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## Speech 4: Practical Establishment of Wilayat

### Different Aspects of Wilayat

In continuation of previous discussions our objective is to explain the expected difficulties related to Wilayat. Our discussion is about Wilayat. What is Wilayat; where does Glorious Qur'an talk about Wilayat; and what dimensions, angles and aspects does it consist of? We have described these things before. There are some subjects that are considered part of Wilayat, although each of these subjects has a principle and a dimension in its own right. We should benefit from these matters in order to set the direction of the society based on Islam and to point towards the line of action for the Islamic society. In the next few lines we will describe these topics one by one.

First of all we have proved through Glorious Qur'an that in order to preserve the internal unity and bonding of the Islamic society and to secure it from external affiliations it is imperative that there should be present a central force in the Islamic society. This force should oversee all the activities of the society; it should direct its direction in all fields as well as its policies; and it should organize and guide different groups and associations in the society. We had declared this force the Wali or the Ruler – in other words, a personality that all forces seek guidance from and who is turned to in all matters. In brief he is a person who controls the reigns of the Islamic society in both ideology and practice; he is called a "Wali".

Who can this individual be?

If you tell us, "we want to identify the Wali", do we have a short answer? We have answered this question several times in our previous talks and you know it. However, we wish to assess it from logical point of view and through the natural flow of this point.

In response to this question the Glorious Qur'an has a verse that says, "The real Wali of the society is God." There is no Ruler of the Islamic society except God. Monotheism tells us the same thing and prophethood also proves the same principle.

Now you see Wilayat tells us the same thing. Basically the principles of a school of thought and faith should be such that every principle produces the same result that others are providing. It should not be that the conclusion we draw from one principle should be contrary to what we draw from other principles.

It is a pity that the Islam currently in the minds of the simple Muslims, leads to opposing inferences from different principles. So the entity that has the right to *enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong*, to set the direction of the Islamic society and to implement the commandments; in short has the right to rule in all aspects of the human life is God.

وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

### **Allah is the Wali of the Faithful.**

We have pondered over the verses that have the word Wali or Walis in them and have studied them all briefly. We have observed that **God is Islamic Society's Wali, there is no helper for the faithful other than God and God should be the Ruler over all affairs of mankind** is a subject that is consistently upheld in the Glorious Qur'an.

The meanings may be confusing to some people and we want to remind them that our discussion is not about Lord of the Worlds' Innate Rule i.e., Rule by Creation. It is a fact that the Lord manages the movement of the earth and the skies with His Controlling Will. Our talk relates to the fact that the laws in the peoples' lives and the individual and the community relationships in the Islamic society should be based on the Commandments from God. In other words the legal Ruler of the Islamic and Qur'anic society under the Islamic system and that of Imam Ali could only be God and only God.

Now a question arises, "what is meant by **the Ruler is God?**"

The Sublime Lord is not going to come to the people to implement His commandments.

Furthermore, only a human being can rule over other humans. It is vital that the control of people's affairs should be in the hands of a person. However, when we talk about a person, it does not imply that we are emphasizing a single individual and negating plural leadership. What we are saying is that there is a need for an individual who can take the reins of people's affairs in his hands, otherwise, if there is law in a society – it may even be God's law – but there is no commander, ruler or a committee; in short, if there is no administrator to implement the law in a human society, its systems will not function.

Who can such an individual be?

Who is that individual or individuals with the right to rule over the society; who have been recognized as the Wali of the society; who have to take the responsibility of Wilayat.

There have been several answers to this question. Historical facts also give several answers.

Some have said, *أَلْمَلِكُ لِمَنْ غَلَبَ* – *whoever takes charge will be the ruler of the state*. In other words, rule of the jungle. Some have stated *whoever is shrewd deserves to rule*. Others have decreed *one who has support of people should rule*. Still others have declared *one who belongs to a certain tribe is eligible to rule*. Some other people have expressed other logic and ideas.

The religion and school of thought has answered,

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

**verily Allah and His Prophet are your Walis.**

So practically speaking the one who has been given the responsibility of enforcing the law and enjoining good and forbidding evil in the society is the Prophet. So when a Prophet arrives in a society, there is no room for anyone else to rule in his presence. Prophet is the one who should have the power in the society.

However, when the Prophet passes away just like others, who will be the next ruler?

The Qur'anic verse responds, *وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا* – ***the believers are your walis***.

What believers?

Can every faithful who believes in the religion and the school of thought be the Wali and the ruler of the Islamic society? In this situation there will be as many rulers as the believers.

The Qur'anic verse in addition to identifying a known and appointed individual according to legislation as the rightful ruler, rationalizes the selection and provides a measure. It says, *وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا* – *those who believe*. And who really believe. These words are for those who have validated their belief through action. So *وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا* – the first condition is that they are truly believers. There are other conditions too. *الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ* – *those who establish prayer*. It does not say, "those who pray." It is one thing to pray and another to establish prayer. If the objective was to just pray, then *يصلُّون* – *pray* would have been a short message. Establishing prayer in a society means that the soul of the prayer in the society is alive; praying is common in the society. And you know that praying society implies a society in which remembrance of God is present in all its corners.

You know that in a society that is filled with remembrance of God, no crime or evil happens. In such a society the human values are not debased. A society that has all its members remembering God has its compass pointed towards God and all peoples' deeds are for God.

The only reason for the presence of evil in a society and bowing to tyranny and oppression is forgetting God. A society in which God is remembered, has its ruler like Ali Ibn Abi Talib who does not oppress, rather eradicates oppression. It has commoners like Abu Dharr Ghaffari who do not bow to subjugation

in spite of physical abuse, deportation, terrorization and helplessness. They do not leave the path of God. This is a society that remembers God. This is a society where prayer is established. A believer who establishes prayer in the society, i.e, directs the society towards God and fosters remembrance of God in the society is among *الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ* – *those who establish prayer*.

The discourse does not stop here. Next *وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ* – ***they pay alms; they spend in the way of Allah; they distribute wealth justly***. Then He says, *وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ* – ***in the state of bowing (pay alms)***. This is an allusion towards a special event and an anecdote. Some commentators say that *وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ* – means that these people are always kneeling and it does not refer to any special incident.

However, knowledge of Arabic language discards this conjecture and tells us that this phrase means that someone likes equality so much; he is so eager to give in the way of God; it pains him so much to see poverty and a needy that he just cannot wait to finish his prayer. This person is so intensely inclined towards spending in the way of God and he is so involved in this activity that he just cannot wait; has no patience. When he looks at a poor person, he sees a picture that is not appreciated by God and he himself does not like it; at that moment all he has is a ring, so he just takes it off in the state of prayer and hands it over to the needy. This is a known historical incident that occurred in the hands of the Commander of the believers, Imam Ali: while he was praying, a needy person came and the Imam gave him his ring, at this point this verse was revealed.

So as you observed, this verse is hinting towards appointing Ali Ibn Abi Talib as the Wali. It is not doing it the same way as some individuals in history were forced upon people. As an example, when Mu'awiyah wants to appoint his son as his successor, he says, "My successor is my son and he is going to rule after me." The sublime Lord is not appointing the successor of the Prophet the same way. However, since the qualities in a head of the government – total faith in God, establishment of prayer and the fondness for charity to the extent of forgetting oneself – are found in Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the magnificent Lord, while selecting the Imam as the Caliph, is explaining the yardstick and the wisdom behind the criterion for the caliphate. On these grounds the Wali in Islam is an individual sent by God and chosen by God.

The concept is that according to the makeup of this world no one individual has the right to rule over another individual and the only entity that has this right is God; so He can delegate this right to someone based on what is good for the people. And we know that God's work is for the welfare of human beings and not based on force. So He appoints and we should accept His appointments.

The Lord of the worlds appoints the Prophet and the Imams. He also defines certain characteristics for the rulers to come after the Imams and says that those who bear these qualities will be the rulers of Islamic society after the infallible Imams. So He appoints Walis. He Himself is a Wali; his Prophet is a Wali and the twelve Imams coming after the Prophet are Walis. The Imams have been appointed from the family of the Prophet and their count is twelve. For later time periods those who meet the specific criteria have been appointed as rulers.

This was one verse that we described for you. There are other verses in Glorious Qur'an, some of them we have referred to in our speeches and the others you should look for yourselves. There are scores of such verses.

Islam underscores the fact that the reign of people should not be in the hands of such people who would push the ordinary people into hell.

Has the history not pointed it out? Have we not seen what was done to the Islamic society after the glorious initial period of Islam? What tribulation it went through? It became such a society where pious people were not appreciated. It became a society where people would change the measure of piety and goodness and would not recognize their well-wishers, true advisers and reformers. What amount of work was done to bring the members of the society to such a level?

The venomous propaganda by the tyrannical and oppressive rulers in the Islamic society changed the awareness and attitude of people so much that they started calling black white and white black. So when one studies the history of the second and third Hijri century and observes the apathy of people towards the atrocities committed by the repressive khilafat and government, he becomes a picture of hopelessness and desperation. He wonders if they are the same people who had lost patience with Uthman, had put a siege on him and terminated his khilafat in such a brutal manner. Are they the same people who sat motionless while huge sums of money were wasted on the wedding night of the Abbasid Khalifa – the money that could have been spent on improving the condition of a large portion of the Islamic populace. They watched the wealth being squandered on frivolous pleasures but did not utter a word. Money belonging to Muslims was being frittered away on personal affairs and they expressed no concern about its legitimacy.

If someone spends funds belonging to a thousand people on himself, not on luxuries but prayer and fasting, even then is it right?

People used to see such things happening in the midst of the Islamic society and would be least bothered.

We might have related this incident in the past in relevance to some other matter. The most favorite minister, Ja'far Barmaki, of Haroon Rasheed married at the age of 28 or 30. Since Haroon Rasheed loved him very much, the honorable guests at the wedding ceremony noticed that instead of sweets something else was being thrown to the poor above the heads of the bride and groom. All the guests jumped to grab as much as they could. When they looked closely, they found that these were small sachets of the size of one third of the finger made of pure gold. When they opened them, a very fine piece of paper came out. When they opened the paper, in total amazement they found that the paper was an entitlement to land in some part of the country.

In just one night entitlements to God knows 500, 800 or 1000 pieces of land written on exquisite paper packed in gold sachets were sacrificed for the bride and groom and were picked up by people whom the

khalifa did not even know. Suppose that a certain orchard or a piece of land came in the hands of a child or a rascal or some other mean person. The khalifa did not know these people, he just threw the sachets. The pieces of land actually belonged to some innocent people. Just imagine the oppression committed; how much wealth was dissipated; rights of how many people were pummeled. It was not important for them and they did not think about these things.

In the same time period when such generosity were being committed, Yahya Alvi was fighting in the hills of Tabristan. His condition was such that he had only one piece of cloth to cover up for him and his wife. Husband and wife would take turns in covering themselves with this piece of cloth during prayers. The family of the Prophet was fighting against oppression under such circumstances and the people at the time were indifferent while watching all this.

Our objective is not to complain about Haroon. If Haroon does not act like this, he is not Haroon. This is expected from the class of Haroon. As long as such a class is present, such deeds will be committed; so we have no grievance against them. Our grumble and moan is against those people who were no longer as sensitive as they were in the early period of Islam. They had given up the acumen and awareness that existed in the early days of Islam and had lost the sense of responsibility to face such a situation. They did not feel sorry about the circumstances.

What happened to these people?

The reason was that there was a constant barrage of extremely harmful, disturbing and mean propaganda from different centers that was working on the minds of people.

For years and years work was done on the minds, souls and psychology of people in different classes of the Islamic society and the state that culminated in this situation.

Now you see the importance a ruler in an Islamic society has. How important it is to decide who the ruler should be. The ruler of the Islamic society should be one appointed by God.

Another verse of Glorious Qur'an says:

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

***Obey God and His Prophet and those charged with authority among you. [1](#)***

Who are the people charged with authority?

The ignorant and foolish Muslims of the time used to think that "those charged with authority" referred to anyone who became a ruler and who could issue commands.

We say, no; not every person is a holder of authority. If every ruler has this authority and has the legal

status according to Qur'an, then there are examples of certain scoundrels ruling on certain lands with complete authority; have they been charged with authority by God?

The holder of authority Shi'ahs believe in, is a person who has been given the right to rule by God; he is an individual who is just like other human beings, except he has received Wilayat from God since God is the Owner of the Grand Wilayat.

Now with such behavior of unlimited grants, extravagant spending and killings of people (one day he killed the same Ja'far Barmaki and a large number of his household; furthermore he killed many believers and performed other similar acts) can Haroon Rasheed be declared someone charged with authority (a Wali)?

The Mufti (grand cleric of the ruler's court) of the time used to say that Haroon was the holder of authority; and the source of quarrel between such people and Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq was that they used to question the Imam why he was against this holder of authority.

So in this case the viewpoint of Shi'ah is very solid and deep. Shi'ah in addition to proving with Glorious Qur'an that one charged with authority is appointed by God, provides standards so people don't get deceived. So the people won't say that Ali Ibn Abi Talib is close to our heart but Haroon Rasheed is also sacred to us. Mansoor Abbasi used to say, "I consider Imam Hasan a Caliph but (God forbid) he sold caliphate for money. And we have wrestled caliphate from those whom he had sold it to, so it is ours now." That is the sort of things they used to say. Apparently they believed in the caliphate of Imam Ali but accepted Mansoor Abbasi as his successor; they did not see any inconsistency.

However, Shi'ahs say that this is not right. If you accept Ali, then you have to accept the standard of caliphate and Wilayat. You have to accept the fact that since Ali Ibn Abi Talib met all the standards, he was selected as the Wali.

So if someone does not meet the standards or has contradicting qualities, you do not have the right to declare him a successor of Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Such an individual does not have the right to call himself a Wali of Shi'ahs and no one has the right to accept this individual in such a capacity. This is the very first point to be considered on the issue of Wilayat. However, we have pointed towards the second point as well and have recited a verse in this context.

If someone asks you on what grounds do you say that Wilayat is in the hands of God and it belongs to Him? The answer is that this claim is based on innate wisdom that lies in the Islamic view of the universe. According to the Islamic view of the universe the source of everything in the universe is the Power of God.

وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ

***Whatever is there in the day and night is from God. [2](#)***

When He is the owner of the whole creation and has real control over everything, then the administration according to the law of the land should also be in His jurisdiction. There is no other way around it.

This was the second point; now we come to some additional points.

Now let us look at the later verses:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَّهَا

***Verily God orders you to return the trusts to their owners.***

وَ إِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

***And when you rule over people or pass judgments or decide between them, do it with justice.***

إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

***Verily, Lord gives you the best advice as no doubt He watches and listens. [3](#)***

So the basis on what He orders is His Absolute Listening, Knowing and all Encompassing Knowledge and Wisdom. Since He is aware of your internal needs and wants as well as your future, whatever you need He provides.

In the first verse trusts have been discussed and it has been stated to hand over the trusts to their owners; and the truth of the matter is it lays the ground for the next verse.

We should be cognizant that a trust is not just that I give you a dollar and you return my dollar. The most important manifestation and example of a trust is that one should return God's possession that is currently among people to its rightful place and owner. "Obeying Lord" is the pact of a human being with God and must be acted upon in full. A man should obey God and obey one whom God has ordered mankind to obey. This is the best evidence of trustworthiness.

In the next verse<sup>4</sup> God says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

***O' believers obey Allah, obey Allah's Prophet and obey those who have been given the charge.***

## "Wali with the charge over Muslims" implements God's commandment

Here we see the distinction as well as difference of the Islamic ideology from other viewpoints. Islamic ideology does not say that there would be a day when no government will be required and does not predict a day when there will be no government in the society. Whereas, some other schools of thought foretell such a day when the society will become an ideal society and one of the qualities of such a society will be that there will be no government. Islam does not envisage such a happening.

Khawarij raised the slogan "rule of Allah" and said that Ali Ibn Abi Talib should not be the ruler. They used to say, 'لَا حُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ' – *Governing is the right of God only*. In response Commander of the Faithful used to say, 'كَلِمَةٌ حَقٌّ يُرَادُ بِهَا الْبَاطِلُ' 5 – *What they are saying is correct but their purpose is evil*.

They are right and the real ruler is God. The One who defines the commandments and holds the reins of all affairs of life is God. Rule and law belong to God but who is going to execute the law? Are you saying that no one other than God should implement the law? In response Imam Ali said, 'لَا بُدَّ لَنَا مِنْ أَمِيرٍ' – *For a human society there is a need for a ruler*.

The human nature is such that it requires someone to put the law into practice for the communal life. It is not enough to have the law; it is essential to have someone who delivers the law and then keeps an eye on its proper execution and this individual is the "Wali with charge" from you.

However, does it allude to anyone who is in authority? Is it alright to have anybody who grabs power? It has been observed many a times that two people at the same place issue orders opposite to each other. In such a situation are they both Walis with charge? Or it has happened so many times that one individual has issued a command that defies logic; will this ruler be a Wali with charge? This is a place where there is a fundamental difference between us and the Sunnis. We say that the Wali with charge and ruler should be a person who meets the criteria laid down by God, whereas, Sunnis do not accept such a condition and do not act accordingly.

فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

*If there is a conflict and difference of opinion on a certain issue, revert it to God and His Prophet if you believe in God and the Dooms Day. It is good for you and will produce the best result.*

This verse draws people's attention towards the good results of the rule of competent rulers and the poor results of the rein of incompetent rulers. In a later verse those people who turned away from this command have been condemned.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا نُزِّلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ

*Have you not seen people who think that they believe in you and what has been revealed to you?*

They think that they are believers, whereas, they commit such deeds that go against the faith in God.

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ

*And in spite of that they turn to Satan for getting decisions.*

In other words they look towards Evil for solutions to their problems; get Evil's opinion; seek orders from Evil and spend their lives according to the dictates of Evil. Their such action goes against faith.

وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ

*Whereas they have been commanded to refute evil.*

وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا

***And this is Satan's wish to pull them deep into ignorance. [6](#)***

In our opinion here Satan and evil are the same object.

These people want to follow evil and are ignorant of the fact that the Satan mentioned in Glorious Qur'an as evil pulls them away from the straight path and pushes them towards the valleys of ignorance. The Satan takes them so far away from the straight path that it is no longer easy for them to come back to it. As a matter of fact, it requires a lot of struggle and hardship to come back to the straight and guided path.

The latter point is about the Wilayat of God and the basis for accepting it is the wisdom set in the Islamic view of the world; so it is a natural phenomenon.

When we say that one should obey God and God is the Wali with Charge, there is a natural and clear wisdom behind it, because everything belongs to God and the Qur'anic verse **وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ فِي الْإِيلِ وَالنَّهَارِ** – ***Whatever is in day and night belongs to Him*** – explains this point clearly.

[1.](#) Ch.4, An-Nisa', verse 59.

[2.](#) Ch. 6 Al-An'aam, verse 13.

[3.](#) Ch. 4 Nisaa, verse 58.

[4.](#) Ch. 4 Nisaa, verse 59.

[5.](#) Nahjul Balagha, speeCh. 40.

[6.](#) Ch.4, An-Nisa', verse 60.

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