, Qurb Al-Isnad, pp. 42.

[68.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:181.

[69.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:232.

[70.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 18:208.

[71.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad. According to Shaykh Al-Kulayni's Al-Kafi 7:327, Imam Ali ('a) clarified the distribution of the eight dirhams among the two men as follows:

The Imam ('a) asked them,

'When you ate, one of you gave five loaves of bread and the other three. Is this true?'

'Yes, it is,' they answered.

'Your guest ate the same quantity you both ate. Is this true?'

Imam Ali ('a) asked.

'Yes, it is,' they answered.

'This means that each one of you (the three) ate two loaves and two thirds of a loaf. Is it true?' asked the Imam ('a).

'Yes, it is,' they answered.

Imam Ali ('a) clarified,

'So, this means that you, the owner of the three loaves, ate two loaves and two thirds of a loaf, the owner of the five loaves ate two loaves and two thirds of a loaf, and the guest ate two loaves and two thirds of a loaf as well. This means that one third of a loaf only remained with you (the owner of the three loaves) and two loaves and one third of a loaf remained with the owner of the five loaves. Thus, the guest gave you eight dirhams, which means that he gave you one dirham for each one third of a loaf (but not one dirham for each loaf, because they ate the same quantity the guest ate). Thus, he must have given seven dirhams to the owner of the five loaves and one dirham only to the owner of three loaves.

[72.](#) Shaykh Al-Tusi, Tahdhib Al-Ahkam 6:315.

[73.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 37.

Commenting on this judgment, Shaykh Al-Mufid, in Kitab Al-Irshad, says, 'That was a judgment in a case for which there was no way of establishing the truth other than by it. Do you not see that there was no evidence to distinguish the killer from the killed and no evidence of intention to kill? Therefore, the judgment was made according to their rule of accidental killing and on the basis of confusion about the actions of the killer and killed.'

[74.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 118.

[75.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad, pp. 113.

[76.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 29.

[77.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 33.

[78.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 47.

[79.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 94.

[80.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 97.

[81.](#) Shaykh Al-Mufid, Kitab Al-Irshad.

- [82.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 101.
- [83.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 101.
- [84.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 94.
- [85.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 43.
- [86.](#) Dhabihullah Mahallati, Al-Haqq Al-Mubin fi Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 193.
- [87.](#) As a law, it is invalid for a non-Muslim man to marry a Muslim woman.
- [88.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 51.
- [89.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 51.
- [90.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 55.
- [91.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 72.
- [92.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 57.
- [93.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 58.
- [94.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 59.
- [95.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 92.
- [96.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 40.
- [97.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 70.
- [98.](#) Najm Al-Din Al-'Askari, Ali wa'l-Khulafa', pp. 287
- [99.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 82.
- [100.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 84.
- [101.](#) Al-Tustari, Qasa' Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 41.
- [102.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 96.
- [103.](#) Muhsin Al-Amin Al-'Amili, 'Aja'ib Ahkam Amir Al-Mu'minin, pp. 102.
- [104.](#) Upon saying this word, Imam Ali ('a) pointed to his bosom.
- [105.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Aphorism No. 147.
- [106.](#) George Jorda'q, Rawa'i' Nahj Al-Balaghah, pp. 230.
- [107.](#) Al-Mirjahani, Misbah Al-Balaghah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah 186.
- [108.](#) Al-Mirjahani, Misbah Al-Balaghah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah 177.
- [109.](#) Al-Hurr Al-'Amili, Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah 8:551, S. 123, H. 2.
- [110.](#) Yaqut Al-kamawi, Mu'jam Al-Udaba' 1:73.
- [111.](#) Ibn Sa'd, Al-tabaqat Al-Kubra 6:116.
- [112.](#) Labib Baysun, Tasnif Nahj Al-Balaghah, pp. 2302.
- [113.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 154.
- [114.](#) Al-Dashti & Al-Muhammadi, Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufahras li-Alfas Nahj Al-Balaghah, pp. 109.
- [115.](#) Al-Dashti & Al-Muhammadi, Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufahras li-Alfas Nahj Al-Balaghah, pp. 110.
- [116.](#) Al-Mirjahani, Misbah Al-Balaghah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah, pp. 177.
- [117.](#) Ibn Shu'bah Al-karrani, Tuhaf Al-'Uqul, pp. 201.
- [118.](#) Shaykh Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 1: 41.
- [119.](#) Al-Qalqashandi, Subh Al-A'sha 3:25.
- [120.](#) Al-Qalqashandi, Subh Al-A'sha 3:149.
- [121.](#) Tash Kubri Zadah, Miftah Al-Sa'adah 1:303.
- [122.](#) Because the copies of the Holy Quran were written without dots and diacritical marks (i.e. harakah), the Bedouin misread the word khati'un (wrongdoers) with the word khatun (steppers).
- [123.](#) Abu'l-katam Ahmad Al-Razi, Al-Zinah fi'l-Kalimat Al-Islamiyyah Al-'Arabiyyah, pp. 72; Ibn Al-Anbari, Al-Nuzhah, pp. 8.
- [124.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:18-9.
- [125.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:19.
- [126.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 1.
- [127.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 91.

- [128.](#) Encyclopaedia Britannica, Item: Big bang.
- [129.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 165.
- [130.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 154.
- [131.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 184.
- [132.](#) Of course, this is the viewpoint of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, because he belongs to the School of Mu'tazilah.
- [133.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:17.
- [134.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 61.
- [135.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 5
- [136.](#) Shaykh Al-Saduq, Al-Khisal, pp. 228.
- [137.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 20:263.
- [138.](#) Al-Mirjahani, Misbah Al-Balaghah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah, pp. 171.
- [139.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 1.
- [140.](#) Muhammad Husayn Al-tabataba'i, Al-Mizan fi Tafsir Al-Quran 1:408, as quoted from Shaykh Al-Saduq's Al-Khisal.
- [141.](#) Murtadha Al-Ansari, Al-Makasib Al-Muharramah 2:279.
- [142.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 79.

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