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Speech 1: Basic Understanding of Wilayat (Guardianship)

Our talk is on the subject of Wilayat. The way we extract the topic of Wilayat from Qur'an is seldom described. However, the ears of a shi'ah are very much in tune with the word, "Wilayat" (guardianship). The subject of Wilayat is there with all sanctity and respect in our supplications, hymns for Allah, our traditions and the prevalent generally accepted thoughts. As a shi'ah we always consider ourselves holders of Wilayat and pray that Allah keeps us on Wilayat and that we die while believing in Wilayat.

We wish to discuss the basic understanding of Wilayat. We will certainly come to the Wilayat of Ali Ibn Abi Talib; but for the time being our talk is about the earlier stages.

We want to extract the meaning of Wilayat from the magnificent verses of the glorious Qur'an so you can see how broad and fascinating the principle of Wilayat is. And how a nation, a group or the followers of a certain faith can fall into chaos and disunity if they do not practice the principle of Wilayat.

In light of this discussion you will also see and understand very well that the prayer of a person not believing in Wilayat is not real prayer, his fast is not real fast and his worship is not true worship.

We also come to realize from this discourse that a society or a nation devoid of Wilayat may spend all their lives in prayers and fasting and give all their wealth in charity, yet not be entitled to the pleasure of Allah.

To summarize, in light of this discussion the meanings of the traditions about Wilayat can be comprehended. We repeatedly state sentences and words from one well known tradition:

لَوْ أَنَّ رَجُلًا قَامَ لَيْلَهُ وَصَامَ نَهَارَهُ وَتَصَدَّقَ بِجَمِيعِ مَالِهِ وَحَجَّ جَمِيعَ دَهْرِهِ وَلَمْ يَعْرِفْ وَلَايَةَ وَلِيِّ اللَّهِ فَيُؤَالِيهِ وَيَكُونُ جَمِيعُ أَعْمَالِهِ بِدَلَالَتِهِ إِلَيْهِ؛ مَا كَانَ لَهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ حَقٌّ فِي ثَوَابِهِ

*If someone prays the whole night while standing, not just in the month of Ramadan but his whole life; fasts all year long; gives away all his possessions in the name of Allah; and performs Hajj every year his whole life; but he does not know the Wilayat of the Wali (guardian) from Allah so that he could follow him after knowing him and as a result all his deeds could be performed under the guidance of this Wali from Allah, then whatever this person does, goes to waste; it is of no use.*¹

If you contemplate on this discourse well and think about the conclusions drawn from the Qur'anic verses, you will realize that Wilayat is continuation of Prophethood; it is not something detached from it; rather it is a supplement and completion of Prophethood.

Now we will see that in the absence of Wilayat, Prophethood is rendered deficient. So it is important that there should be a short discussion on the subject of Prophethood. We should discuss its principles and with this context we gradually enter the subject of Wilayat. However, it is important to mention that it is extremely difficult to talk on this subject and to elaborate on it is even harder.

The reason is that on the subject of Wilayat an average person's mind is so cluttered with weak, hollow and illogical ideas that when we present the correct material in line with Qur'an and Hadith, there will arise one of two situations – either the things we discuss will muddle up with the stuff they already have in their minds or whatever is presented people will feel alien to. So this discussion is very tricky but we seek divine guidance from Allah (swt) and will try to complete this discussion in a few days, God willing.

What was the purpose of coming of Allah's Prophet?

The Prophet came to take the human beings to the zenith of humanity; he came to endow people with Allah's virtues; he came to push the morals to perfection and according to the tradition²:

إِنِّي بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

The Prophet came to build up people. He came to develop and enhance this creation called human being.

Now what is to be seen is the methods the Prophet employs to build up people; what means he exploits and how he develops people.

- Does he establish a school (madressa)?
- Does he set up an institution of philosophy?
- Does he build a monastery and a place of worship?

The Prophet sets up a factory for manufacturing human beings. He prefers that even if it takes ten or

twenty years, a plant should be built that automatically produces perfect human beings to his liking.

So to produce such humans the Prophet uses the human-building factory and this factory is the Islamic society and system. This is the basic point that will be the focus of our discussion.

Everyone says that the Prophet wants to make humans. They all say that the Prophet came to educate and train and they fully understand it. However, what needs to be carefully understood is that the Prophet did not take every individual by his hand to a corner and sing songs of Allah's love. The prophets did not set up institutions of knowledge and philosophy to train a few pupils and then sent them to the far corners of the earth to guide people. The work of the Prophet was much more robust and deep. He establishes a factory that only produces humans and that factory is the "Islamic Society".

What is an Islamic society? And what is its composition?

This is a separate discussion and is not part of our talk. However, we find it necessary to shed a brief light on this subject for some elaboration.

Islamic society is a society and culture whose ultimate reign is in the Hands of God; the laws of this society are from Allah; the boundaries in this society are decreed by Allah; positions and status in this society are awarded in light of Allah's teachings; and based on the same teachings the positions and status can be taken away.

As is the norm with some people knowledgeable about societies, if we draw a society in the shape of a triangle, God is at the top of the Islamic society triangle and all humans are below Him. The institutions in this society are set up on the basis of religion; the laws of war and peace are created according to Allah's decrees; God's religion dictates communal relationships, economy, governance, rights and everything else; all are promulgated according to Allah's religion and Allah's religion is in the back of all these laws. This is called Islamic society.

This is how the Prophet formed a society in Madina on his arrival. God ruled in this society and in practice the governance was by God's representative, the Prophet. The Prophet legislated and implemented the laws. The Prophet had the responsibility of guiding and governing in the society.

In a society that is fully in the hands of God, communal prayers, speech (khtuba) after the prayers and the battlefield songs all take on the same flavor. In the same mosque where Allah's Prophet established communal prayers, he would go on the pulpit to address people, he would teach, train and cleanse their inner selves. The standard of war (jihad) was brought here; the Prophet would raise it and give it to Usama Bin Zaid or some other believer commander and say:

إِنْطَلِقُوا عَلَى اسْمِ اللَّهِ

"Go on in the name of Allah," and would give instructions for victory over the enemy. In the same mosque Allah's Prophet would issue Allah's orders; in the same mosque the Prophet would set up court; from the same mosque the Prophet ran governance and economy of the society; charity was collected and distributed in the same mosque. In the same mosque lectures were given; prayers and supplications were held; war songs were sung; financial and economic problems were solved; in short, affairs of this world and the next were managed in the house of Allah under the guidance of the Prophet. This is Islamic Society.

The prophets come to establish such a society. Every person living in such a society becomes a human being. Even if he cannot become a perfect human being, he is forced to adopt ways of human beings. Anyone who wants to become a good person, he can in a society established by the Prophet, whereas, it becomes a challenge in a non-God-centered society.

In non-Islamic and non-God-centered societies people want to become good but they have hard time. They want to be religious but they have difficulty. They don't want to give and take usury but you see that they cannot avoid it.

In such a society a woman wants to protect her chastity just the way Islam stipulates it but the environment does not let her. The common practices in such a society take a person away from remembrance of God. Pictures, movies, liberal interaction and conversation – all these things – move people away from God and alienate their hearts from remembrance of God. However, the situation is opposite in an Islamic society.

In an Islamic society the market, the mosque, the government institutions, friends, relatives, head of the family, the young of the household – all of them – remind a person of God; they pull him towards God; align him with God; establish relationship with God; make him a servant of God and move him away from serving anyone other than God.

If the Islamic society of the Prophet's time had stayed for another 50 years and his leadership had continued or after the Prophet Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the same leader and guardian who was appointed by the Prophet, had become the heir to the Prophet, believe me there would not have been a single hypocrite after 50 years. All the members of the society would have become real believers. If Ali's government had been established after the Prophet's government, this human-making society would have converted all phonies to pure hearted people for sure; it would have turned hypocrite hearts to believers; all those people whose souls were ignorant of true belief would have gotten to know God and belief. Islamic society bears such characteristics.

The prophets come to establish such societies. Once the society is in place, just the way a factory produces large quantities, people come out of this human-making factory in droves of Muslims – on the surface and at heart; true Muslims and believers. So the prophets come to perform this task.

We had submitted that we would start the Wilayat discussion from its root.

When the Prophet came with the Islamic thought and started inviting people towards it, could he have run the affairs of the society on his own? Does the society not need institutions to run it? Aren't some people needed to run these organizations? Isn't there a requirement for an army to defend this society against enemy's designs? Isn't there a need for such people who would side with the Prophet and spread his message?. Most definitely such people are needed and all this work is done in the usual way with ways and means. The prophets in most of their activities make use of the resources normally available.

The Prophet comes to build his desired society – a society that is a factory for human-making. There is a need for a united and focused group – that has belief and faith in this school of thought from the deepest of hearts and moves towards the goal with steadfastness and zeal. The Prophet understands the need for such a group right from the beginning so his first task is to prepare and launch a united and mutually agreeable group. The Prophet acting on the Qur'anic verses creates such a group by adopting a soft counseling manner.

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

Invite people towards your creator through wisdom and fine counseling.[3](#)

The Prophet through virtuous counseling, Qur'anic verses and the effect of his speech pulls people's hearts towards God's religion and gathers them around him in the first phase. This gathering of people around the Prophet creates the first group. So first of all through his invitation, the Prophet brings into being a group – a rank of people. He creates a front against the forces of infidelity.

What people compose this group?

They are the believing, faithful and persevering Muslims. This group is formulated through accumulation of those:

لَا تَأْخُذُ هُمْ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةً لَّائِمٌ

"Who cannot be swerved from the path of Allah by the censure of the censurers."[4](#)

These are the early Muslims who put together a front in the ignorant society. In other words they are the Muslims from the bosoms of Islam living in the ignorant society. If we want to keep alive this weak and frail force – that came into being in the name of Islam and Muslims – in the ignorant society full of trials and tribulations; if we want that this group, this front does not disappear or vanish, it is imperative that this group of Muslims stays together like a steel wall. These Muslims should be connected together in such a way that nothing could separate them from each other. In today's language a strong party discipline should be set up among the Muslims. They should be tied together with a strong force and

they should be kept far away as much as possible from other fronts, other movements and the opposing forces.

Why?

Because they are in a minority.

It is possible that the ideology of a group that is in minority may be affected by the majority's ideology; the group's actions, its status and its personality may merge and vanish into the status, personality and actions of the majority.

So in order to protect them from dissolving and disappearing and keeping them intact as a group, they are linked together as tightly as possible and kept away from other fronts and ranks in every possible way; so that an Islamic society could be built through their strong hands in future that they grasp the reigns of and take it forward. They become the helpers of the Prophet. Just like a group of mountaineers who are crossing a very difficult mountain pass, ten people holding staffs are crossing a narrow and dangerous path and are going through twisting and turning valleys *en route* to the mountain top.

These people are told to link up, tie to each other and not move individually. If they are left alone, there is danger of stumbling so they are tied together with a strong force. In addition to linking together they are instructed not to carry too much weight, not to look around, just focus on the track ahead and the senses should attend to only the task at hand. These people strongly tie their backs and hands together so in case one of them starts to fall, the others would catch him.

This strong tie between the mountaineers depicts the linkage among the Muslims of the early Islam.

Have Qur'an and traditions (hadith) given a name to this strong linkage and bond?

This union among the Muslims of the early period of Islam that ties them together in such a way that it is not possible to break it; the bond that separates them from other ranks in the society; the bond that results in the Muslims holding each other's hands; what name has been given to it by Qur'an and hadith?

This bond is called Wilayat (guardianship).

So in the early terminology of Qur'an Wilayat is the tie, the unification in the ranks, the same exact thought process, being in search of a single purpose and a strong linkage between a group of people with the same faith and belief aiming for the same goal.

The people belonging to this group should be connected to each other as much as possible and should stay away from other ranks, centers and elements.

Why?

So that they are not finished and do not dissolve into others. It is called Wilayat in the glorious Qur'an.

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, unites and ties the first group of Muslims; he turns them into brothers; he moulds them into a single body; through them he develops the nation of Islam and brings into being the Islamic society.

God willing as we go forward you will see in the verses of Qur'an that the Prophet through the unity and bond between the Muslims of early Islam blocks the path of arch enemies and opposing forces. He separates his hand-crafted group from other groups present in the society. He stops them from melting into the group of Jews, Christians and polytheists and tries hard to keep their ranks connected and united. It is done because if the Muslims are not in this state; if Wilayat does not exist between them; if they are not fully bonded together and if differences arise between them, they will not be able to carry the weight of this charge on their shoulders to the final destination.

Even afterwards when the Islamic society turns into a great nation, the need for Wilayat persists.

What kind of Wilayat is essential for a nation and why is it so important, we will explain later. However, if we stop to reflect, some gist of the Wilayat the Shi'ahs talk about will become clear to us.

In a world filled with darkness, in an ignorant society, a small group needs to stay bonded for its survival. If that group is not tied together, it would be very difficult to stay alive. As an example, we mentioned the group of Muslims from early days of Islam in Makka's ignorant society or the first group of Muslims who migrated to Madina. Another example is the small faction of Shi'ahs during the times of caliphates opposed to Shi'ahs and Islam.

Could the Shi'ahs have survived easily?

Did the propaganda tactics, restrictions, prisons, torture and murder allow them to exist? To make matters worse this was a group that had certain ideology and was totally opposed to the governments at the time and a headache for them.

In spite of all this, how did this group live on?

It endured because Wilayat created an astonishing bond and unity among the Shi'ahs so that the Shi'ah movement under the auspices of Wilayat could endure among the other movements of the time.

Imagine a big river. Streams of water are entering from different directions. These streams are moving very fast and the river surface is turbulent with whirlpools forming. The different streams are crashing and melting into each other with the river advancing.

Amidst all the polluted and dirty streams there is one stream of clean, sweet and exquisitely translucent water moving along in a bizarre manner. This water is safe and whole. What is surprising is that the color of this water does not degrade in any way; it does not acquire the rancidity and brackishness of other waters; it keeps its sweet taste, translucency and purity intact while moving forward.

Consider an analogy of this river with the Islamic world during the reigns of Umayyads and Abbasids. All sorts of ideological, political and active movements were co-existing. You take a look from the beginning to the end. You will find the Shi'ah movement as very ordinary and almost non-existing like a thin line in this peculiar storm; however, it has kept itself protected and unpolluted. Neither its taste has deteriorated nor it has lost its lucidity. It did not acquire the color, odor and taste of the other waters at all; it survived and kept its forward momentum.

What is it that shielded it?

What caused the continued existence of the Shi'ah movement?

It is the presence of the Wali (Guardian) who preaches Wilayat to the people and his followers; he binds them together; makes them kind to each other; he promotes Wilayat; and protects unity, agreement and harmony among the people in the ranks.

This is one of the facets of Shi'ah Wilayat that has been emphasized a great deal. There are several other aspects that we will be taking a look at.

So Wilayat is a bond.

The glorious Qur'an declares believers to be guardians of each other and considers the true believers connected and tied with each other. In our traditions a Shi'ah is called a believer. In that respect belief implies a specific Shi'ah ideology based on Wilayat. It means adopting Islam from Shi'ah point of view and validating Islam with the logic that Shi'as attest to.

We see that in the days of our Imams, this kind of Shi'ahs were linked together; they were declared brothers so that they could keep the Shi'ah movement alive in history. If such an action was not taken, Shi'ahs would have vanished; their ideology would have become extinct just the way it happened to many other sects that lost their personality and were totally wiped out.

Wilayat (Guardianship) of the Wali (Guardian) of Allah

In any case this is one of the several aspects of Wilayat. Now God willing we will present another side of Wilayat that is probably more important in some respects and that is the Wilayat of Allah's Wali.

We have understood the mutual Wilayat of people. What does the Wilayat of Allah's Wali represent? What is the meaning of Ali Ibn Talib's Wilayat? What does the Wilayat of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq signify? Why is it important for us to have Wilayat of Imams?

Some people think that Wilayat of Imams means that we simply love them. These people have a big misconception. Wilayat is not just loving them.

Is it possible to find one person in the Muslim world who does not love the fourteen Infallibles and the

family of the Prophet? Do all these people have Wilayat?

Is there anyone who is an enemy of the Imams?

Were all those, who fought against them in the early days of Islam, their enemies?

No, many of them loved the Imams. However, they succumbed to the worldly desires to fight against them in spite of the fact that they knew the station of these personalities.

When the Abbasid Khaleefa Mansoor was told about the demise of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq he started crying profusely. Do you think he was just pretending? Was he just shedding crocodile's tears in front of his servants? Was he just acting in front of Rab'i Hajib? This was not just a show; in actuality he felt sorrow. He was really sad on Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq's passing away.

But who martyred Imam?

Imam Jafa Saqiq was poisoned on the orders of Mansur himself.

However, when he was told that the job had been done, his heart trembled.

So did Mansur have Wilayat?

Some people who say that Abbasid Khaleefa, Mamun Abbasi, was a Shi'ah, are misconceived.

Do we know what the word "Shi'ah" means?

Will we call someone a Shi'ah who recognizes that Imam Reza was right?

Will only his knowledge of this fact render him a Shi'ah?

If such is the case, then Mamun Abbasi, Haroon Rasheed, Mansur, Mu'awiyah and Yazeed, all of them were Shi'ahs of a higher grade than others.

Did those who fought against the Master of Believers, Ali, not love the Imam? Why not? Most of them loved Imam Ali.

So then, were they Shi'ahs? Did they have Wilayat?

No, Wilayat is something else. Wilayat is above these things.

Once we understand the Wilayat of Ali Ibn Abi Talib and that of other Imams and know what Wilayat is, then we should revert to ourselves and see if we really have Wilayat.

At this juncture if we find that we do not have Wilayat, then we should pray to Allah (swt) to seek Wilayat and we should struggle in its pursuit.

Some people think that they have Wilayat for the Household of the Prophet, just because they have love and respect in their hearts for the Imams.

No, this is not Wilayat. Wilayat is something beyond.

Later we will explain the meanings of Wilayat of the Imams; how we can declare the Imams our Wali and how we can claim to possess their Wilayat. After this explanation we will realize how our assertion about the Wilayat of the Imams is unreal and based on ignorance.

During the days of Eid-Ghadeer people supplicate:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَنَا مِنَ الْمُتَمَسِّكِينَ بِوِلَايَةِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Praise be to Allah who made us adherents of Wilayat of Ali Ibn Abi Talib.

We tell our friends that we should not say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَنَا

Praise be to Allah who made us.

As it might be a lie. Instead we should say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُتَمَسِّكِينَ بِوِلَايَةِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

O' Allah! Make us adherents of Wilayat of Ali Ibn Abi Talib.

Because we should check if we really are devotees of Wilayat or not.

God willing, this point will become clear to us that it is one of the characteristics of Wilayat.

The gist of our discussion today is that for a group of people who are struggling in God's way and Wilayat in the Muslim nation, their Wilayat implies that there should be maximum nearness and connection between the group members; their hearts should be bonded together; and as much as possible they should stay away from their rival centers and those whose thinking is opposite to their own and who act against them.

This is the meaning of Wilayat.

This fact has been described in the early verses of Surah Mumtahina⁵ so we think that from the perspective of this topic, the surah could even be labeled Surah Wilayat.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ

In some translations it says, ***"O' those who believe don't befriend My enemies and your enemies."***

These are incomplete meanings. It is not a question of only friendship and love; it is more than that. Don't make them a Wali (guardian); don't consider them part of your group and don't consider yourself part of their ranks. Don't give space next to you to someone who is an enemy of God and yourself; instead consider him your rival, your enemy and adversary.

تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ

Don't consider them part of your ranks so as to start sending them messages of friendship.

وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

When you know that they have denied the truth that has been sent down by your Lord.

يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ

These people are evicting the Prophet and you out of your land.

أَنْ تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ

Only because you believe in your Lord, Allah.

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَادًا فِي سَبِيلِي وَابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِي

If you have come out to fight (jihad) in My way and for seeking My pleasure, then don't seek friendship and help from My enemies and your enemies.

If you really are truthful and struggling in My way, then you do not have the right to put Mine and your enemies in your ranks and to make them your friends and helpers.

However, the later verses further clarify who are infidels in the eyes of God and then the infidels have been divided into groups in these verses.

تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ

You love them secretly.

وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا خَفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ

And whatever you do openly and secretly I know very well.

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْهُ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

And whoever among you extends a hand of friendship and cooperation towards the enemies of God and thinks and shows himself to be one of them, has gone astray from the path of moderation.

It is important to mention that these verses were revealed because of one individual, Hatib Bin Abi Balt'a. Hatib was a Muslim with weak faith. When the Prophet of Islam decided to fight with the Quraish infidels, Hatib thought that the Prophet might be defeated in the battle and those of his relatives who were living among infidels might come in harm's way while he was in the army of the Prophet. He tried to play a trick. He thought while he was fighting alongside the Prophet and earning the rewards of fighting in the name of Allah, as a precautionary measure might as well write a letter to the infidels and express his love and loyalty to them. What is the harm? When I face them in the battlefield I will not act on this letter. But it does not hurt to create a soft corner in the hearts of the infidels and get their sympathies by writing this letter. God will be pleased and my interests will not suffer.

There is an anecdote. There happened to be a quarrel between an influential person and the chief of an area. One of those watching the scene asked another one, "who is right?" The other one replied, "both are right as we have to stay on good terms with both."

So Hatib wrote the letter to the chiefs of Quraish and signed it as well so they know that Hatib was their well-wisher and a friend. Then he sent this letter to Makka through a woman. The Prophet found out about this letter through revelation and he sent Imam Ali and a few others who got hold of the woman. They forced her to produce the letter.

The Prophet asked Hatib, "why did you do that? Why were you disclosing the battle and strategy secrets to the enemies?" He replied, "O' Prophet of Allah! I have some friends and relatives there. I was concerned that they might suffer some harm so I tried to create a soft corner in the hearts of the polytheists for myself."

In response the verse says, "don't fall prey to misconceptions; their hearts will not be soft for you. Those who are opposed to your ideology; those who suffer because of your religion and faith; those who are determined to destroy your religion and faith, will never be your friends."

The next verse while explaining this point says:

إِنَّ يَتَقَفُّوكُمْ يَكُونُوا لَكُمْ أَعْدَاءً

If they overpower you, they will turn out to be your enemies.

O' Hatib Bin Abi Balt'a! don't think that if you help them, they will take care of you. This is not going to happen. As a matter of fact, if you help them, they will overpower you even more and subject you to extreme oppression.

وَيَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالسُّوءِ

And they will use their hands and tongue against you.

They will suppress you even more; ridicule you; mock you and treat you like nobody; they will not think of you as a human being.

Don't think that this help will serve you.

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ

They will want you to be infidels.

If they overpower you, they will not allow you to have an iota of faith in your heart. Don't think that they will let you free to stay a Muslim and practice the Islamic duties.

The next verse is about the relatives of Hatib Bin Abi Balt'a and those of the other Hatibs of the history. It says point blank, "For the sake of your children and your relatives you are prepared to strike a deal with God's enemies; you are ignoring God's orders to seek the love of His worthless servants and to protect yours and your relatives' interests; and you are befriending God's enemies.

After all how are your children and relatives going to benefit you?

How is this young man for whose employment you are willing to make a deal with Quraish going to help you? Will he be able to save you from God's punishment?

This ignorant Hatib was cooperating with the infidels and the enemies of the Prophet to protect his friends and relatives from harm. How much can the friends and relatives be of help to a person who is willing to invite the Lord's wrath and severe punishment?

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُم أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ

Your offspring and relatives do not give you any benefit.

يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ

On the day of judgment you will be separated from them.

Or if we read and interpret it as follows:

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ

On the day of judgment your offspring and relatives will not be able to offer you any benefit.

يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ

God will put a distance between you and them.

As the God of the universe says in Surah A'bas:

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ

That day a person will avoid his brother, his parents, his kind wife and his beloved children[6](#)

Keep in mind that the same children for whom you are so worried today, you will run away from on the Day of Judgment and they will flee from you; and both will run away from other people; every human being will take flight from another human being; none of them will have the nerve to ask another person of his well-being.

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ

Everyone will be so desperate for himself that he will be of no benefit to anybody else. [7](#)

Those people, who in order to provide comfort and luxury to their children are willing to turn away from success in this world and the hereafter and to accept wretchedness, disgrace and animosity, should be aware of this logic of Qur'an; maybe they will come to their senses.

God of the universe says in Surah Mumtahina as well:

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ أَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

O' believers! understand that on the Day of Judgment your offspring and relatives will be of no benefit to you; there will be total separation between them and you; and God knows very well what you do. [8](#)

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ

For you believers Abraham and his followers are best of role models. [9](#)

See what Abraham and his companions and followers have done. Just do the same.

What had they done?

They told the misguided people of their time, the big satan and the false gods, "we are disgusted with you and your gods; we deny you and turn away from you; there will always be enmity, hatred and malice between us."

حَتَّىٰ تَوَمِّنُوا بِإِلَهِهِ وَحْدَهُ

The only way to friendship and peace between us is for you to come and accept our faith.

So it is being explicitly stated, "O' believers! act like Abraham".

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ

Abraham and his followers are best of role models for you believers.

إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرْهَؤُنَا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

When he told his people, "We loathe you and everything that you worship other than God."

كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا

We have denied you and malice and enmity between us have become evident.

حَتَّىٰ تَوَمِّنُوا بِإِلَهِهِ وَحْدَهُ

Until you believe in one God.

إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ

Except what Abraham told his uncle [10](#).

This was an exception where Abraham did not completely disconnect from the infidels. This exception was when he told his uncle:

لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ

I will pray for your atonement.

وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ

I have received no means from God to defend you with.

In other words he told his uncle, "don't think that just because I consider myself God's servant, you will enter paradise for being my uncle. No, such is not the case. I cannot take you to heaven. I can beseech to God for you that He may forgive your sins and you become a believer.

رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ- رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

He prayed, "Our Lord! in Thee do we trust, and to Thee do we turn in repentance; to Thee is our final goal. Our Lord! make us not a trial for the unbelievers; but forgive us, our Lord! for Thou is the Exalted, the Mighty and Wise." [11](#)

These were the supplications of Abraham.

Then the Glorious Qur'an says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

For you believers Abraham and his followers are best of role models.

لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ

For those who have hope in God and the Day of the Judgment.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

And for the one who disobeys, turns away from the Word of the Lord and is neglectful, God is independent and praiseworthy and no harm will be done to His Grandeur.

If you make a deal with the enemies, your name and humanity will be defiled and no harm will be done to the Lord. You should keep in mind this sentence of Abraham. Abraham and his companions told the infidels and the misguided of the time:

إِنَّا بَرِئُوا مِنْكُمْ

We are disgusted with you.

Imam Sajjad and his companions had similar conversations with the misguided of their time. There is a tradition in Biharul Anwar that says, "Yahya Ibn Umme Tavi, a companion of fourth Imam Zainul Abideen, used to come to Nabavi Mosque and stand facing the people; same people who were apparently lovers of the family of the Prophet; same people among whom Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn had spent twenty years of their lives; same people who were neither Umayyads nor affiliated with Umayyads."

What sort of people were they?

They were cowards. They were frightened by the scary environment created by the Umayyads and deserted the household of Muhammad in Karbala on the day of Ashura. But they had love and respect for the family of the Prophet.

Yahya Ibn Umme Tavi used to stand in front of such people and repeat this Qur'anic verse:

كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ

We have turned away from you and malice and animosity have become apparent between you and us.

He said the same thing that Abraham used to say to the infidels, polytheists and misguided of his time.

You see, it is the same Wilayat. Abraham had Wilayat. The Shi'ahs of Imam Sajjad also had Wilayat at that time. We should stick with each other and away from enemies. If any of Imam Sajjad's Shi'ahs joined the enemy due to greed or fear, he stepped out of the Wilayat of Imam Sajjad. He was no longer

a part of Imam Sajjad's group. So a close pupil of Imam Sajjad told these people:

كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ

We have turned away from you and malice and animosity have become evident between you and us.

Yahya Ibn Umme TaviI was one of the best and highly acclaimed companions of Imam Sajjad. What happened to this great Muslim was that Hajjaj bin Yusuf captured him, cut off his right hand, then his left hand, then his left foot, then his right foot. However, he continued to praise the family of the Prophet. His tongue was severed; ultimately he left this world. Even under such circumstances he organized the Shi'ahs, built the palace of Shi'ah after Imam Sajjad and strengthened and fortified it.

- [1.](#) Usul al-Kafi, Ch. Daa'imul Islam, Tradition 5.
- [2.](#) "Indeed I was sent[by Allah] to perfect the morals and ethics". Bihar, vol. 16, pg.210.
- [3.](#) Ch. 16, Nahal, verse 125.
- [4.](#) Nahjul Balagha, speeCh. 190.
- [5.](#) All the following verses are of Ch. 60, Mumtahina.
- [6.](#) Ch. 80 A'bas, verses 34–36.
- [7.](#) Ch. 80 A'bas, verse 37.
- [8.](#) Ch. 60 Mumtahina, verse 3.
- [9.](#) Ch. 60 Mumtahina, verse 4.
- [10.](#) Here "ab" means uncle and not father; "ab" alludes to the uncle of Abraham or his mother's husband; in any case this person addressed here was Azer.
- [11.](#) Ch. 60 Mumtahina, verses 4–5.

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