

Preface

Forty years have passed. Forty years ...

In 1971 AD and 1353 of Iranian calendar, the Imam of a small under construction mosque by the name of Masjid Imam Hasan Mujtaba (‘a) in a corner of Sarshore Bazar in sacred Mashhad arranged a program at the beginning of the blessed Ramadan. A thirty five years old handsome and attractive young man, Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, holding gracious Qur’an started a one hour lecture after the mid-afternoon prayers. The topic of his lecture was “A Complete Map of Islamic Thought in Gracious Qur’an”.

As soon as the program started, it felt like the environment of sacred Mashhad city suddenly changed. In the hot weather and the month of Ramadan after mid-afternoon prayers people typically rested in their homes and cities would be deserted. However, this year there was frenetic activity in the southern part of the city. Old, young, men and women, thirsty with dry tongues in the intense afternoon heat were coming in droves to the small under-construction Imam Hasan (‘a) masjid so they could benefit from the spiritual and blessed feast provided by this young Sayyid and quench their intellectual thirst in the best month of the year.

Every day more and more people are showing up in this holy gathering and now people cannot find space even in the large garage behind the mosque. As far as one can see, there are people. Every class and race is represented here. There are university students, shopkeepers, traders, locals, boys and girls, men and women, old and young.

Everything is fresh and new in the lectures by Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei. A photocopy with the summary of the lecture is given to everyone before the lecture starts. Instead of sitting on the mimber, the speaker is standing behind a podium. While in the condition of fasting the speaker talks in a loud voice with a lot of zeal. A Qur’an reciter recites in a beautiful voice the same verses discussed earlier in the lecture. The lecture makes the mosque look more like a classroom.

This was the time when Paharvi dynasty had been in power for many years. It was a system of dictatorship. Oppression and persecution reigned. Killings and jail sentences were ubiquitous. This was

the darkest hour when Imam Khomeini had been exiled. Not a word could be said against the satanic government even in any religious gathering. Savak was in full control; there were spies everywhere. Even recitation of Qur'anic verses related to jihad was a crime. If a speaker recited a verse that mentioned Israelites or even if he just mentioned the word Israel, his lecture was stopped and he was thrown in jail. In these worst of times this young Sayyid was standing up in Masjid Imam Hasan. This pupil of Imam Raza ('a) knew how to speak and advance his lectures while staying out of reach of Savak wolves. This Sayyid with his prudence created such a learning environment that those who were previously staying away from gracious Qur'an got educated with the light of Allah's word.

Grand Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei with his deep knowledge and wisdom presented Islamic beliefs and tenets in the language of the gracious Qur'an in such a way that the public started thinking about forming an Islamic society in addition to rejuvenating their beliefs based on Qur'anic understanding. Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei started the series of lectures with the topic of Belief (Iman). Then he moved to Unity of God (Tawhid). He ended the series at the end of Ramadan by going through Prophethood (Nubuwwat) and Guardianship (Wilayat). The young Sayyid planted the seed of faith in the hearts of the Mashhadi youth through his lectures; he developed friendship between them and the gracious Qur'an and placed it in the hands of these young by taking it out of storage, graveyards and "Qur'an recitation" gatherings.

For many years, a group of people with inadequate knowledge of religion kept people away from Qur'an and the religion through their dry thoughts. As an example, their idea was that it was not easy for a layman to understand Qur'an and the holy book should be read only to earn thawab (reward); etc, etc. This was one of the concepts that the satanic government at the time had also embraced but Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei declared it either the enemy's propaganda or lack of intellect on the part of the elite. He himself was totally absorbed in the gracious Qur'an; he was a devotee of Qur'an and was determined to take the Qur'an out of its estrangement and isolation. He, with his tall structure, stood all alone at the podium with the Qur'an in his hand and spoke with passion. He would devote all his presence to the Godly words. He wanted to rejuvenate the ideas and reflections of Islam with the Godly language and bring the gracious Qur'an back to the hearts and actions of the Muslims. He would lament against the followers of satan who wanted to limit the everlasting miracle of the last Prophet (S) to beautiful cover and pages.

"It is a pity on those people who keep others away from the gracious Qur'an; they keep them afraid of Qur'an; they use different excuses to stop them from opening the Qur'an with the intention of understanding it. Woe to them. All of you brothers and sisters! Know that today we are working only with the gracious Qur'an as the most gracious Prophet (S) said,

فَإِذَا التَّبَسَّتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْفِتْنُ كَقَطْعِ اللَّيْلِ الْمُظْلِمِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ.

When trials envelop your lives like the darkness of the night, Qur'an is your savior. [1](#)

When is that day coming? Are we not seeing dark as night ordeals?

Are we not observing ever changing paths with our lifeless eyes?

Isn't an observant eye seeing robbers in different forms and gangs of thugs?

When should we revert to Qur'an? When?

Would it be when the Imam of the time (may Allah hasten his appearance) shows up?

Since he is the talking Qur'an when he comes, we will have to turn to Qur'an.

The gatherings in Imam Hasan ('a) Masjid with lectures on Nahjul Balagha (Peak of Eloquence) opened the minds of the attendees as if the black shroud over their eyes came off. However, the satanic government was also mindful of it. Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei was arrested and taken to the torture cell. This was the worst torture cell of the time. کمیته مشترک ک ضد خرابکاری

Over forty years have passed since this unforgettable blessed Ramadan and this river of knowledge and insight was limited to the audience present at that time while other knowledge thirsty people were deprived of it. There were rumors about this trove of Qur'anic knowledge for forty years. There was only a booklet with the subject طرح کلی اندیشه اسلامی در قرآن that gave us assurance about the existence of these lectures.

We were trying to find the original lectures in addition to this booklet for years. We were praying and it was our heart-felt desire too. The famous Qur'an reciter of Iran, Agha Sadaat Fatimi, was one of the closest associates of Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei before the Islamic revolution and continued to be on the side of the Rahber-e-Azam (the great guide) after the revolution. He had done a lot of work on the publications of Qur'an. One day his interview was telecast where he mentioned his Qur'anic activities before the revolution and his center for sale and purchase of cassettes at Kyaban-e-Sana Abad in Mashhad. He also talked about the Qur'an related services of Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei and his lectures at Imam Hasan ('a) Masjid; he also touched on the fact that it was his responsibility to record the lectures. Right after watching this program without wasting any time we traveled to sacred Mashhad. We had no address other than Masjid Imam Hasan and Masjid Karamat. We entered the mosque at prayer time and looked for elderly people. We inquired about the whereabouts of Agha Sadaat Fatimi. They told us about several masajid. We looked for him from one masjid to next. In the meantime, we found out about Aghas Sayyid Murtaza and Sayyid Jawad. We went to see Agha Sayyid Murtaza and then finally succeeded in reaching Agha Fatimi's Markaz Amozash Qur'an.

We made a reference to Agha Fatimi about his interview and inquired about the recording of Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei's lectures. He said that all those recorded lectures had already been published in a book form and we could get the material from this book. However, when we mentioned that it was not a book but only a booklet and that it only had photocopies of the summaries of the lectures, he was

surprised and dismayed. He could not imagine that people had been missing such a valuable treasure for the past forty years. When we inquired about the cassettes, he told us that the original cassettes had been deposited to the office of Rahber-e-Azam but he had copies and he handed over those copies to us.

Forty years later, yes, it was rather late. A lot of time had passed. However, it is time to be thankful to Allah (SWT) that the treasure was dusted after such a long time and this invaluable jewel was brought to daylight.

Every word of Ayatullah Sayyid Ali Khamenei reveals his youth, passion, dignity and perseverance. Get ready to profit from this treasure hidden for forty years – the book

طرح کلی اندیشه اسلامی درقرآن ; i.e. the Complete Map of Islamic Ideology in Qur'an².

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ النِّعْمَةُ وَلَكَ الْمُنُّ

¹. Bihar Al-Anwar, vol. 74, page 177, and Vol. 28, pag.286

الحديث موجود في بحار الانوار الجزء ٧٤ صفحة ١٧٧ وكذلك في الجزء ٢٨ الصفحة ٢٨٦

². This book was published in Farsi for the first time by the organization, Sahba Iran.

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/tawhid-monotheism-six-speeches-sayyid-ali-khamenei/preface>