

## Part 5: Kashifal-Ghita' And Sharafud-Din

### What Kashifal-Ghita' Says

One individual seeks an excuse from a statement made by the renown scholar and authority, Shaikh Muhammed Husayn Kashifal-Ghita', whom he describes as a thinker, when asked about this subject. He considers the statement of Kashifal-Ghita' as proving the invalidity of the claim that the rib of al-Zahra' (sa) was broken because she was assaulted, and that this also negates the claim that they forcibly entered her house, beat her and were responsible for the events which preceded and succeeded that. The proofs on which Kashifal-Ghita' relies are the following:

1. He, may Allah have mercy on him, has said, "I do not exonerate these folks, but hitting a woman was in those days a shameful act. Anyone who beats a woman will incur shame on himself and on his offspring. In *Nahjul-Balagha*, Ali (as) says, 'Do not afflict women with any harm, even if they condemn your honour, because they are weak in body, in spirit, and in mind. If we, during the pre-Islamic era, used to be admonished to keep away from them, the polytheist that we were, so he and his offspring after him are all shamed for it.'" [1](#)
2. He, may Allah have mercy on him, has also said, "But the issue of al-Zahra' (sa) and slapping her on the cheek is something which my conscience cannot accept, nor can my mind believe, nor my feelings are satisfied with it, because those folks would have been too embarrassed to commit such a momentous vile act. The Arab traditions and the pre-Islamic customs had already deepened such feelings of embarrassment..., etc." [2](#)
3. Then he presumed that if they had something like that, they would have found from among the *sahaba* those who would have rebuked and stopped them.
4. He also derived his excuse from her lack of reference to their having beaten her or causing her to miscarry, nor did she refer to any of that in her speeches which contained her complaints against how she was treated by her people, how badly she was mistreated, such as her speech at the Mosque in the presence of the *Muhajirun* and *ansar* "although she was rebellious, extremely upset." She said to Ali

(as), “So–and–so usurped from me what I have inherited from my father S and what will both my sons inherit.” She did not say that he or his friend beat her. So is the case when she spoke to the ladies from the *muhajirun* and the *ansar* when she started her statement by saying, “I have, by Allah, become indifferent to your world, despising your men..., etc.”

But she did not complain except from the confiscation of Fadak and from the caliphate. Had beating her, slapping her cheek, breaking her rib and driving a nail in her chest been all true, these would have been much greater than the confiscation of Fadak. Also, when Abu Bakr and ‘Umar came to seek Ali’s permission to visit and appease her, she did not mention to them anything of what she had been through. Ali, the Commander of the Faithful (sa), did not refer to any of these things in his sermons or statements.

His grief overwhelmed him after he had buried her. He addressed the Prophet S saying, “Peace with you, O Messenger of Allah, from me and from your daughter who is lying beside you..., etc.” The occasion demanded that he should have mentioned it, had it been so; it is a strong argument against them, and it contains a great emotional outburst against them from all directions.<sup>3</sup> Then he, may Allah have mercy on him, regarded this matter as the doing of Qunfath al–Wardi and nobody else.

Such is stated and upheld by Shaikh Kashifal–Ghita’, and this individual, who seeks to cast doubts, repeats it in order to stir the dust of doubt about this issue.

In answer, we say that what is stated by Shaikh Kashifal–Ghita’ and which is utilized by this person to cast doubt about what happened to al–Zahra’ contains many points which we would like to state thus:

## **1. Kashifal–Ghita’ Does Not Deny What Took Place**

Although we believe that Kashifal–Ghita’ does not deny the momentous events and the tribulations which al–Zahra’ (sa) went through, we say the following:

FIRST: Although he, may Allah have mercy on him, is a prominent scholar, this does not safeguard him against falling into error and confusion especially regarding an issue which needs more investigation of references. We have found how he mentioned the references on which he relies when stating his view regarding assaulting the house of al–Zahra’ (sa), beating her and causing her to miscarry. What he relies on is the evidence, so we have to look into such an evidence and subject it to our cross–examination, for it may not be accurate. His being an Imamite does not place him above scholarly criticism of objective discerning of his views and of what he relies on.

SECOND: Shaikh Kashifal–Ghita’ may be addressing those who sanctify the assailants and regard them as the criterion for what is right and the balance of the truth, so he wants to acquaint them with the truth without stirring their reservations or fanaticism. It is for this reason that we find him labeling this incident as “far–fetched,” putting the blame on a person towards him they have no sensitivity, nor do they sanctify him, namely Qunfath al–’Adawi.

What supports this conclusion is that he, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote it once in answer to a question which he had received. He simply took into consideration the state of mind of the inquirer, or the general condition wherein he does not want to stir hostile feelings or anxieties, especially after having demonstrated a great deal of interest in the issue of unity among the Muslims.

THIRD: We find this same great scholar disclosing his real view when there is no need for placating or flattering anyone, when his address is directed to those whose feelings he is supposed to respect. We, then, find him, may Allah have mercy on him, openly denouncing how al-Muhsin was miscarried, and how the fire was ignited at the house of Fatima (sa). He says the following verses of poetry:

*At al-Taff, the grandson fell subdued:*

*This is the outcome of al-Muhsin*

*Miscarried behind the door.*

*And when the tents were set ablaze,*

*From the firewood of the house*

*Of the Guide's daughter did it take its flame...[4](#)*

FOURTH: He, himself, may Allah have mercy on him, states saying that there is a consensus regarding this matter, and we have already quoted some of his statements in this regard. Nevertheless, we would like to repeat them here again (with an addition):

“Numerous accounts in the books of the Shi’as since the inception of Islam, from the first century, such as the book of Sulaym ibn Qays and those of his successors till the eleventh century and beyond, actually till our time. It is recorded in all Shi’a books which dealt with what went on to the Imams and to their father, the great *aya*, and to their truthful mother, peace of Allah be on all of them. All those who documented their biographies and wrote a book about them have agreed with one another, or their researches agreed with one another, regarding the trials and tribulations which that particular divinely purified portion of the Prophet S had to undergo after the demise of her father, the Chosen One S, how the oppressors slapped her on her face, hit her cheek till her eyes became red and her ear-ring scattered on the ground in bits and pieces, and how she was squeezed with the door till her rib was broken and she miscarried till in the end she died and her wrist carried a black mark like a bracelet.

Poets who follow Ahl al-Bayt, peace of Allah be on them, dealt with this issue and with these shameful acts, using them as the material for their poems and eulogies, taking these details as agreed on. Among them are: al-Kumait, Sayyid al-Himyari, Du’bal al-Khuza’i, al-Numayri, al-Salimi, Deek al-Jinn and those who came after them, as well as those who preceded them, till this century. Major poets from among the Shi’as in the 13th and 14th centuries, such as al-Khatti, al-Ka’bi, al-Kawazan, al Sayyid Mahdi al-Hilli and others too many to count have elaborated on it.

Each of these heart–rending and horrible incidents, the most awful and abhorred norms of conduct which stir amazement and denunciation, are almost unacceptable to reason, nor can the mind nor the conscience absorb them, especially since the same folks had committed what they committed: the (confiscation of) caliphate, the usurpation of the divine post from its rightful owners, is surely greater and more horrible.”<sup>5</sup>

## **2. People Accepting the Hitting of al-Zahra’ (sa)**

One who draws his proof from others says that people would not have agreed to expose al-Zahra’ (sa) to any harm or anything bad. We say the following:

FIRST: Had it been true that people would have confronted the assailants if the latter intended to harm al-Zahra’ (sa), how do you then explain their attempt to burn her door, how they collected firewood for that purpose, all as people saw with their own eyes what was going on and the streets of Medina were filled with people, according to some texts? Why did nobody at all interfere to stop them?!

SECOND: When so–and–so [“Umar] said to the Prophet S when he asked for an ink–pot and a writing material to write them something that would safeguard them from straying after his demise, “The Prophet is hallucinating,” why did nobody at all object to such a rude remark, nor did anyone reprimand him, or confront him, or even frown at him?! Was not the Prophet S greater and more holy in the heart of people than al-Zahra’ (sa) and than Ali (as) and anyone else?!

THIRD: If we accept that people did not agree with them, were people capable of confronting the new rulers who started their political career with violence and erected their government with the power of the sword?! Was not the public over–powered, helpless?!

## **3. Al-Zahra’ (sa) Arguing About What Took Place**

As regarding the argument of those who oppressed al-Zahra’ (sa), we would like to say the following:

FIRST: There is no validity for the argument which says that since she did not use it as an argument, it actually never took place. An event takes place and there may sometimes be obstacles in using it as an argument. In other words, if something happens, and people witness it and verify it, there will be no need to mention it, nor is there any benefit of telling others about it, especially to the same person who committed it except if something else necessitates such a repetition, such as obligating him to take responsibility for it, or something like that.

SECOND: We have stated that had she (sa) made this issue the foundation of her objection to those who usurped the caliphate, she would have fallen in the risk of losing the main polar issue, the issue of caliphate. They would have portrayed to the public that the dispute with her (sa) was personal and about trivial matters. It would not have been a dispute regarding the faith or regarding who is more fit to rule or to be trusted with safeguarding the interests of the nation.

If the issue becomes personal, it is then obligatory on al-Zahra' (sa) to forgive the wrong-doers when they went to her and asked her to forgive them, because forgiveness regarding personal matters is mandated by the exemplary civil and Islamic norm of conduct. Allah Almighty has said,

***“Take to forgiveness and enjoin good and turn away from the ignorant ones” (Qur’an, 7:199).***

He also says,

***“... pardon and forgive so that Allah may bring about His command” (Qur’an, 2:109)***

and

***“... turn away with kindly forgiveness” (Qur’an, 15:85).***

Turning the dispute to a personal matter is the best gift al-Zahra' (sa) could have presented to them. But the issue was not personal. They did not affect justice. They did not hand over the caliphate to its legitimate owner, nor did they do anything that would demonstrate their obedience to righteousness. So, al-Zahra' (sa) had no right to forgive them, nor to placate them, nor to tell them what would have pleased them and made them very happy.

THIRD: She (sa) did make a reference to the same. She mentioned it to the Commander of the Faithful (as), too. We will together review such statements in the section dedicated to texts and legacies. Yet we would like here to refer to some of them:

#### **4. Al-Zahra' (sa) Arguing**

Al-Daylami has narrated that she (sa) said, “They gathered plenty of firewood at our door and brought a torch to burn it and to burn us, so I stood at the door knob and pleaded to them in the Name of Allah and in the name of my father to stop it and to leave us alone. “Umar took the whip from the hand of Qunfath, slave of Abu Bakr, and hit my wrist with it, and the whip wrapped itself around my wrist, leaving a mark like a bracelet. He kicked the door with his foot, causing it to slam on me, and I was pregnant. I fell on my face as the fire was burning, torching my face. He slapped me with his hand till my ear-ring broke from my ear into bits and pieces. Childbirth overtook me, so I miscarried al-Muhsin, a child killed without having committed any crime at all.”<sup>6</sup>

#### **5. Ali (as) Refers to this Matter**

With reference to what is narrated from Ali (as), we would like to say:

FIRST: Al-Saduq has narrated, through his *isnad* which ends with Ali (as) that he said, “While I, Fatima, al-Hassan and al-Husayn (as) were with the Messenger of Allah S, he turned to us and broke into tears. I asked him, ‘What is wrong, O Messenger of Allah?’ He said, ‘I weep for the time when someone will deal a sword’s blow to your head and when Fatima’s cheek is slapped.’”<sup>7</sup>

SECOND: Another *hadith* states the following: “Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) went out towards the highland and was met by Qays ibn Shammās who asked him, ‘O father of al-Hassan! What are you upset about?’ He said, ‘They wanted to burn my house and its residents as Abu Bakr seated himself on the pulpit [of the Prophet S] to receive the oath of allegiance without stopping the aggression nor even denouncing it.’”<sup>8</sup>

He complains and demonstrates how they treated him by way of narrating a tradition rather than as a form of protest so that the incident may be the axis of the argument, the decisive issue. The protests were always directed towards effecting justice regarding the most important issue, that is, the coup that assaulted the caliphate (which is relevant to all the Islamic reality), as expressed by the person seeking the evidence. There are other narratives which will be narrated in the section dedicated to the texts and legacies, by the Will of Allah.

## **6. Protest’s Justifications non-Existent**

Regarding the inquiry of someone who wonders about the reason why Ali (as) did not take advantage of this issue in his arguments and debates although it contains a very strong and serious evidence against them, stirring the emotions from all fronts against them, as the person himself puts it, we would like to state the following:

1. This matter was not obscure from people’s knowledge so that he had to mention it to them. It is not necessary to absorb all the facts to use them as arguments especially when they are so clear and so obvious.
2. The situation could not tolerate stirring feelings and emotions. Rather, there was a need for toleration, for calming excited feelings so that matters might not explode, and so that he might not disobey the Messenger of Allah S who ordered him to remain silent and not to confront them with arms because doing so would weaken the creed and prepare the environment for reneging from Islam as the Commander of the Faithful (sa) said in *Nahjul Balagha* and elsewhere.
3. We have already stated that he mentioned the incident when there were no repercussions against doing so, in a calm manner which did not render the caliphate a dispute of a personal nature for which someone may apologize and be forgiven.
4. Their disobedience of the Command of Allah and of the order of the Messenger of Allah S is the most important issue; therefore, it is more worthy of being brought back to people’s minds because it is the criterion for what is right and wrong. As regarding personal wounds and psychological pains, their knots may be untied by sweet words and by a pretense to show remorse and regret so that it would appear to the public that the matter did not amount to anything serious that would justify their indictment of the offenders. What is narrated about the attempt of both men to appease her (sa) prior to her death is a very good proof. We will explain this matter in another place by the Will of Allah Almighty.

## 7. Al-Zahra' (sa) Did Not Remind Abu Bakr of What Took Place

The individual who seeks support for his statements from what Kashifal-Ghita' says has raised the question as to why she did not remind Abu Bakr and "Umar of what took place, i.e. her being beaten and her miscarriage, when they both went to her to appease her. Here is our answer:

1. She also did not mention to them how Fadak was confiscated, nor how the caliphate was usurped, both issues the inquirer points to in his question, and he himself considers the confiscation of the caliphate as the greatest of all crimes.
2. Mentioning this issue to them had a purpose and a deterrent. Her objective at the time was not to mention such things to them. Rather, she wanted to establish the argument against them by extracting an admission from both of them regarding what they had heard her father S say. She refused to speak to them before their making such an admission.

Then she recorded the decisive and eternal situation by indicting them for all time to come. She did not at all give them any room to discuss one particular issue whatsoever. It was not a meeting of one blaming another, or for settling old accounts, or listing what they had committed against her, for that would have been to no avail at all. They would have apologized for it by saying that it was an oversight promulgated by the circumstances of irresponsible agitation and anger. So, she did not give them a chance to do that, and this is the zenith of her wisdom.

For this reason, we find her (sa) contending with a general view of issues, refraining from providing details. She says to them, "O Allah! Bear witness that they have both harmed me..., etc."

## 8. What Sayyid Sharafud-Din Confirms

Someone quotes the scholar-authority, Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharifud-Din, saying, "It is confirmed that they brought firewood to burn the house. They said (to "Umar), 'But Fatima is inside!' He said, 'So what?!'"

The same individual adds in support his own statement wherein he says, "Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn did not state in his book *Al-Nass wal Ijtihad*, nor in *Al-Muraja'at*, anything like that; so, refer to them!" We answer as follows:

FIRST: Sayyid 'Abd al-Husayn Sharifud-Din was not in his works providing the details of this matter or determining what is confirmed thereof and what is not. Had he desired to thus research, he might have done a disservice to the goal which he aspired to achieve by writing these books. Allah, Glory and Exaltation are His, has said, "Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and dispute with them in the best manner" (Qur'an, 16: 125) in order not to hurt people's feelings and not to cause them anxiety except when the situation demands making things very clear, even in sensitive issues when right is feared lost, and when there is a need for a surgical operation even in sensitive and

dangerous places. The issue for Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din did not fall in such a category.

For this reason, we find him, may Allah rest his soul in peace, mentioning this issue casually then swiftly saying, “Was the action manipulated by fear of the sword or of burning a conviction of the establishment of the oath of allegiance?! Will it be a testimony to what he had said, ‘My nation shall never set the consensus on something wrong’?”<sup>9</sup>

He also says, “They had hardly buried him when those who befriended and loved him were given the option to swear the oath of allegiance (to Abu Bakr) or otherwise be burnt alive. It is just as the Nile’s poet, Hafiz Ibrahim, says in one of his poems which we abstain from translating out of our concerns about some readers’ sentiments:

Poem by renown Egyptian poet Hafiz Ibrahim portraying the incident of “Umar ibn al-Khattab burning the door of the house where Fatima daughter of the Prophet and her family were living.

A statement to Ali said by ‘Umar, [10](#)

Glorious is the listener, great is the speaker:

“I shall burn your house, none shall I leave

“If you do not swear fealty, though the daughter

“Of the Chosen One S is within.”

None but Abu Hafs was the speaker,

Addressing ‘Adnan’s Knight and Protector. [11](#)

Then he, may Allah be merciful to him, writes in the footnotes of both his works, *Al-Muraja’at* and *Al-Nass wal Ijtihad*, saying, “Their threat to burn the house of Ali (as) is confirmed by decisive consecutive reports.”<sup>12</sup>

Then he, may Allah have mercy on his soul, mentioned in the footnotes of both books referred to above many references which discuss how the second (caliph, i.e. ‘Umar) hit her (sa), how she miscarried, and other issues. If one reviews them, he will realize that he did him a favor by not embarrassing him about this very serious matter. Had he embarrassed him, he would have found escape routes for him and interpretations, all of them with fanaticism and emotion which prohibit him from absorbing the idea in a casual and natural fashion.

Had Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din, may Allah have mercy on him, had no such objective, he would have confined himself to the references which discuss the threat to burn in particular, neglecting everything else.

To sum up, the discussion, argument and debate all imply a sense of defiance of one's conviction, so he is unconsciously defending two things: the idea and himself.

If anyone listens to the debaters, he will absorb the idea stripped of the challenge and will accept and surrender to the truth before the debaters. This is so because he has no sensitivity, nor does he confront a problem resulting from understanding and evaluating the debate. He will not be required to retreat from anything, nor will he himself feel any shortcoming or self-indictment because of a shortage of verification, or lack of precision, or anything like that.

Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din always paid heed not to embarrass anyone with whom he debated nor force him to make such a difficult choice.

SECOND: What is transmitted orally about Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din cannot be relied on here, for he, may Allah have mercy on him, was not in a position to deny the confirmation of anything other than the threat to burn the house. He, may Allah have mercy on him, wanted to make sure about this part of the act then remain silent about anything else for a common cause which he considered behind such silence. It is the same that prevented him from entering into the details of this same matter in his books.

The testimony, rather the evidence, for what we have stated is the following:

1. This matter was not recorded by the Sayyid in his books, nor did any other scholar transmit to us that he said it. So, why did he, then, confide this very serious secret, which touches on an extremely sensitive issue, to a young teenager not quite seventeen years old yet? This is so if he did mention it to him in the early 1950s. But if he said that he told him so in the mid 1950s, that is, in 1955, what is strange in such a case is that he said that he was then 23 or 24 years old although he was born in 1935! He was not that old till near the demise of Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din, i.e. in 1957...!

2. The narrative which he mentioned under the heading "... What is confirmed with us... so they said, 'But Fatima is inside it!' He said, 'So what?!'" This is stated in his book titled *Al-Imama wal Siyasa* without mentioning its *isnad*, in addition to other narratives which are more widely circulated and quoted and whose *isnad* is more authenticated and whose narrators are more numerous, counted by the scores, and the venues of its *isnad* are many and diverse. So, how could Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din have considered those narratives to be the ones confirmed with us while leaving all the other numerous narratives and texts altogether with their *isnad* as well, and these are counted by the scores, labeling them as "unconfirmed"?!

As regarding the narratives of the threat to burn the house, why should they be the only ones that are "confirmed" while the narratives about her being hit and about her miscarriage not so?! These narratives are not more numerous or authentic than the first! A number of narrators have stated that these matters did, indeed, take place, as is clearly stated in this book.

THIRD: Who does Ayatollah Sharaf ad-Din mean when he says "with us"? Does he mean by "us" we,

the Shi'as? Or does he mean only himself?! If he means the first, this is not correct. We have already cited al-Tusi and Kashifal-Ghita' in this regard. Refer to the statements of the sect's scholars as recorded in their books, some of which we have already cited in this book. It will reveal to us what al-Tusi has said in the abridged version of *Al-Shafi* to be more worthy of being pleased with, quoted and accepted.

If he means the second, he may be right if we take the following into consideration: the number of the references at his disposal, may Allah have mercy on him, which, from reviewing their footnotes, we can see how few and how limited compared to what people nowadays have.

Regarding the available new references, which used to be manuscripts and which were not in circulation at that time, they found their way to the critics and to publication later on. Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din could not review them. We can discount the notion that he was satisfied with what he alleged as "confirmed" to him, which is the narration of "So what?!" He, the scholar that he is, was expected to investigate in the references and not to rush his judgment, if he at all made a judgment.

FOURTH: The lack of "confirmation" with Ayatollah Sharaf ad-Din does not mean that it cannot be confirmed at all. If a researcher is able to follow the texts of this issue and gather the proofs and evidences for it, he will have enough to be fair. Perhaps he, may Allah have mercy on him, had numerous and big involvements which blocked him from following many issues which needed such an investigation if they did not fall within the circle of his actual concerns.

Even if the case is not so, the scholarly confusion is rendered to Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din just as it is rendered to others. The scholarly and theological issues are subject to evidence and proof except when the Infallible One decides and speaks out in their regard.

FIFTH: We cannot define the nature of the question which the Sayyid received because this question determines the way how and to what extent it should be answered. The question may be, "Did they burn the house of al-Zahra' (sa)?" The answers may come like this: "What is confirmed to us is that there was a threat to burn it but not the actual burning." As regarding the miscarriage, there is no question nor an answer about it, that is, the answer denies that there was an actual burning while only confirming the threat to burn it. But it is silent regarding the miscarriage. As for hitting her and other matters, it does not deal with them; it neither confirms nor denies them. It is as though you may say that Zaid is tall. This does not mean that his complexion is dark or that he is not a scholar, etc.

The question may have also been put this way: "Was al-Zahra' (sa) beaten, so she miscarried?" The answer comes: "What is confirmed to us is that she was threatened with burning her house." This gives the impression of confirming the negation of everything other than the said threat, and it is the same that this individual quotes from Sayyid Sharaf ad-Din.

Thereupon, in the absence of our knowledge of the question put forth to him, we cannot say that Sayyid denies anything except the threat to burn the house of al-Zahra' (sa).

SIXTH: The person who cites this very important statement was a young man when he inquired of the Sayyid and obtained the answer from him. He probably was no more than seventeen years old, as we indicated above. He was not familiar then with the scholarly methods which are characterized by precision, nor was he used to them. He may have fallen into error in understanding the scholarly method, or he may have advanced one word ahead of another, so the meaning came different. He is only transmitting something which he says took place forty–five years ago, as he stated in one of his messages dated 1414 A.H. (1993 A.D.). Yet the possibility of forgetfulness, that is, forgetting the text of the answer, is quite possible as well.

The evidence pointing to the question being about the actual burning, or the threat to burn, as the second possibility, is that Imam Sayyid Sharaf ad–Din himself, as pointed out above, stated that there was fear of the sword or of burning. But he did not point out to the sword in his answer to the inquirer...

The statement of this individual claiming that he *stumbled* on a narrative in *Bihar al–Anwar* indicates that he, since the death of Sayyid Sharaf ad–Din, did not conduct any research of this matter. It is not accepted by reason that he remained for more than forty years researching this issue, which is discussed in scores of narratives from the Infallible Ones in addition to scores, even hundreds, of others, then he during this lengthy period does not “stumble” on anything but a single narrative...!

## 9. Other Evidences and Proofs

The same Sayyid, Sharaf ad–Din, may Allah have mercy on him, has stated that they took Ali (as) out by force. He also indicates exposing the house of Fatima (sa) to danger<sup>13</sup>, how the house was assaulted, and that they were quite a few in number dispatched by Abu Bakr as enforcement to “Umar (ibn al–Khattab) and Khalid ibn al–Walid. He states how people gathered as onlookers and how Medina’s streets were full of men. When Fatima (sa) saw what “Umar did, she screamed and pleaded for help. Many women from Bana Hashim and others gathered around her. She went out and, at the door of her chamber, she called out saying, “O Abu Bakr! How quickly you assaulted the family living at the house of the Messenger of Allah (S)..., etc.!”<sup>14</sup>

He, may Allah have mercy on him, has also quoted Abu al–Aswad saying that “Umar and his folks entered Fatima’s house by force, and that Fatima (sa) kept calling for help and pleading to them.<sup>15</sup> He mentions all of this, stating the names of those who participated in the assault on the house of al–Zahra’ (sa), referring to fear of the sword, taking its authenticity for granted without any reservation. So, how can this individual say that Sayyid Sharaf ad–Din, may Allah have mercy on him, “did not mention in *Al–Muraja’at* or in *Al–Nass wal Ijtihad* anything like what is said, so refer to them”?! We have, indeed, referred to them and found the opposite of what he says!

To sum up, all this proves that he, may Allah have mercy on him, says that they went beyond threatening to actually doing it to the extent that they assaulted the house, in addition to other details stated above. He, may Allah have mercy on him, may have said to this person who quoted him the same

as he said in both his books, *Al-Muraja'at* and *Al-Nass wal Ijtihad*, that is, that the threat to burn the house is already confirmed through decisive consecutive reports.

This statement is different from the one which says, "What is confirmed with us... that there was a threat to burn, etc." All what we have stated confirms the first statement and underscores it, weakening the other. He mentions his references in the footnotes of each page. Some of such references point out to the entire subject, including hitting her and causing her to miscarry. All this points out to his desire that the reviewer may be acquainted with it.

## **Did We Miscalculate?!**

We calculated that doing the above would spare us the need to expand our discussion of all issues which have been and are being discussed by some people via various information media. These issues are very important and sensitive, especially those relevant to the creed and to the faith, in addition to other well known legislative matters.

But the truth demonstrated that the matters went against what we had anticipated. Some folks portrayed to the public that "The main issue that concerns us \_\_\_ in fact, the one that concerns us the most \_\_\_ is none other than that of al-Zahra' (sa); nothing attracts our attention more than some people's discussion of breaking her rib and bringing it about in a *negative* manner."

Such is their attempt to mislead the public and distance them from the truth of the matter. What has assisted them in doing so is our own selves when we practically did *not* discuss such issues. This tempted them to assault us viciously. These assaults have daily intensified our discerning of their intention and the extent of their insistence on what they are doing. This left us with only one option: to tell the public the truth and to make them aware that the issue of al-Zahra' (sa) is but one besides scores like it which may even be more worthy of being researched and clarified.

Perhaps the reader has the right that we should not make him wait for too long when it becomes necessary to provide a "specimen" of such "hearsay" in order to fulfil our promise and to point out that we shall keep our promise to our precious Islamic creed. What cannot be all realized must not be mostly left alone.

As regarding researching the statements, written or recorded, made by some people, this actually is beyond our means because it needs a whole lengthy life-span! Add to this our conviction that we do not find it necessary to do so since the little can portray or suffice for a lot of what is a clear indication of a huge project undertaken by some people that aims at substituting what is originally ancient and fixed by decisive evidence from our legacy and heritage (as they like to term it) with what is *new* and *unique*, without supporting this *new* with any scientific evidence which withstands criticism.

For this reason, we find them adorning their "evidences" or modernizing them as the circumstances

demand, evidently insisting on their claim, which they are still unable to support with sound scientific proofs, thus giving the impression that they are ready-made ideas for which they are looking for proofs. Perhaps they consider the latter a part of the parcel of their “renewing” project with which many are dazzled and which aims at “correcting” the mistakes found, as they claim, in our inherited creed based on the criterion of facing reality, as they term it, on many occasions. [16](#)

What is really odd in this regard is that the same people who aspire for such “renewal” and such facing of the reality on sensing the seriousness of the situation in the face of such allegations have started accusing others of spite, malice, psychological complexes, backwardness and of working for intelligence agencies or falling under their spell, and that the aim is to cause their downfall, or the undermining of their religious authority, and that those who object to their allegations have no religion at all..., up to the end of the list of various expressions which pour in the same venue!

Moreover, such people started even denying some of their own allegations, seeking to explain or interpret or conclude some others. They even went as far as announcing, more than once, that ninety percent of what they are quoted is *attributed* to them, and that ten percent is falsified..., or that 99.99% are lies and innuendos!

So where is this “renewal,” and where is this “clarification”?! With what do they wish to “face” the reality if they turn against what they have already stated?! How, according to their latest terminology, do they wish to assault what is already taken for granted?! Which items, from among what is “taken for granted,” do they wish to assault?!

Yet we still hope that we will not be forced to publish detailed studies dealing with many sensitive and very serious issues contained in the storehouses of what someone writes or publishes if it is at all possible to avoid through this method or that.

## **Reactions to the Book are in Two Directions**

As regarding the reactions to the book from “concerned” individuals, these reactions vary and diversify, but in essence they fall into two directions:

FIRST: The direction of those who still consider this book, *Tragedy of al-Zahra’ (sa): Doubts and Responses*, as a serious achievement in the field of scholarly and objective research since it has provided logical answers that are accurate and convincing, stopping in their tracks those who cast doubts. The most prominent of those who provided such responses are the great religious authorities in Najaf al-Ashraf and Qum, in Islamic Iran, may Allah grant it dignity and honour.

I received many hand-written letters as well as oral declarations from some of them, may Allah prolong their presence among us and keep them as defenders of our creed. In addition to that, I received other letters and statements in the same direction from brilliant scholars who have enriched the Islamic world

with their precious works and who enjoy a great scholarly reputation.

I do not exaggerate if I say that I do not know any, from among the major scholars who deservedly carry the title of “scholars” and who reviewed this book, or when the book was referred to in their presence, and who did not lavish praise on the book...! Most people should be aware of the good echo left by this book among the believing and educated youths especially since many of them were surprised when they saw how those dissertations were displayed so often and with such insistence from the pulpits and in a written form, so much so that you may see one idea discussed in ten books or more. What has surprised them the most is that such issues are enthusiastically discussed by some people during such harsh and cruel periods of our nation’s struggle against its Israeli enemy and against all forms of international arrogance.

SECOND: The reaction of the concerned front, the one that sees itself as being harmed by this book, the one that was the cause for the writing of this book in the first place, since one of its most prominent personalities has been the one who stirred the doubts which varied in shape and form, so they set out to defend him (based on the principle of feeling obligated to thank the benefactor).

Such responses have all poured into one venue: indictment, rejection and crushing confrontation to the extent that we became unable to tell whether there are Islamic legislative or ethical limits that should be upheld and reached though outwardly. Or has what is forbidden been dropped off?! Or has what is condoned become condemned, or what is condemned become condoned or even made obligatory if it contributes to safeguarding the fabric (of the nation) or of the individual, or of the front?! All this is based on a premise that contradicts our Islamic principles, one preached by Machiavelli before, that is, “The end justifies the means.” Such a premise has been modified by some people to the extent that the end not only justifies the means, it even cleanses falsehood “in order to correct” what is wrong of the beliefs of Imamite Shi’as, may Allah increase their dignity, eminence and honour!

## **Glimpses from Some Reactions**

I can cite samples of the reactions expressed by the front that concerned itself with this book. Here they are:

Some people reacted emotionally on their pulpits, on the radio, and at private and public meetings trying to belittle the book and its author, regarding it as being written “illegally”...!

Banning the sale of the book, its reading or handling, applying pressure on the public to do so. Moreover, some publishing houses as well as book-stores were coerced not to circulate this book. This happened although the same people had already expressed on the radio their rejection of boycotting “misleading” books, considering doing so as a mistake which should be avoided.

Numerous and diverse rumors were circulated in more than one direction, without any religious or moral

deterrent. Among them have been:

A. in the form of insinuations aiming at belittling the dignity of the author, casting doubts about his conduct and manners, religion and straight-forwardness.

B. condemnations, verbal abuses and insults aiming at belittling the writer's scholarly status and position, depicting him as ignorant, backward, despotic in his views, unable to soundly comprehend what some people say, etc.

C. doubts cast about the scholarly value of the book, or its style, or background, or even some-times authenticity.

D. discussions of imaginary backgrounds that supposedly caused the author to write this book at such a specific period of time.

Indirect threats, death threats, methods of terrorism, oppression, hegemony, seeking the help of security forces to curtail the effectiveness of the book or the activity of those who read it or circulate it and those who sympathize with him or who voice their opinion regarding the issues discussed therein, have all been applied.

Coercion to give the book a political stamp and to place it in the circle of balances, subjecting it thereafter to the environments of give and take in the market-place of benefits and auctions and even political interests when necessity forces them to resort thereto.

Casting doubts about the objectives and incentives of the author, regarding the book once as indicative of personal ambitions and once as an answer to malice, and a third time as the result of a psychological complex which some people attached to the author.

At any rate, the result, from their viewpoint, is that the goal of the book about al-Zahra' (sa) is "political assassination" or scientific and social assassination of what they term as the "symbol" or "those charged with the Islamic status quo." Such is a terrible crime that leads, as they view it, to the assassination of Islam itself in the name of Islam, so, Woe unto Islam! What a calamity! They have been depicting the issue to the public as a plan the chapters of which and the struggle and the threats thereof are cleverly woven by international or regional or local or even "Islamic" intelligence agencies, or even the Mossad!

Their attempt to limit the subject-matter to "a historical issue," and only to a historical one, in order to divert the attention from many statements relevant to the aspects of the creed and the belief and to theological issues with which the book deals.

Their attempt to raise question marks about the viability of subjects such as this one, although they themselves are the ones who keep insisting on bringing them up, having depicted to the public that the matter does not exceed the very specific historical issue, that is, the issue of breaking the rib of al-Zahra' (sa), setting aside all other injustices to which she (sa) was subjected.

The attempt to link the subject in its entirety, for the sake, of course, of publicity, to certain fronts which plan the downfall of the authority of so-and-so because it sees itself as being harmed by the appearance of an Arab authority that is loyal to its nation *versus* the Persian authorities that perhaps are loyal to their Persian nation...! [17](#) They accuse the grand religious authority of some Islamic countries of being behind stirring the struggle against them, depicting them as mere competitors to them in as far as the religious authority is concerned.

## Written Responses

Besides the above, and in addition to this and that, published responses have appeared by those who stirred all such circumstances. They are still exerting euphoric efforts to fix their statements, as diverse as they may be, in the minds and hearts of the public via various news media apparatuses and through the plentiful means at their disposal, so much so that during short periods of time and sequentially, they publish a book or more containing the same ideologies, or sometimes even the same speeches and interviews. Yet each book has its own form, size, title and arrangement, all differing from those of its predecessors. But if you open any of these books to read, you will be reading the same customary ideologies intended to be fixed in the public's mind.

Whatever responses appeared from his party to my book titled *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa)* written by various writers, or by hired pens, or in radio interviews with his son or brothers or others..., all these tried to recover a lost esteem or stir doubts and suspicions about the book and its author.

Their news media has strongly circulated these responses. A radio interview with one of those hired pens aired by a local station owned by someone was transmitted as many as four times during less than a week. This was done in conjunction with honorary titles and adjectives lavished on the writer of the said book which he never dreamed of had he *not* been the first to shoot an arrow from his bow.

Then they circulated the same interview among the youths after the said radio station had continuously aired, during many days, commercials inviting the youths to obtain their copies of the taped interview. Such was their attempt to instil hostility, malice and hatred in those innocent souls. This by itself suffices to prove their awful failure to scholarly and logically face the challenge. It also proves the extent of the lowliness of the level whereby they treat those who criticize the ideology of one whom they label as their "symbol."

I do not wish to elaborate on how their offices and establishments circulate thousands of free copies to various servants of Allah in different lands. Perhaps spending such large sums of money has its justifications! Perhaps they are to be excused by their own standards to some of which we have already pointed out and from which they set out in such cases!

## Scholarly Value of such Responses

There is no exaggeration in saying that when we reviewed the contents of those “responses,” we were amazed, for we found nothing in them worthy of attention from a scholarly viewpoint. Our amazement was greater when we saw the extent of the attention paid to publicizing and circulating them and how they were passed out as “scholarly efforts” justifying the claims of some and dropping the objections of others. We do not know how they found spending such time, effort and money to circulate them, or to publicize for them, via their various news media, palatable.

It is for the achievement of this objective, and for others, that we, from our end, preferred to ignore them. We do not see it necessary to spend time and effort to expose their weaknesses, lowliness and shortcomings. The deceptions, insinuations, allegations, ill manners, and ignominious ignorance these “responses” contain, in addition to their well selected injurious expressions..., all can hardly escape any fair person with a heart and listens like a witness.

Our ignoring them may have deprived one who bets on distracting us with secondary issues of his opportunity to do so, investing our time with “You said, I said, and I meant, while they did not understand my objective,” so that those others may remain shielded in their ivory tower, depicting to the people that they are above such issues, and that our problem is not only with him but with many others, those who took the initiative to support such allegations This is so although he himself is the one who has been fueling its fire and increasing its flame once in secret and once in the open, once by making a clear statement, and once through alluding. And he is the one who has been spending serious money to have them published and distributed and perhaps rewarding those who take them, after having reviewed them, with his own endorsement of their contents!

From our part, all of this did not and will not be able to achieve those folks’ objectives. Rather, it has increased our conviction in three matters:

FIRST: My book, *Tragedy of al-Zahra’ (sa): Doubts and Responses*, is a firm and powerful response to what someone has put forth and has been putting. There is no scientific, nor any objective, rebuttal to it. For this reason, I see no need to reconsider any of the book’s entries.

SECOND: I have become more convinced than ever before of the need to rebut whatever issues which others have put forth. I have become convinced that there is a certain insistence on publicizing such allegations and fixing them in people’s minds and hearts, something which causes a serious danger to many issues relevant to the religion, creed and conviction.

THIRD: It has become quite obvious to me that all or most of such allegations should be put forth before the people’s eyes rather than stirring a few issues from which we want the other party to know that we shall never remain silent, nor shall we placate anyone, when we find ourselves obligated by the Shari’a to stand in the face of anything that may harm issues relevant to Islam and to conviction.

## Nation's Religious Authorities and Renown Theologians Make a Stance

The good religious authorities and the nation's scholars have not remained silent, though the norms of their rebuttal have varied. A number of *Taqlid* authorities have issued verdicts rejecting some of those allegations, so much so that the person responsible for them (for the allegations) was forced to exert an attempt, though unsuccessful, to dissociate himself from them once, and once to respond to them. Moreover, some religious authorities in Najaf al-Ashraf have alluded to the firm beliefs of the sect in the face of the attempts to cast doubts about them and to which they are exposed. [18](#)

Add to the above, a number of books and articles were published criticizing and rebutting him, and so did some people who delivered sermons and lectures. These are still being issued by many thinkers and men of letters from among those who guard the sect, its symbols and flag-posts.

My book (the Arabic original of this one), *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa): Doubts and Responses*, as we have stated, received a great deal of welcome, and it has become the favourite of great religious authorities whose letters and oral messages still reach us, all laden with praise and support and with supplications for our success. I have also been receiving letters from weighty scholars expressing their elation with this book, their pleasure and admiration of it. I may succeed in publishing them in the future.

Even if we were in an environment where others did not find the opportunity to move and to make a stand, this only doubles our feeling of the responsibility and mandates on us to stand, even alone, to defend the facts of the sect and the issues relevant to Islam and conviction. We find ourselves responsible, now more than ever before, for carrying out this particular religious obligation: defending our religion.

## Our Hand is Stretched out for a Debate

This book, *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa): Doubts and Responses*, came about after several months of waiting during which we invited someone to a written debate, doing so in many letters and through many messengers [but to no avail]. But *he* remained refusing and rejecting while our hand remained stretched out asking him and insisting on debating in a scholarly and objective manner. This is so because it is the most exemplary method to prove the truth as true and to avoid more embarrassments of dissertations which stir worries about people's conceptions and their issues of conviction, provided it is a serious and objective debate wherein both parties uphold the conditions, outcomes and results, once it is conducted in a conscientious manner obligating both parties to precisely express their relevant objectives and not to renege from the implications of their statements, all according to what people comprehend and circulate and to what some of them use as evidence against others.

## Objections and Reproaches

I have been notified about some objections and differing viewpoints regarding my book titled *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa): Doubts and Responses*. I am of the view to make a reference to them in this Introduction with a quick reference to our stand in their regard.

## Why Rebut?!

Some may wonder: Why don't we remain silent as the others do, since doing so saves us a great deal of trouble and hardship, especially since some people possess financial, media and security capabilities in addition to popularity that may cause all sorts of harm to those who stand in their way? They cite the example of what happened to 'allama Yasin al-Musawi, may Allah protect him, and others.

We say:

If there is a religious obligation mandating on us to make a stand, we have to revert the question back to them and ask them: Why do others remain silent?! Why don't they speak as we speak and make a stand as we do, especially since the issues under discussion are only pure theological expressions which are not related to any policy, position or anything else? Moreover, the religious authorities have stated that there should be *no* silence in such a case.

The religious obligation, when the goal is to obligate, is the final and the last judgment, not fear of the financial capabilities nor facing harm nor anything else. Allah Almighty has said, ***"Those to whom the people said: Surely men have gathered against you; therefore, fear them, but this (only) increased their faith, and they said: Allah suffices us and is the most excellent Protector"*** (Qur'an, 3: 173).

Had such "logic" been the criterion, permitting people to withdraw from the field and relax, then the prophets, their successors, and the reformers should have withdrawn from the fields of confrontation so that they might not expose themselves to any harm, and because others have been, throughout history, hoarding materialistic power, be they in the areas of the media or in others, more so than all others around them.

## Sanctifying the Legacy

Some folks "accuse" us of sanctifying the legacy, be it lean or pithy, following the principle of,

***"We found our forefathers on a course, and surely we are guided by their footsteps"*** (Qur'an, 43:22).

For example, why should we not "sanctify" the book by Sulaym ibn Qays?!<sup>19</sup> Is it not a legacy document?!

We say that we do not need to emphasize that what we need of the legacy is what has been verified for us through sound and binding scholarly proofs in a way that mandates on us to uphold it, defend it, and not to permit anyone to be disrespectful to it since it represents a religious and Islamic fact.

As regarding Sulaym's book, we have said that mere trusting its contents, according to us, and according to other scholars as well, does not mean it is due to its legacy; rather, it is due to verifying such contents through evidence.

These folks have overlooked the fact that we, at the same time, while emphasizing our endorsement of Sulaym's book based on evidence, we have discussed the book titled *Conference of Baghdad's Scholars*, and we hold a view in its regard which we have recorded in our book titled *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa)*. Our scientific approach in the writing of *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa)*, as it is in all other books of ours, proves the fact that we adopt the evidence: we go wherever it takes us.

We say the following to anyone who has any complaint against us: It is not sufficient to let accusations fly around. They have to be backed by irrefutable proofs; otherwise, those who let them fly around will themselves be the accused who may not be able to prove their innocence from that in which they let themselves fall.

## [A Reference](#)

We would like here to point out that when we discussed the book titled *Conference of Baghdad's Scholars*, the focus of our attention was the same book: who wrote it, when it was written, a review of some of its contents, etc. We relied in doing so on published and circulated copies, perhaps the best among them is the one that contains the commentary of our brother, the scholar 'allama Shaikh Muhammed Jamal Hammad whose comments were incorporated in its footnotes which, to say the truth, are all useful. He surely exhausted himself in collecting their references and referring to the proofs that showed that much of the book's contents are already contained in other respectable books. May Allah appreciate his effort, and may He keep his feet firm on the right course.

## [Arguments Regarding the Angels' Species](#)

It is said or, say, rumoured, that the book's subject-matter is marginal and not serious; so, why do we concern ourselves with it while others concern themselves with what is more important and more beneficial?! Is not doing so similar to arguing about what sort of species the angels are while others have already reached Mars?! Is not doing so short-sightedness, close-mindedness and intellectual backward-ness?!

My response is the following:

1) I wonder about who initiated this issue as well as many others, insisting on them in his information

media, exerting a great deal of effort, exhausting material and non-material resources as well as manpower just to lay emphasis on them and firm their foundations?! And he has been assaulting the scholars and the religious authorities of the nation, launching against them various accusations specifically because of these issues, keeping the public and the scholars for many months and years concerned with them?

2) The dispute with some people is not about what species the angels are, nor is it anything like that. Rather, it is regarding sensitive and weighty issues some of which touch on the subject of Imamate, infallibility, the characteristics of the prophets (as), the Imams (as) and their role, in addition to other theological topics.

As regarding the issue of al-Zahra' (sa), these same folks deny that any violence took place against her, at her home, except threats of burning. This contradicts what a certain individual himself had stated in his sermon at the Husayniyya of Martyr [Muhammed Baqir] al-Sadr wherein he said *verbatim*, "... History and *hadith* are fraught, and narratives are consecutively reported, that she was beaten, that she miscarried, and that she..., and that she..."<sup>20</sup> Yet he went back to deny it all over again, making his denial public many times.

On Sawt al-Iman Radio, he said that he never apologized nor retracted; rather, he had spoken in agreement with the view of *others*, being apprehensive of "dissension." After the dissipation of such "dissension," he went back to Qum to deliver the said sermon which has contained what the reader already knows!

This is why we, after a lengthy period of hesitation and many attempts to open the door for a debate with him, as well as many attempts to confine the subject-matter to a specific sphere, decided that all such attempts failed and their failure forced us to write this book: *Tragedy of al-Zahra' (sa): Doubts and Responses*. Some people faced this book in an emotional manner, some provocatively. Then he kept spending funds and encouraging the publication of responses containing many misleading lies, trying to firm his statement and fix it in people's minds, claiming that no injustice befell al-Zahra' (sa), exonerating the oppressors.

In this book, we have proven that there were more than just threats against al-Zahra' (sa) in addition to other issues relevant to the creed which we once explained in detail and once in general as it becomes clear for anyone who reviews the said book and looks into it equitably and without prejudice.

## [Why was the Response Late?](#)

Some of the criticism which we have had to face was that someone has said, "If some people had stated such issues and recorded them in their books many years ago, why have these objections been delayed till lately?" Our answer is:

1) The writings of those folks did not earn the attention of the scholars as the latter researched and investigated because they considered them entertaining reading material for the young generation, so they are not circulated among the scholars, verifiers and researchers. Rather, those who paid his books special attention are mostly a specific sect tied to him with special ties and by virtue of a particular circumstance.

2) As regarding the issue of al-Zahra' (sa), objections to his statements in her regard and in regard to others did, indeed, appear many years ago. An uproar took place in 1993, and someone stepped away from his statements: his own retreat therefrom is recorded. Then he went back later on to contradict such a retreat under the slogan of "bowing before the storm." As for the rest of his dissertations, there was a great deal of good intentions and acceptance of issues according to their nature and with confidence. There was no justification for suspecting those works of containing what contradicted such good intentions.

We add to the above a note that most of those works were written during the [Lebanese civil] war that reflected its negative results on various fields, including verifying books and subjecting them to scrutiny by the specialists, the scholars, and the believing and aware youths. Such circumstances, and others, distanced the author of these books from coming directly in contact with brilliant scholars and major verifiers at the *hawzas* of [theological] knowledge except during brief official visits which did not allow sifting the depth of his ideologies and discovering the truth of his convictions. Even if they were circulated, this does not, by necessity, guarantee their knowledge that such is his final conviction. This is so especially since he puts such ideologies under the banner of mobilizing the scholastic environment which does not need more than supposing an idea even when it obviously is wrong.

## Who is "Oppressed"? Is this "Scandalizing"?

Among what we heard are the following issues:

They claim that we scandalized someone and oppressed him when we published a book that calls to account and refutes his ideologies and statements. We would like to say the following:

1) We never wished to discuss who the oppressor or the oppressed one is because the issue is not essentially personal. When it becomes personal, its tackling and discussion in such a method becomes unjustified. The discussion should have involved the wronged truth which is intended to be hidden from the people who have full right to discover it, to own it, to be fully familiar with it, and to be acquainted with its minute details.

Likewise, we do not wish to discuss the oppression of one who, under the guise of justice, oppresses. Nor do we wish to discuss the oppression which some people label as forgiving and overlooking the scapegoat, as we hear some people repeatedly say...!

But if it is the discussion of an oppressor who assumes the guise of piety, one who commits his crime from the position of mercy and benevolence, so that he may be godly, not thinking of the minute and marginal issues..., we cannot imagine anything like this to take place except in a reviving revolution of ideals and concepts, one which the advocates of “modernity” consider to be a legacy of the ancient past.

No matter what, what is required is that the truth should not be dealt with unjustly, nor should the values and supreme principles be oppressed. Such would be worse than any oppression to be discussed.

2) Since we have no choice except to refer, against our wish, to what we have been asked to refer, we would like to say the following:

We find it odd that the oppressor becomes the oppressed one, while the oppressed one becomes oppressed to the extent that these folks object to the publication of a book that refutes someone’s statements, rather than confront him with their objection for having made certain statements and disseminated them. This comes despite our invitation to him to discuss such issues before the scholars and the thinkers prior to presenting them to ordinary people. He responded to us in the *Bayyinat* newsletter of October 25, 1996 saying, “I do not believe that the public are commoners and that we should keep them ignorant... I find it wrong to put forth issues only at private meetings. Rather, we have to discuss them at public meetings.”

We, in this regard, are like what the poet described thus:

*He oppresses me, then he calls me oppressor;*

*He condemns me, then I am called the one who condemns.*

3) As regarding scandalizing, if there were such thing, it is obvious that someone had himself initiated the casting of doubts from the pulpits, on the radio waves, in books, newspapers and magazines, etc., about issues which do not accept doubt due to their clarity and to the irrefutable proofs which confirm them. Let us also not forget that naming him publicly was done by those who defended him on his own behalf. He also is the one who has been publicizing for and circulating these statements as is evident.

## [Quoting Sayyid Sharafud-Din](#)

I have been criticized, with regards to this book, when reference was made to Sayyid Sharafud-Din [Sadr ad-Din al-Musawi] being quoted in the early 1950s as citing an incident involving the assault on the house of al-Zahra’ (sa). And when someone was asked about his age at that time, he said that he was 22 or 23 years old. We at that junction stated that since he was born in 1935<sup>21</sup>, he must have been a lot younger. They rumoured that doing so represented accusing the man of being a liar which, in their view, was a very serious crime.

We respond to them with the following:

1) The language of our discussion is one of right and wrong, of hitting or missing the mark. As regarding the catalysts and causes of one falling into error, these are none of our own concern. One who errs is himself responsible for justifying his conduct. We did not apply the language of ethics or of the Shari'a , whether that was among the diction of lying or telling the truth. The intention is that he stated what was not true without having a reason or an excuse for doing so, whether he did or did not intend it to be as such.

2) We were only discussing the nature of the exactness of quoting expressions in an issue that took place forty years ago. Such quoting represents to some people one basis for denying the issue of the assault on the house of al-Zahra' (sa) and the details that followed the incident. He is the one who has said, "When one wishes to remember his childhood through the history which has, to a certain extent, become far-fetched, going back to more than fifty years, it is only natural that such person cannot remember all the details."<sup>22</sup> Such a statement is realistically sound.

We have found the truth of such a statement in many issues not only in reference to Sayyid Sharafud-Din but also in other instances as well. Here we would like to mention the instances wherein error was made with regard to his age, leaving others alone except for one instance, so that they may serve as models telling about others; so, let us state the following:

1. This individual was asked about his age on graduating from the school and jointing the *hawza*. "How old were you then?," he was asked. "I was eleven<sup>23</sup>," said he. But he, in another instance, talked about himself saying, "... and through that, I sought theological studies at a very early age when, I think, I was nine years old."<sup>24</sup>

2. In another instance, he said, "... I can say that I joined the theological *hawza* in about 1363 A.H. (1944 A.D.) when I was then eleven years old."<sup>25</sup>

The difference between both statements is quite obvious. Once he says that he was nine and once that he was eleven; once he thinks and once he is positive! Then we find the difference in the context of the second statement. Had he been born in 1354 A.H.<sup>26</sup> (1935 A.D.), his age would have then been nine years, not eleven, as he stated in the said text.

3. In the story of the famous incident of the Bi'r al-'Abd attack, which was a "very serious historical milestone," according to him, even his "mighty resurgence,"<sup>27</sup> according to those who sing his praise, we find him saying, "I was exposed to more than one assassination attempt prior to the failed attempt to which I was exposed in 1984<sup>28</sup> in the region of Bi'r al-'Abd." Yet he also says, "As regarding the attack of Bi'r al-'Abd of 1984 wherein they tried to assassinate me..., etc."<sup>29</sup> The Bi'r al-'Abd attack took place on March 8, 1985, killing 80 persons<sup>30</sup>, and the book titled *Tahadda al-Mamnoo'* was published in 1992, only seven years after the said massacre. This individual forgot the date of the greatest even that he had to face in his lifetime; so, how can he help forgetting an incident that took place more than forty years ago dealing with a topic which is not one of his concerns, as he himself has said and to which we

referred on many occasions?!

4. We also find him saying in another incident, “I started issuing a written magazine titled *Al-Adab*, and I used to edit it when I was ten or eleven at the time. I used to write an issue whenever a new subscriber was added.”<sup>31</sup> He also says, “During that time, I published a written magazine titled *Al-Adab* in which I wrote two articles. I solicited articles from some people, and I tried to write and issue a new edition whenever a new subscriber was added. The late Sayyid Mahdi was a very good writer. I published five issues of this magazine between the years 1949 and 1950.”<sup>32</sup>

The implication of his latest statement is that he was 13 or 14 years old when he published the said magazine based on his birth year being 1936 A.D. But if he was born in 1935 or in 1934, as is known from what has already been said in the text and in the footnotes, his age would then increase by a year or two to become 14, 15 or 16.

According to all estimates, his statement that he was ten or eleven years old when he issued the magazine is not precise. And if it all boils down, as he himself said, to something that became, to a certain extent, ancient history, then it is only natural that one cannot remember all its details. Let what he said about the Imam, Sayyid Sharifud-Din, be part of that “distant history,” the details of which can hardly be remembered with precision, a change in altering the facts of history, at least from the viewpoint of Sayyid Sharifud-Din.

## Time Period Between Hijri and Christian Calendars

What is noteworthy here is that someone accused me of confusing, according to his claim, the Hijri, in as far as his age is concerned, with the Christian calendar which he meant in his statement about determining the meeting year with regard to Sayyid Sharafud-Din. We say that it is quite obvious that every 33 Christian years increase the Hijri calendar by one single year. The theory invented by the claimant cannot solve the problem of the terms to which we made a reference because the difference is quite big and because the number of years between both ends is quite large, and it is defined by words and letters, not by figures.

## All Islamic Ideology is Human Except Fundamental Facts

In a discourse which I conducted with some officials of the Islamic Educational Center, I found him making an objection the gist of which is as follows:

The truth is not anyone’s property. Nobody, not even a mujtahid, can claim that he owns the truth, the whole truth. Islam, with the exception of fundamental facts, is a collection of human viewpoints in the comprehension of the texts. All the *fiqh* legacy is human, not divine.

Based on this statement, it does not make any sense to issue severe verdicts, as is the case in regard to

this book, against those who hold different views, for the truth is not anyone's property. He even says that the truth is relative! We did not wish to discuss such an objection had we not found out recently that the man has recorded the same more clearly in some of his books.

Having said "There is no doubt that the Qur'an is the Book of Allah, its diction remains subject to the interpretations of scholars and those specialized in exegesis," he goes on to state the following:

"I believe, therefrom, that our legacy of *fiqh*, *hadith* and philosophy is the product of the interpreters, philosophers and thinkers. It has resulted from their intellectual output. It does not represent the truth except in as much as we feel satisfied with its representation of the truth based on our criteria of what is true. As such, I consider all the Islamic ideology, with the exception of Islamic fundamental facts, as human, not divine. Humans may err in what they comprehend of the Speech of Allah or of His Messenger (S), or they may hit the mark.

"Based on the above, I believe it is very important to look into the legacy that springs from the *ijtihad* of the thinkers, regardless of their point of focus, with an outlook that distances itself from the sanctity of their lives, qualifications, spiritual or practical lives among others on the level of religious authorities or pious men who fear Allah, Glory to Him and Exaltation. Such is one thing, while the issue of ideology is another. For this reason, I invite everyone to study such legacy critically, a legacy wherein we live our intellectual personality and openness which was lived by the ancient ones who implemented it in their intellectual experience."<sup>33</sup>

I say that such an objection, though obviously invalid, is considered as quite serious. It makes it the most weighty and sensitive of all objections. I would like here to state some criticisms, promising to deal with them in detail at another opportunity where elaboration on text and on meaning will be opportune; so, let me say the following:

1. If all of this is "human," with the exception of a limited number of "fundamental facts" such as belief in the Unity of God, Prophetic Mission, Resurrection, and issues relevant to the Islamic Shari'a that are taken for granted, like the obligatory prayers, fast, *jihad*, pilgrimage, *zakat*, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, prohibiting adultery, theft, wine drinking, gambling, slandering, homosexuality, backbiting, killing someone whose killing is prohibited, in addition to such issues which do not go beyond the cycle of very general issues, without going into their details, for such details are within the range of personal "human" interpretations; they are not divine, something which someone describes as "subject to change."

If it is so, why then do we invite non-Muslims to accept Islam?! Do we invite them to accept the specifics of these fundamental facts in their cloudy and general labels which are quite a few? Or do we invite them to accept viewpoints of individuals who, like them, are only human?!

When it is said that we have to present Islam to others as a creed, an ideology and a system capable of solving all problems, the most exemplary model of conduct for all human beings, in all fields..., *which*

Islam do we present? Should we present the specifics of such fundamental facts, or should we present the human ideology then say to them, “This human ideology is Islam which Allah Almighty revealed to His servants”?! Which ideology of these humans do we present to others?!

2. If what is meant by “fundamental” is what nobody discussed, this is wrong, for the existence of a discussion of an issue does not make such an issue a human ideology. Many may discuss the existence, or the non–existence, of God, and many Muslims may discuss the Prophetic Mission of Muhammed S, but neither discussion makes it a human ideology. Many sects discuss the ideology of Imamate, but this does not make it a human ideology. Many discuss religious facts and legislative verdicts, but this does not mean that such facts or verdicts become a human ideology.

Take, for example, some people’s attempt to analyze a man looking at another man’s nudity, or a woman looking at another woman’s nudity<sup>34</sup>. The prohibition of both cases is non–negotiable, yet some people’s permission thereof does not make this fixed verdict, that it is prohibited, a human ideology.

If what is meant by the “fundamental truth” is the issue whose validity is ascertained on casting a look at it, it is quite obvious that the Islamic truth, though fundamentally true in its own merits, or it may not be so according to some people, can be obtained by signs, proofs and legislation. Deriving a fact from the evidence, or obtaining a consensus in its regard, after exerting some extensive effort, does not qualify it as a human ideology simply because it is not a fundamental issue.

So is the case had it not been fundamentally true according to some people, as is the case with the said nudity. But some injunctions or issues may not have definite and final evidences. If they are missed by the indications and evidences, as applied by the Kashfis, then one does not come under any obligation before Allah, Praised and Exalted is He, if he violates the actual injunction.

Yet acting on the principles set by the Shari’a makes all results having an Islamic and a divine characteristic. And if the actual injunction is not validated, the soundness of obtaining an excuse from Allah Almighty through the implementation of means set forth by the Shari’a is a divine injunction, not a human one. My response to those who make such a claim is: Making fundamental facts as characteristic of being a divine ideology is invalid, if we agree on the term “divine ideology” at all.

When obligation becomes the effort to act on what the Shari’a mandates, or following the basics in their own sources, this becomes a divine injunction that obligates the individual, and it is a divine ideology, as someone would like to term it, not a human one, because Allah is the One Who made it an obligation to act on it, or to follow the origin of such sources.

The source is characterized by legitimacy, Islamic and divine characteristics due to its being among the sources determined divinely and Islamically for this case and for similar cases.

3. We deeply comprehend someone’s attempt to demonstrate Shi’ism as a human ideology when he says, “Let the Sunni and Shi’a issue be one of two Schools in understanding Islam”<sup>35</sup> and that Shi’ism is

merely a viewpoint when he says, “The issue under discussion may be that Shi’ism is a viewpoint in the line of Islam, a case isolated from the general reality of the Muslims.”<sup>36</sup>

Then he regards Imamate as “A variable that moves within the world of texts which are subject to *ijtihad* for their verification and implication, something which was not declared on the level which allows no room for a difference of opinion, nor was it confirmed to the degree that leaves no doubt therein. Such is the condition of debate in which the Muslims were involved, such as debating caliphate and Imamate, what is good and what is bad, and what is rational.”<sup>37</sup>

This statement implies that there is no text mandating Imamate, that Imamate, even Shi’ism altogether, is a human ideology brought forth by the Imams (as) like any other human ideology brought forth by others, rather than a divine ideology, because Imamate is not, according to some Muslims, a fundamental fact since the time when the Messenger of Allah S passed away, as someone claims. It is, then, a human ideology subject to *ijtihad* and is not divine, as someone claims; had it been divine, the deniers would have been excommunicated from Islam altogether, something which he does not uphold.

Does the existence of someone’s doubt regarding a fundamental fact turns what is fundamental into a mere viewpoint, changing it into a human ideology, then sorting it among what is “variable,” such as Imamate?!

4. What is fundamentally true does not need the mandating of *Fiqh*, *Itjihad*, *Taqlid*, or *Ihtiyat* on people. As regarding what is termed as “a human ideology,” it, too, carries no meaning because it is not mandated and there is no need for it..

5. If someone admits what is Islamically fundamental as being true, then he wishes to follow others in as far as human laws are concerned, or he himself likes to adopt a human, non-divine, viewpoint, then why should he be labelled as having brought about a *bid’a* (innovation in the creed)? And why should his books be considered misleading so he faces the harsh judgment meted to those who make innovations in the creed and getting his books to be banned because they mislead others? What is the criterion whereby a human ideology becomes at some time acceptable or at others not?

One may say that the existence of things that are not fundamentally true, on the whole, is regarded as fundamentally true, so it, too, is divine. Or one may say that the means of producing the human ideology that are acceptable in such a case are not acceptable to human laws. This may produce the following response: How can a divine ideology, according to their terminology, become human, and how can the human ideology be treated as divine for that sake? In both cases, it is not divine.

6. Let us suppose that the people refuse to uphold what is called a human ideology; should they be sensitive or enthusiastic about that ideology so they are motivated to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, to wage a holy war, to make sacrifices of their lives and of the lives of their offspring as well as of their wealth for its sake? How can we convince them of sacrificing their lives and those of their children?! Would they do so for the sake of a human ideology?! Have all the efforts and sacrifices of the

Prophets, elite pious men and martyrs ever been for the sake of firming the foundations of human viewpoints which vary and which contradict with each other?!

What about this “human ideology,” namely Islam? What distinguishes it from any other human ideology or any man-made code whose advocates claim that it guarantees happiness for people and solves their problems? Does not this mean that this Islam, the “human ideology” that has no spirituality of its own, is merely an ideological luxury or the collection of viewpoints of individuals which people have circulated at their lush salons and savour it at their offices and night parties?!

7. If what some “scholars” comprehend of the texts and of a superficial understanding of the Qur’an and the Sunnah as a human ideology, why did Allah, Glory to Him, hide His “divine ideology,” as they term it, turning it into a pawn of speculations and human imagination?

What benefit remains from the sending of Prophets, and from establishing divine legislative systems, since such systems will become useless because the criteria then are these human concepts in their regard and, in the end, the severing of the tie with Allah on this basis?! How can we compromise this with the legislator requiring the public to uphold the Book and the Sunnah, using the latter as arguments against the servants, then he either rewards or punishes them accordingly although they both, as these folks claim, are unable to prove a divine ideology, and to bet the facts of the creed and of the Shari’a to the public?!

So is the case regarding all other evidences which Allah Almighty requires us to uphold. How did it become possible that Allah makes an issue, which is unable to fix its objectives, as means of reaching His goals? This is truly amazing!

8. Before we conclude our discussion, we would like to point out to the invalidity of the argument saying that the truth is relevant. This is silly. It is nonsense. The truth is the truth; some reach it while others miss its mark. There is no variation in it like the variation in the degrees of colours or in temperature degrees so that one may say it is relevant.

As regarding the variation in the abundance or the lack of sources, this makes the truth relevant. Were such a term fixed, it would still not benefit those who espouse the theory of the divine versus the human ideology, so all *fiqh* legacy as well as *hadith* comprise a human ideology, as they claim.

## **What Implication did the Bi’r al-’Abd Attack**

I have been informed that one of the criticisms of this book is that it discusses, in a way that implies casting doubt about the claim that the said individual was the target of an assassination plot in the Bi’r al-’Abd attack.

I say that reference to the said attack came in the process of objecting to his statement wherein he said: “I am not concerned whether the rib of al-Zahra’ was broken or not.” His lack of concern springs out of

the fact that it was a historical incident which took place a long time ago, whereas this personal incident took place also some time back. Despite that, he exerts an effort to remind others of it every year. It is then that radio announcers and others place this “painful event” before people. I did not intend from doing so to delve into the personal aspects of this ugly massacre in which more than eighty children, women, men, the young and the old, lost their lives, nor in its details.

Again, let me emphasize that I will not be dragged into discussing anything which causes the book to deviate from its pure theological and scientific objective.

## Curses and Condemnations

One of the criticisms against this book, especially its Preface, is that it contains, as they claim, condemnations and personal assaults against somebody. I would like to say the following:

1. I find no reasonable nor any acceptable justification for this statement. The Preface treats topics with which someone dealt and which make up the book’s subject-matter: the tragedy of al-Zahra’ (sa) so that they, on one hand, may be part of it once, and so that, on the other hand, they may strengthen such evidences in the minds of ordinary people. For example, why should ordinary people be told that this individual is simply raising some questions about al-Zahra’ (sa) or that criticizing his statements about al-Zahra’ (sa) is considered “scandalizing,” or that his statements in this regard fall into the category of *Ijtihad*? Rather, he himself says, “I held discussions with *all* the scholars in Iran and elsewhere..., etc.” Is not this statement made for the sake of creating a condition of submission and admiration among ordinary people so that his statement may be regarded by them as a fact taken for granted?

Perhaps one who has not been following up what someone airs from the radio or writes about the book’s subject-matter and about other serious issues recently discussed may be excused in imagining that there is some “cruelty” in such a Preface. But if one follows up, listens, reads, gets to know and witness, it is difficult to find an excuse for him for claiming that there is something in the book’s Preface that is strange to its subject-matters. He will be surprised and resentful when he scrutinizes the statements made by this individual with regard to the subject of al-Zahra’ (sa) in particular, not to mention other sensitive topics.

2. Asides from all of this, can anyone by himself produce for us an evidence for what may be termed as curses or condemnations, or even a lot less than that?!

3. I do not know what the position of these people will be with regard to one who constantly demonstrates himself as one who does not wish to respond to anyone out of his clemency and feeling above delving into such issues, being busy with what is more important and useful! Then he goes on to label others as well as all scholars, including top religious authorities, with labels the most mild of which is: intellectual inferiority, psychological complex, motivated by instinct, unstable... Then he describes on the air some scholars, who do not endorse his statements, as having no religion, in addition to very

serious accusations which he has been repeating and circulating in every direction! We prefer not to “educate” anyone with these labels, for we think that people are above learning them, let alone using them.

As regarding written responses which he circulates and propagates using all his methods and means, despite the decorative speech that they contain in addition to misleading, falsifying and condemning, these have become clearer than midday sun. We made a reference to them in this Introduction at the appropriate place.

## Why a Reply Method?

Someone tries to stir another question which he considers to be worthy of respect and regard. Here it is: Is it not better to stay away from a response method which carries possibilities of accusing someone of being wrong or ignorant and, in fact, is among the forms of challenge to the speaker who is supposed to be immune to anything like that?! Is it not better to write this book in a different way, i.e. by discussing a topic without referring to what this person or that says?!

I say:

1. I do not know if a subjective and scholarly criticism carries the attribute of the so-called “challenge”! Had this been accurate, people would have been better closing the door before any scholarly discussion with any particular person! Would it have been better that no discussion be held between two individuals in any scholarly ideological or vital issue?!

2. The question or, rather, the objection thereto, should be better directed to the same individual who faces criticism or rebuttal of his views or actually the beliefs of an entire sect. Rather, he employs many derogatory statements against it and against its scholars, accusing them of all cruel accusations, using very strong and stinging words the mildest of which are: unawareness, falling under the influence of a backward environment, stagnation, close-mindedness, living in the past, not being modernized..., etc.

3. I find it quite odd that someone should discuss this subject employing such a method. I have discussed it in a way whereby I avoid mentioning anyone’s name, trying not to embarrass anyone who finds himself in a position where he does not like to be.

If there is a situation for which someone himself contributed or which he prolonged, since he insists on following up the stirring of the elements of excitement, we do not know its secret, nor do we know its objectives, so much so that it has become quite clear to many people who the owner of such statements is. If the case is as such, we wonder: What is our fault?!

But it is quite clear that when we prefer to avoid naming names, some people did not like it, considering it charging anonymous people, disseminating ignorance and insults. They, therefore, stirred environments whereby they undertook to publicize and announce names when they did not like allusions

or indirect references. As a comment on their action, we can do nothing but feel sorry, hoping that Allah will grant us success in knowing the “wisdom” in what they have done.

4. We, on one hand, never heard nor saw anyone who introduces himself as advocating debates and openness to others yet, at the same time, he subdues his debaters from within, so there is neither openness nor a debate! Then he refuses to openly debate with those whom he cannot oppress. On the other hand, we find him calling for putting forth issues before the public with honesty and clarity because scholarship and ideology are not the monopoly of one party rather than another.

We find them, instead, stirring the appetite of many to debate, saying, “We consider criticism the best present given to us.” In contrast, we find them facing this book, which is based on the plain scientific truth, with the worst attitude of anger with its contents and with its author.

Then we find them practicing a policy of besieging the book, exerting a great deal of effort to prohibit people, in one way or another, from circulating it or even selling or buying it, so much so that its fate surpassed the misleading books whose circulation and reviewing someone permitted lately! Perhaps the least bearable are their attempts to stir people emotionally by considering the book as being an attack against so-and-so, or that it aims at the downfall of this person or that, let alone their attempt to distort its contents, their unfairness and scandals which may never come to an end.

5. The purpose of the book is to establish a scholarly and subjective discussion of certain statements which someone collected in order to correct the attitude of those who may be influenced by what is said to them and act on it.

Had the research which is stripped from a direct reference been sufficient, scores of books which discuss these subjects, backing them up with numerous proofs, would have likewise been sufficient, and there would have been no need to write this book at all.

There are many authoritative books which, though fraught with irrefutable proofs, can not stop these people from being influenced by this person in an issue of consensus among the followers of Ahl al-Bayt (as) and is backed by statements of the Infallible Ones (as) cited consecutively by historians and traditionists of various inclinations and belonging to different sects.

## **Perhaps Speaker’s Objective is not the Impression he Gave**

One of the objections which I have faced is this one: Perhaps the objective of the speaker is not what you yourself have understood; so, in order to be certain, the speaker has to be questioned in person.

My response is:

1. This individual speaks before the general public, to people at large. What we understood is what other people understood from what his statements apparently indicate, and we did not attribute to him

anything other than what his statements carried of meanings which he used expressive of his objective according to all people who speak and who comprehend the language and according to the rules of discourse and methods of getting a message across.

2. If one who spent decades studying and researching cannot understand the purpose of these few, who then can address him about his own speeches so he would understand them?! We wonder what ordinary people who attended his meetings understood, having heard him directly or on the radio or through other means! There are among them men and women, old and young, youths, those who are educated and those who are not, the labourers and the farmers.

3. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that there is an error in understanding by this individual of some of those matters, how much can we imagine its size and amount besides scores of matters which have been understood just as people understand them once they are addressed thereby in a sound and straightforward way?! What could we do regarding the consensus views of major scholars and authorities of the faith as well as many educated people, including a sect that does not follow ours or our school of thought, so much so that someone started arguing against the followers of this sect?!

Let the person who objects lead us to those matters which need clarifications and corrections so that we may know how and why we misunderstood them! Then let us look into what is put forth and what is supposed to be a clarification/editing: can it be truly described as such? Is it valid at all?!

## **Those Who Fish in Muddy Waters**

What we still keep hearing from more than one direction is that this book has made it possible for sects scattered here and there to fish in muddy waters, as they describe, and move in the direction of achieving other objectives unrelated to the objectives of this book. I would like to say the following:

Perhaps discussing inflammatory topics, when undertaken by one side, that is, that of the said individual, there should be no problem at all even if doing so leads to a shake-up in doctrinal pillars; rather, the field would remain as clear as the roaster's eyes. But if someone else makes a stand to defend the truth and to object to someone's statements with the goal to protect people from being dragged after someone's statements, receiving them with good intentions and with an open mind, without any discussion thereof, this would be a major crime because it may represent an obstacle in the path of the project undertaken by someone for the past forty or fifty years. Is there a crime greater than attracting people's attention to what harms lie in ambush for them?! Is that not considered shaking the foundations of Islam as a whole, as they describe it?!

Having said all what I have said, I would like to add the following:

1. We wish such a statement were conveyed to the individual who caused an uproar about these issues in the first place. He has insisted on circulating them and fixing them among the public on various

occasions and for an extended period of time. I and my book became the scapegoat of his insistence. Many of its words were taken out of context. It was carefully characterized. Employing sizeable media potential and means that are “impressive and effective,” quite often we were warned, but we did not pay attention to the warnings, nor did we care the least about them, because we found our Islamic obligation mandating on us to treat what can be treated. If Allah is pleased, such is our objective.

2. There has been a great deal of exaggeration and fuss about those whom he labels as “fishing in muddy waters,” especially despite what we have stated above.

3. It is quite clear that putting an ideology before the public, so that it may become part of their creed or general knowledge, so that it may, in one way or another, become part and parcel of their everyday life, it requires taking the initiative to put forth an opposite view that exposes where it went wrong within the same sphere and applying the same method wherein the first ideology was discussed. It is not appropriate to wait for years because making a stand at that time against an ideology which has been fixed in people’s minds and hearts, becoming part of their creed, concepts, and everyday life, will be much, much more difficult then.

4. Whether the right idea is put forth today or tomorrow, or after scores of years, there will be those who benefit there from in any time or clime. We think that their presence does not constitute any hindrance to taking the initiative to correct or to explain; otherwise, were we to uphold such a stand to such an extent, we would never be able to respond to any idea, nor face any plan, especially if it is against many terms some of which are very serious and sensitive, something which requires speed in taking the initiative to such correcting.

## **Now is Not the Time for Such Issues**

Having said the above, it becomes clear how to answer the statements of some of those whose echos we still hear. This echo is: “Now is not the time to put forth such issues to discuss, for there are other more important issues, and there are more complex and greater ideological, behavioural and doctrinal problems, in addition to the presence of our brothers who follow other religions and who may be disturbed by particular issues. Most importantly, Israel is there, and so are the plots of international arrogance that jeopardize our lives and very existence.”

I would like to state the following:

1. Such a statement should be directed to the person who puts forth such issues for discussion in the first place. The status quo has been in existence before and after raising these issues; so, why was it opportune to bring them about but not to respond to them?!

2. If nobody responds to these statements now, when can one respond so that the response is effective?!

3. When and in what period of time did the Muslims *not* have great and serious problems? When will they *ever* get out of these problems and their likes except at the time when the Awaited Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) comes out?! Since the Israeli enemy and international arrogance are both lying in ambush against us, should we at all allow or tempt anyone to assault our religious affairs or the matters relevant to our conviction, so that he may undermine them or alter their terminology by granting him asylum, by keeping silent rather than responding to him, and by sheltering him?! Will there be a day when there will be nobody who feels upset once our issues are put forth for discussion?! When will others agree that we discuss matters which indict or endorse the violations committed by those who do not respect them?! Then *who* will determine the day when we have *no* enemy plotting against us so that we may be able to correct what is wrong?!

4. We have repeatedly wondered: Why not examine one who carries out his responsibilities, tries to bring matters to their right course and safeguard the general attitude against falling in error in their beliefs and conviction and who wishes to discuss statements which he sees as touching on very sensitive issues in the theological field, in conviction, and in education? Why should he be looked on as the one who thus stirs a problem or wishes to cause a shake-up in the field rather than one who insists on facing the reality<sup>38</sup> and corrects the “wrong and inherited” beliefs, as he terms them<sup>39</sup>, or even demonstrates knowledge rather than innovations when he says that “Some beliefs of the sect of Ahl al-Bayt are those innovations” which his knowledge contradicts?!

If we suppose that all this may cause a problem, why is he *not* himself questioned for stirring them in the first place, insisting on upholding them and “educating” the public in their regard?!

5. We have always been inviting this same individual to participate in a serious and subjective scholarly debate which obligates everyone, provided it will be in a clear and written language. Such language should not permit anyone to hide behind expressions such as “I did not mean...” or, “They misunderstood me” or, “They told lies about me” or, “I never said that” or, “perhaps” or, “maybe,” up to the end of such tools of circulation and denial in the face of clear statements and their objectives which a scholar as well as an ordinary individual comprehends.

We have always taken pain to use useful and productive means of debate, avoiding what is negative in the field of open discussions. A testimony to this fact is the number of our dissertations. Many of those who carried our messages to him testify to the same. They all returned empty handed.

We would like here to take advantage of the opportunity to call on all sincere people who can adopt such a debate, to carry it out within the frameworks which we have outlined. They may, by so doing, provide a great service to the creed that will grant them a special status and pride on the Day of Judgment.

## **A Bad Method; There is no Objection to Using it!**

What is put forth for discussion, with the goal of diverting attention from a scholarly response to what

someone articulates, is his statement saying: “The matter does not exceed being merely stirring questions of methodology and scholarship about the injustice meted to al-Zahra’ (sa) in addition to other subjects relevant to the creed, to history, to the Qur’an, etc.”

We have pointed out that such is not acceptable from a scholar who is supposed to answer people’s questions, especially the commoners among them. We also said that if one stirs questions only, why does he *not* support them with proofs which cannot be refuted, hiding behind the front of stirring questions?

We do not know whether this person is serious or even realistic about casting his questions. Or does he consider us among the people of misguidance, those who are his opponents in as far as the creed is concerned, so he grants himself a license to use a method which he himself has described as “bad and corrupt,” one which he himself uses against his enemies and “misguided” people?! Does he wish to use the same method with us, as if we were among those enemies who, according to him, are “straying from the right course”?!

If the answer is the first, then we really have a catastrophe at hand. But if it is the second, then the catastrophe is even greater, more bitter and more intricate.

So let us listen to him as he discusses the story of [prophet] Salih and [the people of] Thamud:

“The attempt of the arrogant ones to stir the doubt of the underprivileged with regard to the Message, through putting forth a naive question, has the appearance of seeking the truth, but it is inwardly an attempt to promote misguidance in order to dupe them into thinking that they have to reconsider their convictions on the basis that the issue includes giving and taking and does not go beyond the level of clarity so that they may discover that it does not represent the sure truth. But the underprivileged stood strongly to emphasize their belief in a method that made those folks discover their own identity of disbelief, stubbornness and violent resistance.”

Then, having described this method as “bad and corrupt,” he goes on to say,

“It is one of the methods of disbelief and misguidance when they talk to us in a friendly and flattering way as if they say: Are you serious or not when you announce your belief in what you believe or in the issues which you bring forth for discussion? Then they add saying: We do not believe like that because you, in our view, are in a level of awareness and knowledge which places you in a scholarly position which refuses to accept it; so, how can you believe in it?! It is a corrupt method which tries to turn the issue of belief and creed into one that insults man’s dignity due to its mistreatment of his intellectual capabilities.”

Then he goes on to say,

“We do *not* object to the employment of such a method with many of those misguided ones *from among*

those who disagree with our creed because it agrees with the reality of the matters if we implement it.”[40](#)

## Exiting the Sect’s Fiqhi Circle

They also objected to us by saying that we have accused someone of having exited the sect’s circle when we said that the mass of so many odd verdicts causes one to get out of the *fiqhi* (juristic) circle of the sect to which he belongs. The truth of the matter is that contradicting what is well known, no matter how much, does not obligate such exiting. We would like to add by saying the following:

1. Even a beginner student knows the difference between odd verdicts and verdicts which contradict what is well known, regardless of the individuals’ conditions, and regardless of the direct verdict against them, be it negative or positive.
2. What I have indicated is merely a precaution resulting from so many such odd verdicts. I did not discuss the criterion of *fiqh*, about capacity, depth and affiliation, and that it is the method followed by the *faqih* according to his restrictions and the onsets of his deduction, then according to the general stamp which distinguishes his verdicts. All this does not suffice this scholar with regard to these verdicts or to his agreement with others with regard to their verdicts. We may find a *fiqhi* sect among non–Imamite Shi’as generally agreeing with a sundry and odd verdicts, or sometimes they are not odd, adhered to by a Shi’a *faqih* here and another there despite the obvious difference in the methodology, onsets and similar characteristics. Such characteristics do not place them in a [separate] sect. So there is no benefit whatever gained by someone who keeps saying that so–and–so agrees with him or with this verdict of his or with that.

## Is This the Jawahiri Approach?

As regarding the creative approach, although we find someone claiming that he follows the Jawahiri approach of deduction[41](#), yet we also find him upholding, in his way of deduction, a method which disagrees with the Jawahiri approach. I would like to provide the reader with some examples:

1. He considers the conclusions and the life–styles of rational people as providing injunctions for a Muslim *even* if they may touch on an aspect of the Sunnah which is comprised of the statements, traditions and decisions of the Infallible one[42](#).
2. He considers what has come down to us from the *fiqh* legacy, with the exception of what is fundamentally true, a few issues, the product of the *faqih*s; so, it is *all* human ideology, *not* a divine one[43](#).
3. He considers the Qur’an as the one that expands on or restricts *hadith*. As for *hadith*, it cannot restrict the Qur’anic concept[44](#).
4. Then he considers what is general and what is particular as contradictory of one another if they are

separated by a lengthy span of time<sup>45</sup>, and that they are to be appended for the same reason to what is absolute and restricted.

5. The he says, “Reason uncovers injunctions’ implications.”<sup>46</sup>

6. He also is inspired by the Qur’anic meaning just as the Imams used to be inspired!<sup>47</sup>

7. He has *no* objection to act on *qiyas* (relative comparison) and other perceptive methods in any source for which there is no legislative rule in the Book or in the *hadith* although the Imams have banned *qiyas*. The Imams’ rejection of it is based on its closure of the wide gate of knowledge. It expands to include even the smallest gap though it may be in a legislative rule in a very specific reference.

8. He considers as reliable the *hadith* which the scholars have agreed that it is weak, claiming there is no need to lie in its regard.

9. For the same reason, according to him, it is permissible to act on the traditions narrated by non-Shi’as<sup>48</sup>.

10. Language, according to him, develops; so, we have to understand the Qur’an and the *hadith* based on the new meaning which was not circulated before, nor was the expression led to it during the time when the text was revealed<sup>49</sup>.

11. According to him, some legislative rules have to be reconsidered because they lead to paralysis and stagnation<sup>50</sup>.

12. He considers the principle of agreed on interests on which the Sunnis rely to be the same principle of public crowding in the School of Ahl al-Bayt (as) although the difference between them is quite vast<sup>51</sup>.

13. Obligatory precaution regarding the prohibition of something, according to him, is considered an inclination towards permissibility. So he considers anyone who advocates obligatory precaution by not shaving the beard, for example, to be among those who incline to say that it is alright to shave it, although the meaning of “precaution” is that the *faqah* does not have an evidence for prohibition. It is as though the *faqah* says, “I cannot issue a verdict in this regard; so, go to someone else, or take precaution, so that you may avoid being penalized.”

## Placing the Hands on One Another, Testimony for the Wilayat

As an example for the contradictions in his *fiqh* methodology, I would like to mention the following:

He considers the saying of: “I testify that Ali is the *Wali* of Allah” while reciting the *Iqama* as causing a great deal of *harm*; he says the following in its regard: “I find no benefit for the *Shari’a* to incorporate a new element in the obligatory prayer, in the introduction thereto, or in its rituals, because this may lead to many *harms*.”<sup>52</sup> We do not know why he does not remove it from the *athan* as well, for it is one of the

introductions to the prayers as his statement indicates.

Counting what invalidates the prayers, he then continues to say, “To deliberately say آمين ‘ameen’ is precautionary, though it may be valid especially if the intention behind saying it is to supplicate.”[53](#)

Then he considers putting the right hand on the left, or *vice versa*, during the prayers to be nullification as a precaution, especially if it is meant to be part of the prayers, although a stronger consideration is that it does *not* invalidate it when it is not meant to be part of it and in the absence of a *Shari’a* rule in this regard, especially if it is meant to be submission to Allah.”[54](#)

He, then, has no evidence for the nullification of prayers when the hands are placed as described above, nor by articulating “ameen” on purpose, for the whole issue to him is only a precaution, and precaution, according to him, implies an inclination to authorization. Nay! He has no objection to the pronouncement of “ameen” *even* if it is *not* meant to be a supplication due to the presence, in his estimation, of validity, and so is the case with putting the hands during it as described above with the intention of its not being part of the prayers.

What is noteworthy here is that he did not record any reservation in this regard. He does not consider it as leading to many harms. He is reserved about the third statement in the *Shahada* (Declaration of Faith), considering it as falling in the same category, although putting the right hand on the left, or *vice versa*, and the pronouncement of “ameen” are both, like the above, elements introduced into an obligation, namely the daily prayers, not in something highly commendable and optional. This element has entered into the prayers itself, not in something regarded as a part thereof, although such a possibility is very weak.

Why should there be such a reservation regarding the third statement of the *shahada*?! Is it because of mere possibility? Is he not himself waging a fierce battle against all the scholars who advocate the necessity of precaution even when it comes to obligatory injunctions?![55](#)

Perhaps the allusion we have indicated spares the reader any details with regard to his stand regarding two issues: one is linked to Ali (as) and the other to putting the right hand on the left, or *vice versa*. It is linked to a party that aims at firming everything except the line and the methodology of Ali (as)!

We wish, having seen how he advocates, that if testimony for the Commander of the Faithful (as) in both the *athan* and the *iqama* causes a lot of harm, he would not seek violent means to achieve his objective if he acts on the principle whereby he reached the conclusion that smoking is prohibitive and harmful, deriving it from this verse of the Almighty:

**“... And their sin is greater than their benefit” (Qur’an, 2:219).**

He found it palatable to interpret “sin” as meaning “harm” without any linguistic evidence... He did not like to interpret “benefit” as meaning “reward” although neither is preferred over the other.

Having said so, we do not wish to remind this individual of his pledges to make all his verdicts earning the endorsement of the sect's scholars, yet we have found no endorsement whatsoever for his precautionary verdict wherein he prefers leaving out testimony for Ali (as) in both *iqama* and *athan*, neither from early scholars nor from the latest, having widely researched the views of more than a hundred scholars, may Allah be pleased with them all. Let him name one single scholar who advocates that it is a precaution to prefer leaving out the testimony for the *wali* (as) in both the *iqama* and the *athan* without the intention of making it part thereof.

## [Permissibility of Looking at Nudity](#)

Is this not similar to his advocating the permissibility of a man looking at the nudity of another man, and a woman looking at the nudity of another woman, based on "rational" commendable acts and on *qiyas*?! Rather, he even perfectly clearly makes it permissible to look at the nudity of those who participate in nudist clubs<sup>56</sup> although such a prohibition is quite obvious according to the beliefs of our sect. Can he name one single scholar who agrees with this verdict of his?! Maybe there should be no embarrassment after this day in going to such clubs, according to his views, in order to benefit scientifically from them!

May Allah protect us against slipping away from the Right Path in our way of thinking, in what we say or do.

## [About the Social Activity of al-Zahra' \(sa\)](#)

One of the issues raised is their claim that I have discussed the social activity of al-Zahra' (sa) as I have discussed someone's statement wherein he says that he does not "... find in history what refers to *any* social activity of al-Zahra' (sa) in the Islamic society except in one or two narratives."

I discussed the fact that she did not establish philanthropic foundations, nor did she participate in civil organizations or the like. So, he considered such statements derogatory to his activities in this field, as if he wants to find an evidence demonstrating that this book assaulted personal characteristics unrelated to the scholarly aspect on which the book is based. They also apologized for this person saying that he simply was criticizing and indicting the oppressive history. Let me say the following:

FIRST: Someone's care about philanthropic or civil establishments is not considered as indicting him/her, nor is it a point of weakness in his/her practical life so it could be assaulted.

SECOND: Making a stand to oppose issues of this sort, paying them such an attention, is not an issue relevant to this party or that. Rather, this is considered a framework undertaken by those who deal with social issues. We never objected to such sort of activity, nor do we have any problems in this direction.

THIRD: Anyone who reads, with awareness and fairness, what we wrote and understands our objective and who still needs some explanation, we would like to say to him: We discussed the possibilities within

the cycle of what social life demanded during that generation.

FOURTH: We believe that history has been unfair to al-Zahra' (sa) just as it has been to many righteous and sincere people and those who laboured for the sake of Allah. But to deny the existence of any except one or two such traditions needs a complete supervision and a perfect tracing of historical texts in various books and biographies to prove it. We have cited in this book samples proving that anyone who makes a statement like this has not conducted a thorough research so that he would be accurate in such a way.

FIFTH: This same person who makes such a statement gives credit to this Lady, al-Zahra' (sa), in various and numerous lectures of his which fall in the same category, as stated by some of those who took to defending him; so, what is the meaning of such minute restriction of the subject to one or two narratives?! We have found such matters cited in a lot more than that as is quite obvious.

## Categorizing or Sorting Texts

One of this individual's criticisms against this book is that it took pains to stack many texts and references. We say just as what the Commander of the Faithful (sa) said in one of his letters to Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan: "By Allah! You intended to speak ill [of me] but you instead complimented [me], and you wanted to expose but you yourself became exposed!"<sup>57</sup>

For what is meant from stacking texts is to show the meaning on which they all agree, in a scholarly way, through showing the existence of consecutive reporting which spares the researcher the need to minutely research the evidences. A minute research is required when an issue is not certain, is unclear and its non-existence through such consecutive reporting puts an end to doubts.

This is so when each text in many adds a degree of possibility, then such possibilities keep increasing whenever a new text is added to its predecessors till we reach a degree of conviction, then to a strong conviction, then to a stronger one, and so on till such possibilities become piled up to the extent the opposite possibility drops and disappears and reason diverts itself from taking it into consideration.

This happens with consecutive reporting and with certainty regarding the accuracy of the meaning to be proven. This matter is assisted by various elements and circumstances. For example: whenever references are reliable and at hand since the time when the texts came out, or since the incident, the chances of confirming the meaning will be greater, while the need for such "stacking" will be less.

This is assisted by the issue being one of those that do not agree with the policies of the rulers or with historians' own personal likes and dislikes. Letting many texts of such a characteristic pass through increases the chances of strengthening such possibilities. Stacking doubts about them becomes faster and more plentiful especially when such an abundance is not contrasted by what contradicts it by those who assist the rulers and by those who are concerned about clearing the name of the party that set off

the incident.

If the traditions differ among themselves with regard to minor details, or when some of them include particular details which the other party neglected or overlooked, this does not harm the stacking of doubts about the origin of the incident, since it is intended to be known and to be confirmed by all these narrations.

Perhaps one who criticizes us for stating the texts without verifying their sources has not paid attention to this issue because the one who stands to deny has no say in such issues.

Let me add that mentioning the references which were written across consecutive centuries does not necessarily mean that the successor copied his predecessor whose book is available with us, for quite often he may have copied it from another contemporary or previous reference. Moreover, a scholar's attention in recording this issue and discussing it in numerous volumes proves that he does not take that incident lightly, nor does he look on it casually.

In our view, assaulting al-Zahra' (sa), her being verbally abused, her house being broken into by force and by a number of people, and the arresting of Ali (as) in order to force him to swear the oath of allegiance was narrated from [predicted by] the Prophet S and from most Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (as) as well as from al-Zahra' (sa) herself in many narratives.

This incident has also been reported, briefly or in detail, by many historians from various degrees and inclinations. Poets have composed poetry about it. Speakers have cited it. Scholars, despite their various inclinations and scholarly levels, have confirmed it. All this pours into one venue: There is information regarding its being reported by people who cannot all agree on one and the same meaning due to the differences among their sects, due to their various likes and dislikes as well as specializations across many centuries.

There is no room to accept someone's claim that nothing wrong happened to al-Zahra' (sa) nor to her house, nor inside it, except some people threatening her with burning... while there is also doubt about the seriousness of such a threat since the assailants' hearts were "full of love" for al-Zahra' (sa) and since her social status prohibited them from doing any such thing. This is so except when those who oppose reject stacked up texts and deny even their consecutive reporting, evidences and outcomes, contrarily to what they publicly declare!

To sum up, one who is not certain, or when there are no proofs supporting an issue, needs to research the evidences in a clear and consecutive manner. Had history been confined to what has only an authoritative support, according to the terminology used by scholars of *hadith*, then no historical fact can ever be proven except what strays from the common grounds and is quite rare.

Had the researcher been non-Muslim, one who is not concerned about investigating the truthfulness of the narrators as Muslims do, he cannot prove any historical fact at all, even what is mostly out of the

ordinary and rare, unless he relies on the method sought and referred to by the happy martyr, Ayatollah Sayyid [Muhammed Baqir] al-Sadr, may Allah have mercy on his soul, when he discussed establishing firm grounds for consecutive reports based on possibilities:

Every news heard where there is a possibility of agreeing or disagreeing with it, and when the disagreement is based on the possibility of an error from the side of the reporter or the possibility of deliberate lying in order to serve a specific interest of his that spurs him to hide the truth, if the news comes from many sources..., the possibility of its disagreement with the truth diminishes.

This is so because the possibility of an error, or in deliberate lying from the side of each and every reporter of it in an artificial manner, if it is present to a certain extent, then the possibility of error, or of deliberate lying by the reporters of one and the same incident, is at a lesser degree.

This is so because the degree of possibility results by multiplying the value of the possibility of lying, by one reporter, by the value of the possibility of another reporter. Whenever we multiply the value of the possibility by the value of another possibility, the possibility decreases because the value of the possibility always represents a fraction defined from the true figure. If we represent the truth by the figure 1, the possibility will be  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{1}{3}$  or something like that. And whenever we multiply a fraction by another fraction, the outcome will be a smaller fraction as is quite obvious.

When a large number of reporters are present, we have to repeat the multiplication by the number of narratives reported by those reporters so that we may reach the value of the possibility of lies in all of them. This possibility becomes very small, and it keeps decreasing as the number of the reporters keeps increasing, and so on till it becomes scientifically nil due to its diminution and to the fact that the human mind cannot retain very minute possibilities. The number of narrations which remove such a possibility scientifically, or defacto consecutive reporting, as well as the reports will all then be labelled as consecutively reported.

There is no specific value for the number reached in the latter case because this is affected to a great degree, in addition to the number of narrators, by the quality of such narrators and the extent of their reliability, mastership and other factors which make up the possibility. This shows that considering a report as being consecutively reported depends on the calculation of possibilities.

Consecutive reporting may sometimes be oral, in other times in general meaning, or as a whole. If the common axis for all reports is a specific wording, it will belong to the first type. If it is a specific ideology, it belongs to the second. But if it is persistent and derivative, it belongs to the third.

As long as the axis is more precisely defined, the result of the consecutive reporting required for confirmation, according to the calculation of possibilities, will come out faster. In such a case, the possibilities of finding common interest grounds among all the reporters to such a degree of precision, despite the differences in their conditions and circumstances, are further than the logic of the calculation of possibilities.

The characteristics of the reporters, their quantity and quality, also impact the evaluation of any possibility. Also bearing an impact is the characteristic of those who quote him, i.e. who tell the gist of the reports, and these are of two types: general and relative.

What is meant by the general characteristics is the following: Every specific meaning constitutes, in the calculation of a possibility, an aiding element leading to the report being true or untrue regardless of the type of person who reports it. For example: the oddity of the issue told. It is an element by itself aiding to prove the lie, so it mandates taking the time to reach conviction through consecutive reporting. Contrary to this is when the issue is normal, is expected and is in agreement with all other known issues. This is an element that aids the truth; conviction will then take place much faster.

What is meant by the relative characteristic is: every specific meaning constituting, according to the calculation of possibility, an aiding element leading to the truthfulness of the report or to its being a lie once the quality of the person who brings it about is carefully examined.

For example, if a non-Shi'a narrates anything endorsing the Imamate of Ahl al-Bayt, peace with them, the narrative itself will bring into focus the characteristic of the narrator as an element aiding to confirm his being truthful according to the calculation of possibility because a personal interest will be considered as a remote possibility that he will be lying. Both specific and general characteristics may be combined to prove the authenticity of the report, as is the case with the example above, if we suppose the report came out during the reign of Banu Umayyah or their likes who were always trying to obstruct such reports through coercion or enticement.

A specific idea, regardless of the sect to which its narrator belongs, is a strong evidence leading to the truth. The specificity of the content, while taking into consideration the sect to which the narrator belongs, is the strongest testimony to the same.[58](#)

## **Specialization and Sulaym's Book**

One of the rumours circulated against the book is that one of the references on which it relies is the book titled *Al-Ikhtisas* (specialization) and also the book written by Sulaym ibn Qays. Those who raise such issues do not necessarily find these books reliable despite the fact that most narratives relevant to the issue of al-Zahra' (sa) are referred to the second [book]. We would like to say the following:

1. The references which have recorded the events from which al-Zahra' (sa) suffered are not confined to these books, nor do they end there either. The least review of this book and its sources, which are narrated by Sunnis and Shi'as, guarantees to prove the error of such a claim. Anyone who discerns the narratives which support each other and are consecutively reported have been narrated by followers of various sects. What is quoted from Sulaym's book are only a few traditions which may not exceed the number of the fingers on one single hand. The differences among the narratives within the same report and among the sources on which they rely is a true witness testifying to the transmission being from

more than one book, i.e. Sulaym's book about which some people are sensitive.

2. With regard to the book titled *Al-Ikhtisas*, we would like to say that the same individual has relied on this same book, attributing it to Shaikh al-Mufid<sup>59</sup>. I have discussed in this book the doubts raised about it, and it has become obvious that they all are unworthy of anyone's attention.

3. The authenticity of Sulaym ibn Qays's book and the acceptance of its narratives do not hinge on the venue leading to him, openly and directly. Suffices to accept its narratives the fact that scholars have already accepted them and are pleased with them. They quote them and clearly rely on them, paying no heed to what is said about the men leading to his venue. This is a strong testimony to the fact that this book is above being criticized. It is firmly and strongly established so long as the proofs for its authenticity are to the extent that no noteworthy doubt can ever scratch its accuracy.

When someone discusses one of its narratives, it is the same as one discusses one of the narratives in al-Kafi's work, or in the *Tahthib*, as stated by Imam al-Khoei, may Allah have mercy on his soul, in *Mu'jam Rijal al-Hadith*. Rather, the criterion, according to the same individual whom and whose statements I discuss in this book, is the authenticated transmission, not the report of authenticity; so, he needs no authenticity of the venue. The authenticity of the context and its acceptance suffice. The rational commendable things which he has mentioned as justifying doubt in the text do not justify the end which he tries to reach as we have clarified and to which Imam al-Khoei referred in *Mu'jam Rijal al-Hadith*.

The outcome is this: I have stated that Sulaym's book has been received by the nation with acceptance and appreciation just as it received other reliable Imamite books even when some scholars have discussed some of its narratives. Such is meant by Grand Ayatollah Sayyid [Abul-Qasim] al-Khoei, may Allah have mercy on his soul, when he defended the contents of the book once then decided that the venue, according to him, was weak. What he stated came out to accept the evidence of the report of authenticity rather than the authenticated one.

By my life, one who decides that it is alright to accept Sunni narratives without any reservation or minute investigation of their references<sup>60</sup>, once he trusts the accuracy of their contents and finds no reason for any lies therein, has no right to discuss Sulaym's book which is one of the most important books that uphold the right sect without straying from its path.

How could he conclude that the *fiqh* matters narrated in Sunni books can be authenticated in the pretext there is no need for lies therein, without being convinced of the authenticity of what Sunni books regard persons whose indictment about anything at all they do not like, while there is no justification for telling lies therein as well, but they are motivated not to publicly declare such matters though they themselves mention them?!<sup>61</sup>

## He set out without a Legislative Method

Asides from all of this, the most amusing of the criticism we have heard about this book is what someone mentioned when he was asked about it. Said he, “I do not have any comment about the book, and I do not respond to many things which come out in a way contrary to the Shari’a and are irresponsible.”

It is unclear to me what is meant by this answer. Does he mean by “a way contrary to the Shari’a” that the writer held the pen with his left hand instead of the right one?! Or did he use stolen ink, or stolen pen or wrote on stolen paper?! Or did I start from the bottom of the page instead of from its top?!

Why is it not said that the condemnations and false accusations, which are directed at others with or without any occasion, also come out in a way that is contrary to the Shari’a?! Has what he said, or the lies and insinuations written as responses to the book titled *Tragedy of al-Zahra’ (sa): Doubts and Responses*, been falsifying the truth, betraying and confusing the nation, whereas all his books and articles have contained condemnations and insinuations? If so, then such books are circulated free of charge, stirring a huge media blitz to welcome him! Is all of this done in a way accepted by the Shari’a?! We do not wish to know, while the aware person and the intelligent already knows.

## Authentication of Texts

We have been reproached by some of our brethren for not verifying some statements by attributing them to their sources, or by verifying the dates when they were issued or aired since doing so complements the book and instills comfort and ease in the reader’s heart regarding the authenticity of such attributions. I would like to say that I found no reason for doing so due to the following:

FIRST: We did not want to concentrate on personalities so that it would not be considered as defaming anyone.

SECOND: We wished not to take part in attributing this matter to this person or that, more than it actually is, in order to safeguard him from being exposed to what we do not wish him to be exposed, and to safeguard the reputation of some good people against falling into doubt or error.

THIRD: What I have stated in my book has become quite famous and well known, so it needs no attributing to its sources or references. We do not think that this individual can deny any of his own statements to which we referred. He, more than anyone else, knows what and how big statements he wrote, recorded, aired and circulated among people throughout the Islamic world and in the areas where there are Muslims. What is tragic yet ludicrous is that we find some people who wish to support such statements and who demand that we should provide them, in very few places, with the references from which we quoted him. Had they referred to what their fellow had written, or to his published or circulated statements, they would have spared us such an effort.

## No Need for any Change

Maybe some people suggest the following: Since the Introduction to the book contains some “severity,” could it be toned down a little bit in forthcoming editions? Let me say that the book’s Introduction is only a response to allegations which someone made as he tried to convince people to accept his viewpoints relevant to al-Zahra’ (sa).

Such a response has been scholarly, clear, and frank. I found no reason to mislead the kind reader especially since the statements (discussed throughout the book) have already been published and circulated by the news media. Nor do I find in this Introduction anything that condemns anyone except when the scholarly truth represents a shock to him, so he considers announcing it or responding to it as condemning or cursing.

Why was it alright for this same person to object to all the nation’s scholars since the first day of the Islamic history till our time, assaulting them and undermining them? Then it was alright for him to continue his accusations against the sincere scholars, labeling them as backward, lacking in understanding, suffering from psychological complexes, accusing them of being agents of intelligence agencies or falling under their influence, of having no creed..., up to the end of the list of terms of which his dictionary is brimful.

Why is it *not* alright for others to publicly, and in response to all of that, declare the scholarly truth which dispels their doubts or whims and make them aware of where they erred against this religion in an open and clear way? Is not the same person the one who discussed these methods, describing them as being employed by the unbelievers against the Prophet S and against the believers? He says,

“We may need to learn from this situation: How can we face the accusations fueling the war of nerves directed by the enemies of Allah who work in His Path: mockery, ridicule, accusations of backwardness, of being distant from the march of civilization..., up to the end of the list of such irresponsible diction? There are those who are lackeys of the foreigners or following in the latter’s footsteps with the objective of wrecking our nerves so that we may withdraw from the line of work and forsake the call to Allah...”[62](#)

He also says,

“We have found, besides theological terms such as apostasy, atheism, heresy, words such as backwardness, treason, subjugation to foreigners, moral decay, etc. This caused us to exhaust the vocabulary of the available dictionary and seek help from foreign vocabularies, English and French, such as Nazi, Fascist, totalitarian, and the like. For this reason, I imagine the hardship lived by a Muslim in the east, who adheres to his faith, as being the same severity lived by the secular man in the east, especially what is related to the vocabulary words dealing with general terms such as advancement, backwardness, or words which deal with political issues directly. From this, we understand that this phenomenon is not purely religious in the deep religious context, though it plays a role there, but it is a

phenomenon related to the eastern emotional condition whose depth Marxism increased through the Marxist method of facing the opposite ideology or the opposing individual. When some Muslims resorted to harsh methods, they were treasuring the Marxist method in their application of Islam.”[63](#)

Having said the above, let me add saying that we do not know how these words came to make us face an embarrassing question about the wisdom in what some believers do against each other, ways implemented by the enemies of Allah against those who believe in Him. Before concluding, let me remind the kind reader of three matters:

FIRST: I expect the reader to witness anew a fierce assault against me containing many insults and accusations, one stirring antagonistic sentiments and provoking people against me. The pretext will be: my supposed “scandalizing” of so-and-so, and that my exposition is not scholarly or subjective.

SECOND: You will find them clinging to minor and secondary issues in order to confuse the sensitive and serious subjects of the book and to water down the issues.

THIRD: They will consider this legitimate defense of the truth and righteousness as stirring dissension from one side although I have not dealt with all his numerous statements in various issues relevant to creed and conviction. These are quite sensitive and weighty issues, as we have pointed out. They will not remember their prior consecutive and persistent agitations and the challenges of such sensitive and weighty issues raised by the nation’s scholars and religious authorities to whom we referred more than once. Surely the morrow is near to one who anticipates it.

May Allah safeguard us against straying from the right course in our way of thinking, speaking, in whatever we do. We plead to Allah, Glory to Him, to help us pursue goodness, guidance and success; He suffices us, and how good He is to rely on!

Ja’far Murtada al-’Amili

Rabi’ II 27, 1418 A.H./August 31, 1997 A.D.

[1.](#) Ibn Abul-Hadid, Nahjul-Balagha, the part dedicated to the Imam’s letters (edited by Muhammed `Abdoh), Vol. 3, p. 16 (published by Dar al-Ma`rifah, Beirut, Lebanon).

[2.](#) Refer to Jannat al-Ma`wa, p. 81.

[3.](#) Refer to the previous references.

[4.](#) `Abd al-Razzaq al-Muqarram, Maqatal al-Husayn (original Arabic text has been translated into English by Yasin T. al-Jibouri), p. 389, published by the Dept. of Islamic Studies, Tehran, Iran.

[5.](#) Refer to Jannat al-Ma`wa, pp. 83-84 and 78-81.

[6.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 8 (ancient edition), p. 231, quoting Irshad al-Qulub. References will be discussed in the texts’ section to follow.

[7.](#) Al-Saduq, Al-Amali, p. 118. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 28, p. 51. We will discuss the references in the texts’ section.

[8.](#) Al-Mufid, Amali, pp. 49-50.

[9.](#) Al-Musawi, Al-Muraja`at, p. 346, edited and commented on by Shaikh Husayn al Radi. The Translator of this book has also translated Al-Muraja`at which was first published in 1415 A.H./1995 A.D. in Beirut, Lebanon, by the Imam Husayn

Foundation, then it was reprinted by Ansariyan in 1380 A.H./2001 A.D. which has been reprinting it ever since due to public demand. The London, U.K., office of His Holiness Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Sistani recently published a Spanish translation of this edition. Another translation into Albanian is complete but is yet to be published. Its Translator, al-Jibouri, is planning to publish it in the U.S. very soon, Insha-Allah.

[10.](#) Refer to the Arabic text above of the poem composed by Egyptian poet Hafiz Ibrahim in reference to this incident.

[11.](#) Al-Musawi, Al-Nass wal Ijtihad, p. 79 published by Al-A' lami Foundation.

[12.](#) Refer to the footnotes of Al-Nass wal Ijtihad, p. 79, and Al-Muraja`at, p. 346

[13.](#) Ibn Abul-Hadid, Nahjul-Balagha, the part dedicated to the Imam's letters (edited by Muhammed `Abdoh), Vol. 3, p. 16 (published by Dar al-Ma`rifah, Beirut, Lebanon).

[14.](#) Refer to Jannat al-Ma`wa, p. 81.

[15.](#) Refer to the previous references.

[16.](#) \_\_\_, Dunya al-Mar'a, p. 25. \_\_\_, Al-Murshid magazine, p. 282.

[17.](#) There are many such indications. During this Summer, in a televised interview wherein Sarkis Na`oom participated, a certain individual expressed his pleasure with the statements made by Na`oom who concentrated on the subject of Persian and Arab religious authorities. He did not oppose him, nor did he express any reservations about his statements.

[18.](#) Quoted from a published communique issued by his Qum office in order to falsify what was announced during the Friday prayers and was aired by a radio station belonging to some people regarding forging his signature and invalidating it.

[19.](#) Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilali, an Arab scholar and may be the very first author in Islam outside the immediate family of the Prophet (S), was one of the companions of Imam Ali (as) and is well-known for his book titled كتاب سليم بن قيس, The Book of Sulaym ibn Qays. According to Ibn al-Nadim, this book is "the oldest surviving Shi`ite book" which is written in the first Islamic century. Sulaym is said to have been born near the place where K£fi was later built. He became an ardent supporter of Imam Ali (as) as did Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Salman al-Fairis and many others from among the Prophet's most respected sahaba ؓ. He wrote down what he learned from and experienced with Ali (as), and his writing eventually became this same book. Sulaym collected some of the sermons which Imam Ali delivered at Kufa's Grand Mosque. When al-Hajjaj ibn Yousuf al-Thaqafi became the governor of Kufi, after the martyrdom of the Imam (as), Sulaym fled to Persia with his writings in 694 A.D., staying in Nobandegan. There, he found a fifteen-year-old boy, Aban ibn Abu `Ayyash and became fond of him, so he started to educate him, and Aban eventually became a Shi`a. Sulaym entrusted all of his writings to Aban, after Aban had made a solemn oath not to talk of any of the writings during Sulaym's lifetime and that after his death he would give the book only to trustworthy supporters of Imam Ali (as).

[20.](#) This lecture was published in Qadiyya Islamiyya magazine of Qum, Vol. 1, p. 13, and it is recorded in his own voice on an audio cassette which many people already have. He had delivered this sermon/lecture at Husayniyyat al-Shahid al-Sadr in the sacred city of Qum on Sha`ban 21, 1414 A.H./February 3, 1994. It was reprinted on p. 22, Vol. 3, of Ru'a wa Mawaqif magazine and was also published on May 16, 1997 by Bayyinah newsletter, with two alterations:

1. The lecture was dated 1995 instead of its real date especially since he never went to Qum in that year anyway.
2. His statement was altered and underwent editorial additions in order to the removal of the contradiction in the stand made by the same person who delivered it. The statement was made to read as follows: "History is fraught with various ahadith (claiming) that she was beaten, and that she miscarried, and that she..., and that she... Yet these do not deny that her sanctity was violated as well as that of the Prophet's house which was assaulted, and threats were made to burn it even if Fatima was inside it." The purpose of the substitution of one word for another is quite clear. All narratives pour down in one venue which they all confirm and which we, too, want to prove in this book. His statement does not emphasize one particular issue at all. The addition to the statement came to emphasize the same. Such alteration and falsification provides us with the evidence that we cannot trust what they transmit to us. This is only one simple example. We have many more such examples.

[21.](#) Refer to Al-Murshid magazine, issues 3 and 4, pp. 23 and 210, quoting the book titled As'ila wa Rudud minal Qalb. But on pp. 299, 282 and 127, the same reference states that he was born in 1936. On p. 122 of Libdiyeh newspaper, issue dated April 19, 1992, it is stated that he was born in Najaf al-Ashraf on March 19, 1934/Shab`an 19, 1354. The same interview was published in the book titled Afaq al-Hiwar al-Islami-al-Masihi [horizons of the Islamic-Christian dialogue], p. 351; so, refer to it.

- [22.](#) \_\_\_, Tahaddi al-Mamnoo`, p. 23.
- [23.](#) Ibid.
- [24.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid magazine, issues 3 and 4, p. 56, citing p. 26 of Tahaddu al-Mamnoo`.
- [25.](#) Ibid., issues 3 & 4, p. 62, citing p. 43 of Tahaddu al-Mamnoo`.
- [26.](#) Refer to Tahaddi al-Mamnoo`, p. 19. But he also stated that he was born in 1936 A.D., and so is the indication on p. 127 of Al-Murshid, although this coincides in 1935; so, refer to p. 210, issues 3 and 4, and consult Mu`jam Rijal al-Fikr wal Adab. What is noteworthy is that many dates are given to his year of birth. He mentioned 1935, 1936 and 1934. Refer to another footnote above.
- [27.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid magazine, issues 3 and 4, p. 299, where the statement is quoted as follows: "The greatest resurgence took place after 1982, then following the great explosion at Bi`r al-`Abd in 1984 which made him the focus of all attention."
- [28.](#) \_\_\_, Tahaddi al-Mamnoo`, p. 87.
- [29.](#) Ibid., p. 88.
- [30.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid magazine, p. 128, citing the Al-Sha`ab Egyptian newspaper of August 6, 1993 and p. 344 of The Secret Wars of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.
- [31.](#) Ibid., issues 3 and 4, p. 57 and p. 28 of Tahaddi al-Mamnoo`.
- [32.](#) Ibid., issues 3 and 4, p. 20, citing the book titled As`ila wa Rudood minal Qalb.
- [33.](#) Refer to p. 480 of Hiwarat Fikr wal Siyasa wal Ijtima` where issue 8 of Al-Mawsim magazine of 1990 is quoted.
- [34.](#) Refer to the book titled Kitab al-Nikah, Vol. 1, p. 66.
- [35.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid magazine, Vols. 3 and 4, p. 68.
- [36.](#) \_\_\_, Ta`ammulat fi Mawaqif al-Imam al-Kazim (u) p. 94.
- [37.](#) \_\_\_, "Originality and Renewal," Al-Minhuj magazine, Vol. 2, p. 60
- [38.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid magazine, Nos. 3 and 4, p. 281.
- [39.](#) \_\_\_, Bayyinat newsletter of October 25, 1996.
- [40.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Hiwar fil Qur`an, pp. 252 and 253.
- [41.](#) Refer to p. 244, issues 3 and 4 of Al-Murshid, citing a lecture delivered at the Institute of Islamic Shari`a in Bi`r Hassan on January 18, 1995.
- [42.](#) Ibid.
- [43.](#) Refer to p. 480 of Hiwarat Fikr wal Siyasa wal Ijtima`.
- [44.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid, Nos. 3 & 4, pp. 267, 247.
- [45.](#) Ibid.
- [46.](#) Ibid., p. 245.
- [47.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Insan wal Hayat, p. 310.
- [48.](#) Kitab al-Nikah, Vol. 1, p. 58.
- [49.](#) Refer to pp. 19-20 of Qira`a Jadida li Fiqh al-Mar`a.
- [50.](#) Ta`ammulat fi Afaq al-Imam al-Kazim (as), p. 47.
- [51.](#) Al-Insan wal Hayat, p. 169.
- [52.](#) Al-Masa`il al-Fiqhiyya, Vol. 2, p. 123 (1996 edition).
- [53.](#) Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 92 (fifth edition).
- [54.](#) Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 91-92 (fifth edition).
- [55.](#) Refer to Al-Murshid, Vol. 3 & 4, p. 263.
- [56.](#) Refer to p. 66, Vol. 1, of Kitab al-Nikah. The basis upon which he relies does not refrain from prohibiting men from looking at women's nudity, nor women from looking at men's nudity, for he considers it one of the issues which are not relevant to obligations. His criterion is the nude person dropping the prohibition (of seeing himself/herself in the nude) from his/her own self when he/she uncovers the private parts. So, if one relinquishes on's own right to safeguard the nudity, looking at such nudity will be (according to this scholar) permissible just as it is permissible for the women who do not refrain when they are prohibited from doing something prohibitive. Refer to his statements relevant to this subject and see for yourself.
- [57.](#) Refer to Book 58, to the Section about the Imam's letters and messages of Nahjul-Balagha.

[58.](#) Refer to Durus fi `Ilm al-Usul, Vol. 1, Second Series, pp. 108–110.

[59.](#) Refer to Ta'ammulat fi Afaq al-Imam al-Kazim (as), p. 40..

[60.](#) Ibid.

[61.](#) Refer to Kitab al-Nikah, Vol. 1, p. 58.

[62.](#) \_\_\_, Risalat al-Ta'akhi, Vol. 1, quoting “Lessons from the Prophet’s Lifetime,” in a section on the birth of the Prophet (S), pp. 22–23.

[63.](#) \_\_\_, Al-Murshid, Nos. 3 & 4, pp. 198–199.

---

**Source URL:**

<https://www.al-islam.org/tragedy-al-zahra-doubts-and-responses-jafar-murtadha-al-amili/part-5-kas-hifal-ghita-and-sharafud-din#comment-0>