

Warnings to the Seminaries

It is possible that by spreading poison and evil propaganda impure hands have portrayed ethical and reformatory program as without importance, and have presented going to the *mimbar* (pulpit) for giving advice and making sermons as contrary to a scholarly station, and they inhibit the work of the great scholarly personalities who have the station of reforming and refining the seminaries by calling them *mimbari* (mere sermonizers).

Today, in some seminaries, going to *mimbar* and giving sermons may even be considered disgraceful! They forget that the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him, was *mimbari* (a sermonizer), and from the *mimbar* he would admonish people, make them aware of things, raise their consciousnesses, and guide them. Other Imams, peace be with them, were also this way.

Perhaps secret agents have injected this evil in order to exterminate spirituality and ethics in the seminaries, and as a result our seminaries have become corrupt and dissolute. God forbid that forming gangs, selfishness, hypocrisy, and disagreements should penetrate the seminaries. The people of the seminaries fight with each other, they close ranks against one another, and they insult and belie one another.

They become discredited in the Islamic community, so that the foreigners and enemies of Islam are able to get hold of the seminaries and destroy them. The ill-intentioned know that the country supports the seminaries, and as long as the country supports them it is not possible to beat them or tear them apart.

But on the day when the people of the seminaries and the student of the seminaries come to lack ethical principles and Islamic manners, and fight each other, and form opposing gangs, and are not refined and purified, dirty their hands with unsuitable deeds, then naturally the nation of Islam will get a bad impression of the seminaries and the clergy, and support for them will be lost, and consequently the way for the use of force and enemy influence will be opened.

If you see that governments are afraid of a cleric and of a *marja'* (authority in Shi'ite jurisprudence and source of imitation), and take account of them, it is because of this, that they benefit from the support of the people, and in truth, they are afraid of the people. They consider it probable that if they show

contempt and audacity and violate a cleric, that the people will rebel and rise up against them.

However if the clerics oppose one another and defame one another and do not behave with Islamic manners and morals, they will fall from their position in the community, and the people will abandon them. ¹ The people expect you to be *ruhani* [spiritual, a cleric], well-mannered with the manners of Islam, and to be of the party of Allah.

Restrain yourselves from the splendor and glitter of life and artificiality, and do not refuse any kind of self-sacrifice in the way of the advancement of Islamic ideals and service to the nation of Islam. Step forward on the way of God the Almighty to please Him, and except for the unique Creator pay attention to no one.

However, if, contrary to what is expected, it is seen that instead of paying attention to metaphysics, all you care about is this world, and just like the others you try to gain worldly and personal interests, and you fight with one another for the sake of the world and its base pleasures, and you take Islam and the Qur'an, may Allah forbid it, as playthings, simply to reach sinister goals and your own dirty, disgraceful and worldly intentions, and you turn your religion into a market place, then the people will be turned away and become cynical.

So, you will be responsible. If some of those who wear the turban and burden the seminaries fight and brawl with each other and malign and slander one another because of personal grudges and the pursuit of worldly interests, and rivalry over some positions, they commit some treason against Islam and the Qur'an and they violate the divine trust. God the Almighty has placed the holy religion of Islam in our hands as a trust.

The noble Qur'an is a great divine trust. The *'ulama* and *ruhaniyyun* [clergy] are the bearers of the divine trust, and they bear the responsibility to protect that trust from betrayal. This stubbornness and personal and worldly antagonisms are treachery against Islam and the great Prophet of Islam.

I do not know what purpose is served by these oppositions, formations of cliques, and confrontations. If it is for the sake of the world, you do not have much of that! Supposing that you did benefit from pleasures and worldly interests, there would be no place for disagreements, unless you were not *ruhani* [spiritual, a cleric], and the only thing you inherited of *ruhaniyyat* [spirituality, being a cleric] was the robe and turban.

A *ruhani* [a cleric] who is occupied with metaphysics, a *ruhani* who benefits from living teachings and reformative Islamic attributes, a *ruhani* who considers himself a follower of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be with him, is not possibly tempted by the world, nor would he allow it to cause disagreements.

You who have declared yourselves to be followers of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him, you should at least make a bit of research into the life of that great man, and see if you are really one of his followers! Do you know and practice anything of his asceticism, *taqwa* [piety, God-wariness] and simple unadorned life?

Do you know anything of that great man's combat against oppression and injustice, and class differences, and of his unhesitating defense and support of the oppressed and persecuted, of how he lent a hand to the dispossessed and suffering social classes? Have you put it into practice? Is the meaning of the "Shi'ite" nothing more than the ornamental appearances of Islam? [232](#)

Therefore, what is the difference between you and other Muslims, in virtue of which they are much further ahead and more advantageous than the Shi'ah? What distinguishes you over them?

Those who today have set a part of the world on fire, who spill blood and kill, do this because they are competing with each other in looting the nations of the world and swallowing their wealth and the products of their labor, and in bringing the weak and underdeveloped countries under their dominion and control.

Thus, in the name of freedom, development and prosperity, the defense of independence and protection of borders, and under other deceptive slogans, every day the flames of war are set in some corner of the world, and millions of tons of incendiary bombs are dropped upon nations without protection. This fighting seems correct and accords with the logic of worldly people whose brains are polluted. However, your conflicts, even according to their logic, are incorrect. If asked why they are fighting, they will say that they want to take over such and such a country; the wealth and income of such and such a country must be made ours. However, if you asked why you have conflicts, and why you are fighting, what will be your answers? What benefit do you get from the world, for the sake of which you are fighting?

Your monthly income, which the *marja'-e taqlid* [supreme authorities of religious jurisprudence] give to you, called *shahriyyah*, is less than the money used by others for cigarettes! I saw in a newspaper or magazine, I don't recall exactly, that the amount the Vatican sends to a single priest in Washington is quite a large figure. I reckon it is more than that of the entire budget for all of the Shi'ite seminaries!

Is it right for you, with your lifestyle and conditions, to have conflicts and confrontations with one another? The root of all these conflicts which have no specific sacred aims is love of this world. If conflicts of this sort exist among you, it is for this reason, that you have not expelled the love of this world from your hearts. Because worldly interests are limited, each one rises up against his rival in order to obtain them.

You desire a certain position, which someone else also wants; naturally this leads to jealousy and strife. However, the people of God, who have expelled the love of this world from their hearts, have no aim but God, never fight with one another, and never cause such calamities and corruption. If all of the divine prophets were together in a city today, there would be no disagreement or conflict among them, for their aims and destinations are one.

The hearts of all of them attend to God the Almighty, and they are clear of any love of this world. If your deeds and actions, your way of life and your wayfaring are of this sort that is evident today, then

you had better fear, may God protect us from it, that you may leave this world without being one of the Shi'ah of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib(as), peace be upon him.

You should fear that your repentance might not be accepted, and that the intercession of Imam 'Ali (as) may be of no benefit to you. Before losing the opportunity, you should try to remedy this. Give up these banal and shameful conflicts. These confrontations and conflicts are wrong. Do you compose two nations? Why are you not pure and honest and brotherly with one another? Why?

These conflicts are dangerous, for they lead to corruption for which there is no compensation: the destruction of the seminaries; and it will make you worthless and dishonored in the community. This banding into gangs is only to your loss. Not only is it of no credit to you, but it brings dishonor and discredit to the community and the nation, and leads to the harm of Islam.

If your oppositions to one another lead to corruption it will be an unforgettable offense and before God Almighty it will be one of the greatest of all sins, because it will corrupt the community and make it wide open to the influence and domination of the enemy.

Perhaps some hidden hands are at work spreading enmity and discord in the seminaries, by various means sowing the seeds of discord and strife poisoning the thoughts and confusing the minds, arranging for such things under the guise of 'religious duties,' and by means of such religious duties corruption is established in the seminaries, so that by this means those who are useful for the future of Islam are destroyed and unable to serve Islam and the Islamic community in the future.

It is necessary to be aware and conscious. Do not fool yourselves into thinking that your religious duties require such things, and that your religious obligations are such and so. Sometimes Satan determines responsibilities and duties for man. Sometimes selfish wants and desires force a man to do things in the name of religious duties. Offending a Muslim and saying something bad about a brother in faith are not religious duties.

This is love of the world and love of self. These are the promptings of Satan which bring a dark day for a man. This enmity is the enmity of the damned.

“That most surely is the truth, the contending of one with another of the inmates of the fire” (Q 38:64).

Enmity and contention exist in hell. The people of hell have conflicts, fighting and clawing at one another. If you quarrel for the sake of this world, beware that you are preparing hell for yourself, and you are on the way there.

There is no fighting for things of the other world. The people of the other world are pure and at peace with one another. Their hearts are overflowing with the love of God and servitude to Him. The love for the servants of God is the shadow of that very love for God. Do not set your hands on fire. Do not set

ablaze the flames of hell. Hell is lit with the ugly works and deeds of man. These are the deeds of refractory man which set this fire.

It is narrated: "I passed hell when it was extinguished." If a man does not light the fire by his works and deeds, hell will be extinguished. [3](#)

The interior of this disposition is hell. To approach this disposition is to approach hell. When man passes away from this world and the curtains are drawn aside, he will realize,

"This is for what your own hands have sent before" (Q 3:182), and ***"and what they had done they shall find present"*** (Q18:49).

All of the works and deeds and words of man will be reflected in the other world. It is as if everything in our lives was being filmed, and in that world film will be shown, and one will be able to deny none of it. All of our actions and movements will be shown to us, in addition to the testimony given by our limbs and organs.

"They shall say: 'Allah who makes everything speak, has made us speak'" (Q 41:21).

Before God, who will make all things able to speak and bear witness, you will not be able to deny your ugly deeds or hide them. Think a little, look ahead, weigh the consequences of your deeds, keep in mind the perilous events which take place after death, the pressure of the grave, the world of *barzakh* (the period between death and resurrection), and do not neglect the difficulties which will follow that.

At least believe in hell. If a man believes in the perilous events which take place after death, he will change his way of life. If you had faith and certainty in these things, you would not live so freely and licentiously. You will try to guard you pen, your steps, and your tongue, in order to reform and purify yourselves.

[1.](#) 'Ali, peace be with him, said: "If the bearers of 'ilm (knowledge, science) bear it as it deserves to be borne, they will be loved by Allah, the angels, and those who are obedient to Him, and those who bear it for the sake of this world will be despised by Allah and held in contempt by the people." Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p. 201, Chapter on the words of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be with him.

[2.](#) Sifat ash-Shi'ah, written by Shaykh as-Saduq, and also Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 65, pp. 83-95 and 149-196, "The Book of Faith and Infidelity," vol. 65, pp. 83-95, 149-196, "The Book of Faith and Infidelity," the section on "Verily the Shi'ah are the people of the religion of Allah...", the section on the Attributes of the Shi'ah and their kinds..."

Sharh-e Chehel Hadith, Imam Khomeini (may he rest in peace), hadith 29, translated by 'Ali Quli Qara'i as Forty Hadiths: An Exposition of Mystical and Ethical Traditions, in the journal, Al-Tawhid, vol. X. [Tr.] and available on line at: <http://www.al-islam.org/forty-hadith-an-exposition-second-edition-imam-k...> [1] (Pub)

[3.](#) This refers to a hadith according to which, "When some people asked our Imam about the inclusiveness of this ayah: 'And there is not one of you but shall come to it [hell]' (Q 19:71), he replied, "We passed through hell and it was extinguished." 'Ilm al-Yaqin, vol. 2, p. 917.

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