

[Home](#) > [Husayn, the Saviour of Islam](#) > [Some Guiding Clarifications](#) > Consolidated View of the Account as a Whole and the Co-relation of the Events

Some Guiding Clarifications

Of late, it is frequently preached by some ill-informed people against paying respect, regard or reverence to Alams, Zarees, Mimbers, Imambadas or any such things dedicated to the sacred memory of the members of the Holy Ahlul Bayt, terming it, '*Shirk*' or '*Bid'at*' or '*Kufr*'. Since there is the possibility of some innocent and ignorant Muslims and Non-Muslims alike, not knowing the difference between '*Mawaddat*' (i.e., love or faithfulness), and, '*Oboodiat*' (i.e., Worship), getting astray, it has become necessary to issue the following clarifications.

Be it known that the move to criticise the expressions of Respect, Regard and Reverence to the Holy Ahlul Bayt and the things dedicated to their sacred memory, is nothing new. Such criticisms and accusations against the devotees of the holy ones, the Shias, have been in vogue since centuries having their start immediately following the departure of the Holy Prophet.

'*Mawaddat*' (i.e., love or devotion) practised by those attached to the Holy Ahlul Bayt has always been misrepresented as '*Oboodiat*' (i.e. worship), just to condemn attachment to the Holy Family, terming the love and the devotion to the Holy ones, as '*Shirk*' (i.e., Polytheism) or '*Kufr*' (i.e., infidelity). This was done to stop people's attachment to the Ahlul Bayt, and to enlist strength against those who, inspite of the vicious propaganda against them and even suffering the miserable persecution, remained devoted to the Holy ones of the Prophet's family. The first of such a cry, motivated with the vicious object mentioned above, was raised by some opportunists aspiring for power and authority, immediately as the Holy Prophet departed from this world, saying:

"Man kana Ya'budu Muhammadun faqad maat."

'Let everyone who was worshipping Muhammad now know that he is dead (and gone).'

This satiric cry was raised against the devotees of the Holy House, to declare them as '*Kafirs*' Infidels i.e., those who worshipped the Holy Prophet instead of God, terming their '*Mawaddat*' to the holy ones, which means only love and devotion, as '*Oboodiat*' i.e., worship, and thus to declare the attachment to the Ahlul Bayt as '*Shirk*' or '*Kufr*', whereas only the devotees to the Ahlul Bayt are Muslims in the true and

the strict sense of the term, as they worship none but the One and the Only True God, and love the Holy Prophet and his Ahlul Bayt and remain devoted to them under the divine ordinance:

“Say unto the people O' Apostle Muhammad! I seek not of you any 'Ajr' (compensation) for it (the service of the apostleship) save love of my relatives.” (Holy Qur'an 42:23)

Under the above ordinance from the Lord, none who does not pay the Holy Prophet the 'Ajr' (i.e., recompense) in the love and devotion to the Ahlul Bayt, demanded him, can never be a Muslim at all.

In short, 'Mowaddat' i.e., the love towards the Holy Ahlul Bayt, is purposefully termed as 'Oboodiat', i.e., worship, to blackmail their devotees, the Shias as 'Musrikeen' (i.e., the Polytheists) and 'Kuffar' (the infidels), and to dissuade people from attachment to the Holy Ones.

It must first be remembered that '*Shirk*' means associating anything with God and these things which are held sacred by the Shias are never at all held as God, or gods, or in place of God, or that of holy ones to whose memory they are the dedicated. They are mere Emblems and Memorials, dedicated to their memory. This fact has already been made clear and it is once again repeated here for the information of the new uninformed or misinformed critics.

The move against respecting these sacred memorials of the dedicated tokens is only to dissuade the public from their devotion to the Ahlul Bayt, in the guise of preaching '*Tauheed*', i.e., the Unity of God, and warning against '*Shirk*' which is the most abhorred thing in Islam, particularly in Shia'ism which is the Islam–Original.

Let the misinformed advocates of '*Tauheed*' and the Warners against '*Shirk*' rest assured that the Shias, in particular when they pray for any divine boon or mercy in the name of the Holy Imams, they never imagine for a while that the actual giver or the bestower of the boon or the giver of the help prayed for, is anyone other than the Almighty Lord of the Universe, and the prayer in the name of the holy ones is only to invoke the mercy of the Lord through the medium of these holy souls who have been declared as God's chosen ones and the nearest and dearest ones to Him.

The misleading question which the critics raise, in that way should not one seek the help he needs directly from God? This question has in itself the answer that when such great devotees of God (i.e., the critics) get ill, why do they go to the doctor? Who is the actual Curer, God or the doctor? Why not they depend upon God for the cure and avoid the means of the doctor, when the doctor is not the actual curer? No, they do it because they have to seek a means or a medium and they do it for they cannot avoid it. This is quite in accordance with the divine guidance from the Lord:

“Seek ye the means to reach Him” (God). (Holy Qur'an 5:35)

None can reach God without the proper means to the end. God Himself has enjoined the Holy Prophet to seek his '*Ajr*' or recompense in the love and devotion to his Ahlul Bayt (See 42:23) and the '*Ajr*' in the

love and devotion to the Holy Ahlul Bayt has been made the way to the Lord (See 25:57).

I ask not any '*Ajr*' (recompense) for it (i.e., apostleship) save ye take the way to the Lord (25:57).

And what the '*Ajr*' (recompense) is has been mentioned in 42:23.

The reverence and the regard for things dedicated to the sacred memory of the holy ones, is clearly warned by the verse 2: 158 in which the Muslims have been ordained to run between the hillocks '*Safa*' and '*Marwa*' while performing the '*Hajj*'. And the following verse of the Holy Qur'an clearly declares the regard for any signs of God (i.e., anything by means of which man remembers God's Glory, His Authority or His Existence) as the piety of the heart of the individual:

"And whosoever respects the signs of God, it surely is of the piety of the heart." (Holy Qur'an 22:32)

Shias go to the '*Imambadas*', the '*Mahfils*', the '*Mimbers*' and recite there '*Fateha*' (i.e., 1st Sura of the Holy Qur'an), and the masterly edited prayers of the great divines viz., Ameerul-Momineen Ali ibnul Husayn and the other Imams. Let the advocates of '*Tauheed*' and the warners against '*Shirk*' go through the '*Dua al-Mashlul*' or the '*Dua al-Komail*' or the '*Joshan al-Kabeer*' or the '*Joshan al-Sagheer*' or any other prayers '*Dua*' prescribed by the Holy Imams and then say if there can be a greater and a surer source of approaching God or invoking His mercy, than these mediums. People ignorant of these great things, are those who speak against the heavenly means to get nearer to the Lord to be blessed by Him.

It is also necessary to inform the advocates of '*Tauheed*' and the warner against '*Shirk*' that it is the declared faith and the conviction of every Shia that nothing without the compulsory Salat or Salat, duly performed, can ever benefit any one in approaching God or getting any boon or help from Him or from any one of the holy ones, and the Mosque is the holiest place with nothing to be compared to it.

Sajdah

Who said sajdah or prostration in obeisance to any one besides God is allowed? Sajdah to '*Ghairallah*' or '*Masiwallah*' (i.e., other than God) is '*Haram*', i.e., strictly prohibited, and Shia'ism the Islam-Original, more than any other school of faith, abhors it, and guards its adherents against it, both from the pulpit and the press. The critic should first know that Sajdah to God differs from the act of merely laying the head on the ground which also is termed as Sajdah.

The Sajdah to God is not only laying the head on the ground, but submitting one's self wholly to God with the realisation of one's negation of his finite existence granted to him, before the infinite. Almighty and the Absolute Existence of the Only Self Existing One, with the intention of worshipping Him as the only Creator, Sustainer, Lord of the Universe.

Mere laying of the head on the ground before any one in any ceremonial way of paying any conventional

regard or formal reverence to any one other than God, can never be the '*Sajdah al-Oboodiat*' (the prostration of subservience). It will be a '*Sajdah al-Tazeemi*' (i.e., the prostration or regard) which was demanded of the angels for Adam:

***“(Sajdah) (Prostration) to Adam, they did offer (Sajdah) Prostration save 'Iblees' (the Devil)?”
(Holy Qur'an 2:37 and 7:11)***

This is what God Himself ordered the angels to do:

“When I have made him (Adam) complete and breathe into him spirit of Me, fall ye all down (offering Sajdah) Prostration to him.” (Holy Qur'an 15:29)

If Sajdah in any sense whatsoever was prohibited save to God, the stars would not have been caused to appear to Joseph in his vision, offering 'Sajdah' or prostration to him.

“When Joseph said to his father, 'O' My father: verily I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them, offering Sajdah (prostration) to me.” (Holy Qur'an 12:4)

And why did Yacoob (Jacob) an apostle of God, offer '*Sajdah*' to his son Joseph:

***“And he (Joseph) raised his parents to the throne and they offered Sajdah (Prostration) to him.”
(Holy Qur'an 12:100)***

It is sufficiently clear if one wants only to know the truth that Sajdah by way of worship to any object besides God, is strictly prohibited as '*Haram*' and abhorred by Shia'ism which is Islam- Original, whereas the act of mere laying of head before anybody in any conventional or ceremonial way of paying the regard, or expressing one's humility to any greatness, or excellence particularly the case of any divine object, which was expected of the angels even by God Himself, and was practised even by a prophet of God like Jacob, is not worship, and hence not objectionable.

Prayer before Any Object

In shia'ism, Salat (or prayer or worship) is due to none but to God and God alone. If any one prays before any object of His worship, it is not objected by Islam. One can offer his prayers before anything even a grave, if the individual does not mean the object as the object of his worship. It is in this spirit and with this point of the faith in view that prayers in the Holy Shrines of Najaf, Karbala, Mashhad etc., are offered, and offering prayers in such sacred places, though they are not mosques, or in places sanctified by dedication to the memories of the godly ones, is definitely commendable and has its '*Fazeelat*' or the Grade of Excellence, is without the least opposition or prejudice to the excellence of the prayers offered in a mosque.

Dedication of any Place as Memorial with Regard for it

Erecting a mosque or any such premises in memory of any sacred object or event, has been allowed by the Holy Qur'an. See about the Mosque commanded to be raised at the spot where lay the '*Ashaabe-Kahf*' the Sleepers of the Cave (18:21). Holding such places in sanctity with regard and reverence for them, is certainly the sign of piety of the heart, and devotion to God Himself. To preach against offering prayers before graves or in any shrines quoting the Hadith or the saying of the Holy Prophet prohibiting making any grave or a shrine a mosque, without the context in which it was said is nothing short of betraying one's ignorance of the Islamic History. Umm Salma the virtuous wife of the Holy Prophet on her return from the Abyssinian Exile, reported to the Holy Prophet that she had seen in Abyssinia the Christians worshipping the images of Jesus and Mary and the graves of their saints.

The Holy Prophet issued the ordinance or the Hadith prohibiting prayers on the graves as the object of worship. The point underlying in the saying is against a prayer being offered before or around any grave or graves. This point is clarified in the verse 18:21 which commands building of mosque on the grave by which the object is not to start worship of the grave but to consecrate the place by dedicating it to the worship of the Lord, to Whom the departed soul had been devoted, and had itself surrendered.

Remembrance of the Righteous Ones

Remembrance of the holy personalities for their righteousness has been ordained by God, *vide* 38:48.

Every educated and awakened mind knows that the remembrance of the godly ones by every possible means is remembering God Himself and such a remembrance is highly commendable, rather essential to keep the models of the various aspects of godliness always in view to be imitated or copied by one, for himself or herself to become godly. The object of the Holy ones having been sent into this World was only to set up the models necessary for the guidance of man, for man to copy them and thus get himself qualified and fit for the higher levels of the life of eternal bliss.

The secret is that the ill-informed or the misinformed critics have not at all understood the Most Exalted position of God. They do not know that God is too Great, too Exalted, too Just, too Gracious, too Merciful and too Excellent to be only on the watch to catch hold of every one and chastise him, judging merely the actions or the external appearances, irrespective of the intention or the real object latent in man. It is man who cannot probe into the secrets of the heart of another man that accuses another man basing his accusation merely on his limited and defective knowledge of the outward appearances or the external outlooks. It must be remembered that man's actions are judged by God, the All-Knowing Lord, by his intention.

Let every Muslim remember the well-known declaration of the Holy Prophet:

"An act is naught but with its intention and 'Verily the the actions are judged only by the intentions'."

'Seena-Zani' or the Chest-Beating

The Shia young, in mourning for the great Martyrs of the Holy Ahlul-Bait, particularly for the First Holy Imam Ameerul-Momineen Ali and the Holy Imam Husayn, the King of Martyrs, beat their breasts, sometimes to the extent of bleeding themselves. Hurting of ones self is of course not allowed in Islam. Shia'ism the Islam- Original knows it and recognises it fully and has no sanction against it.

But when it is a matter for a godly cause, it contents itself with exhortations from the pulpit and the press, and if the uncontrolled emotion of any of its enthusiasts in his extreme love and devotion to the godly cause, helplessly gives expression to it in beating his breast, the law has to be considerate and tolerable in view of the intention of the action not being any defiance of the law, but the helplessness to the love for the godly ones who suffered the miseries, tortures and the most cruel death in the way of the Lord. In such cases, mere common sense will say that the All-Merciful Lord will not only tolerate the well intentioned excess but love the expression of the extreme devotion to His cause.

Thus the breast-beating in mourning for the great martyrs in the way of the Lord, is not condemnable but tolerably commendable, for hurting of one's self is prohibited if that be for any worldly cause besides God's and when it is in the cause of the Lord Himself, the Shia Ulema do not spare exhorting the enthusiasts to control their emotions while expressing their love and devotion in this regard, and since the action does not affect any of the fundamentals of Islam and the intention is not to violate any law which rather in a way strengthens the bias for devotion to a godly cause, it is not stopped by force.

Such toleration is illustrated in the historic event popularly reported about the great devotee of the Holy Prophet Uwais al-Qarani, who, with his own hands pulled out his teeth and this action is praised by the Ulema from the pulpit while they speak of the love and devotion to the Holy Prophet. Why should the same and identical action by the Shias for the Ahlul Bayt be seriously considered and unsparingly criticised instead of issuing a similar to admiration the one given to Owais.

There is an apt example in the practical and everyday life of man to know how far such actions are ingrained in the native endowments in man.

What is an Alam?

The alam wrongly called, the '*Panja*' in Southern India, is an emblem or the copy of the Holy Banner of the Holy Imam. It is installed in the houses of the devotees of the Holy Imam and also in separate apartments called the '*Ashurkhanas*' or the Imambadas and is respected and honoured as the standard of a king, loyal, respected and honoured by his faithful subjects. The Brute Yazid lowered the one standard of Truth which the Holy Imam held in Karbala but today God alone knows how many millions of such token standards of the Holy Imam are made and honoured in the world by his devotees.

It should be remembered that the *Alam* is not at all an idol it, any sense of the word. It is never held

either in the place of God or in the place of even the Holy Imam. It is only a copy of the Holy Standard of Truth carried by the Holy Imam when he fought against Falsehood. The '*Alam*' is held in high esteem and honour as stated above and it is never in any way worshipped. Worship in Islam is due only to God and not even to the Holy prophet who is next only to God in authority over his followers. About the Holy Imam Husayn, Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti one of the great mystics of India has said:

"Husayn is King, the King of Kings,

He is Faith, Defence of Faith from him springs.

Beheaded though

He never bowed to Yazeed

By God, God's unity by him is established"

In which grave is his throne and his crown where is it

'O' Earth! Show us where the might of Yazid is today.'

(Josh Malehabadi)

Let Muslim remember the well-known declaration of the Holy Prophet:

"And act is naught but with its intention" and "Verily the actions are judged only by the intentions."

Take for instance, when a man dies, the nearest of his relatives particularly his own children, and even among his children, they who love him the most will naturally feel the separation from the departed soul, more than anybody else. One of the sons may be violent in the expression of his grief, hurting himself in an uncontrollable state of behaviour, while the other son may be quietly shedding tears, and others who may also be sorrowful remains suppressing their grief. At the same time such of the relatives and selfish friends, who were only waiting for the death of the man, to have a share in the property left over by him, or to occupy the post or position which he may be vacating, will naturally feel happy though appearing quiet on the occasion.

The same is the case in regard to the degree of expression of the grief for the '*Ahlul Bayt*' by the Shias, and the rejoicing made at their martyrdom by others. The fact is that those who are not sorry for the sufferings of the holy ones, seek an excuse for their hard hearted inimical attitude towards the family of the Holy Prophet, and take shelter under the guise of abiding by the law, and since they are not sorry for calamities inflicted on the holy ones, they do not want others to express their sorrow for the holy victims, for it discloses the devilish character and conduct of the assassins whom they regard as their religious leaders.

Alam or the Emblem

'The Alam' which is installed in the Imambadas, is another target of attacks from our ignorant friends who not knowing its actual significance and criticize it as '*Bid'at*' i.e., an unwarranted innovation. Be it known to the critics that the Alam is only the Emblem of the Holy Standard of Islam of which, All the Ever Victorious Lion of God was the Bearer on behalf of the Holy Prophet, and which was held also by 'Abbas the lion hearted son of Ali the Lion of God on behalf of the Holy Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, against the devilish forces of Yazid in Karbala, when the Yazidian power and authority wanted to destroy the original teachings of Islam.

Since the devilish forces disrespected the Holy Standard of Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, every sincere Muslim today, particularly those attached to the Holy Ahlul Bayt the Shias, instal an emblem of the Holy Standard and pay respect and regard to it, as they would have done, had they been with the Holy Imam in Karbala.

Every lover of Islam and the Holy Prophet would certainly like to do it with all the sincerity and devotion at his command, for as a Royal Banner represents the King and respect to Banner is respect to the King himself. This token or the emblem, the Alam, represents Islam and the Holy Prophet, respect for the Alam is respect to Islam, and respect to Islam is respect to the Holy Prophet himself.

Before criticising the respect or regard for the *Alam* or the *Zarees*, i.e., the models of the shrines of the Holy Ahlul Bayt let the critics remember the vacant model of the Mahmil of Hazrat Ayesha the wife of the Holy Prophet, which until yesterday was brought in a Ceremonial way to Mecca every year on the occasion of Hajj, attended by the Ulema walking solemnly along with it. Was Hazrat Ayesha actually sitting in it? If any empty Mahmil without an occupant in it could be respected and solemnly followed by the Ulema how could the emblem of the Standard of Ali Husayn or 'Abbas or any of the Holy ones of the Ahlul Bayt, become a '*Bid at*' and the respect to it be deemed, objectionable.

Majlis al-Aza or the Mourning Congregations

When the tyrannes and the torturous death inflicted on the Holy Ahlul Bayt, could not be denied, the other course adopted to hide the most disgraceful and most brutal and heinous deeds is to declare the Majlis al-Aza or the mourning congregation for the Martyrs of the Ahlul Bayt who are the authentic custodians of the Holy Qur'an and its teachings as '*Bid'at* and '*Kufr*'. The Majlis al-Aza is the 'Sunnat al-Zainabi', i.e. what was inaugurated in Damascus itself by Hazrate Zainab the sister of the Holy Imam Husayn, the Great Martyr of Karbala as soon as she was out of the prison in Damascus.

And what the Shias do today is only In the footsteps of the Holy Sister of the King of Martyrs, Lady Zainab who was one of the members of the family of the Holy Prophet, the daughter of Ali and Fatimah, one of the great sufferers at Karbala, Kufa and Damascus and who herself was martyred in the way of the Lord was buried in Damascus. This action of the Holy Lady Martyr Zainab has been regularized by

the decree of the Holy Imam thus it has become a prescribed duty of every true Muslim to carry out the godly command.

When the *Majlis al-Aza* for the mourning of the Martyrs is criticised, what about the 'Meela' and the 'Gyarwin Sherif' celebrated every year which had their origin only recently. Can anyone prove from any historic record of accepted authenticity like Tabari etc., that any such celebrations were ever held in the ancient days even a century ago anywhere in the world? Why then this innovation now?

And if such celebrations are commendable for the Holy Prophet or any other person held as Holy what objection can there be against a similar commemoration for the Holy Ones of the Ahlul Bayt?

The objection can no doubt be if it is to stop the narration of the torturous sufferings inflicted on the holy ones, which automatically disclose as to whom the devils of the tyrants were, who enacted the heartless massacres of the godly ones of the Ahlul Bayt of the Holy Prophet.

The fundamental or the basic point underlying the mourning by the Shias for the great martyrs of the Holy Ahlul Bayt is, not merely for the death of those holy ones for, death is there for everyone except God. The Shias know it fully well that those who die in the way of the Lord, are not dead but alive (2: 154, 3: 168).

The great martyrs of the Holy Ahlul Bayt have reached the glorious heavenly destination of the life, of the highest eternal bliss exclusively reserved for them by their Lord. Any one, be he a Muslim or a non-Muslim, and a friend or even a foe, if he is only a human being and not a brute, will naturally feel for the miserable sufferings and the painful death of another human being, particularly when the sufferers are godly ones surrendering their selves for the Truth. Only those who are void of the basic human qualities of feelings will remain effectless and unmoved under such circumstances.

The mourning by the Shias is mainly for the heartless and inhuman treatment inflicted on the Holy ones by those who, professing themselves to be Muslims, have caused such shameful and disgraceful blots on the pages of the history of the conduct and character of man on Earth, that it can never be erased and for which every member of the human family will certainly be unceasingly grieved, and will be ever cursing the brutes in the human forms until the end of the world.

The *Majlis al-Aza* has also been declared '*Bid'at*' i.e., an unwarranted innovation saying that mourning for the dead is forbidden by Islam. The hollowness of this allegation against the natural act of expressing fellow feelings has already been dealt with above. Even granting for a while that mourning for the dead is forbidden, none can show any objection from Islam to the oppressed or the aggrieved protesting against the miseries inflicted on them. The *Majlis al-Aza* is a congregational protest against the brutal atrocities inflicted on the godly members of the family of the Holy Prophet as revenge against Islam itself. None will object to such protests excepting those responsible for the brutal actions or those who support the devilish conduct and character of those who are temperamentally identical with the brutes possessing the same devilish tendencies.

The actuating factor behind all this mischievous move to mislead the Muslims and to create dissensions among them, is only Satan who, during the lifetime of the Holy Ones, instigated his disciples the tyrants, to inflict the most painful miseries and the torturous death on God's commissioned guides to humanity, and now the same Devil is busy beguiling the ignorant ones among the Muslims by inspiring in their minds all sorts of doubts and false notions against the truth and those who have been successfully converted by Satan are employed by him as his missionaries spreading the falsehood.

By God's grace, all the awakened minds in the ranks of Islam be the Shias or Sunnis or of any other school of thought, are unanimous in paying the due regard and reverence to the Holy Ahlul-Bait, particularly in the matter of Husayn all Muslims are united. Each one of the sincere lovers of Islam today is ready to surrender his all for the Holy Prophet and the Holy Ahlul Bayt, more particularly for Husayn, the King of Martyrs.

'Taqlaed.' The only, the greatest and the best protection afforded in Shia'ism, against the continuous as well as the occasional raids by Satan and his disciple missionaries is the ordinance about *'Taqlaed'* (16:43) or to always abide by the *'A'lim'* or the *Most learned one, called the 'Mujtahid'*. This course guides one always to the right or the correct way of the practice of the faith and protects him from committing any excess and from shortcomings, and at the same time the individual from being exploited by the instigations of the satanic forces.

'Taqlaed' has also been misinterpreted into the innovated institution of the *'Mureeds'* blindly following the *'Pirs'*. Be it known that being guided by a Mujtahid in matters of doubt about the practice of the Faith, has nothing in common with it, and can never be compared to any such unwarranted blind following. *Taqleed* is only being attached to any one of the greatest scholars who has reached the level of *'Ijtehad'* (i.e., the ability to derive the required correct inference from the Holy Qur'an or the genuine traditions of the Holy Prophet) in matters of doubt about any articles of the practice of the Faith *'Furu al-Deen.'* *Taqleed* or any kind of following anyone in the articles of faith i.e., *'Usool al-Deen'* is *'Haram'* (i.e., prohibited).

As every one of the adherents of the Faith cannot be expected to know all the minutest details about the practice of the Faith, or be able to draw the correct inference about any doubts, from the Word of God, the Holy Qur'an, and the Hadith or the Sayings of the Holy Prophet, the divinely prescribed course to keep a Muslim always on the right course of his practical life, as well as to protect him from getting astray by the misgivings from the ill-informed or less-informed one is *'Taqlaed'* by which one chooses of his own independent discretion any one of the accredited scholars who in his considered opinion is the greatest one of the most learned and the most pious ones of the age, and is always guided by the directive of such a scholar in all matters of the individual's doubts regarding any matter of the practice of the Faith.

By this course one is not only assured of the best possible guidance in the right course, by the highest intellect of the age but also of the safety against his getting deluded by the unqualified, misqualified or purposeful misgivings by any one.

Since the practice of the Faith by any adherent, unbounded by this course of, '*Taqleed*', it cannot doubtlessly be free from irregularities; hence it will naturally be unacceptable.

The question of following the highest authority in knowledge and piety is only in the case of '*Fatawa*' or the opinion of the Scholar about the law and not about the application of the law for which '*Ijtehad*' is sufficient. The caution that Shia'ism, the Islam–Original, has sounded against the ruinous effects of unqualified administration of justice is worthy of note here for the information of the sincere adherents of Islam, i.e., the special importance Shia'ism attaches to Justice being meted out in the proper manner, and to the extraordinary care taken against any unqualified and defective administration of it. The following is the decree of the Sixth Holy Imam, Ja'far Ibn Muhammad al–Sadiq (as) the Regulator of the Shia faith:–

None shall take this seat save a Prophet of God, the successor to the prophet or the evil one.

This declaration clearly warns any unqualified one without any authority from the Holy Prophet and the Holy Imam, who assumes the seat of '*Qazaiat*' or (Justice), will be none but the evil one. Hence a '*Qazi*' (a judge) can be none but a '*Mujtahid*' who gets himself qualified under the declaration of the Imam reported above.

While condemning the yielding to the rule of '*Taghoot*' i.e., an authority without the divine sanction, the Sixth Holy Imam Jafar–Ibn Muhammad As–Sadiq said that 'instead of submitting to such tyrant seek the greatest of the scholars among you, Who has learnt our traditions and gained deep insight into our sanctions and prohibitions and who knows our rulings well and accept him as your Judge (i.e. Qazi) and your Ruler, as I have appointed him to rule over you. And if he gives a ruling and if it is not accepted by any one, it will be the contempt of God's Sovereignty which is almost '*Shirk*' i.e., the recognition of an authority beside God's.

The definition and the requirements of '*Ijtehad*' and '*Taqleed*' given below, are those that have been prescribed by the '*Masoom*' i–e., the Twelfth Holy Imam, as ordained by the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnat as a part and parcel of the whole system of the Divine Sovereignty and the Absolute Theocracy which is implemented in the very term '*Islam*' which means acceptance of the Absolute Sovereignty of God and complete submission to His will. It is on this basis that the institution of apostleship is established. God communicates His will to mankind through the chain of the apostles, which was consummated in the apostleship of the Holy Prophet of Islam through whom was presented the Final Word of God in the form of the Holy Qur'an, and his own apostolic sayings. And in the continuation of that sovereignty and the institution of apostleship, the Holy Prophet declared Ali and the Eleven Imams in his descent, as the authority joined with the Holy Qur'an representing his as well as God's will.

When the period of the codification and the consolidation of the '*Kitab*' and '*Sunnat*' was completed, the age of the Imamatus for that legislative purpose came to its conclusion. Hence the seclusion of the Twelfth Imam was effected though his hidden existence continues as a necessity, as a medium factor between

God and His Creatures, in the process of the Creative administration of the universe. The Imams declared the institution of '*Ijtehad*' as given below, as the sole directive authority on their behalf, in leading mankind on the right path of submission to the sovereignty and the will of God, in all the practical aspects of the covenant which the '*Kitab*' and the '*Sunnat*' had already dealt with.

In short, '*Ijtehad*' and '*Taqleed*' are the supplementary institutions to '*Imamat*' which in turn is supplementary to '*Risalat*' (Apostleship) which as a whole is the manifestation of the Divine Sovereignty. There is no room left for any individual view or choice except that the door is left open for every human being irrespective of any racial or geographical bias or restriction, to qualify one's self in knowledge and piety to the level of '*Ijtehad*.' The decree of the Holy Imam about the institution of '*Ijtehad*' is as follows:

"Amma Hawadisal Waqi' aat, Farijeoo ila ruwate Ahadeesena, fa innahom hujjati alaikum wa ana Hujjatullah."

'In all the events of life, refer ye to those who bear our traditions, they are the authority over you on my behalf, and I am the authority on behalf of God.'

The Decree of the Holy Imam

The above decree of the the Masoom (i.e., the Sixth Holy Imam) in this respect which is about '*Ijtehad*,' is not the only tradition but there are many undisputed traditions also of the other Imams establishing the institution of '*Ijtehad*' prescribing the minutest details of its functioning, only a very brief outline of which is given below: Of the many declarations of the other Imams in this respect, two of them are the most outstanding. One from Hazrate- Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq, known as the '*Maqool-el-Umar bin Hanzala*' (the tradition of Umar Ibn Hanzala) and the other is from the Eleventh Holy Imam, Hasan Al-Askari.

The Definition of '*Ijtehad*'

'*Ijtehad*' literally means an all-out effort to interpret and explain explicitly the divine orders, rules and regulations from the denotations, the connotations and the implications contained in the Holy Qur'an and the authentic sayings of the Holy Prophet and the apostolic Imams. '*Ijtehad*' does not mean the use of one's discretion in the findings, parallel to the Qur'an or the Sunnat, but it means the use of one's discretion and sound reasoning in understanding the contents of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnat.

Anyone who has the capacity of understanding the details of the Divine Laws, Rules and Regulations from the Qur'an and the Sunnat of a '*Masoom*' as given above, is a '*Mujtahid*' provided he is of outstanding learning, knowledge and piety. Any one short of that standard of knowledge and piety be he a good scholar in certain branches of the Islamic literature, is termed as a layman in regard to the field of religion. A man who has not reached the stage to take decisions in every detailed point of the Laws of Islam, on the authority of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnat, is a layman, and he has to follow a person who has definitely reached that standard, and whoever has reached that standard has to follow his own

decision, and it is forbidden for him to follow anyone else.

In case there are several men of equal standard, and they differ in their decision, the layman has the choice to follow any one of them and in case the '*Mujtahids*' differ in the degree of their accomplishments the best among them is to be followed. In case one is better in knowledge and the other in piety, the latter is to be followed.

As to how to find the best one among the '*Mujtahids*' the layman should refer to the evidence of the competent pious scholars of Islamic Theology who have no claim to '*Aalamiat*' or to the evidence of the '*Mujtahids*' of the approximate standing about the best next to them. By the collection of all these evidences, one can easily consider for himself as to who is the best. This is the best method followed throughout the history of the '*Niabat*' of the Imam after the '*Ghaibat*.'

There is no room for any election or the counting of votes of any class or group to appoint one as the ecclesiastical head as used in the Papal system of Christianity, nor is it the '*Peeri*' and the '*Mureedi*' practised in the mystic system which is an unwarranted innovation among the Muslims, carried as a counter section or parallel to the institution of Imamatus. Be it known that the qualifications for '*Ijtihad*' are known, recognised and measurable and the qualifications for a '*Peeri*' is only fanciful heresy blindly accepted and neither fixed nor measurable.

It is to be noted that the question of following the opinion of the best in knowledge and piety is confined to such questions where the '*Mujtahids*' differ, and the question of following any '*Mujtahid*' does not arise in matters unanimously accepted by all '*Mujtahids*.' It is to be noted that for the administration of the theological centres and the other religious and ecclesiastical services, any pious '*Mujtahid*' is competent for the undertaking, and if any pious '*Mujtahid*' offers himself to shoulder the task the other '*Mujtahid*' should not stand in his way, on the other hand he must help him.

Consolidated View of the Account as a Whole and the Co-relation of the Events

We have gone through a few of the various events of the life of the Holy Imam and the Great Wholesale Slaughter at Karbala. Now let us take a consolidated view of the accounts as a whole and co-relate the events and find out what is the mean or the norm and where the arc or co-relation ends.

If we take the isolated parts of a monotype printing machine separated from each other and study each one of the parts for ages together we will never be able to know the maker or the deviser's mind or wisdom in it. Nor we will ever be able to know neither the purpose it serves nor the enormous use of the implement to the human life unless all the parts are duly put together and see how they work together and what result they produce.

Similarly, if we take the words of a heavenly scripture separated from the sentences and isolated from

each other, spend ages together on the various meanings each word gives we will never know those individual words work together in a sentence to give a sensible meaning and unless the sentences are duly arranged none can ever know the heavenly guidance endowed in their proper combinations.

Unless we put together all the events of the life of the Holy ones of the Ahlul Bayt, particularly Husayn, the personality of our concern in this brief treatise on him we will never be able to have a proper view of the divine purpose of the Almerciful Alwise Creator Lord in the creation of this holy soul and sending him on the earth and the fulfilment of the purpose for the benefit of man in this world.

Let us recapitulate in brief the whole matter of this brief work into a consolidated compact whole to have the overall view of it from God's given heights of intelligence to realise the glorious grandeur of the heavenly sight of the Great Event in a harmonious whole, with the data at our disposal vouched by history and illustrated by the words of the holy scriptures.

1. It is a fact known to one and all of the educated ones in the world that man is a created being by the Creator who is acknowledgly EverLiving, Alwise and Omnipotent Absolutely Supreme Authority.
2. Man in the primitive stages of the life of his specie, led a wild life in the jungles without any morals to control or law to bind his thought or action with Might as the Right to survive.
3. The Almerciful Lord Creator of the Universe with His gracious will to educate man and train him for the higher object of his creation and to qualify him for the glorious heights of the heavenly bliss sent apostle after apostle from Him.
4. Apostles of God were sent in every part of the earth to the people inhabiting it. Some were sent as mere preachers and some with scriptures, some were for a limited zone and some for a wider area – some superior to the others. Some as law givers as Moses and some as the renewers of the already given law like Jesus. Most of them prophesying the advent of the Last or the Final of God's Apostles and prophets.
5. Of the children of Adam God had chosen a particular lineage, and the Lineage was particularly blessed to be progenitors of the selected apostles of His. Abraham was given the Imamat to be perpetuated in his seed but teaching only those free from iniquity.
6. The Divine device was to present a pathetic sight of sacrifice in the way of the Lord, depicting the sublime submission to the Divine Will, which is the only source or the only Royal Road to the heavenly bliss in store for man who earns it.
7. A rehearsal of the divinely destined drama of the sacrifice was made employing Abraham and his son Ishmael for the trial.
8. Abraham and Ishmael proved true the selection but the event was not to be as it was temporarily enacted only as a trial. The aim behind its proper enactment was too high, too great and too grave.

There was yet no demand for them to be presented on a mount unseen by any man and it was not unknown to the human world. Just to make Abraham pass the knife that a living body was placed under it.

9. Abraham was told by the Lord that the divinely designed event was a Great Sacrifice.

10. Abraham was promised that God's Covenant will be established with him and his seed. Abraham had two Sons Ishmael (through Lady Hagar) and Isaac (through Lady Sarah) but the promise to Abraham even according to the Bible of the Christian Church does not mention the name of any of the two sons, but only it was said that the Covenant will be with Abraham and his seed.

“And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and in thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant.” (Old Testament, Genesis 16:7)

The divinity of the purity, physical as well as spiritual endowed in Abraham flew in both the channels of his seed, Ishmael and Isaac and Twelve Princes (Imams) were promised in the seed of Ishmael (Old Testament, Genesis 18:20).

12. The race that sprang of Isaac called the Israelites got corrupt and rebellious and violated the Covenant of God—the prophets that were raised among them either they killed them (.....) or they deified them and worshipped them as the Sons of God and those of the apostles they did not follow, they blackmailed them with horrible charges to create hatred against them (.....) The Israelites who hated Jesus charged the Holy Virgin Mary of adultery for having given birth to Jesus, without a male partner to her. At last the Kingdom of God was taken away from the seed of Isaac and given to another nation (the seed of Ishmael). Jesus informed them of it:

“Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken front you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” (Matthew 21:43)

13. The higher truth about the life divine of the process of the complete submission to the Absolute to attain the glorious heights of eternal bliss could not be given in its fullness to man in his mental evolutionary stages. It has to be administered gradually. Jesus clearly announced that he could give out to the people many things for they could not bear it then (.....) and prophesied about the advent of the Spirit of Truth who would fill the world with righteousness and truth (.....)

14. Moses was told by the Lord about the Prophet to come in whose mouth will the Lord put His words whom everyone would hearken (.....)

15. The great sage of India Buddha had prophesied of the advent of the Last Buddha called '*Maetrea*' in the Pali language which in Arabic means '*Rahmat*' the title with which the Holy Prophet Muhammad has been addressed in the words of God (. . . .).

16. At last came the Last of the apostles of God—the Prophet prophesied to Moses— The Spirit of Truth,

the Holy Ghost prophesied by Jesus and the Maetrea prophesied by Buddha the Holy Prophet Muhammad in the seed of Abraham through his son Ishmael to give out the truth in its fulness about the Kingdom of God—preaching the truthfulness and the purity physical and spiritual of the personalities of all the preceding prophets who had been blackmailed by the Israelites—Preaching the Absolute Unity of God and brotherhood of man and the commitment of man to his Lord—with a final code in the Last Revealed Word of God the Holy Qur'an as the final code of discipline for human life on earth—Since all the previous scriptures were either made extinct or corrupted this Final Word of God came with a challenge that it will be preserved by God Himself for it had to remain current forever for there was no prophet had to come after the Holy Prophet.

17. To preserve the purity of the Final Word from God to man and to maintain the originality of its teachings and its practice, the institution of the Imamatus was started to succeed the Last Apostle of God for the guidance of man against his getting astray after being guided aright. The Imams had to be brought forth from the family of the Holy Prophet himself hence the holy family was sent into this world duly purified by God Himself ((Holy Qur'an, 33:33).

18. The Holy Prophet had taken all possible steps to introduce the position of his Ahlul Bayt, particularly of Ali identified with the Holy Prophet in his purity, physical and spiritual, At the very outset of the apostolic mission and also at the conclusion of it Ali was declared in clear cut words as the Caliph Vicegerent, Brother, and the Master or the Maula, or the Amir, in the place of the Holy Prophet.

19. On the very first day of his advent into this world, Husayn's mission in this world and the fate in store for him was declared out by the Holy Prophet.

20. As misfortune would have it, immediately as the Holy Prophet departed from this world, the Ahlul Bayt were alienated from their position preached by the Holy Prophet, and the people forgot all that was said about Ali and Ali's appointment in the place of the Holy Prophet.

21. The final word of the Holy Prophet to the people was that he had left Two important things behind him; the Book of God the Holy Qur'an and his Ahlul Bayt and the people would be attached to these Two.

22. With alienation of the Holy Ahlul Bayt, the religion got gradually corrupted and by the time of Yazid son of Mu'awiyah son of Abu Sufyan, the disbelief in the Holy Qur'an being the revealed word of God and the Holy Prophet Muhammad being the Apostle of God was openly pronounced from the throne and people had become irreligious and the teachings of Islam were openly defied, the Religion of Islam was on the verge of being annihilated for ever, and the Holy Qur'an had practically lost its original value as the Word of God.

The question of rescuing the Holy Qur'an and its faith, Islam, arose demanded the one like the Holy Prophet to defy the falsehood and even to offer the greatest sacrifices it may need. None but one from the family of the Holy Prophet, the one purified by God Himself (Qur'an 33:33) could do it and from

among the divinely purified ones only Husayn was now left in the world, to face the situation. The sacrifice the task needed was the Greatest One, i.e., the '*Zibhe Azeem*'.

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