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Intellectual Talents of Imam Husayn (‘a)

No one had reached the level of the merits and knowledge of His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a) because the command and talent of His Eminence with regard to knowledge was more than all other people. Since his young age he had acquired knowledge from the source of the sciences of his grandfather, the science that illuminated the horizons of the world. In the same way he was under the training of his father, His Eminence, Amirul Momineen (‘a), who was the gate of the city of knowledge of the Prophet (S), and the most knowledgeable of the people and the wisest of them. And it has come in traditions that: “Hasan(‘a) and Husayn(‘a) had been made to drink knowledge.”^{[1](#)}

The scholar of community, Abdullah bin Abbas says: “Husayn is from the family of prophethood and they are the inheritors of knowledge.”^{[2](#)}

A biographical account of His Eminence mentions: “Husayn was the most accomplished one of the people in knowledge and recognition of the Quran and Sunnah.”^{[3](#)}

Here we shall briefly discuss some of the intellectual merits of His Eminence.

[Referring to Imam Husayn \(‘a\) for religious Verdict](#)

Imam Husayn (‘a) was the point of reference for religious verdict in the world of Islam. The senior most companions of the Messenger of Allah (S) used to refer to His Eminence in religious matters. Among those who benefited from His Eminence was Abdullah bin Zubair and he says about it: “O Aba Abdillah! What do you say about the release of a prisoner, who is responsible for it?”

The Imam (‘a) replied, “It is the responsibility of the one he had helped or the one on whose side the person had fought.”

At another time he asked him, “O Aba Abdillah! When does it become incumbent to forgive the child?”

His Eminence replied, “Every time (after he is born) and he cries it becomes incumbent to forgive him and provide nourishment to him.”

On the third time he asked about drinking in the standing position. The Imam ordered that a female camel be brought. It was brought and he milked it. Then His Eminence drank the milk in the standing position and gave to him.[4](#)

Ibn Qayyim Jawzi has said, “Other companions who issued religious verdicts are Abu Darda, Abu Ubaidah Jarrah, Hasan and Husayn.”[5](#)

Muslim people referred to His Eminence in connection with the prohibited and permitted acts, Islamic law and rules of Shariah like they had referred to his respected father in these matters.

Gathering of Imam Husayn (‘a)

The gathering of His Eminence, was the gathering of knowledge and dignity and by the people of knowledge among the companions it was an adornment, for whom it taught manners and wisdom and obtained from it and in it the Imam (‘a) narrated from his grandfather (S), which they used to note down.

Historians say that people gathered around him like birds are sitting on his head and they used to listen from the Imam the vast knowledge and correct traditions.[6](#)

The gatherings of His Eminence used to be held in the mosque of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S) and he had a particular circle of companions. A person from Quraish asked Muawiyah where he could find Husayn. He replied, “When you enter the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (S) you would see a gathering of people collected around him like birds. That is the gathering of Abu Abdillah.”[7](#)

Alaili says, “his gathering was the place of arrival of the hearts and venue of the descent of angels and whoever used to sit in his gathering used to feel that though he (the Imam) were like a human but he was from some other world and this sight used to go on increasing awe in him. Rather as if he were sitting in a gathering where the angels were coming and going’[8](#)

The personality of the Imam, his lofty status and his spirituality used to attract people, and their minds used to be attracted by his personality. They used to hasten towards his gatherings and listen to his discourses, though he spoke with utmost humility and simplicity.

Narrators from Imam Husayn (‘a)

The Imam (‘a) was among the greatest and significant reformer of his times with regard to intellectual and knowledgeable qualities and he had a positive role to play in spreading Islamic sciences and explaining divine recognition in such a way a large group of companions and their children acquired such knowledge from him. The most important of them are as follows: His son, Imam Zainul Abideen(‘a) and his daughter Fatima(‘a),[9](#) Sakina(‘a) and the grandson of His Eminence, Imam Abu Ja’far Baqir (‘a), Shobi, Akrama, Kurz Tamimi, Sinan bin Abi Sinan Duali, Abdullah Ibn Umar, Ibn Uthman, Farazdaq,[10](#) his nephew Zaid bin al-Hasan,[11](#) Talha Aqili, Ubaid bin Hunain,[12](#) Abu Huraira, Ubaidullah bin Yazid,

Matlab bin Ubaidullah bin Hantab, Abu Hazim Ashjai, Shuaib bin Khalid, Yusuf Sabbagh, Abu Hisham¹³ and others; and Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Saeed Hamadani has written a book about the letters of those who narrated traditions from Imams Hasan and Husayn (‘a).¹⁴

The Holy Imam selected the mosque of the Prophet as his school and therein he taught and explained religious jurisprudence, Quranic exegesis, traditional reports, rules of ethics, morals and good manners and people came from all sides to listen to the discourses of the Holy Imam, so that they may gain from the knowledge and divine recognition of His Eminence, that he had received from the Prophet (S).

Traditions of Imam Husayn (‘a) from his grandfather

Imam Husayn (‘a) narrated a large number of traditions from his grandfather, His Eminence, the Messenger of Allah (S). Zuhri says in Kitab Maghazi that Bukhari has narrated many traditions from Husayn; some of them are on the subject of the Prophet’s encouragement for the Midnight Prayer. Also Tirmidhi, in the book Ash– Shamailun Nabawiyyah has quoted many traditions from His Eminence, that Sufyan bin Waki had quoted on the authority of the Holy Imam.¹⁵

Below we present some traditions that His Eminence has narrated from the Holy

Prophet (S):

1. His Eminence (‘a) says: “The Messenger of Allah (S) said: ‘Among the Islamic good qualities is that a person speaks less about what he is not concerned.’”¹⁶
2. His Eminence (‘a) says: “One of the merits in Islam is that a person keeps away from that which does not concern him.”¹⁷
3. His Eminence (‘a) said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say: ‘There is no believing man or woman who is not involved in difficulties (or he said: the difficulties do not befall him or her), even it is related to the past and it is returned from him or her except that Almighty Allah gives a new reward and a gives such a reward that He had promised when he or she were in the problem.’”¹⁸
4. His Eminence said: “I heard the Holy Prophet (S) say: ‘The Almighty Allah likes the lofty deeds and He does not like lowly deeds.’”¹⁹
5. His Eminence said: “I heard the Holy Prophet (S) say: ‘One who obeys Allah, is given a lofty status and one who disobeys Him is degraded. And one who purifies his intention for Allah is given adornment and one who relies on that which is with Allah, becomes needless and one who prefers himself or herself above Allah is humiliated.’”²⁰
6. His Eminence said: “The Messenger of Allah (S) prayed for the rain as follows: ‘O Allah! Bestow us a rain, which is widespread and according to our needs, general and beneficial without any harm, which

spreads to all towns and villages and increases our sustenance and increases our thankfulness. O Allah! Make it the sustenance of faith and bestowal of faith; such that your bestowals are never prevented. O Allah! Send its comfort on us on the earth and through it make our pastures green.”[21](#)

7. His Eminence said: “My father has narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) that he said: ‘One who is deceived (cheated) would not be deserving of praise and rewards.’” [22](#)

8. His Eminence has narrated from his father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The secret of reason after faith in Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, is to befriend the people.” [23](#)

9. He has narrated from his father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “Man shall not proceed before he is interrogated about four things: About his life, how he spent it. About his youth, how he exhausted it. About his wealth, how he obtained it and how he spent it. And love of us Ahlul Bayt.”[24](#)

Reports of Imam Husayn (‘a)

The following traditional reports are narrated by Abu Bashir Muhammad bin Ahmad Dolabi (died 320 A.H.) in his book *ad-Dhariayahtu Tahira*:[25](#)

1. Ali bin al-Husayn has narrated from his father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “Among the Islamic virtues is that a man leaves off that which does not concern him”

2. Imam Husayn (‘a) says: “I found a paper tied to the sword sheath of the Messenger of Allah (S) on which was written: ‘The most chastised person by Allah is the one who kills one who had not killed him, who hits one who has not attacked him and one who ignores the favors of his Lord, the Almighty Allah shall keep him away from whatever is sent by Him.’”

3. His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a) has narrated that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “The miser is the one in whose presence my name is mentioned but he does not recite the Salawat.”

4. His Eminence, Imam Husayn (‘a) has narrated from his father from the Messenger of Allah (S) that he said: “After me there shall be three sects: Murjiya, Harooriya, *Kharijīs*, so if they fall sick do not go to visit them, if they die do not attend their funeral and if they invite you, do not accept their invitation.”

5. His Eminence has narrated from his grandfather that he said: “There is no man or woman who is miserly in spending in the way of Allah’s pleasure but many times that shall go to the ways disliked by Allah. And there is no man who avoids helping a man who is in real need but helps someone else who falls into sin but that he shall not be rewarded for rendering this help. And there is none that leaves Hajj while he is capable of performing it for the sake of worldly needs but that the one who has returned from Hajj his need shall be fulfilled more.”

6. Yahya bin Saeed has narrated: “I was with Ali bin al-Husayn (‘a) when a Kufiate came to His

Eminence. Then Ali bin al-Husayn (‘a) said: ‘O man of Iraq! Befriend us for the sake of Islam as I have heard my father saying: The Messenger of Allah (S) said: O people! Do not accord me the status that I really have because before Allah, the Mighty and the Sublime chose me for messengership He selected me for His servitude.’”

7. Fatima the daughter of Husayn (‘a) has narrated from her father and Abdullah bin Abbas has reported that the Messenger of Allah (S) used to say: “Do not glance at the leprous person continuously and one who speaks to a leper, should keep a distance of a spear from him.”

8. Fatima, the daughter of Husayn (‘a) has narrated from her father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “Indeed the Almighty Allah likes the lofty morals and hates lowly behavior.”

9. Fatima, the daughter of Husayn (‘a) has narrated from her father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “Do not stare continuously at the patient of leprosy.”

10. Fatima, the daughter of Husayn (‘a) has narrated from her father that: “The head of the Messenger of Allah (S) was in the lap of His Eminence Ali (‘a) while revelation was descending on the Prophet. So when the revelation was over the Prophet said, “O Ali! Did you perform the Asr (afternoon) prayer?” “No”, he replied, the Messenger of Allah (S) said: O Allah! You know that he was in Your service and the service of your Prophet, so send back the sun for him. Thus the Almighty Allah returned it for him and he recited the prayer. After that the sun set again.”

11. Fatima(‘a) has related from her father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: “The petitioner has a right even if he comes astride a horse.”

12. Fatima(‘a), the daughter of Husayn (‘a) has narrated from the Messenger of Allah (S) that he said: “One who is involved in a difficulty and he remembers it later, just as when he was in that difficulty, Almighty Allah will give him fresh rewards when he says: ‘Indeed we belong to Allah and to him we shall return.’ i.e. He would give the same reward that is deserving for that difficulty.”

13. Fatima, the daughter of Husayn (‘a) has narrated from her father that he said: “The Messenger of Allah (S) said: ‘When the Almighty Allah took the covenant from the people and put it in the stone. Thus the fulfillment of the covenant is to touch the stone.’”

14. Abdullah bin Sulaiman bin Nafe, slave of Bani Hashim has narrated from His Eminence, Husayn bin Ali that he said: “The Messenger of Allah (S) said: ‘O Bani Hashim! Speak a good word and provide food. (to others).’”

15. Abu Saeed Mithami has narrated that he heard Husayn bin Ali say: “The Messenger of Allah (S) said: ‘One who wears the dress of fame, is dressed into the garment of fire.’”

These were some of the sayings related through Imam Husayn (‘a) that contain points of high moral virtues and good manners, such that no one is needless of them.[26](#)

Traditions of Imam Husayn (‘a) narrated from his mother Her Eminence Fatima (‘a)

His Eminence has related the following traditions from his mother, the chief of the ladies of the world, Her Eminence, Fatima Zahra (‘a):

1. Muhammad bin Ali bin al-Husayn (‘a) has narrated: I came out walking with my grandfather, Husayn bin Ali to the land of His Eminence. On the way I saw Noman bin Bashir riding a pony. He alighted and told to His Eminence Husayn: “Mount it, O Aba Abdillah!” His Eminence did not agree and he continued to press him. His Eminence said: “You are making me do something I do not like but I would relate a tradition for you that my mother, Fatima had related to me: The Messenger of Allah (S) said: The person on the mount and on his bed and the prayer in its home is more preferable except that it be the Friday congregation, so you should mount your animal. Thus he went off calmly. Noman said, “Her Eminence, Fatima said the truth”²⁷

2. Fatima, the daughter of His Eminence, Husayn has narrated from her father from Fatima the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) from the Messenger of Allah (S) that he said: “He has not done anything good for himself if he spend the night till morning came while he did not make (do) anything.”²⁸

Traditions of Imam Husayn (‘a) from his father, Ali (‘a)

Imam Husayn (‘a) has narrated many things from his father, Imam Amirul Momineen (‘a), whether they be related to the biography of the Prophet or connected to the religious law. Some of them are as follows:

1. His Eminence (‘a) has narrated from his father (‘a) that the Messenger of Allah (S) dispatched a battalion and they took a man from Bani Salim, named Usaid bin Salma as slave. When the Messenger of Allah (S) saw him, he took pity upon him; and he presented Islam to him and he became a Muslim. This information reached his father who was an aged man and he wrote a letter to him with the following couplets:

“Who can mount and reached Medina safely. So that he could take my message to Usaid. That the worst child is the one who is the disowned one of his parents and who does good to strangers. Have you left the religion of your father and elders and follow Muhammad these days?

Usaid presented the letter of his father to the Messenger of Allah (S) and sought his permission to write him a reply. The Messenger of Allah (S) according him the permission and he wrote as follows:

“Verily, One Who created the heavens with His power and got loftiness to His kingdom and Who is Alone.

He sent such a one, as there was none like him before it so that he may call the people by his mercy, and he is Muhammad the Prophet.

Thus he called the people to his religion and they, willingly and unwillingly, came to guidance continuously.

And they feared the fire that was severely harmful and deviating for them.

Indeed you shall die and your accounting shall be done. Then what for is this misguidance and destruction?"

When Salma read the letter to his son, he came to the Prophet (S) and accepted Islam.[29](#)

2. His Eminence says: I asked my father about the life of the Messenger of Allah (S) in the presence of his companions and His Eminence said, "The Messenger of Allah (S) was always cheerful and had simple manners. He has softness of character and not sharpness or hardness. Nor was he hot-tempered, obscene, fault finder or sour faced. He used to ignore what he did not like. No one used to be disheartened by him and none was ever deprived by him. He used to keep away from three things: Disputation, to consider something or someone too great and that with which he was not related and kept away from three things about the people. He did not criticize anyone, he was not finding fault in anyone and he was never in pursuit the evils of the people. He did not speak anything except that he hoped in its reward and whenever he spoke his companions bowed down their heads as if there was a bird on the head and when he was silent, they were speaking. He never quarreled with them and heard attentively to all those who spoke to him so that they may complete their dialogue. Whenever he was first to speak, he used to laugh with that which people laughed and he used to be astonished with what others were astonished. He used to stop with the travelers (aliens) inspite of their harsh manners of speaking and act according to their desires; so much so that he used to call his friends and say: If you find a needy person who needs anything, bring him to me; and he did not accept thanks from anyone except that he used to reward him according to his deed. He did not cut off the sentence of anyone except when he was going away from the truth. In this case he used to cut off his statement either by stopping him or by getting up himself'[30](#)

By these good manners the Prophet (S) became superior and the hearts of Muslims joined together and gave them unity in their intellects and desires and he guided them in his first period to the leaders of the nation and guides to the pleasure of Allah and made them obedient to Him.

3. His Eminence ('a) has narrated from his father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: "One who dies defending his wealth or property, dies a martyr."[31](#)

4. His Eminence ('a) has narrated from his father that the Messenger of Allah (S) said: "I am surprised on one who refrains from food due to illness, how he does not refrain from his sins for the fear of the Fire."[32](#)

5. His Eminence (‘a) said: I heard my father say: “Faith is recognition with the heart and confession by the tongue and action by the physical organs.”[33](#)

6. His Eminence (‘a) has narrated from his father that he said: “Enjoin good and prohibit evil, otherwise the Almighty Allah would make the evil ones among you dominate you. After that the good people among you would pray but their prayers will not be accepted.”[34](#)

7. He has narrated from his father that he said: “The Almighty Allah has concealed four things in four (other) things. His pleasure in His obedience. Then do not consider anything in obedience of Allah small that perhaps His pleasure was in favor and you do not know. And he concealed his displeasure in disobedience. So do not consider anything small in disobedience of the Lord. As perhaps it may become the cause of His anger, while you do not know. And he concealed His acceptance in His supplication. So do not consider any supplication small, perhaps it may bring His acceptance and you do not know. And He concealed Himself in his creatures. So do not consider a creature of God as lowly, perhaps he may be the selected one of God and you do not know.”[35](#)

8. His Eminence (‘a) has narrated from his father that he said: “The Messenger of Allah (S) said: The best of the houses of helpers (Ansar) is the Bani Najjar and after that Bani Abdul Ashal and then Bani al-Harth and after them Bani Sa’ada. May there be good in all the houses of the Helpers”[36](#)

9. His Eminence (‘a) has narrated from his father that he said: “The Messenger of Allah (S) said: The best supplication is seeking forgiveness, and the best worship act is saying: There is no god, except Allah”[37](#)

Here we conclude some of the traditions of His Eminence narrated from his grandfather and father.

About the astonishing inheritance of Imam Husayn (‘a)

There is an astonishing heritage for Imam Husayn (‘a). Some of them are the collections of philosophical discussions and theological problems, which have complexity and secrets. So His Eminence, mentioned Islamic ideology in them and explained such as many sayings of Imam Husayn (‘a) are having the rules of good behavior, laws of ethics and had the foundation of social and personal reformation. We mention below some of these qualities.

Predestination

The most important and the most complex problems of scholastic theology is the topic of predestination about which sayings have been recorded since the dawn of Islamic history and Imams of Ahlul Bayt (‘a) have explained and clarified doubts about it. Hasan bin Hasan Basri, inquired about it from His Eminence, Husayn and His Eminence replied to him in a letter which is quoted below:

“For what I am explaining to you about the “Predestination”. From that with which we Ahlul Bayt have

achieved that one who does not believe in the good and bad destiny is a disbeliever and one who attributes evil to Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, has made a great allegation towards Allah and surely the obedience of Allah cannot be forced and disobedience cannot be by compulsion and the people shall not except destruction but He is the master of whatever he has delegated to the authority of the people and He is the Powerful who made them powerful on it. Thus if they follow the obedience, the Almighty Allah will not delay anything for them. And when they go to disobedience that Allah should do favor to them and they and the things they want to commit He should become an obstacle between them. That he has not done this under compulsion and Allah has not forced them to commit. Rather with all the possibilities He has provided them all facilities and after He announced about them and after warning them of the dangers He makes them limited to it and He has also given them the power and He has also made way for them. He has invited and He has also kept the way open for those things He has prohibited. He has made them capable so that they may act on that which they are ordered and that they may not commit the acts He has prohibited. And thanks be to Allah that He made His servants capable for that which He has commanded that they obtain power for it. And they are stopped from that and for seeking forgiveness is made an accepted thing that even after being stopped they have come. And for those for whom there is no way, I believe and my companions also believe that all praise is for Him”³⁸

This blessed discourse mentions important theological discussions. More details on this would prolong our discussion and would be beyond the scope of our subject.

Self-sufficient

A group wrote a letter to His Eminence and inquired the meaning of the word “Samad” (Self-sufficient) in the statement of Almighty Allah, “Allah is self-sufficient.”³⁹ His Eminence wrote to them after “Bismillah” (In the name of Allah):

“So to say: Do not go deep into the Quran and do not argue about its meanings. Do not speak about it without knowledge as I have heard from my grandfather (S) that he said: One who speaks about Quran without knowledge, he has made for himself a place in the fire (of hell). And Allah glorified be He, has explained “Samad” (self-sufficient) and said: Allah is One, Allah is Self-sufficient, then he explained it and said: He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none unto like Him. He begets not, that is nothing dirty (bad) comes out from Him like a child and other dirty things come out from the creatures and neither a subtle thing like the soul and from it thoughts and ideas and different conditions like sleep and to remember something, sorrow, grief, happiness, smile, weeping, fear, hope, desire, dislike, hunger, satiation are not found in Him. He is much greater than that something should come out from Him and that something should be born from Him, dense or subtle.

Nor is He begotten: Nothing is born from Him and nothing comes out from Him like dense things come out from their sources and origins. A living being from a living thing, vegetation from the earth, water from its source, fruits from the trees. In the same way subtle things come out from their respective

sources. Like sight from the eyes, hearing from the ears, smell from the nose, taste from the mouth, speaking from the tongue, recognition and discrimination by the heart and in the same way, fire from stone. Never! Rather he is the self-sufficient who is neither a thing and nor in something and neither on something. He is the creator of things and maker of them and He is the originator of things by His Power. Whatever He has created for itself shall be annihilated and what He created by His wisdom, it remains and endures for further creation. And he is that needless God Who begets not nor is He begotten. He is the Knower of unseen and the seen. He is the Almighty Who has no equal”⁴⁰

Monotheism

In many of his sayings Imam Husayn (‘a) has mentioned about monotheism of the godhead and described and explained this concept beautifully to answer the doubts raised by the apostates. Some of the sayings of His Eminence are quoted below:

1. His Eminence (‘a) has said: “O People! Fear these two extremes, those who compare God with themselves and say like the unbelievers from the people of the Book while He is such a God that there is nothing like Him and He is the Hearing and Seeing, that eyes could not see Him and He sees all visions. And He is the Subtle and Omniscient, He has made Oneness and power special for Himself, intention, power and knowledge, which, He has used. There is no obstacle in His command and none could be equal to Him and no opponent could precede Him. And neither is there anything having a similar name which could be like Him and nor anyone like Him could precede Him. No actions surround Him and nor conditions are effective upon Him. Events do not happen to Him and words are not capable to describe the reality of His greatness. The magnitude of His powers could be accommodated in the hearts because there is nothing equal to Him. His knowledge cannot be perceived by intellects and neither by thinkers through their thoughts. But, certainly and by belief of the unseen He cannot be compared to anything in the universe. He is such a Oneness, that is needless. He is against all imaginations about Him. Whatever is in the imagination of man, God is other than it and whatever is imagined is not God. And whatever’And not a deity who is desirous and undesirous. He is present in the things not in existence that there should be an obstacle for Him. He is distant from the things but in such a way that He should be hidden from them. He is not such a powerful one that there could be someone in his opposition or equal to Him. His antiquity is not related to any time period and His presence is not related to a place (space). He is concealed from the intellects just as His concealment from the eyes and His concealment in the sky is same as that His concealment from the inhabitants of the earth. His proximity implies the bestowal of His favors and His remoteness indicates that He makes someone worthless and not in the sense that He is in some place or time. He changes non-existence into existence and makes the existing one non-existing. Except for Him, no one could have the two equalities at the same time. Faith in His existence is received through Him only and existence of faith is not existence based on description. All qualities are described through Him and not that He is described through qualities. And all the divine recognitions are recognized through Him and not that Allah is recognized through these divine sciences. And He is that Allah for Whom there is no one with same name. He is purified of

everything and there is nothing like Him and He is the hearing, the seeing.”[41](#)

The Imam (‘a) has warned against comparing Him to His creations who were nothing in the beginning and who shall be destroyed in the future.

No matter how powerful a man may become he will be limited in quantity and quality and it is impossible to reach to the reality of the Great Creator Who has created these souls and stars. Intellects are helpless to imagine Him. And that complex systems that are applied to him’. Man has not been able to understand his own mechanisms like the machinery of the sight hearing and feelings etc. then how could he understand His creator?!

Anyhow, this interesting discourse has explained many aspects of the concept of the monotheism of the godhead. It is one of the best explanations that have reached us from the Imams of Ahlul Bayt (‘a)

2. Historians say that the scholar of the nation, Abdullah bin Abbas spoke to people in the Prophet’s mosque. Then Nafe Azraq stood up and said: “You are giving a verdict about the ant and the mosquito! Describe the god whom you worship.”

Abdullah Ibn Abbas in the honor of his statements bowed down his head. Imam

Husayn (‘a) was sitting there. He called out to him: “O son of Azraq! Come to me.”

He replied: “I didn’t say anything to you.” Ibn Abbas stood up and said to him: “He is from the family of Prophethood and they are the inheritors of Knowledge”

So he went towards His Eminence, Husayn and His Eminence said: “O Nafe! One who conjectures in ones religion would be continuously involved in more and more confusion and doubts. He would begin to commit evils and fall into deviation and sinful activities and speak foul things. I am explaining you about my Lord with what He has explained Himself and I will introduce Him to you as He has introduced Himself. Sense does not perceive Him and He cannot be compared to people, but He is not attached but there is no distance in between. He is considered One but He could not be divided. He is recognized by His signs and is described by His signs, there is no god except Him. He is great and High”[42](#)

Azraq became astonished and was not able to reply, because confusion had surrounded him and the Imam has closed all avenues for him. All those present who heard the discourse of the Imam were astonished and repeated the words of Ibn Abbas that Husayn is from the family of Prophethood and they are the inheritors of knowledge.

Enjoining Good

Imam (‘a) addressed the Helpers and Immigrants in these brilliant words and revived them from their carelessness about enjoining good and forbidding evil as the Islamic society is based on these two

principles. He informed them about it, just as the nation was affected by social injustice. He made it the topic of attention that danger had developed due to the shortcoming in this matter. The rest of his discourse is as follows:

“O people, gain lesson from matters that Allah has cited as warnings for His disciples when He denounced the rabbis in His saying: Why do not the learned men and the doctors of law prohibit them from their speaking of what is sinful and their eating of what is unlawfully acquired?⁴³ Certainly evil is that which they work. Those who disbelieved from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of Dawood and Isa, son of Maryam; this was because they disobeyed and used to exceed the limit. They used not to forbid each other the hateful things (which) they did; certainly evil was that which they did.⁴⁴

Allah humiliated them because they did not forbid wrongdoers from evil and committing sins while they were among them, for they had desired for gaining more gifts from the wrongdoers and they had feared them. Allah says: “Therefore fear not the people and fear Me’⁴⁵ And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil.”⁴⁶

Allah has begun with enjoining good and forbidding evil because He has known that if these two matters are carried out thoroughly, all the other obligatory duties, including the easy and the difficult, will be carried out thoroughly. This is because enjoining good and forbidding evil is advocacy to Islam, restoration of the grievances, opposition of the wrongdoer, (just) allotment of the booty and the spoils, and taking the alms to spend them in their proper ways.

You are the company famous for knowledge, mentioned in goodness, renowned with advice, and respected by people through Allah. The masters stand in awe of you, the weak honor you, and those whom you have not done favors and who do need you prefer to others. You intercede for fulfilling people’s needs when they are deprived. You walk in the ways with gravity of kings and dignity of celebrities. You have attained all these just because you are expected to fulfill the rights of Allah; yet, you omitted most of His rights when you disregarded the rights of the Imams, threw away the rights of the weak, and sought only your claimed rights.

You have not spent any wealth, risked your souls for their Creator, or opposed your clan for the sake of Allah. You are looking forward to gaining Paradise, the neighborhood of Allah’s messengers, and the salvation from His punishment. I anticipate you to suffer a form of Allah’s retribution because you, through the favors of Allah, have attained such a rank by which you are preferred to other. You are respected among people by means of Allah. However, you notice that the traditions of Allah are omitted, but you do not move for it, while you may move when any of your fathers’ traditions is violated. The traditions of the Prophet are broken. The blind, the deaf, and the chronically ill are left without help in the cities. You neither behave mercifully nor do you use your positions. You do not aid those who assume such deeds and you achieve your safety from the wrongdoers (or the unjust rulers) by means of flattery and cajolery. Allah has warned you against all these conducts but you are negligent while you will be

responsible more than others because you enjoy the positions of scholars. Had you only felt thus! Moreover, the courses of affairs and rulings are under the control of scholars who are keepers of legal and illegal affairs of Allah. This standing is surely usurped from you just because you have gone in different direction away from the right and disagreed about the Sunnah after clear exposition of evidences. If you tolerated harm and bore burdens for Allah's sake, all affairs of Allah would come into your hands, emanate from you, and devolve upon you. But you have made unjust rulers occupy your positions and handed over affairs of Allah to them. They are acting suspiciously and pursuing their positions.

Your escape from death and adherence to his life, which will sooner or later leave you, gave them a free hand on doing so. Thus, you forsook the weak ones; some of whom were enslaved compulsorily and others were suffering under straitened livelihood. The unjust rulers therefore are rolling in royalty with their own opinions and disgracing others by their own passions as they follow the examples of the evil and dare the All-omnipotent (Allah). In every country, they are assigning an eloquent orator on the pulpits of Allah. Lands are vacant for them as their hands are prevailing on everything and people are taken as their slaves because they lack the power to defend themselves. They are either a transgressing tyrant or domineering, coarse to the weak, and obeyed; who does not acknowledge the Initiator the Recreator. How strange is this! I am astonished at such affairs when lands are prevailed by tyrannical cheaters, wrongful bribers, or unmerciful governors. Allah is the judge in our question of disputation and His judgment will pass over our controversy.”[47](#)

These political documents explain and highlight moral decadence and spread of evil in the world, which was due to the inability and inaction of the Helpers and Immigrants, because they occupied a significant position in the world of Islam. They were the companions of the Prophet (S), defenders of Islam and capable to speak the truth and they could defeat falsehood, but they failed to perform this obligation. This became the cause of the Bani Umayyah tyrants to become rulers on the Muslims and they enslaved people and plundered the wealth of God.

Types of Jihad (Holy War)

It was inquired from His Eminence, Imam Abu Abdullah (‘a) about the Jihad (Holy war) whether it was recommended or obligatory. His Eminence (‘a) replied:

“Two are obligatory, one is recommended but performed only with obligatory, and one is independently recommended. One of the two obligatory jihads is self-control against committing acts of disobedience of Allah. It is surely the greatest form of Jihad. The other obligatory Jihad is fighting those of you who inclined to the infidels.

The Jihad that is recommended but performed only with the obligatory is fighting the enemy. It is obligatory upon everybody. Punishment would befall them if they neglect fighting the enemies.

Meanwhile, fighting the enemies is recommended for the Imam who is permitted to fight the enemies

with people.

The Jihad that is independently recommended is every (good) tradition that a man founds and exerts efforts for instituting, achieving and enlivening it. Activities and efforts that are exercised for achieving such traditions are the best deeds because they represent the restoration of traditions.

The Prophet said: “One who introduces a good tradition will gain the reward of that tradition in addition to the rewards of all who follow it up to the Day of Judgment without any reduction in their rewards.”[48](#)

Legislation of fasting

Imam Husayn (‘a) was asked regarding the wisdom behind the legislation of fasting and His Eminence replied: “So that the rich could experience hunger and become inclined to help the poor.”[49](#)

Types of worship

Imam (‘a) mentioned about the types of worship and said: “A group worships God due to greed, which is the worship of entrepreneurs. And a group worships God due to fear. It is the worship of slaves. And a group worships Allah by way of thankfulness and that is the worship of freemen and it is the best kind of worship.”[50](#)

His Eminence (‘a) spoke about the one who worships the Almighty with seriousness and said: “One who worships Allah as He should be, the Almighty Allah gives him more than what he has hoped or more than what would suffice him.”[51](#)

Love for Ahlul Bayt (‘a)

Imam Husayn (‘a) encouraged love of Ahlul Bayt (‘a). Abu Saeed says: “I heard His Eminence, Husayn that he said: ‘One who loves us, the Almighty Allah would reward him for as if someone has become a prisoner of Dailam and love for us makes sins fall off like wind does to the leaves’”[52](#)

And he said, “Inculcate love for us Ahlul Bayt, as whoever meets the Almighty

Allah with the condition that he loves us, our intercession would reach him.”

Bashir bin Ghalib has narrated that Imam Husayn (‘a) said, “One who loves us for the sake of Allah, we and him would reach to the prophets.” And he joined two fingers of his hand. “And one who loves us for the sake of the world, the world gives place to both the good and the evil people.”[53](#)

Imam (‘a) has mentioned about benefits that they would gain saying: “One who comes to us will not be deprived from all three of the following things: clear verses, just matters, profitable brother and companionship of the scholars. Imam (‘a) tells about the benefits of those who begin to follow them

afterwards and he said: One who comes to us, he could not leave any of these four qualities: (1) An established sign. (2) A just matter (3) A beneficial brother, and (4) company of scholars.”[54](#)

Lofty Morals

Imam (‘a) described the lofty morals and good qualities of his Ahlul Bayt (‘a) and his followers and commanded them so that they may decorate themselves with it so that they be an example for others. Some of them are explained below:

1. His eminence said, “Forbearance is an ornament, having loyalty, tolerance, good behavior, bounty and more desire is shamelessness, precedence, foolishness, is a weakness; extremism (ghuluw), to fall into a doubt and to cultivate company of debased people are mischiefs and company of sinners creates doubts, and company of the debased ones is an evil, and sitting with transgressors creates doubts”[55](#)

2. His Eminence said, “Truthfulness is an honor, falsehood a weakness. Secret is a trust. Neighborhood, relationships, helpfulness is charity and work, experience, good manners, worship, silence are ornaments. Miserliness is poverty; generosity is wealth and forbearance is intelligence”[56](#)

3. His Eminence said, “O people! One who gives, gains happiness and one who is miserly becomes debased and most generous is one who gives to one who does not expect it from him.”[57](#)

4. His Eminence said, “One who is generous gains happiness and one who is miserly becomes debased. One who makes haste in helping his brother, when tomorrow time comes for him he would receive it.”[58](#)

5. His Eminence said, “Indeed the needs of people put towards you are bounties of God to you, so do not be upset by these bounties otherwise they will be turned into calamities”[59](#)

6. Imam (‘a) saw a man who was invited for dinner but he did not accept the invitation. He told him: “Get up as there is no excuse in invitation and if you are not fasting eat it and if you are fasting say: May Allah give more”[60](#)

7. His Eminence said, “A needful one has staked his honor by asking, so You maintain Your honor by not turning him away empty-handed.”[61](#)

8. His Eminence (‘a) often used to repeat the following couplets that speak of good behavior and invites lack of hardship in seeking the world. Some narrators say that they are compositions of His Eminence himself.

“If actions of the day are judged for man, his morals and behavior is the highest. And if sustenance is restricted, making less effort is best for him.

And if in the world the cost of anything is calculated, the reward of Allah is the greatest.”

If sustenance is destined, beauty lies in working least for it.

And if bodies were created for death, being killed in the way of Allah is the greatest.

And if wealth is obtained to be kept and lost then why people adopt miserliness in spending whatever he leaves.”[62](#)

These couplets were recited by the Imam about martyrdom in the path of Allah just as his kind temperament and generosity shows.

9. His Eminence said: “Do not take up a responsibility of that you are not capable of. Do not go after something, which is not going to come to your hand. And do not promise that which you are not capable of. And do not spend except in proportion to what you earn. And do not expect reward but to the extent of what you have done. And do not remain happy but to the extent of the divine obedience you have observed. And do not obtain information except to the extent what is appropriate for you”[63](#)

10. His Eminence said to Ibn Abbas, “Do not speak about that which is not related to you. As I am fearful of the sin on you and do not speak about that which is not related to you so that you are called to testify for it later. Many are the speakers who speak the truth but become butts of criticism. And neither should you argue with forbearing people nor with fools; as the forbearing one would change you and the fool will cause you pain. And whenever a believer brother passes before you, do not say anything about him except what he says about you, when you pass before him. And act like one who knows that sinful deeds will be punished and good deeds will be rewarded”[64](#)

These golden words are some of the matters that His Eminence narrated about good manners and good qualities so that man could through them the right way and good behavior and well being of the world and the hereafter.

Legislation of the Call of Prayer

Some contemporaries of the Imam claimed that Abdullah bin Zaid had made the call for prayer legal due to the dream he had seen and told about it to the Prophet (S) and the Prophet ordered it. Imam (‘a) rejected this theory and said, “Revelation came on your prophet and you claim that he obtained it from Abdullah bin Zaid? While the call of the prayer is the face of your religion’!”[65](#)

Brothers

His Eminence said, “Brothers are four: A brother is for you and for himself and a brother is for you and a brother due to you and a brother who is neither for you nor for himself?”

Then the Imam explained as follows, “A brother who is for himself and for you, he is such a brother who wants to maintain his brotherhood and for his brotherhood he does not desire death for the brother.

Then it is for you and for himself, because if brotherhood is established, both their lives shall become good and if the brotherhood becomes conflicting, both of them shall be spoiled. And the brotherhood that is for you is a brotherhood that has taken itself out from greed to attachment. Thus if there is brotherly love there would not be greed in the world and he will be ready for you wholly. And the brotherhood that is upon you, it is the brotherhood, which is waiting for an opportunity about you, and who conceals the secrets for you and tells lies about you to the people, and looks at your face with eyes of jealousy that the curse of Allah may be on him. And the brotherhood which neither for you nor for him is that the Almighty Allah has made him a complete fool and kept him away from His mercy. Thus you will see him that he is showing his superiority to you, and there is nothing that he sees in you but that he demands it”⁶⁶

Knowledge and Experience

His Eminence said, “Study of knowledge is the result of divine recognition and more experience increases intellect and nobility, piety, contentment and comfort are bodies and one who considers you a friend restrains you and whoever is inimical to you, deceives you.”⁶⁷

Meaning of Charity

A Bani Umayyad person gave a lot of charity but it was not lawful wealth, thus the Imam (‘a) said: “His simile is like that of a person who robs Hajj Pilgrims, then gives those things away in charity. Indeed charity is of the one who sweated in obtaining it and got his face smeared in dust (i.e. he worked very hard).”⁶⁸

Advice and Guidance

Imam Husayn (‘a) used to accord great importance to advising and guiding the people like before him his father had done, and both of them used to be particular in strengthening the powers of good in the people and guiding people to the path of truth and good and prevent them from bad qualities some of which are pride, arrogance etc. some of these are sayings of His Eminence on this subject:

1. His Eminence said, “I advice you fear of Allah and I warn you of the days of Allah and I wave His flag on you as it is a terrible matter and coming of its fear and its reaching unwillingly and the bitter food is destroyed and your lives are drowned and it has become an obstacle between the deeds and you. Thus run for it by your healthy bodies and the period of life–spans as if it has come upon you. It would take out those below the earth and those who are out, below it. It would replace company with loneliness, comfort and light with darkness and its wideness with restrictiveness. Where no relative would be visited nor a sick person and nor the plaintiff be replied. May Allah help you and me in the horrible calamities of that day and may He keep us away from its consequences and may He give us more reward.

O slaves of Allah! Then if that is your nearest aim and destination of your journey, it is sufficient for everyone who acts, to leave their griefs and sorrows on him and stop him from his world. And in order to be released from it, its difficulties should be more. Then what would be the condition when even after that they are in the limits of their account of deeds and he is stopped for accounting. And he has no helper and caretaker to look for him and neither is there any help for him to remove it. On that day no'[69](#)

I advise you to fear Allah. Allah has guaranteed to those who fear Him from that which he does not like. And he makes him enter what he likes, gives sustenance to him from where he least expected. Thus be careful that you become such that you fear your sins due to people but are not afraid of the consequences of sins. The Almighty Allah, blessed and the High cannot be deceived regarding His Paradise and whatever is with Him cannot be obtained without His obedience.”[70](#)

This statement is full of that which brings the people near to Allah and that which keeps them away from His disobediences and restrains them from evil deeds and qualities.

2. A person wrote a letter to him and asked His Eminence to issue him two words of advice or to teach something in brief. So His Eminence (‘a) wrote to him, “One who desires an act for Allah’s disobedience, what he has desired will be fulfilled soonest and whatever he fears would come at the earliest. One who asks Allah for something in His disobedience, He takes him up very fast and that which he fears comes down very fast.”[71](#)

3. His Eminence said, “O people! Have the fear of the Almighty and beware of the world for if the world had been for anyone or if anyone had been in it forever, the prophet were more deserving, more eligible for divine pleasure and most

satisfied with His decision. Except that Almighty Allah has made the world as a test for the people and created its inmates for annihilation. Thus its new things shall be destroyed. And its bounties will go away and its happiness will become darkness. It is the stage of contentment and a house on loan. So take provision from this; and the best provision is piety.”[72](#)

4. A person wrote to the Holy Imam (‘a) to teach him something about the good of the world and the hereafter. His Eminence wrote back to him, “So to say: One who seeks the pleasure of Allah with displeasure of people, the Almighty Allah will make him needless of people. One who seeks the pleasure of people with displeasure of Allah, the Almighty Allah leaves him to the people. And peace (be upon you)! ”[73](#)

5. His Eminence said, “On everything that the sun shines on the east and west of the earth, be it in the sea or land, on the plains or on the mountains, that on whichever part of land the sun shines, it is for every saint of God and all this is like a shadow for those who have recognition of God.”[74](#)

And after that he said, “Where is that independence that releases this talkative woman (world) for its

inhabitants? Nothing less than Paradise is the price of your lives. So do not sell it for anything except that because one who becomes satisfied with the world from Allah, he has become satisfied with a thing of less value.”

6. A person asked His Eminence: “O son of Allah’s Messenger (S)! How did you begin your day? His Eminence replied, “I began the day with certainty that the Almighty Allah is above me and the fire (of hell) is before me and that death desires me and accounting has surrounded me and I am caught in the whirlpool of my deeds. I do not get what I desire and I cannot avoid what I don’t like, and my affair is in the control of someone else such that if He likes He could punish or forgive me. Then who is more needful and helpless than me?”⁷⁵

7. His Eminence said, “O son of Adam (People)! Think upon it and tell me! Where are the kings of this world and its owners? Those who inhabited its ruins and dug streams, planted trees, founded towns and did not like that they should be separated from it but other people succeeded them there and soon we shall also join them.

O son of Adam (Man)! Remember your death and your sleep in the grave. Remember that you are before the Almighty. Your limbs would witness against you on the day when the feet shall stumble and hearts would reach the throats and faces would become white and secrets would be exposed and scales of justice shall be installed.

O son of Adam (Man)! Remember the death of your father and sons. How they were and what place they reached. As soon you would also reach there and become a lesson for those who seek lessons. Then he recited the following couplets:

“Where are those kings who became careless of their defense? That the cupbearer of death made them drink the goblet of death.

Their towns and lands became deserted and ruined and their architects have tasted death.

We gather wealth for our successors and we build our houses for future destruction.”⁷⁶

These were some teachings of His Eminence that are narrated in traditions whose aim was to reform the character of people and keep them away from evil qualities.

^{1.} Ibne Athir, an-Nihayah 3/347

^{2.} Athairul Awwal Fil Islam Pg. 10

^{3.} Al-Kawaakibut Durriya 1/58

^{4.} Al-Istiab 1/398

^{5.} Al-A’laam 1/12

^{6.} Al-Haqaiq fil Jawamiul Fawariq, Pg. 105

^{7.} Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn (a.s.), Pg. 211

^{8.} Ash’at Min Hayatul Husayn, Pg. 93

^{9.} Al-Jarah wat Ta’deel, Section 2, Vol. 1, Pg. 55

- [10. Tahdhib at-Tahdhib 2/345](#)
- [11. An-Najjashi. Pg. 94](#)
- [12. Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 7](#)
- [13. Seer A'laamun Nubla 3/280](#)
- [14. Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 8](#)
- [15. Athaairul Awwal Fil Islam Pg. 10](#)
- [16. Ahmad bin Hanbal, Musnad 1/201](#)
- [17. Ahmad bin Hanbal, Musnad 1/201](#)
- [18. Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 8, Usud al-Ghaba 2/19, Al-Isabah 1/332](#)
- [19. Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/219](#)
- [20. Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/219](#)
- [21. Uyunul Akhbar 2/303](#)
- [22. Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 9](#)
- [23. Al-Khisal, Pg. 15](#)
- [24. Ibid, Pg. 253](#)
- [25. From handwritten manuscript at the Ahmadiya Library in the University of Zaituniya in Tunis and its facsimile is available at His Eminence Amirul Momineen Library which Sayyid Aziz Tabatabai Yazdi has classified](#)
- [26. Adh-Dhariyut Taahira, Pg. 128-132](#)
- [27. Ibid Pg. 137-138](#)
- [28. Adh-Dhariyut Taahira, Pg. 138, Musnad al-Firdaus, Vol. 41](#)
- [29. Usud al-Ghaba 1/100](#)
- [30. Al-Husayn \(a.s.\) 1/86](#)
- [31. Ahmad bin Hanbal, Musnad](#)
- [32. Bahauddin Amili, Arbaeen, Pg. 111](#)
- [33. Al-Husayn \(a.s.\) 1/140](#)
- [34. Musnad Imam Zaid, Pg. 374](#)
- [35. Al-Khisal, Pg. 209](#)
- [36. 5 Musnad al-Firdaus, from the facsimile at Imam Hakim Library from the writings of Shahardar bin Shiruya Shafei \(died 558 A.H.\)](#)
- [37. Musnad al-Firdaus, Vol. 2/179](#)
- [38. Fiqh ar-Reza, Pg. 408, Biharul Anwar 5/123](#)
- [39. Surah Tawheed 112:2](#)
- [40. Ma-aadinul Hukma fil Makaatib al-Aimmah 2/48-49](#)
- [41. Tohafful Uqool, Pg. 244](#)
- [42. Al-Kawaakibut Durriya 1/58, Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 225, Ibne Adeem, Baghiyatut Talib, Pg. 144](#)
- [43. Surah Maidah 5:63](#)
- [44. Surah Maidah 5:78](#)
- [45. Surah Maidah 5:44](#)
- [46. Surah Taubah 9:71](#)
- [47. Tohafful Uqool, Pg. 237-239](#)
- [48. Tohafful Uqool, Pg. 243](#)
- [49. Ibne Asakir, Tarikh 13/56](#)
- [50. Biharul Anwar 78/116, Tohafful Uqool, Pg. 246](#)
- [51. Askari, Tafsir, Pg. 327](#)
- [52. Ibne Maghazali, Manaqib, Pg. 400, Tradition 454, Hadith no. 388, from the handwritten manuscript of Amirul Momineen \(a.s.\) Library](#)
- [53. Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 227](#)

- [54.](#) Kashful Ghumma, 2/32
- [55.](#) Nurul Absar, Pg. 277
- [56.](#) Yaqubi, Tarikh 1/219
- [57.](#) Nihayatul Arab 3/205
- [58.](#) Ibid, 3/205
- [59.](#) Sherani, Tabaqat 1/26, Mukhtasar Sifwatul Safwa 62
- [60.](#) Daimul Islam 2/107
- [61.](#) Nurul Absar, Pg. 277, Kashful Ghumma, 2/29
- [62.](#) Mukhtasar Sifwatul Safwa 62, Al-Anwaarul Bahiya, Pg. 46
- [63.](#) Asraar al-Hukma, Pg. 90 by Yaqub Musta'si
- [64.](#) Bihar, 78/127
- [65.](#) Daimul Islam 1/143
- [66.](#) Bihar, 78/119
- [67.](#) Ibid, 78/128
- [68.](#) Daimul Islam 1/249
- [69.](#) Surah Anam 6: 158
- [70.](#) Al-Anwaarul Bahiya, Pg. 45, Bihar, 78/120
- [71.](#) Usul al-Kafi 2/373
- [72.](#) Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam Husayn (a.s.), Pg. 316
- [73.](#) Saduq, Majalis, Pg. 268, Bihar, 78/126
- [74.](#) Bihar 78/306
- [75.](#) Ibid
- [76.](#) Dailami, Irshad, Pg. 30

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