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Preface

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Imam al-Sadiq (as), the most prominent scientific character in the human history, is well known for his intelligence and creativity, which we cannot find an end or a limit to. This talented Imam brought the source of information and wisdom back to earth and filled the world with his knowledge and sciences as al-Jahiz, a famous Arab man of letters, once said.

The Imams and leaders of the schools of Muslim jurisprudence are among those getting benefits from his knowledge and his legislative works. We can still see the effects of his highly new scientific achievements, especially in the field of religious instructions such as acts of worship and transactions, which are the sources of jurisprudents in their religious inferences. Additionally, his knowledge has been used by master scholars of law in the field of legislation.

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This great intelligent figure holds positive and active share in the establishment of human culture and civilization as well as improving general public lives and enhancing human thoughts. This was achieved by means of his advanced technological discoveries and inventions that led human beings ahead in all aspects of life. He was among those who discovered oxygen as well as its properties and constitutions. He also declared that air was not a simple element, but it is composed of various elements.[1]

He also discovered many of the secrets of the universe that Western scholars and scientists have then confessed through their research in the books of Imam al-Sadiq's (as) student, Jabir ibn Hayyan, the great chemist and the source of pride in the east, whose writing works are available in many Western libraries until now.[2]

Western scholars have considered Imam al-Sadiq (as) an intellectual and creative mind in humanitarian issues. It is also noteworthy that some of Orientalists have claimed that Imam al-Sadiq (as) was from the West, but he then migrated to the East, because they believed that eastern people do not possess such a scientific superiority like the one owned by the Imam (as). It was hidden from those who claimed

this statement that he was from a prophetic family that was granted the privilege of having high knowledge on the earth.

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Imam al-Sadiq (as) had very much attention to the distribution of science, culture and the crystallization of the Islamic thoughts in various aspects. His great university, which was seen as a place for one of the most important events of that time, elevated the scientific level; extended the cultural knowledge; provided the necessary prerequisite of the nations' advancement through the publication of different scientific and intellectual waves throughout the Islamic world and the surrounding regions.

The scientific revolution in the Abbasidd era was considered to be the result of the Imam's (as) university. In addition to that, some researchers believe that the technological advancement and the high industrial upgrading of the modern countries at that period were based, to some extent, on the findings and brilliant heritage of Jabir ibn Hayyan, the student of Imam al-Sadiq (as), in the fields of chemistry and physics, which are considered the foundations of today's scientific revolution.

Anyway, in this book, the Imam's university is presented in a comprehensive, subject-based method. Also, the scientific and cultural programs, number of students, fields and all relevant issues will be mentioned in the book.

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Imam al-Sadiq (as), in his brilliant lectures and researches, touched the issue of monotheism, which is the forefront of the Islamic thought. He posed the doubts that were arisen around this issue by anti-Islam persons in the intention of spoiling the beliefs of Muslims. The Imam (as) had a steady program to remove their doubts. He cured the monotheism issues by making use of philosophical researches and by referring to sense-based issues that points to self-evident, obvious reasons with no other disputations allowed. So, he reasonably abolished all the doubts set forth around monotheism and proved the originality of the Islamic ideology in all aspects. This book presents a comprehensive view of the Imam's (as) endeavour and vast knowledge and wisdom in this issue.

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Imam al-Sadiq (as) enriched the Islamic thought with his fabulous maxims and comprehensive expressions in all fields of human life that he used to spread among people. These maxims and expressions can be adopted as comprehensive programs and complete instructions to solve all problems of humanity. In addition, the majority of these maxims have been in the highest level of eloquence and fluency; since they have been characterized by beauty of composition, preciseness of writing style and magnificence of statements.

They are thus considered one of the essential resources of Arabic literature and one of the treasures of

Muslim heritage. Because of the innumeracy and significance of these maxims, we have allocated a special chapter in the book to them.

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Among the brilliant intellectual treasures of Imam al-Sadiq (as), his honourable prayers can be mentioned, which are regarded as equal to the prayer-book of his grandfather, Imam al-Sajjad (as), which is considered as the Bible of Muhammad's (S) family. Those prayers are evidence for his devotion and adherence to Allah (SwT), in addition to the various spiritual aspects that include moral, social and political issues. He narrated what went on to the people of his era, such as the problems and disasters, which were the results of the cruelty of the ruling authorities of that time who used to force people to do things they disliked to do.

The prayers of Imam al-Sadiq (as) are similar to those of his ancestors and successors. They are all aiming to plant proper characteristics in Muslims' hearts, refine their behaviours and distribute devoutness and refinements among their communities. Because of the importance of these prayers, we have presented them distinctively in a book entitled "*al-Sahifah al-Sadiqiyyah*." This book was submitted to be published before printing the sections of this book.

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Imam al-Sadiq (as) established a great, independent, complete and comprehensive methodology for his followers, which dealt with advanced jurisprudence that went well with all eras. He made them independent from other Islamic sects or schools of thought. Their jurisprudence has thus been the most brilliant jurisprudence ever established. Dr. Abd al-Rahman al-Badawi made the following statement:

"Imam al-Sadiq (as) was the same one who organized the Shiah and originated jurisprudential entity thus making it one of the most striking Islamic jurisprudence. He enriched it from the intellectual point of view and deepened its focus for the sake of Allah (SwT) and for the benefit of humanity."[3]

This book tries manifesting his honourable jurisprudence in a comprehensive and complete way.

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The sources and collections of *Hadith* (tradition) are full of brilliant set of Imam al-Sadiq's (as) traditions that were narrated from his great ancestor, the Holy Prophet (S) and the infallible Imams (as), in addition to some other narrations from the customs, behaviours and advices of other prophets (as). These traditions are generally about moral behaviour and proper characteristics that urge Muslims to imitate in order to be masters of human beings and leaders of the world.

We have allocated a special section to this group of traditions in this book.

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Among the many available works of this great superhuman, there were a set of medical instructions and medical prescriptions transferred to his medical students. This evinced his proficiency and skill in this science. The late Shaykh Muhammad al-Khalili had written a book in which he mentioned what was derived from the Imam (as) in some medical topics. We will bring some parts of this book later on.

It is worth mentioning that narrators have narrated a collection of traditions in which the Imam (as) discussed the importance of vegetables on human health. We will present some of these topics later in the book too.

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It rarely happened that we read a book regarding Quran Interpretations (i.e. *Tafsir*) without finding an original idea taken from Imam al-Sadiq (as) in interpreting some of the holy verses of Quran. This confirms that Imam al-Sadiq (as) had an important emphasis on interpreting the Holy Quran. So he granted this field of Islamic knowledge a lot of efforts and outcomes as well as considering the task as a teaching program, which he used in turn to pass to his high rank students. If this effort were collected, there would undoubtedly be a comprehensive, self-describing book. We will present the personal interpretation of some of the verses of the Holy Quran in the book.

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An important complementary in discussing the life of Imam al-Sadiq (as) is to study the lives of his students in details and to acquaint ourselves with their identities and cultural skills. This research is quite necessary according to modern studies, as it reveals the scientific and cultural life of that period. It also exposes the amount of efforts exerted to distribute the science and the organized operations in having it public among people.

Crowds of students rushed into Yathrib (al-Madinah al-Munawwarh where Imam al-Sadiq (as) used to deliver lectures) to make use of the Imam's (as) vast knowledge. The number of those students reached to something around four thousands. This large number revealed the capacity of Imam al-Sadiq's (as) sciences that persuaded students to get what they needed from the diverse fields of knowledge and sciences available.

Yathrib thrived by this scientific faculty. Its golden majesty, which was constructed by the Holy Prophet (S), came back to it. The Islamic world started its expansion by the appearance of scientists and scholars graduated from the University of Imam al-Sadiq (as). They distributed the cultural and scientific awareness among Muslims and exploded the scientific revolution that was one of the most important objectives of Imam al-Sadiq (as) who aimed to reach that stage.

We have brought brief lives of three thousands and six hundred and sixty students of Imam al-Sadiq in this encyclopaedia on the life of the Imam (as). It is worth mentioning that the majority of these students were from the city of al-Kufah (Iraq) to which they came back after they had graduated from the Imam's

(as) University. As a result, they elevated the level of science and established different courses at the University of al-Kufah. As they distributed Imam's (as) sciences and knowledge, they were surrounded by the youth. This way, al-Kufah became the most outstanding cultural center in Islam.

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Imam al-Sadiq (as), with his intelligence and creativity, proved the originality of the fact, the Shiah believe, that Imam (as) should be the most knowledgeable person of his time in a way that no one else might reach his scientific level and capacity of knowledge.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) was the sole person in the whole history that had such a wide scientific capacity, while he neither attend any school nor did he study under any teacher.

So, from where did this advancement and progress, which made his mind illuminated, come?

There should be an acknowledgement to what the Shiah believe to the fact that Ahl al-Bayt (The family of the Holy Prophet (S)) were granted this knowledge and eloquence from Allah (SwT) in the same way as He, the Majestic, granted His messengers (as) and Prophets (as). In this, there is no exaggeration or deviation from the criteria of the truth, especially after the availability of original proofs, which will be clearly demonstrated in this book.

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Imam al-Sadiq's (as) characteristics and personality stand in for the best example of nobility of character and high moral standards, such as forbearance, generosity, mercy and self-denial. As for nobility of character, he has reached the highest level of morality to which his great ancestor - namely, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) who excelled all other prophets (as) in this field - reached.

Imam al-Sadiq's (as) morality was a grant from Allah (SwT) Who endued him with such characteristics so that he could be the guide and the leader of the nation in its cultural and intellectual revolution.

The huge quantity of excellent mannerisms that the Prophethood-descending Imam (as) enjoyed made him in the forefront of all Muslim leaders in rank and position throughout history.

Allah (SwT) has granted this Imam (as) such supreme levels of tender-heartedness, precise feeling and high morality that no one has seen before; as if he was an angel that came down to the earth to fill it with prosperity, justice and mercy.

This book aims at presenting a comprehensive, live and distinguished form of the attributes and moral behaviour of Imam al-Sadiq (as).

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One of the unique characteristics of Imam al-Sadiq (as) is his tendency to pray and devotion to Allah

(SwT). Therefore, he used to spend his leisure time glorifying Allah (SwT) and reciting His Book. Malik ibn Anas was astonished with the prayers of Imam al-Sadiq (as) as he went on saying with wonder and surprise:

"When I was running into Jafar ibn Muhammad (al-Sadiq), I never saw him in a situation other than the following three ones: praying, fasting or reciting Quran."

The Imam (as) resorted to Allah (SwT) and worshiped him honestly; he did only that what would take him closer to Allah (SwT). This book will bring some selections of his prayers.

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One of the researches of this book is discussion of the age in which Imam al-Sadiq (as) grew up.

A research should necessarily be conducted comprehensively regarding the social, economical and political situations of that time. Therefore, discussing that era has become one of the most principled methodologies in studying the life and biography of a person. The era in which the Imam (as) lived was full of important and affecting events.

The social life of his time is one of the most controversial issues; the boundaries of the Islamic world were encompassed by terrifying problems as ordeals and afflictions. These were the result of the different parties' struggles to win authority and power. Therefore, various seditious matters and riots overshadowed Muslims who, gradually, strayed off their religion.

Imam al-Sadiq (as) had a decisive decision in dealing with political conflicts; he avoided engaging himself in any political conflict. He therefore retired to distributing science and knowledge among people.

This book presents comprehensive details about the Imam's (as) attitude to the political events of that time.

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Another phenomenon that characterized the age of Imam al-Sadiq (as) was the appearance of diverse Muslim sects such as the following: al-Mutazilah, al-Ashairah, al-Khawarij, al-Kaysaniyyah, al-Zaydiyyah and many others.

Conflicts amongst these sects attained its climax in tension and violence. Every sect had its own meetings and assemblies in which they discussed and tried to prove the accuracy of their own tenets. They tried to invite people to their opinions.

The ruling authority adopted the ideas of certain sects and forced people to embrace their opinions as it ordered the judges to judge according to the jurisprudential ideas of these sects, because they acted as trumpets for the ruling authority.

Imam al-Sadiq (as), alongside his top students, confronted and refuted the claims of these sects, which were in contrast with the fact of Islam.

This book explains thoroughly all the details of this issue.

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This book tends to demonstrate the life accounts of the rulers and governors who were contemporaries of Imam al-Sadiq (as) as well as the events that took place between these rulers and the Imam (as) without taking side with any specific group or taking anyone's part. Our aim is to be sincere to the truth, without mixing it with any sort of sectarian imitation or fancy.

We have to highlight the historical documents, as they are considered backbones of historical researches, to spare no effort in studying them and to infer the resulting facts, so not to follow a wrong path. The history is filled with various subjects that could cause concealment of the truth from the sights of many writers and researchers.

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After this brief introduction about some of the studies in the book, I would like to indicate that in spite of the book's comprehensiveness, it would not narrate, in a definite way, all the traditions of Imam al-Sadiq (as), as it did not collect his knowledge-based and scientific works wholly. The book only takes a short glance at some of his characteristics, which are considered part of the unlimited intellectual and scientific treasures of the world.

I hope that I have presented a simple, modest service in this collection to Imam al-Sadiq (as), whom Allah (SwT) granted wisdom, intelligence, chastity and straightness - attributes that made him one of the greatest leading figures of Muslims, the most dutiful towards his religion and the most desirous to revive Allah's (SwT) Book and the Prophet's (S) customs in words and deeds. I ask Allah (SwT) to aid us to reach success and to grant us the rewards.

Before finishing this introduction, it is necessary to express my gratitude to the great Allamah Shaykh Hadi (may Allah (SwT) save him) for his efforts in reviewing the historical texts from which I have benefited in authoring this collection, in addition to his valuable notes that he made. May Allah (SwT) grant him more rewards! Also, I would like to express my thanks to His eminence *Hujjat al-Islam wal-Muslimin* Shaykh Husayn al-Khalifah for motivating me to document the biographies of the Holy Imams (as). May Allah (SwT) reward him duly. It is only Almighty Allah (SwT) Who is able to do so.

Baqir Sharif al-Qarashi

1. Refer to al-Imam al-Sadiq Kama Arafahou Ulama al-Gharb (Imam al-Sadiq (as) as Known by Western Scholars), by A Group of Authors, pp. 120-130.
2. We will present the writings of Jabir ibn Hayyan in details within his biography in the chapter of this book on the

biographies of Imam al-Sadiq's (as) companions.

3. Abd al-Rahman Badawi, Dirasat Islamiyyah.

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