

Some Examples of Imam al-Ridha's (a.s.) Wise Answers

Although the holy Imam's wise sayings and decisive responses are quite many, we mention some of them here as examples.

Ibrahim b. Muhammad asked the holy Imam: "Why did God drown Pharaoh, although he came to faith?" The holy Imam answered: "Because he came to faith upon seeing punishment; coming to faith at that moment is not acceptable."¹

Aba Salt Hirawi asked: "Why did God drown all people in the time of Noah, although there were innocents and children among them, too?" His holiness answered: "There were no children among them, as for forty years their progeny had discontinued; some perished for their denial and some for their consent to denial. Whoever is absent from an event but consents to it, is like someone present perpetrating it."²

Ibn Sikkit (Ya'qub b. Ishaq) asked his holiness: "Why did God send down Moses (a.s.) with a staff and white hand and magic, Jesus (a.s.) with medicine, and Muhammad (S) with speech?" His holiness answered: "In the time of Moses (a.s.) magic prevailed, in the time of Jesus medical needs, and in the time of the Prophet (S) sermons and speeches."

He went on to ask: "By God, I have never seen the like of you; what is Allah's Authority over people now?" The Imam answered: "Intellect, by means of which the veracious-to-God will be distinguished from the liar." Ibn Sikkit said, "By God, this is the true answer to my question."³

Hasan b. 'Ali b. Fadhdhal asked the Imam: "Why did the people distance from Commander of the Faithful 'Ali (a.s.) while they knew his excellence and achievement as well as his relation to the Prophet (S)?"

His holiness replied: "Because 'Ali (a.s.) had killed their fathers, forefathers, brothers, uncles, and their

near of kin, who battled against Allah and His Apostle and they were many in number, so they were vindictive to him and unwilling to be under his guardianship; but others did not do this in the holy wars (*jihad*), therefore the people distanced from ‘Ali (a.s.) and inclined toward them.”⁴

Haytham b. ‘Abd Allah asked his holiness: “Why didn’t [Imam] ‘Ali fight with his enemies twenty five years after the Prophet (S) but he fought during his ruling days?” Imam al–Ridha (a.s.) said, “He followed the example of the Prophet (S) who did not fight with the unbelievers for thirteen years in Mecca and nineteen years in Medina and the reason was lack of enough helpers; similarly, ‘Ali (a.s.) gave up fighting with the enemy because his helpers were few.”⁵

Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Fadhdhal asked his holiness: “Why is the Prophet’s nickname Abu al–Qasim?” He answered: “Because he had a son named Qasim.” The narrator said, “Do you deem me worthy of telling me more?”

The Imam said, “Yes.” He said, “Do you know that ‘Ali is the distributor of the Paradise and the Hell?” The man said, “Yes.” His holiness said, “The Prophet (S) is called Abu al–Qasim (the father of the distributor) because he is [the spiritual] father of (‘Ali, who is) the distributor of Paradise and Hell.”⁶

Someone asked Imam al–Ridha (a.s.): “Is it (the *hadith*) true that the Prophet (S) said, “My companions are like stars, whichever you follow, you will be guided?” The Imam said, “Yes, what the Prophet (S) means are those who did not change or transform the way.”

He asked: “How would it become known?” His holiness said, “By means of the *hadith* related – by the Sunnis – from the Prophet (S) saying: “On the Resurrection Day some men will distance my companions from my Fountain just like they distance strange camels from the water.

I say: O Lord! My companions, my companions! I am told: You do not know what they did after you! And take them to the left. I say: May they be far! May they be perished!” Then Imam al–Ridha (a.s.) said, “Do you think this would be for those who remained unchanged and unvaried?”⁷

¹. ‘Uyun Akhbar al–Ridha (a.s.), vol. 2, p. 76.

². Ibid, p. 74.

³. ‘Uyun Akhbar al–Ridha (a.s.), vol. 2, p. 79 (in brief).

⁴. Ibid, p. 80.

⁵. Ibid, p. 80.

⁶. Ibid, p. 84.

⁷. Ibid, 86. Some of the dignitaries among Sunnis, such as Bukhari and Muslim in their Sahihs as well as others have related from various narrators the hadith about some of the companions’ deviation with various references and sanads.

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