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Foreword

The form of research varies and the outlook differs in investigations about the religious matters and those of the faith of those who believe in God and the unseen world.

The acceptance of this truth, or in other words, such a view of the universe that the world is created by God, in it is a subject that entails research. With regards to Islam we hold belief in God's existence and His being omnipotent, All Knowing, Almighty, All Wise and that He sent the Messengers for the guidance of the people.

Obviously in such a way of investigation we connect the Mission of Muhammad to God Himself. Now the validity of this connection is to be explored.

On, the issue of Imamate and Mahdism; we faithfully and unanimously make inquiry into the relation of these two (Imamate and Mahdism) with the reality so that to understand as to whether these two subjects are based on an Islamic Pedestal or only attributed to Islam.

The forms of research differ even in that of belief in God. In order to reach the truth and the correct view of the universe, one seeks to launch an inquiry.

This occasions him to conquest the view of the universe held by those who know God and those who ignore God. Now, such an inquirer or investigator deals with both sides of the coin, negatively and positively, because he has not yet formed a belief. He is still in a search. So, this is a way of research and study. Another way of research about the events and beliefs is, in a historical term, the material view of the universe. Although, he himself might not be materialist, but wants to know the materialistic causes.

This and such a type of study is valid only in the ambit of the material view of the world and could provide causes and effects within the limits of its range, but does not stand authentic to establish the fact or deny it because from the aspect of the Divine view of the universe it is not a standard. Besides, it would not go beyond a concatenation of feeble guess. It would only crawl like a centipede but could not run with the impetus of the gallop of a horse.

Here we are not in the situation of making a comparison between these two aspects of viewing the

universe and to prove the Divine view of the universe. Nor can we say that the material view of the universe or historical one, whatever it may be called, if it is to be considered to be the absolute one towards negating God and the unseen world, then they are mistaken because the material view of the universe is short to constitute a consummate scope of all truth and cannot pose itself as a reality to be believed. One may reject the divine view of the universe; but his path terminates at ignorance – absence of knowledge and not the knowledge of absence.

In such a disquisition of the material view despite the severance of the connection between this visible world with the absent one, the invisible causes that give birth to an incident or a belief or a thought, because of the bottom of their question. As such, they are after a material and historical cause for the birth of a thought, a system, a school, a movement and so forth. So, this outlook in the causes that lead a belief or an opinion to appear in a circle of unbelievers is nothing but a series of presumptions which carry, even to themselves only a value not more than the worth of a guess.

It is not a viewpoint believable of its own entity in the subject matter. It is not consummate neither compendious nor far stretching one, even to those who are wandering in the wilderness of conquest and have not yet reached the oasis of any particular view of the universe. It is, indeed, void for those who hold an Islamic and Divine view of the universe.

When such a fundamental difference exists between the two methods of study and disquisition one should avoid the conjugation of these two in discussions and arguments. There are many that are quite inadvertent to this fact, and therefore, become victims of the error that is the consequence of the coition between these two different ways of disquisition. Therefore they fell prey to mistakes when they study the Divine view of the universe, without a belief in it they will classify it as a second or third grade issue.

They make their research in the issue of messengers and apostles and, the belief in its essentiality; in the same fashion, that is, from the historical aspect. They bring forth other issues, those of economical and material ones; and conjugate them although there exist no relation with the invisible world. A Divine view of the universe or the belief in God is, in fact, a cardinal issue. But they treat it on the same basis dwelling on the causes, which are ended by the element of time or succumb to it.

So, such they proceed and such they pay no heed to these points, and, accordingly by fall in the abyss of error which to them appears as a valley of principles, where their imagination which had given link between the historical events takes the shape of facts. Thus they float distant from the shore of the Divine view of the universe because not being in its current they cannot enter into its flow. Great issues such as the prophet hood and Imamate to them are a true history of the events that once occurred.

So, here we can conclude that the respected scholar, Mr. Abdul Aziz Sachedina, has endeavored greatly and toiled much but only to attain the outlook of the second category; what he saw from Shia and Mahdism has been written in this book; The knowledge about him that I have, tells me that he is an ardent Shia and a Staunch believer in "Wilayat" and "Imamate of Mahdi (as)."

That a series of historical effects caused the events, and that Imamate and Mahdism among them which precede the belief in the prophet hood, to presume such and attribute this to the writer it will be unfair. It is not so. He has chosen this method of analysis from the historical aspect because of his own assumption to make the Shia religion and Mahdism comprehensive for those who regard the growth of the schools in line with the material view of the universe and on such a foundation rest their analysis.

He has done this because of his knowledge of them to whom realities are only a historical series of events, interlinked and interwoven, chained in the continuity of time only to become the cause for the effect of the other. In other words, whatever the history it is a fact and a reality; and, which therefore, cannot be denied.

He has adopted such method of analysis although in principle wrong and erroneous to present the gist so that the thought might not be looked improbable and not excite wonder, astonishment nor tempt them the vilification. By such an analysis we infer that the writer has made an attempt to elevate the Shi'ism and the school of Mahdism in their understanding as a consummate, complete, and advanced one with participation in revolutions and changes which cannot be ignored.

Yet, this should be said as we pointed out earlier that this way of study and investigation neither attains truth nor does it reflect the facts. The outlook of the universal Divine view is at difference with it. The Divine view is not mentioned, neither openly nor indirectly, in the book. Reflecting these points and the method of raising the issues and the difference between the outlooks towards these issues are not known to many.

There is every likelihood of a mistake. To divert the attention of such ignorant to the gist of the issue and to divert their sight to the original point and to acquaint them with the Imamate and Mahdism, we will present our readers a few explanations about the issues raised in that book.

We hope our readers will at least acquire some advantages and benefits that he may use latter on. What we have explained, is the need; there is no need to depend upon the matters about which we have explained.

Each chapter that occurs to us we shall explain by the help of God.

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