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Preface

In the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

And all praise belongs to the Lord of the worlds; and there is no Power and no Strength except in Allah, the Exalted and Mighty

Endless greetings upon the immaculate soul of the seal of the prophets, Muhammad Mustafa, and his noble deputy and spiritual heir and successor 'Ali Murtadha and the eleven progeny of his most glorious descendants, especially the *wali* of the contingent realm, the Eminent Imam Zaman, the divinely appointed leader of the era, Muhammad ibn Hasan, the Upholder of the House of Muhammad, who leads the caravan of existence with love and attraction in its movement toward the realm of the absolute and the Oneness of the Eminent Truth—be He magnified and Exalted.

***And We made them leaders, guiding* (*others*) *by Our command, and We inspired them to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers and to pay the poor rate and they constantly served Us* (*and Us only*). (Sura al-*Anbiah 21: 83*)**

The era of the Imamat of the Eminent[1] Imam Hasan Mujtaba and the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs (Imam Husayn) peace be upon them was among the darkest and most difficult eras due to the pressure and domination from the oppressive Umayyad regime. Stifling of the truth, guile, duplicity, ignorance, pretense, lies and deception were at their peak.

In a speech near the end of his life, the Eminent Leader of the Faithful, Amir ul-Mumineen, 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon him bore witness to this very situation when he said:

'Know this—may Allah be merciful upon you—you are living in a time in which those who speak the truth are few. When it comes to saying the truth, the tongue is tired, inarticulate, and unable to explain itself.

The person who follows what is right is abased. The people of this era have turned to the mundane life. They have settled into sinfulness, and have adapted to and become familiar with lassitude and half-heartedness. Their youth are ill-mannered; their elders are sinners. Their learned men are hypocrites; those among them who recite the Quran are polluted and impure. The youth do not treat the elders with

dignity and respect; and the rich do not take care of the poor.'[2]

In addition to the entire length of their lives, the length of the Imamat of these two gallant and high-minded Imams amounted to ten years each. Thus, naturally there should be thousands of narrations and traditions, speeches and sermons, Quran exegeses and the like from them. Yet, not more than one or two narrations on jurisprudence and a few hadith giving Quranic commentary have been passed down. Their speeches, sermons, and sayings, are also extremely brief, concise and few in number.

At the same time, books, records, and history have been filled with thousands of forged and false hadith—with content corresponding to the politics of the time--from the hadith merchants such as Abu Hurairah and others like him.

It is obvious that in view of that darkness, gloom, and pressure, either fewer people turned to those great individuals to take advantage of their burgeoning oceans of knowledge; or, the sayings which were repeated from them, due to the anxiety, terror and fear of the narrators of those hadith, were wiped out and destroyed and thus were not conveyed to the later generations.

A few of the speeches and preachings of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs have reached us, which are lessons in freedom and wisdom, in faith and conviction. Obviously these flow from the font of Wilayat. On such is:

'We are the sovereigns of speech (regarding the Truth). Our speech has firm roots and bases, and these roots and bases have grown, and its branches spread through our lineage.

Surely we are the creators and sovereigns of (true) discourse. It takes root in us, is established in us, and grows in us so that the fruitful branches of true speech hang from our household.'[3]

Accordingly, they are the sources and tributaries of speech, representing the bases and the applications of spirituality and Truth.

And how good it would be if the words of that Eminent one, words which contain a world of glory and honor, of independence, faith and conviction, of patience and fortitude, manliness and chivalry, would be written on posters and banners, translated in a flowing and engaging way. Then these posters and banners, like the poems of *Muhtasham*,[4] would be hung in the mourning ceremonies and centers.

Then, those who enter and participate in these meetings could benefit not only from listening to the truthful speakers and narrators, but also from seeing such words. They could memorize these words exactly and make these be the guiding principles for their life and behavior.

This brief manuscript currently before the esteemed reader includes some of the exact words of the Eminent Lord of the Martyrs, (peace be upon him) which this humble writer has recounted, noting their sources. I have merely translated them, refraining from explaining or expounding upon them. Thus, they are concise and brief enough to be written upon posters and banners, placed in view of those present in

meetings and gatherings. At the same time, because of their simplicity, they are useful for all of our religious brethren.

It is anticipated that seminarians and other religiously committed students memorize these exact words and speeches, and then in their own speeches and discussions, enlighten the mind of the general public with the radiant brilliance of the light of Husayn peace be upon him. Thus this valuable legacy which has come to us from the pens of the scholars and the blood of the martyrs who came before us, can be passed along to the next generation.

May Allah reward them for their splendid efforts and increase their faith, piety, knowledge, and righteous actions.

Allah's greetings, mercy and blessings, be upon us and upon them and upon the Righteous servants of Allah.

Sayyid Muhammad-Husain Husaini-Tehrani
Noon prayer time,
Ashura, 10th Muharram, 1402 H.Q.

The Sacred City of Mashhad, the region of Imam Ridha', peace be upon him
And He is the Ominipotent

1. Eminent stands for the word "Hazrat" which is an honorific title, used to show respect, in the Persian language before the names of the Fourteen Infallible. Some translators have omitted this altogether because there is no English equivalent. The word Eminent, capitalized, has been used here in an attempt to keep the flavor of the original manuscript, showing the deference and respect allotted by devout Shia to the Fourteen infallible.
2. "Nahjul Balaghah", Speech 231; Sharh 'Abdeh. Egypt: Vol.1, p. 462
3. "Nahjul Balaghah" (The Peaks of Eloquence), Speech 231, Shahr 'Abdeh, Egypt: Volume 1, p.461.
4. Muhtahsham is an Iranian poet. Verses of his poems elegizing the events at Karbala are traditionally written on black banners hung in mourning ceremonies and halls in meetings commemorating these events.

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