

In The Name Of Allah,  
The Beneficent, The Merciful

This Is My Faith

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**The Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain (AS)**

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# This Is My Faith

Simplified Ideological dialogue-Based Series

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In The Holy Shrine Of Imam Hussain (AS)

Studies and Researches Section

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## Introduction

Praise be to Allah, the One, the eternally Besought of all who bestowed upon all people with His knowledge. Peace be upon His last messenger, Mohammad Al-Mustafa, and people of his kindred who preserved the Shari'a.

Nothing will endure unless it is built right; it might have appearance but with no content. This is a rule agreed about by the wise that is also emphasized by the Creator of the wise; He put Principles for His religion to found on, bases to lean on, and branches through which to worship Him.

The religion of Islam – the last of religions, the Mohammedan law that crowned all preceding celestial laws – is no exception to this rule. Our religion has principles (Osul) and branches to those Principles (Foru')

as well as Practices (Sonan). They are also known as Ideology, Jurisprudence and Ethics. Through these three pillars one can attain the Divine vicinity; each has also its own role in building the human personality.

Ideology orients the human mind to the right direction away from myths and superstitions, ignorance and perversity. Jurisprudence is interested in the relation between mankind and their Creator in addition to the relation between people themselves. Ethics tries to refine the human soul from vice and to beautify it with virtue.

This book – This Is My Faith – comes to highlight the first science which is Ideology in a simplified dialogue-based style. All can understand its content as it is free from complicated reasoning and difficult demonstration. Some texts have been changed for the sake of simplification as the definitions to the five Principles are also provided. Thus, here we offer you this book in the form of dialogue-based serial stories between two friends seeking only truth and knowledge.

Sheikh Ali Al-Fatlawi

## ***Symposium 1***

### **Preface**

"I saw you by accident on my way back from work", said Anwar to his friend Hasan. "Do not say by accident", Hasan replied, "Coincidence is rejected in Islam. Say unintentional meeting".

*Anwar:* Why doesn't Islam recognize coincidence?

*Hasan:* Because coincidence means occurrence of events with no reason!

*Anwar:* What is wrong with things happening with absolute no reason?

*Hasan:* It is against the law of life.

*Anwar:* So, what is the law of life about that?

*Hasan:* That there is reason behind everything. All Imams referred to the fact that Allah insists on events take place for a reason. This is also supported by logic

and reason; that is why we have this rule that says there is always a cause for an effect!

*Anwar:* But, when I said 'by accident', I did not mean to refute the reasons; I just did not plan to see you when I left work.

*Hasan:* So, we better call it 'unintentional meeting' that took place for its own reasons.

*Anwar:* What is this coincidence that is rejected by Islam?

*Hasan:* It is what the materialists say about *raison d'etre* and that there is no creator or no reason behind the whole existence.

*Anwar:* May I raise some questions as long as we have this ideological conversation?

*Hasan:* You're most welcome! I always encourage believers to ask about their religion. The Hadith says, "ask about your religion until you are called lunatic", and there is no shame in seeking knowledge, especially when it comes to every day issues.

*Anwar:* So, please listen to my questions with patience.

*Hasan:* I am all ears. No one can claim that they know

everything, but I think I have enough of Islamic culture to hopefully answer your questions, Inshallah.

*Anwar:* I hear that religiously following a clerk (Taqlid) is not permitted when it comes to the Principles (Osul Al-Din). Why is that?

*Hasan:* First of all, you need to know about these Principles (Osul Al-Din).

*Anwar:* Yes, with all pleasure!

*Hasan:* There are five fundamental elements on which the religion of Islam is based on. Each of them is called a Principle (Asl).

The first Principle is Monotheism (Tawhid) and it means to believe that Allah is the only God Who is unmatched, Who has no associates and Who holds the entire superior and perfect qualities. This is emphasized by the Noble Quran in one of its chapters which is also named after this principle:

(Say: He is Allah, the One◊Allah, the eternally Besought of all◊He begetteth not nor was begotton◊And there is none comparable unto Him)<sub>112:1-4</sub>

The second is Justice ('Adalah) which means to believe that it is impossible that Allah treats his creatures unjustly as it is mentioned in the Noble Quran: (Allah is no oppressor of His bondmen).<sup>3; 182</sup>

Prophecy (Nobowa) is the third principle. It is to believe that Allah sent the Prophets and the messengers to guide mankind. The Glorious Allah says in the Noble Quran: (And verity We sent messengers to mankind before thee).<sup>13; 38</sup>

The fourth is Imamate (Imamah). This principle means that Allah has placed a number of Imams<sup>(1)</sup> for the messengers and the Prophets to preserve and carry on their messages. This is mentioned in the Noble Quran: (And We made them chiefs who guide by Our commands).<sup>21; 73</sup>

The fifth principle is the Hereafter (Mi'ad). It is to believe that the Glorious Allah will gather people for the Judgment (Al-Hisab) in a certain day as He puts it in the

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(1) Shiite believe there are twelve imams (PBUT) after the prophet (PBUT);

1- Commander of The Faithful Ali bin Abi talib (PBUT). 2- Al-Hasan Bin Ali (PBUT) .

3- Abu Abdullah Al-Husain Bin Ali. 4-Ali Bin Al-Husain.

5- Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Ali. 6- Abu Abdullah Ja'far Bin Mohammad Al-Sajad.

7-Mosa Bin Ja'far Al-Kadim.8-Ali Bin Mosa Al-riza. 9-Mohammad Bin Ali Al-Jawad.

10- Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Hadi.11- Al-Hasan Bin Ali Al-Askari.

12 – Abu Al-Qasim Bin Al-Hasan Al-Mahdi.

Noble Quran: (He Who hath given thee the Quran for a law will surely bring thee borne again).<sup>28:85</sup>

Religious Scholars ('Olama) have indicated that every individual has to know these Principles and that they are not allowed to religiously follow the clerks in these issues.

*Anwar:* But how do we expect those Muslims who cannot read or write to know these believes?

*Hasan:* The matter of belief has nothing to do with reading and writing; it is about understanding and accepting, and they can learn them through listening. Those who are able to read can definitely find it printed. Imam Ali (PBUH) says: "Knowledge is either heard or printed". I would actually like to carry on our conversation to give some proofs to the existence of the Creator; this is if you have time.

*Anwar:* I would love to know.

*Hasan:* Once, an Arab of the desert was asked about the existence of the Glorious Creator. The answer was that the camel dung refers to its camel, the trail refers to the pathway and the heavens and earth refer to the Most Kind with a full authority.

An old woman, who was spinning her wool, was also asked the same thing. 'My spindle proves it!' she said, 'it moves when I spin it and when I leave it, it stops, and so is the existence; it has to have a Creator who moves it!' The Bedouin and the old woman apparently did not get this knowledge through reading but obviously through thinking and understanding. This is again what the Noble Quran refers to:

(In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the difference of night and day are tokens of His sovereignty for men of understanding ﴿٤٠﴾ Such as remember Allah, standing, sitting, and reclining, and consider the creation of the heavens and the earth, and say: our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain).<sup>3;190-191</sup>

There are so many other Holy Verses that invite us to think.

*Anwar:* All right! What you just said was very sound and solid, and now I want to know something about religiously following a clerk (Taqlid) and also about ideological matters on Monotheism.

*Hasan:* Of course, but we'll do that next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 2***

### **Following a Religious Scholar (Taqlid)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi (brother) Hasan! Are we still going to carry out what we agreed on?

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh! Yes, Inshallah.

*Anwar:* So, talk to me about following a religious scholar (Taqlid).

*Hasan:* Taqlid linguistically means to put a collar on one's neck. But from a religious point of view, it means to practically following a religious scholar or clerk in religious matters. So, if you give practical effect to a Fatwa – formal religious opinion – issued by a Mujtahid

– religious expert, you are a Moqallid – religious follower.

This, of course, is not allowed with the Principles (Osul Al-Din) which are: Monotheism (Tawhid), Justice ('Adalah), Prophecy (Nobowa), Imamate (Imamah), and Hereafter (Mi'ad). As we know now, we need to be convinced about them through reasonings.

Taqlid is only allowed with the branches to those Principles (Foru' Al-Din) which are: prayer (As-Salat), fasting (As-Siam), almsgiving (Az-Zakat), pilgrimage to Mecca (Al-Haj), giving away one fifth of income (Al-Khoms), holy wars by Muslims (Al-Jihad), bidding to do good (Al-Amr Bil-Ma'rouf), forbidding to do evil (Al-Nahy 'An Al-Monkar), following the practices of the Ahl Al-Bait (Al-Mowalat), renouncing the enemies of Ahl Al-Bait (Al-Bara).

Thus, in the Noble Quran, the Glorious Allah disapproves those who only imitate what their fathers used to do: (They say; we follow that wherein we found our fathers. What! Even though their fathers were unintelligent.)<sup>2:170</sup>

This means that man has to think and meditate in order to find the truth.

*Anwar:* What is the problem with doing Taqlid in Osul Al-Din?

*Hasan:* Then it will only be imitation which is opposite to conviction, and also there is always the possibility of getting things wrong way. That is why Allah only permits us to do Taqlid in Foru' Al-Din, and so do the Imams (PBUT): (They should find a righteous pious person who preserves the practices of his religion and who obeys his Lord so that the common people can follow him).

Thus, Allah, Praised Be His Name, orders us to first understand and then accept the Principles so we can find the right path ourselves, and accordingly, Taqlid just doesn't do that. If we believe in Monotheism (Tawhid), Justice ('Adalah), Prophecy (Nobowa), Imamate (Imamah), and Hereafter (Mi'ad), this again will refute any possible damages; Taqlid, in Osul Al-Din, will leave the door open for these possible mistakes.

*Anwar:* Then why is Taqlid allowed in Foru' Al-Din?

*Hasan:* Believers need to be characterized as one of the

following three:

- They can learn the religion until they become religious experts (Mujtahid).
- They have to be watchful i.e they need to know about the opinions of all the contemporary religious experts and adopt the opinion that keeps them in the safe zone.
- They simply follow a religious expert.

*Anwar:* Talking about Taqlid took a long time, so I will leave the rest of my questions for the next time.

*Hasan:* Ok, great! But what are your questions?

*Anwar:* Who is the person I can follow in my religious matters? And what are his characteristics?

*Hasan:* Excellent! We'll have this talk in our next meeting, Inshallah.

### ***Symposium 3***

#### **Religious Experts (Moqallad)**

*Anwar:* Last time I had questions about religious experts and their characteristics, and I think it is time I get an answer.

*Hasan:* of course, Anwar! You are welcome. Our dignified religious scholars and clerks have all agreed on certain qualities in a person in order to be considered a religious expert (Muqallad) and this way common people can follow him in their religious matters. These qualities can be listed as the following:

Puberty (Al-Bolugh), reason (Al-'Aghl), manliness (Ar-

Rojoulah), faith (he has to be a Shiite - Iman), justice (Al'Adalah), purity (Al-Taharah), strength of mind (Al-Zabt), religious scholarship (Al-Ijtihad), and life (Al-Hayat).

*Anwar:* Would you please explain these characteristics?

*Hasan:* Of course, Akhi. I am at your service. Puberty means he has to be an adult – either aged of fifteen or experiencing the wet dream. By reason they mean he must be wise and sane which is against being mad or insane.

The faith of the Moqallad has to be a Shiism or Imamiya sect of Islam – believing in all the Imams starting with Imam Ali (PBUH) and ending with Imam Al-Hujjah (PBUH). Justice means the Mujtahid you want to follow has to be rightful and just as he also must not have ignored any of his religious duties or committed a religiously forbidden act (Haram). With purity, they mean he has to be legitimately born and not a bastard.

Strength of mind actually means memorizing things well and being able to be exact. By life, they mean the Mujtahid has to be alive in order for people to follow

him. For most of the clerks, you cannot do the Taqlid from a deceased Mujtahid.

*Anwar:* It seems you forgot to explain the religious scholarship (Ijtihad).

*Hasan:* No, I saved it for the end to focus on it. The religious scholarship is the study of Shari'a to acquire the knowledge of the practices of the messenger of Allah (PBUH) concerning the branches of the Principles or Foru' Al-Din, and they are not subjected to change regardless of time and place as the Imams (PBHT) emphasized: (Mohammad's permitted acts – Halal – are permitted until the Judgment Day and his unpermitted acts – Haram – are unpermitted until the Judgment Day).

*Anwar:* I need more clarification, please!

*Hasan:* The clerk has to put enough and final efforts to find evidence from the Shari'a i.e. from the Noble Quran, the Honorable Sunna, consensus religious scholars, and reason, and be able to deduce decisions from that evidence. This person is called religious scholar (Mujtahid) and the work he does – search and deduction – is called religious scholarship (Ijtihad).



# CHAPTER ONE

## Monotheism (At-Tawhid)

- Existence of the Glorious Allah
- Qualities of the Glorious Allah
- Demonstration of Types of Monotheism
- Glorifying Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) is not Polytheism
- Demonstration of Other Types of Monotheism
- Seeking for Assistance from Other than Allah is not Polytheistic
- There is Neither Strength Nor Power But Through Allah



## ***Symposium 4***

### **Existence of the Glorious Allah**

*Anwar:* Now that I know what Ijtihad means and who Mujtahid is and what his characteristics are, I would like to move to other questions.

*Hasan:* With all pleasure!

*Anwar:* I do not need evidence to existence of Allah, but it will be good if I have some ideological culture.

*Hasan:* Religious scholars referred to substantially different evidence. I'll mention a few of them:

- The innately evidence: this realization comes by nature, and we know that there is an Almighty God when we are in trouble. This feeling is evidence in itself.
- The possibility evidence: it is based on the fact that

existence is divided to: essentially in existence, possible to exist, and impossible to exist.

I'll explain these concepts. Essentially in existence means that the existence of something or someone is not related to others i.e. it is an absolute undeniable existence, and this is a quality that only the Glorious Allah has and no one else. Possible to exist means that the existence of something or someone is actually related to others. This is a quality for all mankind except Allah, Praised Be His Name. Impossible to exist simply means it has no existence; impossible is false and untrue, so it has no existence; it is actually nothing.

- The effect evidence: the essence of this evidence goes like this: we have creatures all around us, and there is no doubt in that. These creatures are results and effects. Now an effect needs a cause, and these creatures, as effects, need a cause which is not an effect itself, that is, the Glorious Allah.

I'll give more explanation. In this entity, every creature has a creator or a maker, but after all, there must be a creature that does not have a creator and that is not related to other entities; otherwise he is no different

from others. This creator and maker cannot be but the Glorious Allah.

- Incidence and change: to clarify this I need to say that the universe is changeable, that is, it takes an incidence for the universe to change. Now, this incidence cannot be substance or matter in order not to be exposed to changing.
- Order and harmony: it is obvious that this universe is in harmony and order. Everything has a function; ears are congruous for hearing only, and tongue is appropriate for speaking and not seeing, and so on and so forth. This does prove the existence of a wisely organizing creator who is no one but Allah, Praised Be His Name.

These are only some evidence to the existence of our Great and Almighty Creator. I think we are done for today although there is more evidence to existence of Allah such as limitedness, arrangement, guidance, etc.

## ***Symposium 5***

### **Existence of the Glorious Allah**

*Anwar:* Last time you mentioned some rational proofs to the existence of the Great and Almighty Allah. Now, I want to know if Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) dealt with this issue.

*Hasan:* I will show you some sayings from Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) as examples.

*Anwar:* Allah rewards you well, my generous teacher!

*Hasan:* likewise, Akhi! You like to learn and I like to do a review my ideological knowledge. I will start with a Verse from the Noble Quran: (I have turned my face toward Him Who created (Fatara) the heavens and the earth).<sup>6;79</sup>

The Arabic word Fatara (Fitra) here means creation or

actually the First Creation. This is a realization that it is the Great and Almighty Allah who created the heavens and the earth; this is also emphasized in a discussion Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) had with a man who wanted to reason out the existence of the Glorious Allah.

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): Have you been on a ship?

Man: Yes.

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): Was it wrecked and started to sink so you thought you had no way to survive?

Man: Yes!

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): Did you deep in your heart hold on to a power that can survive you?

Man: I did!

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): Did you exactly know who is able to rescue you from your adversity?

Man: No.

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): That was Allah! Your hear was attached to a rescuer that you did not know, and this is actually your awareness of the Creator.

Imam Ali (PBUH) also says: "Allah sent them His messengers and Prophets successively to help people grasp the covenant of His creation and to remind them of His forgotten blessing through arguments based on reason." Amir Al-Mu'menin (Commander of the Faithful Ali PBUH) demonstrates that knowing Allah, Praised Be His Name, comes naturally, and that messengers and prophets had only the role of a reminder in this matter.

Moreover, the Great and Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran: (Or were they created out of naught? Or are they the creators?)<sup>52;35</sup>. This Holy Verse gives clear evidence to the existence of the First Cause and refutes the nonexistence theory. Imam Al-Bagher (PBUH) also refers to this innate knowledge of the Glorious Allah: "Allah has created them to naturally know Him".

The proof that everything is in need to the Glorious Allah in order to exist and to survive is this Verse: (O mankind! Ye are the poor in your relation to Allah. And Allah! He is the Absolute, the Owner of Praise)<sup>35;15</sup>.

Another proof is what Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) said to an unbeliever who questioned the creation of the world: "Actions speak for their doer; you know that a building

has a builder even if you do not see the one who built it”.

Moreover, the Glorious Allah, in a different Verse, refers to the fact that everything in the universe is His Creation, and that it takes a reasonable person to perceive it: (In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of night and day, and the ships which run upon the sea with that which is of use to men, and the water which Allah sendeth down from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing all kinds of beasts therein, and in the ordinance of the winds, and the clouds obedient between heaven and earth: are sign of Allah’s sovereignty for people who have sense)<sup>2:164</sup>.

*Anwar:* Very good! I’m very delighted. May I know some of the features of the Almighty Allah?

*Hasan:* Inshallah, I will talk about that next time.

## ***Symposium 6***

### **Qualities of the Glorious Allah**

*Anwar:* Last session, we had a talk on how to prove the existence of the Glorious Allah, and you promised to tell me about the qualities of this Great and Merciful God.

*Hasan:* It is obvious, Anwar, that the previous evidence through which we proved the existence of the Glorious Allah also show His qualities that are absolute; Allah is affluent with all the perfect qualities and away from any possible ones.

*Anwar:* What do you mean by perfect qualities and possible qualities?

*Hasan:* This is what I like about you. You are precise which encourages me to give whatever explanation you want.

*Anwar:* Thanks for the compliment, sir.

*Hasan:* Thanks to you. All right, let's go back to your question. Religious scholars introduced some perfect qualities and some other negative qualities, that is, perfect qualities exclusively belong to the very essence of the Glorious Allah such as knowledge, power and life, but the possible qualities belong to the creatures of Allah; this is the reason why they are known as negative qualities. Lightness, heaviness, tallness, shortness, matter, weakness, ignorance, etc. are some negative qualities to describe the possible entities or the creatures and not Allah, Praised Be His Name.

*Anwar:* I hear about other qualities like the Creator, the Provider, the Merciful and the Compassionate. What type of qualities are they?

*Hasan:* These are known actual qualities that describe the essence of Allah. In other words, Allah cannot be the Creator and not be The Everlasting, Omniscient or

Almighty. Also, He cannot be the Provider without having all the perfect qualities.

*Anwar:* Would you please tell me about monotheism (Tawhid) and its types?

*Hasan:* With all pleasure! Monotheism is to believe in the One with no associates who is unmatched and unrivaled. Monotheism is divided into several types; I will mention some of them:

- Essential monotheism: it is to believe that Allah is essentially the One, and that He has no associates because He is unmatched and unrivaled.
- Worship monotheism: it is to believe that Allah is only worthy of worship; we must only obey Him, be only loyal to Him, and worship nothing or no one – like the Devil, money, power, etc. – but Him.
- Quality monotheism: this is to believe that the personal qualities of Allah are part and parcel of His existence and that they are not additional. If we say, for instance, that the Glorious Allah is eternally old and His qualities are as old and eternal as He is, we get into a problem. This way we are accompanying something

with Allah – here His qualities; as if we are saying that the qualities are old and eternal too; but the fact is that it is only the Glorious Allah Who can be described as Old and Eternal.

- Deeds monotheism: it is to believe that the doer – the Creator, the Provider, the One Who raises from the dead and the One Who puts to death, the Beneficent, the Maleficent, etc. – is only the Almighty Allah, and no other person no matter who could ever share these doings with Him. These are the types of monotheism that we believe in.

*Anwar:* Excellent! This talk we just had forces me to raise some more questions, but I will bring them up next time.

*Hasan:* All right. See you next time, then!

## ***Symposium 7***

### **Demonstration of Types of Monotheism**

*Anwar:* I am boiling with impatience to ask an important question.

*Hasan:* Of course, Anwar. Ask whatever you want.

*Anwar:* You were telling me on the subject of deeds monotheism that the Doer, the Creator, the Provider is only the Almighty Allah; it is totally true, but I hear that some common people request the Imams (PBUT) to give them good health or children and other things. Is it true? How do you explain this?

*Hasan:* I assure you that the Creator and the Provider is only the Glorious Allah; He is the One and He has no

associates, and that people do not actually ask the Imams (PBUT) to do anything for them.

People, in fact, entreat to that special status the Imams (PBUT) have before Allah and the special love and care He has for them so much the Almighty Allah would give them what they request through those medium, in this case the Imams (PBUT).

The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran: (and seek the way of approach unto Him)<sup>5:35</sup>, as He tells us that the Prophet Jesus is one of the illustrious dignitaries before the Glorious Allah: (And remember when the angels said: O Mary! Allah giveth thee glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near unto Allah)<sup>3:45</sup>.

This is another proof to the validity of seeking refuge with the dignitaries before Allah, especially when your request is restricted to His worship and obedience. I will explain this more later when we try to explain imploring to and approaching the Almighty Allah.

*Anwar:* The answer you gave me was concise yet very

good and useful, and it is good that I can hear more later.

*Hasan:* Inshallah!

*Anwar:* Alright! Will you illustrate the implications of monotheism that you mentioned earlier?

*Hasan:* Yes, and I will start with explaining the 'essential monotheism'; the Lord, in the Noble Quran, gave us the proof that the essence of the Divine Being is One and Only; it is not compound and it is not numerous: (Your God is One God; there is no God save Him, the Beneficent, the Merciful)<sub>2,163</sub>.

This Verse presents an obvious indication that the Divine Being is One and there is no God but Allah. Also, when He says He is the One, this does not mean there is number two. Not at all! The purpose as Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) put it is that "the meaning of the One is that there is no similar thing to Him; this is how our God is".

Furthermore, there are two separate proofs that He is Simple as opposite to compound; this means that the Glorious Allah is not a combination of segments.

Evidence of reason: which says that reasonably Allah cannot be a combination of segments, otherwise he would become an object or matter which would make him dependent on his segments, but we know that the Almighty Allah is in no need whatsoever.

Evidence of reports: is what Allah, Praised Be His Name, says in the Noble Quran: (Say: He is Allah, the One Allah, the eternally Besought of all He begetteth not nor was begotton And there is none comparable unto Him)<sup>112:4-1</sup>.

This Chapter is an obvious refutation to existence of any matches or counterparts or combination of segments in any possible forms. This is what I can say in brief.

Now, about 'worship monotheism', I should say that it persists on the fact that only Allah is worthy of worship, imploring and submission, as it is also clear in the following Verse: (ye worship none save Him)<sup>12:40</sup>. Thus, because we believe He is the Creator with all perfect attributes and the highest qualities, He is worthy of obedience and imploring.

*Anwar:* And how should we explain our obedience and

imploing for mothers, fathers, clerks and Imams (PBUT)?

*Hasan:* We do submit to them. That is what the Glorious Allah even ordered us to do. But, our submission to them does not make them gods or deities, because it is out of honor, respect and veneration. This is, of course, out of decency that every Muslim has to have towards their Imams (PBUT), their parents and their clerks from whom they learn. That is why there is a line of poetry that says:

*“Stand up for teachers and pay them full veneration As teachers are almost messengers”*

*Anwar:* Are there any Quranic evidence to support what you have said?

*Hasan:* Yes, so many of them! We’ll talk about this next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 8***

### **Glorifying Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) is not Polytheism**

*Anwar:* You promised to show me some Quranic Evidence that our submission and imploring for Imams (PBUT) or parents is considered worship or any forms of polytheism. Will you tell us how?

*Hasan:* We all know about conscience. It is acceptable if someone implores or obeys or submits to someone else out of respect or veneration as long as the one you obey and submit to is not considered god or divinity. There are several Verses from the Noble Quran that I am going to mention to prove this:

(And when We said unto angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they fell prostrate...)2;34.

Here the Almighty Allah illustrates that prostrating to Adam (PBUH) is not worshipping him but it is a form of honoring and veneration to the status of Adam (PBUH).

(And he place his parents on the dais and they fell down before him prostrate...)12;100.

The family of Yusuf (PBUH) prostrate before him is not for the sake of worshipping but again it is a way to honor him. This is exactly the Shi'a do when they bow or prostrate before the shrine of the Imams (PBUT); they do so only out of honor, respect and veneration to the Imams (PBUT) and not because they are gods or deities – Glorious Allah forbid!

*Anwar:* Great! This is a defeat to those slanderers who say we worship the Imams (PBUT).

*Hasan:* Yes, it is actually obvious for discerning people.

*Anwar:* I have a question here, as long as we are speaking about worshipping and worshippers.

*Hasan:* Yes, please!

*Anwar:* I read somewhere that Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) said worshippers are of three kinds: traders, slaves and free people. Is he here showing his disapproval to the first two groups?

*Hasan:* Not at all. Imam Ali (PBUH) is not disapproving any of them; actually, he is trying to illustrate types of worships in order to present us with the best one. There is no harm in someone worshipping Allah seeking The Paradise for that; it is fine on condition that we still worshipping Allah.

The same if someone worships Allah for fear of The Fire; this is all right too. However, the best type is to worship Allah, Praised Be His Name, away from seeking or fearing but for the love of the Glorious Allah for the countless blessings He has bestowed on us.

*Anwar:* I have loads of questions on worshipping, but can any sane person really worship anything but the Almighty Allah?!

*Hasan:* Yes, there are so many people who got caught in the traps of Iblis; they fall for some tricky ideological uncertainties. There are also people who believe in

Allah, yet they worship other people.

*Anwar:* Strange! How come? Will you explain that?

*Hasan:* I would like to add something before I explain. If people are told by Allah Himself that they will not go to heaven if they do not worship Him, but they won't go to Hell either. How many of the worshippers you think will remain?

*Anwar:* I think only those who worshipped Allah for the love of the Allah himself will stay, and they are few.

*Hasan:* Now, I can explain what you wanted. Some people have concrete gods like pagans who worship idols or the sun or the moon or even actual people. Some others have abstract gods like worshipping passion, power or praise. These people might know about the existence of Allah but they worship different other things in order to have power or be constantly praised. I seek refuge with Allah from that! Oh, I've just noticed you looking at your watch.

*Anwar:* Yes, I have an appointment. We'll continue later, God Willing!

## ***Symposium 9***

### **Demonstration of Other Types of Monotheism**

*Hasan:* I have some questions on monotheism.

*Anwar:* Please!

*Hasan:* Are there other types of monotheism?

*Anwar:* Religious scholars and experts have mentioned that there are other types of monotheism part from 'essential monotheism', 'quality monotheism' and 'deeds monotheism'; they are 'legislation monotheism', 'obedience monotheism', 'resorting monotheism' and 'love monotheism'.

*Hasan:* God bless you! This is very beautiful! Will you explain these types?

*Anwar:* Yes. They have mentioned that legislation monotheism is to know that law making is Allah's; He is the creator and He knows His creatures and what is good for them. No legislators or lawmakers can be aware of the intrinsic nature of human being or his outward appearance better than the Glorious Allah, not to mention the hidden reasons that only the Almighty Allah knows and no one else; that is why man-made laws and constitutions are insufficient and narrow.

*Hasan:* But we know that Prophets (PBUT) have the right to legislate. How come?

*Anwar:* Yes, they do have this right but with permission and authorization from the almighty Allah. This is backed by evidence from the Hadith and the Quran, especially when we all know that the Prophets speak what the Glorious Allah reveals to them.

*Hasan:* All right. Please, explain the other types.

*Anwar:* I'm at your service, Anwar! I am pleased to see your insistence for learning. It exemplifies this Hadith of

the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH): (Seek knowledge from cradle to grave).

Now, the second type is obedience monotheism and it simply refers to the fact that worship is only for the Almighty Allah; obeying any one part from Allah or beside Allah might be considered polytheism (Shirk).

*Hasan:* How do you say that? We obey the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), the Imams (PBUT), our parents and teachers. Is this polytheism?

*Anwar:* Not at all. Do not let this sort of ambiguity confuse your reason. The whole point is that our obedience to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), the Imams (PBUT) and our parents must not be against our obedience to the Glorious Allah; our obedience to them has to be part of our obedience to the Almighty Allah. That is what I meant by 'might be considered polytheism'.

*Hasan:* So, how should we put it then?

*Anwar:* We have to say the absolute obedience is for the Almighty Allah, and our obedience to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and the Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) has to be

part and parcel of our obedience to the Almighty Allah as He put it in the Noble Quran: (Oh ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in the authority...)4:59.

So, we obey them because the Almighty Allah ordered us to do so; this also makes our obedience to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and- his householders- the Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) part of and actually an extension to our obedience to Allah, Praised Be His Name.

*Hasan:* And how possibly can we obey someone else alongside the Glorious Allah that it would be considered polytheism or Shirk?

*Anwar:* We can find out that it is possible with a bit of reasoning!

*Hasan:* How is that, if you please?

*Anwar:* Allah, Praised Be His Name, permits some doings and prohibits some other ones; so, he orders us to worship Him and to not disobey Him. Yet, we see people following the Devil who orders them commit wrongdoings. They obey the Devil and not the Almighty Allah, and this way they are worshipping the Devil which

is again a form of polytheism (Shirk)?

This next Verse from the Noble Quran illustrates that: (Hast thou seen him who chooseth for his god his own lust?...)<sup>25;43</sup>.

It shows us that some people worship their desires; they are actually excluding the Almighty Allah by obeying and following the Devil and their lustful desires.

This is enough for today. We'll continue next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 10***

### **Seeking for Assistance from Other than Allah is not Polytheistic**

*Anwar:* We were talking about types of monotheism last time and you explained the 'obedience monotheism'; I would like to hear about 'resorting monotheism', please.

*Hasan:* It means to seek help only from the Almighty Allah and no one else. This is perfectly embodied in the words of God: (Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.)<sup>1;5</sup>. So, we ask Him and only Him for help.

*Anwar:* But I sometimes hear Shi'a people say 'Ya Ali'

when they need to do something that takes physical effort. Is it against what you just said?

*Hasan:* Unfortunately, many of those with some ideological knowledge mock people who say this, not knowing that these people do not mean to manage without Allah, Praised Be His Name, nor do they mean that Imam Ali (PBUH) is able to manage their needs. Not at all! Imam Ali (PBUH) is one of the creatures of the Glorious Allah; Imam Ali (PBUH) and his sons spent all their lives following and worshipping the Almighty Allah asking only Him for assistance.

So, we believe that Imam Ali (PBUH) is a creature of the Almighty Allah as he is totally in need for Him and he cannot manage without Him. At the same time, we believe that Imam Ali (PBUH) is the successor and the guardian of the Prophet of the Allah; he is also of a very high status to the Glorious Allah as he is a person of distinction. That is why we beseech to him for the status and the distinction he has to the Almighty Allah so our God help us with our needs.

That is what Prophet Suleiman (PBUH) did when he asked for help from Asif Bin Barkhiya to move – God

willing – the throne of Balqis with twinkle of an eye. This help is not Shirk or polytheism; it would be polytheism if we would have looked at Imam Ali (PBUH) as the person who answers our calls and helps us with our needs away from the will and permission of the Almighty Allah. This needs a lot of elaboration that we have to leave for later.

*Anwar:* Yes, very good! Now, what is ‘love monotheism’?

*Hasan:* It is to focus our love for the Glorious Allah because He is the absolute gracefulness and perfection and everything else gets its beauty and quality from Him. So, how can we possibly leave the original for the copy? That is why we cannot combine our love for Allah, Praised Be his Name, together with another love in one heart; it is even against honesty.

*Anwar:* Again I feel I have a problem here.

*Hasan:* Oh, my Lord! What is the problem?!

*Anwar:* How can we focus our love only for the Glorious Allah and ignore our love for the Prophet and his family, our parents, relatives and friends? How is it possible?!

*Hasan:* The answer would be the same answer I had for your previous question. We love only the Glorious Allah and whoever loves Him. We also love those Almighty Allah ordered us to love, as He Put in this Verse: (Say: I ask of you no fee therefore, save loving kindness among kinsfolk...)26:23.

Thus, it is a direct order from the Lord that we love the Prophets, the Messenger, the Imams, our parents, children, relatives, friends and believers. I would prefer to save more talks on this issue for later.

*Anwar:* Please, tell me just a bit about it!

*Hasan:* When you love someone, you have got to love his work results, otherwise our love and honesty is lacking.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much. You make me feel I have to learn the Islamic ideology in depth so that I become an expert myself.

*Hasan:* I hope so. This way we gain one more man of religion who is fortifying himself from all kind of suspicions. See you!

## ***Symposium 11***

### **There is Neither Strength Nor Power But Through Allah**

*Anwar:* We were talking about what remained from the types of monotheism last time, and now I am thinking of some questions I eagerly need answers for.

*Hasan:* Of course, Anwar. With all pleasure! But please, I need you to put your questions clearly.

*Anwar:* Yes, definitely. My first question is about the existence of the Glorious Allah. I'm thinking, what would my answer be if someone asked me who created God? My other question is about the explanation of this common expression in prayers, 'with the power of Allah and His

strength, I stand up and sit down (بِحَوْلِ اللَّهِ وَقُوَّتِهِ أَقُومُ وَأَقْعُدُ)'. What does it really mean? I also need to know more about the qualities of Allah, Praised Be His Name, especially the Omniscient, the Omnipotent and the Alive.

*Hasan:* Excellent! These are very good and important questions. Let us start with your first question. To say 'who created God' is against our faith regarding the divine nature in the first place; The Almighty Allah is not in need to anyone or anything, and this is an absolute fact of our faith; if we say 'He is a creature, then He is in need to others in order to exist, and consequently He would deserve to be God. So, to say 'who created God' is a big fallacy and we have to warn the questioner that the Glorious Allah is neither in need nor a creature.

Now, the answer to your second question would be:

No creature has power to exist or survive, that is, we all need the Almighty Allah to exist and to survive, and this is the meaning of what the Lord says in the following verse: (Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive, the Eternal...)<sup>3;2</sup>.

Thus, we cannot survive on our own; it is the Almighty

Allah that gives us power to move and work. We are impotent without His strength. That is why we seek power and strength from Allah, Praised Be His Name, as well as beauty and perfection. This is what 'with the power of Allah and His strength, I stand up and sit down' means. Actually, philosophers and religious experts believe that the power of creatures is in linear relation with the power of Allah, Praised Be His Name, and not in cross relation.

*Anwar:* What do you mean by 'in linear relation with the power of Allah, Praised Be His Name, and not in cross relation'?

*Hasan:* It means that creatures do not independently possess the power to do anything; it is the Almighty Allah that empowers the creatures to take any actions. So, there is no comparison between the power of creatures and the power of the Glorious Allah, otherwise what is possible to exist would be what is essentially in existence, and that is what impossible turnabout means.

*Anwar:* Excuse me, Sir! You are using philosophical terms now and I need some explanation for them.

*Hasan:* I am at your service! So, you need clarification for possible, essential and impossible turnabout, don't you?

*Anwar:* Yes, exactly.

*Hasan:* When we say 'possible', we mean what can possibly exist or possibly stay in nonexistence – so to say, and by 'essential' we mean what must be in existence since eternity and with no dependence whatsoever. 'Impossible turnabout' is to turn what is possible and in need to what is essential and not in need, and that is totally impossible.

*Anwar:* Thank you. What about the third question?

*Hasan:* Next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 12***

### **More on Qualities of the Glorious Allah**

*Anwar:* I think we need to talk about my third about qualities of Allah, Praised Be His Name.

*Hasan:* We have already gone through this discussion that the Glorious Allah is essentially in the existence and in absolute existence. Thus, He cannot have the qualities of the possible or creatures.

*Anwar:* Will you put in plain words, please?

*Hasan:* All right. We previously said that every perceptible has to be essential in existence, possibly in existence, or impossible in existence. This classification is a proof that there is what necessarily exists without having a creator, and there is what is possible to exist

and so it has to have a creator, and finally what cannot exist is impossible in existence. Now, what is essential to exist is absolute and unlimited in existence. So, the qualities He has are absolute and unlimited, and He has neither a couple nor a copy; He is the One and the Eternal.

*Anwar:* God bless you. How beautiful is this reasoning!

*Hasan:* This is one of the important proofs to the existence of the Most Exalted.

*Anwar:* I am all ears, Akhi Hasan! Please, go on.

*Hasan:* Yes, Inshallah. Therefore, if the qualities or the characteristics of the possibly in existence are excluded from Him, this tells us that He is not a matter, a compound, visible, an image or reflection of it; it also cannot be described with lightness, heaviness, tallness, shortness, direction, condition, movement, stillness, deficiency, time or place. This is because these are all qualities of possibly in existence or creatures and they are limited. So, if these qualities are excluded, He will consequently have the perfect qualities attached only to the Most Exalted.

*Anwar:* Why would you say 'He will consequently have the perfect qualities'? This is as if you are saying this might not be true. Right?

*Hasan:* Very well! But, it is impossible not to be.

*Anwar:* Will you please give an example to clarify the idea?

*Hasan:* Of course. If we say you are human and we proved this, then the case in which you might not be human is totally cancelled. This is because you cannot have both qualities: human and non-human. It is impossible you are both human and non-human at one and the same time.

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot. It is very clear now. Continue, please.

*Hasan:* So, if the qualities of the possibly in existence are excluded from the Glorious Allah, it is proved He has the perfect qualities.

*Anwar:* What are those qualities that are 'proved'?

*Hasan:* Look. The qualities are divided into two parts: proved and negative. The negative qualities are those

we have just talked about and we excluded the Almighty Allah from them. But the proved qualities are again divided into two parts:

**Essence qualities:** we can know these qualities from observing the very essence of God. This way we find out that we cannot gather up the essence quality with its opposite. For instance, we cannot say He is the Omniscient and not the Omniscient; it is just impossible. He is Omniscient, the Omnipotent, the Superior, the Alive, the One, The Everlasting, etc. and His essence is always described with them i.e. these qualities can never be detached from Him.

**Deed qualities:** they are subject to the situation; one quality can be true in one condition but the opposite in another condition like the Creator, the Provider, the Merciful, etc. and so, Allah, Praised Be His Name, is Merciful to believers but He is not Merciful with polytheists.

*Anwar:* I see you are looking at your watch. Are we done for today?

*Hasan:* Yes, I think we'll have to continue our discussion next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 13***

### **More on Qualities of the Glorious Allah**

*Anwar:* You don't know how eager I am for our discussion. It is a huge bless!

*Hasan:* We are always thankful to the Glorious Allah for the blessing of knowledge.

*Anwar:* So, we are going to continue with our last discussion, Inshallah.

*Hasan:* Yes, with all pleasure! We were talking about the qualities of Allah, Praised Be his Name, and we stopped at the 'deeds qualities' which is the second part of the 'proved qualities'.

*Anwar:* Yes, we did.

*Hasan:* We said the proved qualities are divided into two parts: essence and deed qualities. The essence qualities are actually part of the perfect qualities as they describe the perfection of the Almighty Allah unlike the deed qualities that come next; they are not suitable for the perfection of the Most Exalted, yet they are derived from His perfection.

*Anwar:* Would you please explain some of the perfection qualities?

*Hasan:* Yes, of course. Some of the essence qualities which are, in fact, part of the perfection qualities are the Omniscient, the Omnipotent and the Alive. I'll explain these qualities in brief.

### The Omniscient

Allah, Praised Be His Name, is Omniscient with no doubt, and ignorance is totally against His Divine Perfection. This is reasoned out through a number of debates:

- Opposite of knowledge is ignorance, and ignorance is a flaw that stands against the absolute perfection of the Almighty Allah. So, this is a proof that the Almighty Allah has the exact opposite of ignorance i.e. omniscience.
- The organization and harmony in the creation of the world refers to the full knowledge and wisdom of the organizer as wells of His omniscience to everything before their existence and after.
- His omniscience what we know is part of His omniscience; the Devine essence is transformed to us since our creation. So, He is the source of knowledge, and if He would be so, we wouldn't have any.

*Anwar:* I have a question here. We read in the Noble Quran that: (And Verily We shall try you till We know those of you who strive hard and the steadfast, and till We test your record)<sup>47:35</sup>, and there are even more Verses indicating that knowledge can only come after testing and assessment. How does this agree with His Everlasting Omniscience?

*Hasan:* This is a very important and actually a brilliant question. We have to say that the Glorious Allah is the

Eternal, the Everlasting and the Old, and accordingly, His knowledge is as eternal, as everlasting and as old He is. This knowledge actually exists even before anything is created; He has knowledge to what when and where and how is going to be created taking into consideration every single possible detail.

This is eternal knowledge and it is not going to change; to show us His Omniscience, the Glorious Allah put it into thorough examination and testing to tell us that We know it all not only before testing you but even before you were existed, yet We test you to show what We already knew was going to take place.

*Anwar:* Very Good. So, His knowledge is comprehensive?

*Hasan:* His knowledge is so comprehensive that no one can ever surround it; He is Infinite and so is His knowledge. So, how is it possible to surround any of it? There are many Verses from the Noble Quran that prove this. I am going to give you some examples:

(And Allah knoweth all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah is Aware of all things)<sup>49,16</sup>.

Here is another example from Al-Anfal Chapter: (Allah is Knower of all things)<sup>8;75</sup>.

This next Verse clearly refers to comprehension of the knowledge of Allah, Praised Be His Name: (And that Allah surroundeth all things in knowledge)<sup>65;12</sup>.

However, the following Verse proves the opposite, that is, creatures cannot cover the knowledge of the Almighty Allah: (And they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He will)<sup>2;255</sup>.

In this regards, Imam Ali (PBUH) also says: "He is Aware of the uproar of the wild animals in the wilderness, the wrongdoings of the mankind on the sly, the diversity of whales in overwhelming seas, the clash of water with violent wind, ...".

*Anwar:* Very Good! I hope we can continue this same subject next time, Inshallah.

*Hasan:* Inshallah!

## ***Symposium 14***

### **More on Qualities of the Glorious Allah**

The Omnipotent

*Anwar:* How about we move on to the next quality of the Glorious Allah, namely 'the Omnipotent'?

*Hasan:* Gladly! Omnipotence is the ability of a doer to do something or to stop doing something. Omnipotent is the one who takes action and stops one whenever he wants so, with a sense and knowledge of what is good whether he takes that action or not.

*Anwar:* What are all these restrictions for?

*Hasan:* This is because we want to exclude the Almighty Allah from the state of acting without awareness,

knowledge and/or choice, like a burning fire that is capable of burning but without all of the above conditions. What comes out of a human being or any creature with awareness needs to carry preference which also requires knowledge and awareness – two principles of acting and leaving.

*Anwar:* Will you mention some evidence to Omnipotence of Allah, Praised Be His name?

*Hasan:* Yes!

- Omnipotence is perfection, and because He is the absolute perfection, then He is the source of it.
- The strength we have is from the Almighty Allah; He wouldn't be able of giving us power unless He is the ultimate source of power.
- These results and the way they are organized is another proof to His Omnipotence.

*Anwar:* Why is choice paired with the omnipotence?

*Hasan:* Because the Doer with no choice cannot have any kind of intervention in any on action. It is like nature powers; they act with no choice. Moreover, this choice

is part of the perfection the Glorious Allah is characterized with, that is why He is the Absolute Perfection.

*Anwar:* So, is there any scrutiny in His choice in order for Him to give preference to one party against the other?

*Hasan:* Not at all! His choice is not like ours. He does not need to scrutinize in any way because His choice is eternal corresponding to His knowledge of good and evil since eternity, that is, His Choice is linked to His Omnipotence.

*Anwar:* I know that the Almighty Allah is capable of everything, that is, His power is general and not concerned with one specific thing without the other. However, how can we explain or respond to those who talk suspicions?

*Hasan:* Give me an example.

*Anwar:* Some ask 'would the Glorious Allah be able to create an equal match of His?' or 'would He be able to create a stone He can't lift?', and this kind of suspicions.

*Hasan:* This kind of suspicions is raised by some ignorant and biased people who want to fill the believers with

doubt for their beliefs, and these suspicions are nothing but trivial and empty bubbles with a lot of contradictions or fallacies.

*Anwar:* Tell me more. God bless you!

*Hasan:* As a response to such people, we can ask them first if they believe that there is a God, essentially in existence with absolute perfection. If they answer with no, then we'll have to have a debate on the omnipotence of the Glorious Allah; this debate, of course, needs to prove what was preceded on His absolute richness, power and knowledge.

If he is convinced, all will be good, otherwise we have to continue with introducing the Almighty Allah; the words of Imam Ali (PBUH) prove this point: "The priority in the religion is knowing Him...". So, we have to come to a conclusion concerning the knowing the absolute perfect God.

When they accept this fact, we are going to tell them that this God with absolute perfection cannot be impotent. This way their suspicions and empty talks are fully refuted. In case they just needed answers for their

inquiries concerning God's power and strength, then we should focus on the impossibility of perfection going along with imperfection. From a philosophical point of view, the deficiency exists in the taker and not the doer.

*Anwar:* This requires more clarification.

*Hasan:* Next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 15***

### **More on Qualities of the Glorious Allah**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom! I am still waiting for more explanation!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam! I am at your service. I will start with the example from our last session. So, if we ask 'would God be able to create an equal match of His?', We have to answer that this creature would not be like God, because God is not in need to anyone in his existence but that creature is. It is impossible for the creature to be like Him because that would mean turning a needy and poor creature that is possibly in existence to absolute perfection who is essential in

existence, and this is impossible!

Here we must mention another important point, which is that an impossible is actually false, untrue and null i.e. it has no existence at all. This is because nothingness cannot have any power, as power and strength are concerned with things in existence. That is why the Glorious Allah says in the Noble Quran: (and Allah is able to do all things)<sup>33;27</sup>.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed.

*Hasan:* All thanks to God!

The Alive

*Anwar:* Now, will you explain another quality of the Almighty Allah, namely 'the Alive'?

*Hasan:* Yes, of course! Theologians agree that the Alive is one of the qualities of Allah, Praised Be His Name, but we first need to know the reality of life which is based on two things:

- Action and being affected which can be referred to by 'the effectiveness'.

- Sense and cognition which can be referred to by 'the perception'.

The Almighty Allah is Alive in a sense that is appropriate to His exalted status. His effectiveness and perception is not similar to that of creatures and possibly in existence. Now, the evidence to His life is actually a combination of what has already been proved through our discussion on His Omnipotence and Omniscience and the correlation between them as well as the life we have just introduced through effectiveness and perception.

In other words, without His Omnipotence, it couldn't be true to say He has perception. Also, without His Omniscience, it couldn't be true to say He has effectiveness; this is the meaning of 'He is the Alive', and it is untrue to say otherwise, because He is described with Omnipotence and Omniscience, then He must be Alive. Moreover, the fact that He gives life to His creatures proves He is the Alive, otherwise He could not give what He did not have in the first place.

*Anwar:* Will you please support this through quotations from the Noble Quran and more?

*Hasan:* Yes! The Glorious Allah describes Himself in the Noble Quran with the eternal life: (And trust thou in the Living One Who dieth not, and hymn His praise)<sup>25;58</sup>.

There is another proof in the Qursi Verse: (Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive the Eternal, neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh Him. Unto Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth)<sup>2;255</sup>.

Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH) has a word in this regards as well: "There was Allah, Praised Be His Name, and nothing but Him: the Light without darkness, the Right without lies, the Omniscient without ignorance, the Alive without death. This is also how He is today and how He will be for eternity".

Imam Al-Kadim (PBUH) also says: "There is no God but Him, the Alive without doubt, the Alive without being created, but freely Alive".

*Anwar:* Thank you very much! How about other qualities of His like hearing, seeing, comprehension and will?

*Hasan:* The interpretation of hearing and seeing, as we read in the Holy Verse: (Allah is the All-Hearing, the All-

Seeing)<sup>31;28</sup>, is that the Almighty Allah has knowledge for everything that can be heard and seen, and this is part of His Omniscience.

As for His Comprehension, we have this Verse: (Vision comprehendeth Him not, but He comprehendeth all vision. He is the Subtle, the Aware)<sup>6;103</sup>.

It shows that the Almighty Allah is witnessing things that cannot be seen and He is fully Aware of them. As for His will, it means the Glorious Allah is willingly a doer and not by force. That is what we can say in brief.

*Anwar*: Thank you, sir!

*Hasan*: All thanks to God! We will continue next time.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Divine Justice (Al-'Adl al-ilahi)

- Introduction to Divine Justice
- Is It One of the Essence Qualities or Deed Qualities?
- Interpretation of Evils and Tribulations
- Are Tribulations a Form of Punishment?
- Is Punishment Equal to Sin?
- Fate and Destiny
- Are Good Deeds and Bad Deeds From Allah or Mankind
- What is the implication of 'Guidance and Aberration are in the Hands of Allah'?
- Are Happiness and Misery from Allah?



## ***Symposium 16***

### **Introduction to Divine Justice**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi Hasan!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam!

*Anwar:* We are done discussing the qualities of the Glorious Allah, and it is time to talk about divine justice, isn't it?

*Hasan:* Talking about the qualities of the Glorious Allah and monotheism can take ages to cover, but I tried to give you some simplified information so you have certain ideological knowledge. You can have further studies in this regard if you like.

*Anwar:* Yes, I feel I can manage the subject and interact with it easier.

*Hasan:* This allows us continue on our simplified ideological discussion.

*Anwar:* So, can we move on with the divine justice?

*Hasan:* Before we start with the details of justice, we need to give it a proper definition.

Justice: is to give everyone their due; this is the first definition.

Justice: is to describe the Most Exalted God with good and graceful deeds and to deem Him far above injustice and repulsiveness. "The Almighty Allah neither persecutes nor oppresses any of His creatures; He rewards dutiful people as He can punish the sinners. He neither demand His creatures to do what they cannot bear, nor does He punish them more than what they deserve", says Sheikh Al-Muzaffar<sup>(1)</sup> in this regard.

*Anwar:* Can we call "putting everything in its place" justice?

*Hasan:* This is closer in meaning to wisdom than justice. Putting things in their right place is what a wise person does and it is different from justice.

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(1) Sheikh Al-Muzaffar (1916 – 1964 AD) was an Iraqi great Shiite scholar in Najaf, Iraq.

*Anwar:* I have a question regarding justice, now. Why doesn't God persecute or oppress His creatures. Isn't it part of His right as their Creator to do whatever He wants with them?

*Hasan:* It is far above the Most Exalted Allah to do any form injustice and repulsiveness. Those who do so fall into one of these categories:

They are ignorant about it, thus they do not know it's repulsive.

They are aware of it, but they have to do it as they are unable to refrain from it.

They are aware of it and they do not have to do it, but they need to do it.

They are aware of it and they neither have to do it nor do they need to do it, which implies that they do it for no reason and only for fun. All of these manners are impossible to the Glorious Allah, because He is the absolute Omniscient, the absolute Omnipotent, the absolute Wise and the absolute Rich, so He cannot be ignorant, impotent, needy or frivolous. Moreover, we have already proved that the Most Exalted Allah is the

absolute perfection and so far above all these flaws. Consequently, He cannot be unjust nor do repulsive acts.

*Anwar:* Well said! But I still have questions if you don't mind.

*Hasan:* Of course, ask whatever you want.

*Anwar:* You said, 'justice is to give everyone their due'; does that mean that we are entitled to claim certain rights from the Most Exalted Allah?

*Hassan:* This is an excellent scientific question, and I am pleased that you asked. The reward for the good deeds is no one's due; this is out of His mercy, because we are His creatures as we are not entitled to claim anything. However, the Glorious Allah, out of mercy and kindness, gave us this right to be in charge of our deeds and considered certain rewards for that as He put it in these Verses:

(Say: Unto whom belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth? Say: Unto Allah. He hath prescribed for Himself mercy...)6;12.

(Your Lord hath prescribed for Himself...)6;54.

So, the Glorious Allah Himself bestowed this right unto us, then it became a commitment as He never renege on a promise. This is clarified in the following Verse: (Allah hath bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs...)9,111.

Although we are not the owners of lives or our wealth, the Almighty Allah gave us this right to have them, then He bought our lives and wealth and bestowed the Paradise in return. This is a right He never denies; this is a promise He always keeps. That is why we say that 'justice is to give everyone their due'.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much.

*Hasan:* Thank you. See you next time.

## ***Symposium 17***

### **Is It One of the Essence Qualities or Deed Qualities?**

*Anwar:* We are still talking about justice and I still have question!

*Hasan:* And I am more than ready to answer them. Go ahead, Anwar!

*Anwar:* Is this quality of Allah – Justice – part of His essence qualities or deed qualities?

*Hasan:* Very good question, Anwar! Majority of religious experts consider it one of the deed qualities. Their evidence comes from the definition of justice which is ‘to give everyone their due’, that is, not to be unjust nor repulsive to any of the creatures; this requires a creator in the first place in order to be fulfilled, but prior to existence of the Creator, there was no meaning to

justice, injustice or rights.

*Anwar:* Does that mean that the Most Exalted Allah was not just before His creation of the world?

*Hasan:* Not at all! What I meant was that just is like providing and resurrecting and healing; without the existence of the creatures, the Glorious Allah could not be called the Just or the Provider or the Healer. To end any possible confusion you might still have, I would like to say that the Glorious Allah has His perfection qualities since eternity, and these perfection qualities are the foundation for His deed qualities like the Just, the Provider or the Creator. So, the Glorious Allah is capable of giving justice but He only when He decided to create the universe; to have the universe in existence is crucial for justice to be served. Is it clear now?

*Anwar:* Very Clear. Thank you very much. All right! We have just proved the justice of the Almighty Allah through giving reasonable evidence. But, is it generally agreed about by religious scholars?

*Hasan:* I can see you are referring to 'the reason's good and bad rule', aren't you?

*Anwar:* I have actually heard it, but I don't know what it exactly means!

*Hasan:* We are not going deep into the explanation of this rule, but I'll simply refer to what religious scholars say in this regard; reason can judge what is good and what is bad without depending on religious evidence. So, the reason's judgment is enough to know the good deeds from the bad ones.

*Anwar:* I might want to avoid getting into this rule as well, yet I still need to know the meaning of good and bad.

*Hasan:* Religious scholars answered that. Good is what deserves praise and bad is what deserves dispraised. I see you are smiling!

*Anwar:* Your name means good, and your parents deserve to be praised for raising a man like you.

*Hasan:* This is very kind of you. Thank you!

*Anwar:* You earlier made reference to what Sheikh Al-Muzaffar said: 'He rewards dutiful people as He can punish the sinners'. I wonder why he said 'He can punish the sinners'!

*Hasan:* All right! The Glorious Allah never breaks His promise to reward dutiful followers. He also has the right to refrain from punishing sinners; this is out of His mercifulness and generosity.

*Anwar:* So, dutiful followers cannot be punished, I understand!

*Hasan:* Yes, of course! This is if the followers fulfill their duties.

*Anwar:* I got a different question now. What are the conditions of obedience to the Almighty Allah?

*Hasan:* We are going to discuss this later when we talk about Religious Duty (Taklif). However, I'll mention some important points in brief. 'Conditions of obedience' means that when an order comes from the Almighty Allah, mankind must obey. Also this obedience has to be only for the Almighty Allah and not be associated with anything or anyone else.

*Anwar:* Thanks. It is very obvious now.

*Hasan:* Thanks God. I'll see you next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 18***

### **Interpretation of Evils and Tribulations**

*Anwar:* Hello Sir! Are we still discussing the divine justice?

*Hasan:* Yes, go ahead.

*Anwar:* Now that we know that the Glorious Allah does not commit the evil acts nor does He avoid the good ones, how can we explain evil acts and disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and other tribulations and misfortunes?

*Hasan:* Here we have two answers, one general and another in details:

The General answer says that Allah, Praised Be His

Name, is far above bad or evil acts; He is also Wise and far above ill-treatment. This is proved through reason and reported evidence. Thus, all that comes from the Glorious Allah is the very exact wisdom, the very exact good act and the very exact mercy, and consequently all forms of disasters and misfortunes are based on wisdom and for the good of mankind, but the point here is that we cannot know the wisdom and the benefit behind it.

So, our lack of knowledge should not affect the way we explain disasters or catastrophes as injustice; this is not fair at all. I'll give you an example to make this point clear. Let's say if we see a bulldozer destroying a beautiful house or garden, we'd think it is an evil deed. But after some inquiries if we find out that they will be building a hospital, then we'll be happy and not only change our mind but we'll also thank them for that matter. Again, if we could ask God to stop what we think it is an evil thing happening to us, the answer then would be like 'in order to for you to get this certain benefit or to stop that certain damage from happening to you. This sets our minds at rest and we thank the Lord for taking such good care of us.

*Anwar:* This is a very reasonable point; we should not rush into judgments, especially when we know that the Doer is Just and Wise.

*Hasan:* Now we'll answer in details:

Looking at a phenomenon isolated from other ones is an incomplete look, because incidents are interconnected rings in an interlocked extended chain. So, we cannot judge a particular phenomenon or incident without noting what preceded it or what will follow it.

For example, when a storm hits a coast, it demolishes many houses and trees; this is an evil act for those it happens to them, yet it is a good thing for the ships sailing in the midst of the sea. It is also considered good and valuable when it is a way to pollinates flowers or when it moves the clouds bearing rain or when it dissipates the fumes and the smoke rising from factories that may affect the environment if they remain still, and many other benefits of winds.

We understand here that damage is partial, as it affects a particular individual or a small group, when it is compared to the public benefit it brings to many others.

When those who experienced the damage know that the benefit is more than the damage, they will not be upset – this is of course if they are not selfish. The same goes for earthquakes and other incidents; if the benefit and the gain exceed the loss, they are not evil but pure good

*Anwar:* But what is the fault of those affected by the damage?

*Hasan:* Misfortunes and disasters do not always happen because people commit sins, so we should not be surprised here, and even if it was because of the sins, it is still good because the pain and the damage occurring to the sinners will be a form of expiation to their sins.

*Anwar:* Yet, what is the fault of the believers who suffered from the damage?

*Hasan:* You are still preoccupied by the idea that these incidents are only for revenge or punishment. No, my brother! We have just shown that the benefit they might have for others. Those who get affected by those misfortunes will be compensated by either expiating their sins or raising their rankings for those with no sins!

Moreover, if believers were to choose between misfortunes of this life and raising their rankings in the afterlife, they will definitely choose the raising their status and rankings in the afterlife; that is what every sane person would do.

To assure you, I will quote from Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): "If believers knew what a reward they will receive from their misfortunes, they would wish to be cut off with scissors".

Thus, if believers were to know what a precious reward the Almighty Allah is hiding for them when they face misfortunes in this life, they would wish that they experience not only misfortunes but be torn apart in order to get more of that reward in the afterlife. So, how is that you judge disasters and misfortunes to mankind as an act of revenge or retaliation?

*Anwar:* But?

*Hasan:* Leave that but for next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 19***

### **Are Misfortunes Punishment?**

*Anwar:* I was going to ask a question, but had to stop. I was wondering why the Noble Quran says that some people experience misfortunes as a form of punishment. How can we explain this?

*Hasan:* Yes, there are two types of people: the first type is the believers who are sinners, and the other type is the infidels or the oppressors. The punishment for the second group is that they become an example for others. Even though, when God punishes people in this life, He is to commute a punishment or penalty for those who deserve it. This is relevant only to the second type, of course.

*Anwar:* I think you said there are benefits to

misfortunes. What are there?

*Hasan:* Benefits of misfortunes are as the following:

- They are a means to explode capacities: misfortunes force people to take precautionary procedures to protect themselves from these misfortunes. This will lead to inventions and discoveries because 'need is the mother of innovation' as they say and as Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) explains: "Nevertheless have terrestrial trees harder wood, and have great greens more gentle skin, and are Bedouin plants burning faster and going out slower". This is also supported by the word of Allah, Praised Be His Name: (it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good)<sup>4:19</sup>.
- Misfortunes are warning bells: indulgence in pleasures and running after earthly affairs make people forget about the afterlife, so they need to be reminded of their Creator and the afterlife, and what is better than disasters and misfortunes to bring those gone astray back to their Lord.
- Misfortunes help to appreciate the blessings: if

people always had a joyful life, they would have less respect for the blessings. This is because they got very used to it and never knew how it would feel like to lose it. So, by losing certain blessings, people would appreciate these blessings and make sure to maintain them. Tasting the sweetness and the bitterness of life is what make us understand the value of the blessings the Glorious Allah gave us. These are the benefits of misfortunes and disasters in general.

*Anwar:* Justice is a Pillar and there should be subdivisions originated from it. What are they?

*Hasan:* What results from the Divine Justice is understanding the purpose behind punishment; is it to take revenge or to make an example? It is far above the Almighty Allah to act out of emotion and agitation. So, it is not true to consider revenge as a pure purpose of punishment. It is true to say the Almighty Allah punishes to make an example for other people but this is only true for this life and not the afterlife.

*Anwar:* So what is the purpose behind punishment?

*Hasan:* I will give you a brief but conclusive answer now;

punishment has a positive effect due to the correlation between the criminal and the punishment. We can illustrate this in two ways:

First, the criminal and lawful acts create a special ability in person as a result of repeating those acts so much that this ability or aptitude becomes part of their existence. Both virtuous and vicious people are raised from the dead with these aptitudes that are again born due to constantly doing good and bad deeds. In other words, it is these aptitudes or special abilities that make heaven and hell.

Second, there are apparently two sides to human deeds, a worldly side and an otherworldly side, and so human deeds take different forms depending on each different situation. For example, prayers have a specific form in this world, i.e. there are certain moves and steps and certain words to praise the Lord, but they have a different in the next world. This is supported by the words of God:

(And let not those who hoard up that which Allah hath bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them. That which

they hoard will be their collar on the Day of Resurrection. Allah's is the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is informed of what ye do)<sup>3;180</sup>.

Here are more of God's words as a proof: (On the day when it will all be heated in the fire of hell, and their foreheads and their flanks and their backs will be branded therewith and: Here is that which ye hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what ye used to hoard)<sup>9;35</sup>.

*Anwar:* Now it is crystal clear that punishment is the outcome that criminals make for themselves. It is not forced on them. God bless you!

*Hasan:* God bless you too! We will continue next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 20***

### **Is Punishment Equal to Sin?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi Hasan!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh! I can see you already have a question.

*Anwar:* Indeed! Usually, punishment is equal to the crime committed, quantitatively and qualitatively. Yet, we see that this formula is not achieved for the otherworldly punishments; researches confirm that some criminals remain in fire although their sin is less in time than that of their punishment. How is that?

*Hasan:* You are saying that the punishment has to be equivalent to the crime; this is what the man-made or manufactured punishment is about. However, when the punishment has a positive effect towards the criminal act, we do not see this consistency neither in quantity nor in quality.

*Anwar:* Can you clarify this using an example?

*Hasan:* Yes, of course. A driver might lose his attention for a very short while, yet this can cost him a lot. He can have a car crash and get seriously injured, and he might have to live with this for a long time or he could even lose his life because of that inattention.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much. It is really obvious now. Is there anything else regarding the Divine justice you need to mention?

*Hasan:* Yes, there is. One of the important things is the idea of God charging mankind with certain responsibilities. The point here is whether the Glorious Allah demands people to fulfill commands they are not able to endure.

*Anwar:* What do you mean?

*Hasan:* I mean can the Almighty Allah order people to make a camel enter through a threading hole or command them to fly?

*Anwar:* The Almighty Allah is free to command whatever He sees fit. We all are His slaves and nothing can prevent Him from doing so!

*Hasan:* Yes, everything is under Allah's domination, but this does not mean He demands people to do what they are not capable of doing. This is absolutely unjust and the Gracious Allah is far above injustice, as it is also a form of lacking to be unjust and Allah is the Absolute Perfection.

*Anwar:* Great. This is a very reasonable elaboration, but will you give some evidence from the Noble Quran?

*Hasan:* Yes, there is a lot of evidence. Some of which are:

(Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope...)2;286.

(...and thy Lord is not at all a tyrant to His slaves)41;46.

(...and thy lord wrongeth no one)18;49. , and many other Verses.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much. I would like to leave now. I have to do something important. I hope we can meet up tomorrow, Inshallah!

*Hasan:* Inshallah! See you then.

## ***Symposium 21***

### **Fate and Destiny**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi Hasan!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* We have already discussed the Divine Justice, but before we move on, I would like to talk about something that has been tackled a lot, namely fate and destiny.

*Hasan:* Raising this subject needs some scientific grounding, because it is such a deep philosophical issue. However, I will try to deal with it in general and in short so that it would suit your knowledge. What do you say?

*Anwar:* As you like, sir. You know better.

*Hasan:* All right! Dear Brother, fate and destiny are Islamic issues mentioned both in the Noble Quran and Honorable Sunna, and we need to believe in them because Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) ordered us to do so in this Hadith: (There are four God does not look at in Judgment Day: the ungrateful to parents, the favor reminder, the fate refuter and the alcoholic).

*Anwar:* So, we must believe in them whether we knew the details to them or not.

*Hasan:* Very good. Wise answer, but it'll be good if we know something about them in brief.

*Anwar:* Go ahead. I'm all ears!

*Hasan:* First, we need to define fate and destiny:

Fate linguistically means to limit the amount, value and price of everything.

Destiny linguistically means to perform something precisely and accurately.

In fact, destiny refers to many concepts, some of which

were mentioned by Sheikh Al-Mofid<sup>(1)</sup> – God bless his soul: “It can mean creation, command, informing and even judgment; this way we can understand this Holly Verse: (Then He ordained them seven heavens in two Days)<sub>41;12</sub>, that is, He made them expertly”.

*Anwar:* It is as if nothing can be done without knowing fate and destiny conventionally, isn't it?

*Hasan:* Very true. Now, you are going to know both of them conventionally, and of course, to know them 'conventionally' refers to the knowledge we get about them from the experts in ideology and scholastic theology. We can talk now about these two basic elements:

Fate or estimation conventionally means all of the characteristics of something that is related to time, place, quantity and quality, i.e. the boundaries of its existence from being to non-being.

*Anwar:* Talk to me clearly, I beg you!

*Hasan:* I will do so next time, and with examples, Inshallah. See you!

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(1) Sheikh Al-Mofid (948 – 1022): Abu Abdullah Mohammed bin Mohammed bin Al-No'man Al'okbori Al-Baghdadi. Known as Al-Sheikh Al-Mofid and ibn Al-Mu'allim for his expertise as a traditionalist and philosophical theologian. He was an eminent twelver shi'a theologian.

## ***Symposium 22***

### **More on Fate and Destiny**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam , Akhi Anwar! You must be waiting for the rest of our discussion.

*Anwar:* I am looking forwards for that!

*Hasan:* Fate is like when we want to estimate the value of a building. So, we say, for instance, it consists of three floors, and in each floor, there are four flats made of reinforced concrete; the area of premises is four hundred square meters, and it is all covered with brown decorative stone, and so on and so forth. These features are representing the estimation of objects and so is fate.

*Anwar:* Excellent. Now, what does destiny mean?

*Hasan:* Destiny conventionally is segments of causes for the existence of something come together to an extent that makes it essential to exist.

*Anwar:* Elaborate, please.

*Hasan:* In other words, if something is described within its supposed boundaries, it is judged that there is no hindrance for it to occur.

*Anwar:* Will you clarify destiny using the example you have just used for fate?

*Hasan:* If we can get the land, the construction materials and the layout, and we decided the dimensions and colors, only then can the civil engineer determine the construction of that building.

*Anwar:* It is time now to bring what we learned into effect in real life. What do you say?

*Hasan:* Before doing so, I need to tell you two Hadith supporting what we just said:

First, it is reported that Yunis asked Abu Al-Hasan Al-Riza (PBUH) about the meaning of fate and destiny. His

response was: "Fate is engineering and putting boundaries from being to non-being whereas destiny is ratification and justice".

Second, Imam Al-Riza (PBUH) said to Yunis, valet to Ali Bin Yaqtin: "Do you know what Fate means?", Yunis said no. Imam went on: "it is engineering from length, width and survival. When Allah wills something, He wants it; when He wants it, He preordains it; when He preordains it, He performs it; when He performs it, He accomplishes it".

These Hadith and other ones confirm the meaning of fate and destiny.

*Anwar:* This is Excellent and very clear!

*Hasan:* Now, we can apply this to real life. So, we say that the ruling Divine practices in the universe and the human society cannot be denied; these practices (Sonan) have effects regarding healing and happiness. For example, in a community, majority of people live in poverty and deprivation and a minority live in luxury and wealth through tyranny and aggression. In another community, everyone lives in comfort and happiness

jointly and severally.

Both situations are preordained by the Glorious Allah, but He does not force any of them, that is, if people choose oppression and aggression, they will live in poverty and deprivation, and if they choose to work jointly, they will live in comfortably and happily. This is estimation of the Almighty Allah that has no compulsion in it.

*Anwar:* So, the Almighty Allah has no hand in what people choose to be?

*Hasan:* Only estimation; people choose by themselves.

*Anwar:* So, where is God's will (Ghadha') here?

*Hasan:* After people make their choice comes the will of the Almighty Allah to be applied on their own choose.

*Anwar:* Will you clarify more?

*Hasan:* I will after a cold glass of water and a hot cup of tea. What do you say?

*Anwar:* I can't complain!

## ***Symposium 23***

### **More on Fate and Destiny**

*Anwar:* Now that we enjoyed having tea, let's enjoy our time having some Divine knowledge.

*Hasan:* Sure. We said the Most Exalted Allah does not force anyone to do anything. I will clarify this through these two examples:

Let's say we have a sick person; there are actually two estimations or assessments before this person:

- He can either go see a doctor and follow a prescription, or
- He can consult no one.

If he chooses the first one, he will heal soon, but if he chooses the second one, he will stay sick. Both of these estimations are from the Almighty Allah, yet the patient is free to choose any of them.

*Anwar:* Now I understand that the Almighty Allah never forces anyone to do anything.

*Hasan:* No doubt in that, because compulsion goes against justice, and the Glorious Allah is far above compulsion and injustice.

*Anwar:* But what does it mean that the Almighty Allah destined something and that it is preordained, so it has to happen?

*Hasan:* We have to know the fact that fate and destiny that is all God's does not cancel man's choice, because freedom of choice is one of man's characteristics and it is part of fate as well. Also, the Most Exalted Allah structurally destined mankind to act with complete freedom of choice.

*Anwar:* Will you explain more, please?

*Hasan:* What I mean is that right of option is something the Glorious Allah has fated in creation of mankind and

that He adjudicated and decided for man to be free to choose and not constrained.

*Anwar:* So, there is no forcing in that, but where did this idea come from?

*Hasan:* This is untrue Umayyad idea raised by Mo'awiya through which he wanted to rip off the Caliphate; it is a long story!

*Anwar:* We do not need this now, but what does it mean the Almighty Allah destined me do this and that, and I cannot free myself from it?

*Hasan:* the knowledge of the Gracious Allah on quantity of something and necessity of its existence is certain. This means the Glorious Allah knows about things before happening and puts this on record, but this does not mean He forces the slaves to do them accordingly.

*Anwar:* Please, elaborate more.

*Hasan:* The Almighty Allah knows, for instance, that Anwar is going to do so and so out of his free will, then He put what Anwar will do on record. Now, does this mean that Anwar is forced to do what Allah has put on record?

*Anwar:* No, this is just knowing and taking record.

*Hasan:* So, Allah's recording has nothing to do with one's deeds. However, we have to know that it is impossible that the Almighty Allah would put on record that something is going to take place and then something opposite happens, because nothing can be concealed from the Almighty Allah; He has knowledge of everything.

*Anwar:* Excellent! It is very important that we know that we cannot blame the Most Exalted Allah when bad things happen to us; we cannot justify our failure with fate and destiny. We also can't do people wrong and say it is fate or destiny, because mankind has free choice. Thank you very much, Hasan. I'm enlightened.

*Hasan:* Thanks God for everything.

## ***Symposium 24***

### **Are Good Deeds and Bad Deeds From Allah or Mankind?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* As far as we are speaking about Divine Justice, may I ask you some questions?

*Hasan:* With all pleasure, Akhi Anwar!

*Anwar:* Are good and bad deeds from Allah or the slaves?

*Hasan:* If we look at good and bad deeds as possible

matters, then they will only be attained through the Most Exalted Allah, because He is the Creator of all. However, if we look at them through their causes and motives, then the good deed is from the Glorious Allah and the bad deed is man's failure.

*Anwar:* I didn't get it well.

*Hasan:* I mean causes are from Allah but coloring is from us, that is, that is, if it weren't for the Glorious Allah, man could not commit sin, because when slaves act, they get strength and power from the Almighty Allah, but failure comes as a result of one's own choice.

The following Divine Hadith<sup>(1)</sup> confirms this: "O human being! It was My will that you are here now willing whatever it is you are willing, and it was My grace that you are doing the religious obligations I ordered you, and it was My power that gave you power to disobey Me; I created you to hear and see. I am more entitled to your good deeds than you are and you are more entitled to your bad deeds than I am".

So, the Glorious Allah tells human beings that 'I gave

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(1) Divine Hadith: is a tradition of Allah SWT, narrated by the prophet (PBUH), and is not a part of Quran.

you the ability and the power to act; when you do good deeds, attribute them to Me and when you do bad deeds, attribute them to yourself, because you are negligent and ignorant and I am far above that'.

*Anwar:* It is obvious now. Whatever a slave does, the strength and power they get are from Allah; if one acts right, they thank God for that because it is God's grace, but when one acts wrong, they are to be blamed rather than the Giver of strength and power.

*Hasan:* Excellent! You got it right.

*Anwar:* I have another question now. What does 'guidance and aberration are in the Hands of Allah' mean?

*Hasan:* I am going to answer this question after a break!

## ***Symposium 25***

### **What is the Implication of ‘Guidance and Aberration are in the Hands of Allah’?**

*Anwar:* Salam ‘Alaykom!

*Hasan:* ‘Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakato!

*Anwar:* I am sure you did not forget your promise to answer my question.

*Hasan:* Of course not, and I am at your service.

As you know, Quranic Holy Verses refer to the fact that guidance and aberration are in the hands of Allah:

(Then Allah sendeth whom He will astray, and guideth whom He will. He is the Mighty, the Wise)<sup>14:4</sup>.

There are many other Verses that talk about this matter. Such Verses including this one seemingly express compulsion, but we all know that the Gracious Allah does not force anyone to do good deeds nor bad deeds because God gave us free choice, so it is up to us to be obedient or disobedient.

*Anwar:* How do we come over this problem?

*Hasan:* There is no problem here at all; it is our ignorance that makes it seem like it is a problem. In this regard, I have to make clear that there are two types of guidance: a general and a specific guidance. Simply, When the Glorious Allah says: (He guideth whom He will)<sup>2;142</sup>, this is a reference to both general and specific guidance, and when He says: (Allah sendeth whom He will astray)<sup>13;27</sup>, this is a reference to deprivation only from the specific guidance.

*Anwar:* I need more explanation to be able to understand it all, if you don't mind.

*Hasan:* With all pleasure! In fact, general guidance is for all creatures, human and non-human, and it is divided into two parts:

- General creational guidance: it is to create something and prepare it with what they need for the sake of the purpose they were created for as the Glorious Allah says in the Noble Quran: (He said: Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its nature, then guided it aright)<sup>20:50</sup>. Also, part of the general creational guidance is man's reason that the Most Exalted Allah bestowed upon us in order to achieve what we were created for.

- General legislative guidance: it is only for human beings because they can understand the Divine rules and codes that lead them to comfort and perfection.

Now, the specific guidance is neatly related to individuals, so it only embraces those who have been enlightened by the general guidance so much that they have fully benefited from it. In other words, if people use their reason and commit to the Divine codes, they will consequently be under His especial care and attention in a sense that the Almighty Allah grants them success to find the path to salvation and to also take along provisions for the next life. This is evident in the words of the Glorious Allah:

(While as for those who walk aright, He addeth to their guidance)<sup>47:17</sup>.

(As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths...)29;69.

*Anwar:* Now we know the general and specific guidance, but what does it mean that 'aberration is in the Hands of Allah'?

*Hasan:* The implication of (Allah sendeth whom He will astray) is deprivation from the specific guidance only and not granting success to those with ugly deeds such as injustice and dissipation. This is also evident in the words of the Glorious Allah:

(And Allah guideth not wrong doing folk)2;258.

(And He misleadeth thereby only miscreants)2;26.

There are still many other Holy Verses in the Noble Quran that demonstrate deprivation of some people from the specific guidance as well as the Divine success and prosperity for their ugly deeds.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed. It is completely obvious for me now!

## ***Symposium 26***

### **Is Happiness and Misery from Allah?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* I still have a question on the Divine Justice. May I ask, please?

*Hasan:* Of course, go ahead!

*Anwar:* We hear a lot that this person is happy and that person is unhappy or miserable! Is happiness and misery from Allah or from the slave, or is it something in between?

*Hasan:* Very good question! But before we show their origins, we need first to shed light on their meanings.

*Anwar:* Yes, Very good.

*Hasan:* Happiness has been defined as an attribute to describe the slaves who achieve and enjoy a welfare that suits their body and soul. On the other hand, unhappiness is lack of this and being deprived from it.

*Anwar:* There are other definitions, but I think more or less they all say almost the same thing. Please, go on!

*Hasan:* We need here to demonstrate that these issues are mentioned in the Noble Quran and the Hadith. The Most Exalted Allah says in the Noble Quran:

(On the day when it cometh no soul will sneak except by His permission; some among them will be wretched, others glad. As for those who will be wretched on that day they will be in the Fire; sighing and wailing will be their portion therein. Abiding there so long as the heavens and the earth endure save for that which thy Lord willeth. Lo! Thy Lord is Doer of what He will. And as for those who will be glad that day they will be in the Garden, abiding there so long as the

heavens and the earth endure save for that which thy Lord willeth: a gift unfailing)<sup>11:105-108</sup>.

Moreover, there is a Prophetic Hadith reported by Omar:

“Once one is born either happy or unhappy, what would we work for? For what is finalized or yet not finalized?” Prophet (PBUH) replied “For what is already finalized, Omar, as pens were dried and fates were practiced, but all is possible for what created for”.

Both the Holy Verse and the Hadith might give us this impression that happiness and unhappiness are forced on mankind, but the truth is that it is nothing but an invitation to obedience and rejecting disobedience. This is because the Almighty Allah wants happiness for whoever chooses obedience and unhappiness for whoever chooses disobedience, and this notification comes out of His Eternal Knowledge and Will. So, again there is no compulsion in this, and on the contrary, it is free choice that is being only confirmed as both happiness and unhappiness are the result of actions that come out of the doer willingly, and after all, what has been said refers to the next life and not this life.

*Anwar:* But these two concepts – happy and unhappy – are attributes with which people are described in this life. How is that?

*Hasan:* My dear Brother, happiness and misery or unhappiness are two things mankind acquire during their lives; they are not attached to us from birth to death. Happiness and unhappiness are the result of certain requirements applicable to a certain degree and not of forcing or compulsion.

These requirements might be genetic, cultural or environmental as they might or might not influence us, because we are born with freedom of choice, so we are free to become happy or unhappy, and this freedom cannot be totally canceled by these elements.

*Anwar:* But how about this Prophetic Hadith: “An unhappy person turns unhappy in his mother’s womb, and a happy person turns happy in his mother’s womb”?

*Hasan:* I need you to focus, my Brother. If this Hadith has a reliable source linked to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), then it refers to this implication that human

beings are of two types: one is born from sperms and eggs of healthy parents physically and spiritually; this type is described with a happiness that will stay for all life along. The other one is born from a sperm and an ovum of unhealthy parents physically and spiritually; this type is doomed with unhappiness 'unless your Lord wills otherwise'. So, this is related to this life and not the afterlife.

There is actually another Hadith that gives explanation to this Prophetic Hadith:

Hamad Bin Omair said: I asked Musa Bin Ja'far (PBUH) about the implication of the Prophetic Hadith "An unhappy person turns unhappy in his mother's womb and a happy person turns happy in his mother's womb". He replied: The unhappy person is the one that Allah knows since he is still in his mother womb that he will be acting unhappily and the happy person is the one that Allah knows since he is still in his mother womb that he will be acting happily.

Thus, happiness and unhappiness of people since they are still in their mothers' bellies implies God's knowledge of man's happiness and unhappiness due to

their choice of good and bad deeds, and consequently there is no compulsion or restriction practiced on a person in this regard.

*Anwar:* This is an excellent scholarly elaboration.

*Hasan:* I will end this discussion with a Hadith from Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) in which he illustrates the fact that happiness and unhappiness are as a result of man's actions and that no one is forced to become happy or unhappy:

"The truth of happiness is that one ends his work with happiness and the truth of unhappiness is that one ends his work with unhappiness".

This clarifies that everyone has his own choice for being described with either happiness or unhappiness.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Prophecy

### (Nobowa)

- Demonstrating the Meaning of Prophecy and the Benefits of Prophethood (Bi'tha)
- Is Prophethood Divine's Grace?
- Demonstration of Miracles
- What is the Difference Between Miracle and Magic?
- Approaches to Proving Prophecy
- Attributes of the Prophets Including Infallibility
- Is Infallibility Against Free Choice?
- Infallibility of the Prophets (PBUT) in Individual and Social Affairs
- Words on Special Prophecy
- Attributes of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH)
- Elements of Building Human Personality
- Words on Fluency and Eloquence of the Noble Quran
- Words on the Noble Quran
- Words on Universality and Finality of the Message



## ***Symposium 27***

### **Demonstrating the Meaning of Prophecy and the Benefits of Prophethood (Bi'tha)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* Although I know there are still issues regarding the Divine Justice to talk about, I think they are not that necessary for this discussion.

*Hasan:* What we said about the Divine Justice is quite enough unless you want to specialize in this field.

*Anwar:* So, we now move to talk about Prophecy. Where should we begin?

*Hasan:* We are going to give a simplified and brief demonstration on the meaning of Prophecy, its sections and its necessity.

*Anwar:* That'll be great!

*Hasan:* Let's start with providing a definition for prophecy. According to religious experts: "it is a correlation between the Glorious Allah and wise people in order to introduce them to affairs related to this life and the afterlife". Now, the prophet is a person who informs people about the Gracious Allah through one of informing ways.

*Anwar:* May I ask a question before we get into details?

*Hasan:* Yes, please!

*Anwar:* Is it necessary and essential to have prophets?

*Hasan:* Yes, it is. The Creator's wisdom and justice demand sending Messengers to guide people and lead them to paths of happiness.

*Anwar:* Will you illustrate this?

*Hasan:* Sure. In General human beings are sociable by nature and need. That is why human societies were

established and consequently social life that calls for law and order to organize life in these societies and protect them from chaos. The law must also be impeccable and able to fully respond to the needs of individuals specifically and societies generally. Accordingly, the one who makes the law must be qualified for making such a flawless and impeccable law.

*Anwar:* You illustrated man's need for law as well as the nature of this law. Now, will you tell me about the qualifications and the attributes of the law maker?

*Hasan:* Of course, the law maker must

- have a complete and comprehensive knowledge of human beings,
- not be personally beneficiary of this law,
- adhere to improving the inside alongside the outside through this law.

What the Most Exalted Allah says in the Noble Quran supports this:

(We verily sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, that

mankind may observe right measure...)<sup>47:25</sup>.

Therefore, the purpose of sending the Messengers and revealing Scriptures is to enforce justice in order to attain happiness. This can only be facilitated through making a comprehensive, complete and impeccable law.

*Anwar:* We now know the characteristics of law and law maker as well as the need of community for this law. Are there any other benefits for prophethood or Bi'tha?

*Hasan:* I'll need a break first, if you don't mind.

*Anwar:* Of course, whatever you say, sir.

## ***Symposium 28***

### **More on the Benefits of Prophethood (Bi'tha)**

*Anwar:* I hope you enjoyed your break and you are ready now to continue our talk.

*Hasan:* Thanks God. I am all ready.

*Anwar:* Then, Let's start with answering the question I raised last time. What are the other benefits for prophethood or Bi'tha that make it so essential?

*Hasan:* Of course there are other benefits:

- The need of society for knowledge
- Protecting the nature and the innate character of human beings and restraining their instincts

- Divine's grace
- Delivering cogency

*Anwar:* These points are, in fact, essential for sending prophets, but would you briefly explain them for me, please?

*Hasan:* Yes, I will explain each of these points in a few words.

First is 'the need of society for knowledge'; the Almighty Allah placed some instincts in mankind and as long as these instincts cannot get human beings to the desired goal, He bestowed reason upon people to enlighten them. In spite of that, mankind is still not protected from making mistakes and going astray.

So, there should be a weapon to maintain reason with, and it is nothing but the Divine Knowledge because it develops our mind and reason, refines our soul, defines the nature of relationship we should have with the members of our communities, and guides us to the right path and away from the wrong one. All of this can only be done through the Divine Knowledge God send to people through His Ambassador or Prophets.

*Anwar:* Please, present some reported evidence?

*Hasan:* Sure. Let's start with Quranic evidence. The Almighty Allah say: (Mankind were one community, and Allah sent unto them Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed therewith the Scripture with the truth that it might judge between mankind concerning that wherein they differed)<sup>2:213</sup>.

There are several Hadith referring to the impotence of human reason to comprehend all that is best for him, and there are also more Hadith on the benefits of prophethood (Bi'tha) and the necessity of sending messengers.

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: "No prophet and no messenger were sent unless to complete the reason..."

Amir Al-Mu'menin Imam Ali (PBUH) Said: "The Almighty Allah sent Mohammad (PBUH) to release His slaves from worshiping idols to worshiping Him and from obeying the Devil to obeying Him."

Imam Ali (PBUH) also said: "...until the Almighty Allah sent Mohammad as His Messenger to fulfill His promise and to realize His prophecy...and the people of

earth, at that time, were divided nations, scattered whims and separated communities all between figuring will His image among His creatures to atheism to taking others for Him instead, so He guided them through him from aberration ...”

Imam Al-Kadim (PBUH) said once to his pupil, Hisham: “O Hisham, the Almighty Allah sent His Prophets and Messengers to His slaves so that they comprehend Allah; the best to follow this has the best reason and knowledge of Allah among all as well as the highest ranking in this life and the next life.”

Imam Al-Riza (PBUH), in this regard, said: “The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) had no equal among them; he passed His constructions, prohibitions and ethics to them so informed them on what gains benefits to them and what repels damages from them and other knowledge they need.”

Second benefit of prophethood is ‘protecting the nature and the innate character of human beings and restraining their instincts’; there are certain demands for the nature of human beings and their instincts that must be fulfilled, otherwise they will definitely die. As

for the instincts, human cells, for instance, need to be nourished and human body needs sleep and rest or they will suffer biological disorders.

Therefore, there should be a number of rules to control their instincts and to preserve the humanity in them. Now, regarding the nature of human being, we have, for instance, the tendency to comprehend the Almighty Allah, to do good and not to do bad. These are the pivots of human nature and there should also be law to protect this nature and fulfill its need for guidance. This is because reason does not have this full ability to encompass all the transcendental details of what surrounds us

*Anwar:* You look pretty exhausted. Let's take a break.

*Hasan:* Yes, thank you. We'll continue later, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 29***

### **Is Prophethood Divine's Grace?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* We got to the third point concerning the necessity of sending prophets, namely the Divine's Grace.

*Hasan:* To reason out the necessity of Bi'tha, which is sending the Prophets and Messengers, we use the Divine's Grace Rule. To highlight this rule, we first need to define Grace: it is what makes a person closer to being obedient and avoiding wrongdoings. Grace only brings nearer and closer and so, it does not force anything on anyone.

*Anwar:* Will you use an example?

*Hasan:* Yes, promising with good and warning with punishment or the principle of intimidating from doing bad deeds and motivating to do good deeds.

*Anwar:* Thank you for clarifying the rule. I understand now that sending prophets is a necessity.

*Hasan:* Thank you! In the Noble Quran, this is expressed as “bringer of glad tidings and warner”. There are other roles for Prophets, of course. They educate people, command them to do good and forbid them from doing bad. This comes as part of ‘resultant grace’.

*Anwar:* What is this?

*Hasan:* Grace is divided into two parts:

- Resultant grace
- Close grace

The first one means accomplishing the preparations and the basics with which this purpose can be served, that is, it is a possible grace.

The second means it is bringing close and not possible.

Bi'tha or sending the Prophets comes under the first type of grace, i.e. it is possible to perform but to bringing close.

*Anwar:* Is this grace part of the perfection and the justice of the Almighty Allah?

*Hasan:* Yes, exactly. It is essential for His Perfection and Justice.

*Anwar:* Will you delight our ears with some words from Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and his Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT)?

*Hasan:* Of course. Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) in this regard says:

“O people! When the Most Exalted Allah created mankind, He wanted them to be of high morals and good manners, He had this knowledge that they could not be so unless He informs them about the dos and don'ts; this only comes through commanding and forbidding, and commanding and forbidding can come only with promising and warning; promising cannot be but through motivating and warning cannot be but through intimidating...”

*Anwar:* What is this grace with the slaves for?

*Hasan:* Excellent inquiry. My answer will be what the scholar Al-Hilli – God bless his soul – said:

“Allah knows that people will not be obedient without grace. Even if He commands man using no grace, this would be against His purpose. It is like inviting someone for food and knowing in advance that this person will not accept without a polite request; the inviter has to use such manners with the invitee or it will be in disagreement with the purpose. Thus, the necessity for grace results in fulfilling the purpose”.

*Anwar:* It is said that sending prophets is for demonstrating the proof to mankind. What do you say?

*Hasan:* This is self-evident, because we all know that the Glorious Allah does not charge His slaves with anything unless He first provides concrete evidence before them, otherwise this would be injustice, and the Glorious Allah is far above it.

*Anwar:* You are right. I just remembered that the Glorious Allah says:

(... and We never punish until We have sent a messenger.)<sup>17-15</sup>.

*Hasan:* There is another Holy Verse talking about providing proof and evidence to people:

(...in order that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers, and Allah was ever Mighty, Wise.)<sup>4;165</sup>.

*Anwar:* So, we know now why sending prophets and messengers is a necessity. We can move forwards to learn about issues related to prophecy.

*Hasan:* After a break, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 30***

### **Demonstration of Miracles**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* I hope you enjoyed your break.

*Hasan:* Yes, thanks God. As far as we are still talking about general prophecy, we have got to speak about issues related to general prophecy like miracles and attributions of prophets. We'll first talk about miracles, but before doing so, I have to point out that there are three ways or approaches to verify that a claimer for prophethood is truthful:

- The miraculous nature

- Attestation of a preceding prophet for the following prophet
- Evidence and proofs to the status of the claimer, his disciples and his ideology

*Anwar:* Will you explain them one by one?

*Hasan:* Of course. Let's begin with miracle. According to religious experts, miracle is of supernatural nature associated with challenge and no opposition.

*Anwar:* A bit of clarification, please!

*Hasan:* You do know there are things that are in contrast with the force of reason like coexistence of opposites or an affect without a cause and so on and so forth. These laws will not be violated, but normal laws that do not go against the force of reason will.

*Anwar:* Can you give an example about supernatural miracles?

*Hasan:* Yes, the throne of Balqis<sup>(1)</sup>, for instance, was moved from a long distance in the twinkling of an eye without making use of any form of natural means in a point in time that there was no from any industrial civilization. This is a miracle.

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(1) The Queen of Sheba.

*Anwar:* But did that happen with no reason?

*Hasan:* I did not say without any reasons. I said it took place without any normal means or reasons, that is, there are other reasons that are not normal and that science has not discovered them yet. This explains the first part of the definition (of supernatural nature).

The second part (associated with challenge) proves the prophecy and distinguishes the claimer. This is because without any form of challenge, it will only be a special gift, but not a miracle. As for the third part of the definition (no opposition), it means there should be no one who is able to do the same miracle in an effort to disprove that claim.

*Anwar:* What if someone was capable of doing so and was also in disagreement with the claimer for prophethood?

*Hasan:* In this case, we say if the person objecting was also a claimer for prophethood, then one of them should be truthful and the other should be a liar. This is because we cannot have two different claims or allegations and both are right. I also remind you here that a miracle is something that cannot be performed by

everyone; otherwise it would not be called a miracle in the first place.

*Anwar:* All right. What if a person does perform a supernatural act but it is not corresponding to the claim?

*Hasan:* Very good question. In fact, Mosailama<sup>(1)</sup> did that when he claimed to be a prophet. People asked him to do what the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) did when he spit in a well little with water and the water increased and was sweetened. When Mosailama did the same thing, it had a reversed effect; all the water boiled and nothing was left. He was proved a liar by the Almighty Allah. So, we understand here that a miracle has to fall in with the claim.

*Anwar:* May I add this to the definition?

*Hasan:* Yes, you may!

*Anwar:* I have more questions concerning miracles?

*Hasan:* And I have an appointment and I have got to go. We will continue tomorrow, Inshallah.

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(1) Mosailama bin Habib: was one of a series of men who claimed to be a prophet around the time of Mohammad (PBUH). He is viewed as a false prophet by traditional accounts, and frequently referred to by the epithet "the liar" (Arabic: al-kaddab)

## ***Symposium 31***

### **What is the Difference Between Miracle and Magic?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh! You had questions.

*Anwar:* I wanted to know if performing miracles in conflict with the rule of cause and effect.

*Hasan:* No, and you might ask how a stick can possibly turn into a snake.

*Anwar:* This and other ones!

*Hasan:* We should not to mistake absolute absence of cause for absence of material cause. It is against the rule to say that something happened without being based on a certain cause. So, we have to say that there is cause

behind it but we have not seen or experienced it or science has not discovered it yet.

*Anwar:* So, what causes miracles?

*Hasan:* Everything said in this regard is related in a way or another to the Glorious Allah after all. The cause could be Allah Himself; a creature might perform a miracle being empowered by Allah.

*Anwar:* We know now the difference between a miracle and a special gift. But, what is the difference between miracle and magic?

*Hasan:* Here are the differences between miracles and magic:

- Magic can be learned but miracles cannot.
- Magic can be opposed but miracles cannot.
- Magic is not associated with challenge but miracles are.
- Magic is variably limited but miracles are not.
- Magic differs in purpose but miracles do not.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much. I have one more question!

*Hasan:* Ask whatever you like.

*Anwar:* How do miracles prove the truthfulness or the validity of Prophecy?

*Hasan:* The Glorious Allah is Just and far above injustice; He guides people and does not accept them going astray. Now, here comes the miracle as a form of Divine support for the claimer and as a proof for his connection to the Almighty Allah. A lot of people might deviate from what is right in case they follow a false claimer for prophethood. Consequently, it is far above the Most Gracious Allah to support a false claimer with miracles because this will lead to people going astray.

*Anwar:* Thus, we can conclude that every claimer for prophecy with a miracle is truthful prophet.

*Hasan:* Yes, exactly. I would like to add something here. Someone might ask us why miracles do not happen these days despite contemporary human craving for miracles in a time dazzling scientific advance. The answer would be the Noble Quran is, in fact, the last of all miracles because it is the miracle of the last of the Prophets (PBUH), and it is an eternal and timeless miracle.

*Anwar:* How is it an eternal miracle?

*Hasan:* The Almighty Allah, in the Noble Quran, challenges all mankind and over all times to come with such a miracle as His Holy Book, Quran:

(And if ye are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto Our slave, then produce a Sura or the like thereof, and call your witnesses beside Allah if ye are truthful.)<sup>2;23</sup>.

(Say: Verily, though mankind and the Jinn should assemble to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof though they were helpers one of another.)<sup>17;88</sup>.

These two Verses are clear cut evidence to this Divine challenge that no man or Jinn can ever make anything like the Noble Quran or any part of it.

*Anwar:* This is an excellent approach to proving a claim for prophethood. But, there are two more approaches to tackle.

*Hasan:* We will go through these approaches after a short break.

## ***Symposium 32***

### **Approaches to Proving Prophecy**

*Anwar:* We are back again to continue our fruitful talk on approaches to proving claims for prophethood.

*Hasan:* We have already discussed the first approach to verifying that a claimer for prophethood is truthful, namely miracles. The second way or approach is attestation of a preceding prophet for the following prophet. Now that a person is proved to be truthful in regard to his prophecy, we know that he is infallible and impeccable, i.e. he does not commit sin, he does not lie, he does not forget, etc. As a result, when this prophet tells us about a prophet that is going to succeed him or come after him, we must take his words for granted.

*Anwar:* I got it.

*Hasan:* The third approach, as we know, is the evidence and proofs to the status of the claimer, his disciples and his ideology. Through these proofs, we know whether he is honest or dishonest in his claims. They are as the following:

- Disposition of the claimer: he has to be distinguished by high status, noble manners and free from any form of flaw or defect on the inside as well as outside.
- Content of the claim: the purpose or the content of his prophecy has to be corresponding to that of Divine acquaintances.
- Readiness to sacrifice himself and the people he loves for the sake of proving his prophecy.
- Tools of claim or prophethood: the means and tools used in spreading the instructions of the prophecy must be in agreement with human nature and righteousness.
- His believers: having believers specifically from people knowing him closely.

*Anwar:* It seems there is still so much to say on this third approach.

*Hasan:* but, this is sufficient on this regard.

*Anwar:* So, shall we move to the second issue on general prophecy.

*Hasan:* Do you mean attributions of prophets?

*Anwar:* Yes.

*Hasan:* All right. But, do you still have questions?

*Anwar:* No, I am looking forwards to talk about our next issue.

*Hasan:* Inshallah.

### ***Symposium 33***

## **Attributes of Prophets Including Infallibility ('Isma)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* You promised to tell me about attributes of prophets.

*Hasan:* Yes did. With prophethood comes a responsibility; it is the responsibility of leading human community through guiding mankind to perfection and happiness in both this life and next life. Accordingly, the person who undertakes this role has to be having

certain privileges, qualifications and attributes that distinguishes him from other people.

*Anwar:* No doubt in that; it is actually self-evident.

*Hasan:* The spiritual attributes and moral qualities that a prophet is characterized by are as the following:

- **Infallibility:** it is the power that prevents a person from making mistakes and committing sins.
- **Honesty and integrity** attract people to the prophet and his message.
- **The prophet must be better and having more knowledge** than anyone else so they follow him and no other way round.
- **Having unique capability** in leadership, management and decision making.

In other words, he needs to be characterized with internal and external perfection.

*Anwar:* Would you explain each one of these characteristics in brief?

*Hasan:* Yes, Sure. Let's begin with infallibility.

Beside what we have just said in this regard, theologians define infallibility as a form of grace that the Gracious Allah bestows upon a person in a sense that he neither refrains from obedience nor commits sins although he is capable to do so.

There are also three levels to infallibility:

- Preserved from committing sins and disobeying Divine commands.
- Preservation in receiving revelations, realizing them and delivering them to people.
- Preservation from making errors when implementing the Shari'a as well as in individual and social affairs.

*Anwar:* Is it true that there are two types of infallibility?

*Hasan:* Yes, there is essential infallibility and deeds infallibility.

*Anwar:* Can you explain them a bit?

*Hasan:* Of course!

Essential infallibility: is purity from committing sins or making mistakes intentionally and unintentionally. This

type of infallibility is restricted to Prophets and Imams (PBUT).

Deeds infallibility: is purity from committing sins or making mistakes only intentionally. Every person is capable of achieving this type of infallibility through self-restraint and righteousness. Abi-I-fazl Al-Abbas and his sister Zainab, Fatima Al-Ma'souma, Ali Al-Akbar and others (PBUT) are crystal clear examples for people who could attain deeds infallibility.

*Anwar:* Will you explain the process through which one attains infallibility?

*Hasan:* Briefly, infallibility is a high form of piety that one can obtain via absolute awareness about the consequences of committing sins and their ugliness as well as pure love for the Creator and worshipping Him. This is how one can turn away from committing sins or making mistakes.

*Anwar:* This was very brief, yet very beautiful and useful. However, could you please present us with evidence to the necessity of infallibility?

*Hasan:* As you know, proofs to infallibility are either

purely reasonable or a combination of reasonable evidence and evidence from Islamic law or Shari'a. These proofs or evidence can be put as the following:

- No infallibility leads to refutation of the purpose. In other words, the idea and the purpose behind sending the Prophets to people is to guide them to the right path, to prevent them from going astray, to educate them and to steer them to proper perfection. If we assume prophets forget or make mistakes, how can we possibly expect them to lead humanity towards what the Glorious Allah desires?
- Infallibility is the best and the most preferable means to achieve the purpose. Thus, it must be given preference and priority over other means in this regard.
- Lack of infallibility would cause people to turn away from the words of a prophet as this attribute gives them peace and tranquility.
- If a prophet were not infallible, he would face denial due to falling into abominable acts. This would not only lead to people turning away from him but probably offending him as well.

- No infallibility means possibility of committing sins which accordingly leads to prohibiting people from following him. This is because infallibility and committing sins are contradictory to each other.

*Anwar:* Now, I understand why many Verses from the Noble Quran urge people to follow the Prophets (PBUT) and to completely obey them.

*Hasan:* Yes, exactly. At the same time, we have still a lot more to say on infallibility.

*Anwar:* I have a question in mind, please.

*Hasan:* Let's take a break first.

### ***Symposium 34***

#### **Is Infallibility Against Free Choice?**

*Anwar:* Dear sir, is infallibility contradictory freedom of choice?

*Hasan:* No, it is not. This freedom cannot be taken away even with the infallible Prophets.

*Anwar:* So, we can say that they are able to commit sins

*Hasan:* Yes, for sure. However, what prevents them from doing so is related to what we have discussed earlier; it is that level of piety and awareness about the consequences of committing sins as well as their love and devotion for the Most Exalted Allah.

*Anwar:* Can you give us examples?

*Hasan:* I will give you a couple of examples. Fathers do not even think of killing their children although they have this ability to do so. This is because simply they love their children. Moreover, reasonable people do not drink poison for the knowledge they have about the consequences although they are able to poison themselves.

*Anwar:* Sometimes, it is inferred from some texts or scripts that infallibility is a Divine gift. In this case, the infallible prophets are not really distinguished people. How can we respond to that?

*Hasan:* This is how we respond:

- Sheikh Al-Mofid – God bless his soul – says: “Infallibility (‘Isma) is a grace from Allah to a person that He knows he will grasp at this ‘Isma”.
- As-Sayyed Al-Mortaza<sup>(1)</sup> – God bless his soul – says: “Infallibility is a act of gracefulness from the Glorious Allah, then it is the slave’s choice not to carry out ugly deeds”.

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(1) As-Sayyed Al-Mortaza (966 – 1044) was the greatest shiite scholar of his time. He was student of sheikh Al-Mofid.

In short, the Almighty Allah knows about people's intentions and their future and so He knows that when this gift is bestowed to them, they will use it for the sake of obeying the Most Gracious Allah freely and without any restraints.

*Anwar:* Are heredity and education or good breeding influential factors in this matter?

*Hasan:* Of course, they are. Although they are external factors that cannot be chosen by an individual, yet they attribute to this matter in a sense that these factors help that person to achieve infallibility through self-restraint and righteousness. Thus, without self-restraint and righteousness, heredity and education are useless factors; they are, in fact, requisite factors but not compulsory.

*Anwar:* What do you mean by 'requisite factors but not compulsory'?

*Hasan:* I mean they can lead to either perfection or deficiency but these two factors do not force an individual who has them towards perfection or deficiency.

*Anwar:* All right. Now when a person is infallible, is he going to fall into committing sins?

*Hasan:* No. This is well illustrated in the Noble Quran:

(And We bestowed upon him Isaac and Jacob; each of them We guided; and Noah did We guide aforetime; and of his seed We guided David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward the good.)<sub>6;84</sub>.

(Those are they whom Allah guideth, so follow their guidance. Say O Mohammad, unto mankind: I ask of you no fee for it. Lo! It is naught but a Reminder to His creatures.)<sub>6;90</sub>.

(And he whom Allah guideth, for him there can be no misleader. Is not Allah Mighty, Able to Requite the wrong?)<sub>39;37</sub>.

Therefore, we can say that when the Prophets are guided by a Divine power, they cannot be misled.

*Anwar:* It is said that a prophet is only infallible when it concerns delivering a message. What do you say?

*Hasan:* We have earlier discussed the fact that Prophets

are infallible to do nothing in error when it comes to implementing the Shari'a and normal affairs.

*Anwar:* what is the proof?

*Hasan:* It is self-evident. If we assume that he forgets and make mistakes, he cannot lead or guide a community; he cannot command people to be good and to do good. This is simply because a person who can possibly do something in error cannot be an example or model; this is simply because people will doubt him when they see this inconsistency between his words and his deeds. So, he needs to be infallible not only in delivering his message but also in his everyday life affairs so that his followers can believe him and trust him with their own everyday life affairs as well.

Aside from that, there are Verses from the Noble Quran refer to this fact that a prophet is a 'witness' for or against the people. So, how can he possibly be a witness when he is exposed to forgetting and making mistakes?

*Anwar:* Can you mention these Holy Verses?

*Hasan:* Yes. The Glorious Allah says:

(Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the

messenger may be a witness against you. And We appointed the Qiblah which ye formerly observed only that We might know him who followeth the messenger, from him whom turneth on his heels. In truth it was a hard test save for those whom Allah guided. But it was not Allah's purpose that your faith should be in vain, for Allah is full of pity, Merciful toward mankind.)<sup>2;143</sup>.

(But how will it be with them when We bring of every people a witness, and We bring thee, O Muhammad, a witness against these?)<sup>4;41</sup>.

(There is not one of the People of the Scripture but will believe in him before his death, and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them.)<sup>4;159</sup>.

(And bethink you of the day when We raise up of every nation a witness, then there is no leave for disbelievers, nor are they allowed to make amends.)<sup>16;84</sup>.

(And the earth shineth with the light of her Lord, and the Book is set up, and the Prophets and the witnesses are brought, and it is judged between them with truth, and they are not wronged.)<sup>39;89</sup>.

(I spake unto them only that which Thou commandedst me, saying: Worship Alah, my lord and your Lord. I was a witness of them while I dwelt among them, and when Thou tookest me Thou wast the Watcher over them. Thou art Witness over all things.)<sup>5,117</sup>.

*Anwar:* Very good.

*Hasan:* God bless you.

### ***Symposium 35***

## **Infallibility of the Prophets (PBUT) in Individual and Social Affairs**

*Anwar:* Dear Brother, you did not explain how a prophet can be infallible even in personal affairs and social affairs.

*Hasan:* As far as the Prophets are role models for the societies, he has to certainly be doing things flawlessly. So, if he forgets and makes mistakes, those people who follow him will definitely repeat those mistakes. Consequently, the prophets are only models and examples for the people in their individual and social life

and not in delivering the Divine messages.

*Anwar:* How is that? I did not get you!

*Hasan:* The Glorious Allah ordered us to model after the Prophets in both individual and social life, but he did not order us to model after them in regard to delivering the Divine messages, because it is something that the Prophets do only. In other words, the rubric of a prophet (Sunna) is what he says, what he does and what it is reported from him.

Prophet Mohammed says: "Say prayer the way you saw me doing". This is a proof to rely on actions and not words. What the Prophet do has to be used by us as evidence as it is also mentioned in the Noble Quran:

(Lo! We reveal unto thee the Scripture with the truth, that thou mayst judge between mankind by that which Allah showeth thee. And be not thou a pledder for the treacherous.)<sup>4:105</sup>.

To do is what matters and if errors occur at all while implementing, injustice and chaos will prevail.

For instance, if the Prophet (PBUH) takes a person in to take his arms, doesn't that mean that this person was

accepted and liked by the Prophet (PBUH) and that we have to respect this person?

*Anwar:* Of course, this is obvious.

*Hasan:* This judgment of us on this person comes from what the Prophet (PBUH) did and not what he said. This is a proof to the fact that actions or deeds determine what we ought to do.

*Anwar:* This is very correct and reasonable. Let's move on to the second attribute, namely 'honesty and integrity'. What can you tell us about it?

*Hasan:* Guiding and leading people require a guide and a leader who can give them peace and tranquility, so he has to be infallible from and far above everything that would make people detest him and run away from him. I will mention a few of them:

- Being far above the lowliness and villainy of the parents will help in attracting people to him and letting people trust in him.
- Being healthy is also important, i.e. not having any physical disabilities or diseases such as leprosy.

- Nobility of character and good temper are of great significance in attracting people. The opposite definitely make people run away from him. The following Verse from the Noble Quran is a proof to this:

(It was by the mercy of Allah that thou wast lenient with them, for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart, they would have dispersed from round about thee. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when thou art resolved, then put thy trust in Allah. Lo Allah loveth those who put their trust in Him)<sup>3:159</sup>.

- Being fully sane and mentally sound has also a significant role in leading and guiding people.
- Good reputation and good breeding is of great assistance.

*Anwar:* Excellent. Now, what about the third attribute which is 'the advantage that knowledge gives to a prophet'?

*Hasan:* it is almost the prayer time. Let's get ready.

*Anwar:* Yes, thank you.

## ***Symposium 36***

### **More on Attributes of the Prophets (PBUT)**

*Anwar:* May Allah accept your prayers.

*Hasan:* Yours too, Inshallah.

*Anwar:* Let's go back to the third attribute, now.

*Hasan:* Yes. A prophet has to have a comprehensive knowledge of not only the Pillars of Islam (Osul Al-Din) and their divisions (Foru' Al-Din), but also of anything that brings happiness to mankind in this life and the next life. Having this knowledge is very important in serving the purpose for which the prophet was sent.

A prophet has to have the upper hand when it comes to knowledge so that no one could be superior to him and consequently he would be followed and obeyed. In order to have such knowledge, he has to have a Divine

bond with the Most Wise; these Holy Verses emphasize this fact:

(Nor doth he speak of his own desire ﴿It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired﴾<sub>53:3-4</sub>.

(...and whatsoever the messenger giveth you, take it. And whatsoever he forbiddeth, abstain from it. And keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is stern in reprisal.)<sub>59:7</sub>.

*Anwar:* All right. I think it is time now to talk about the fourth attribute or characteristic of the prophets, namely 'competence in leadership'.

*Hasan:* People need a unique leader with capability to make decisions, guide the society and manage people's daily life. This also includes spiritual leadership to obey the Most Exalted Allah. This point is well presented in this Verse from the Noble Quran:

(So they routed them by Allah's leave and David slew Goliath; and Allah gave him the kingdom and wisdom, and taught him of that which He willeth. And if Allah had not repelled some men by others the earth would have been corrupted. But Allah is a Lord of Kindness to His creatures.)<sub>2:251</sub>.

This form of leadership is only possible through a well-equipped and a highly qualified person in decision making, guidance and management.

*Anwar:* Will you please delight our ears with some words from Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and his Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT)?

*Hasan:* Sure. It is reported from the Prophet (PBUH) that "Leadership is only appropriate for a man with three characteristics: a pious person who restrains from disobeying Allah, a forbearing person who contains his anger, a good manager who is merciful like a father".

Moreover, Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) addresses people in this matter by saying "O people! The person who is more entitled to this is the straighter one and the one having more knowledge of Allah among them, as when a rioter disturbs the peace, he is to blame and when he refuses, he is to fight against".

*Anwar:* Well said. I deeply enjoyed it.

*Hasan:* God bless you. We are now done with the issue of general prophecy.

*Anwar:* Does this mean there is also special prophecy?

*Hasan:* Yes. We will talk about it soon, Inshallah.

*Anwar:* Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 37***

### **Words on Special Prophecy**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi Hasan!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam! How are you doing?

*Anwar:* I am fine, thanks God! You promised to tell me about the special prophecy and the Islamic Call (Da'wa).

*Hasan:* This call emerged in a time full of paganism, polytheism, tyranny, oppressors, suffering and aggression. To cleanse the world from all the wrongdoings and offenses, there had to be a man with a celestial bond able to guide people, to educate people and to get them out of darkness to light.

*Anwar:* Does such a man have to rise to carry all this burden necessarily after injustice and corruption prevail?

*Hasan:* At the time of prophets and messengers, they are responsible for such burdens; after them, this responsibility is passed to their trustees. This is because the Almighty Allah always has someone representing the reason. It is part of His Divine Wisdom to send a prophet or a messenger when the world needs one. That is why Mohammad Bin Abdullah (PBUH) came with his sealing call to guide people and spread justice.

*Anwar:* Can we specify the date when the Islamic Call started according to Gregorian calendar?

*Hasan:* The Honorable Messenger (PBUH) began his call in early seventh century – in 610 A.D. – with his family and his tribe so they support his cause. Then, he spread his message to others, Arabs and non-Arabs. During this period, the prophet, his companions and his followers engaged in wars and conquests in order to exalt the name of Allah against the disbelievers. As a result, he successfully delivered his Divine message and spread his celestial call; this was around 633 A.D. His disciples

followed his path to expand his call all around the world.

*Anwar:* What are the features that distinguish this call?

*Hasan:* If we look closely, we can find many Verses from the Noble Quran clearly describing this call:

(Say: O mankind! Lo! I am the Messenger of Allah to you all)<sup>7;158</sup>.

This Holy Verse refers to the universality of this call; it is not limited to a certain place or a certain race at a certain time. This call is also a grace to humanity as it is evidently stated in this following Holy Verse:

(We sent thee not save as mercy for the people)<sup>21;107</sup>.

If we take this Holy Verse, for instance:

(Mohammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah is Aware of all things)<sup>33;40</sup>.

We can clearly see that this Message is the Seal of all Messages, that the Prophet (PBUH) is the Seal of all Prophets and that his Book is the Seal of all Books.

*Anwar:* Did this call appeared unexpectedly or was the

way paved for it first?

*Hasan:* Of course, the way first was paved for this call through the news delivered by the preceding Prophets such as Prophet Moses (PBUH) and Jesus Christ (PBUH). This is well presented in these two Holy Verses from the Noble Quran:

(Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel...)7:157.

(And when Jesus son of Mary said; O Children of Isreal! Lo! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming that which was revealed before me in the Torah, and bringing good tidings of a messenger who cometh after me, whose name is the Praise One. Yet when he hath come unto them with clear proofs, they say: This is mere magic)61:6.

*Anwar:* Are there any more features to this call?

*Hasan:* Yes, it does have more distinguishing features:

First of all, it is a complementary call to all the previous celestial calls and laws as it is evident in these words of the Most Gracious Allah:

(And when there cometh unto them a Scripture from Allah, confirming that in their possession though before that they were asking for a signal triumph over those who disbelieved and when there cometh unto them that which they know to be the Truth they disbelieve therein. The curse of Allah is on disbelievers)<sup>2;89</sup>.

Second of all, it is a call that guarantees happiness in this world and the afterworld for those who embrace it as it is obvious in this Holy Verse:

(Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel which are with them. He will enjoin in them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong. He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul; and he will relieve them of their burden and the fetters that they used to wear. Then those who believe in him, and honor him and help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him: they are the successful)<sup>7;157</sup>.

Here, we conclude that this is a complete and

comprehensive call as it is far above myths, superstitions and illusions. It is entirely based on crystal clear facts and brilliant thoughts that drive injustice and darkness.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed! Now that we know all the features related to this Islamic Call, can we move on to know something about the features and attributes of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) who carried and delivered this call?

*Hasan:* We will definitely talk about this next time, Inshallah. See you.

## ***Symposium 38***

### **Attributes of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* You promised to...

*Hasan:* I know! I promised you to talk about the attributes of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), and today I will fulfill my promise. My Dear Brother, other than the general attributes of the Prophets (PBUT) we mentioned earlier, there are additional attributes that distinguishes the Seal of the Prophets and the Messengers, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

He is of such a high ranking compared to people and other Prophets that the Most Exalted Allah described him with these words in the Noble Quran:

(And lo! Thou art of a tremendous nature)<sup>68;4</sup>.

(Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those with him are hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves. Thou seest them bowing and falling prostrate in worship, seeking bounty from Allah and His acceptance)<sup>48;29</sup>.

The Prophet (PBUH) himself says: "Six features distinguish me from other Prophets: I am given comprehensive knowledge, I am given victory with dread, I am given immaculate ground for worship, I am sent to all mankind and I am the Seal of the Prophets".

Here are some of the attributes of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), the model and example for all mankind, according to Islamic experts:

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was the most forbearing, the most courageous, the most even-handed and the most virtuous of all. He never laid a hand on a woman unless he had their tenderness, married to them

or had kinship that permits it. He was the most generous so much that no penny had stayed overnight with him. He did not return home until he had satisfied the needy. He used to mend his foot-wear, patch his garments and help with house-work like chopping the meat with female members of the family (Harem).

Moreover, he was the most modest. He did not look sharply at a person. He answered the requests from both the free and the slave. He accepted any gifts even it was a drink of yogurt and he rewarded them for that. He would not accept any alms. He would only get angry for the sake of Allah and not to satisfy himself.

He attended funerals. He walked among his enemies unguarded. He was the most humble. He was the most eloquent. He was of the most beautiful nature. Nothing of earthly nature would attract him or scare him.

He used to tie a rock on his stomach out of hunger. He would eat anything he was offered and would not refuse any kind of food as far as it was Halal. He would wear any available clothing and ride any riding animal such as horses, camels, mules and donkeys, as he also used to go on foot. He would prefer to sit with the poor and

feed them. He also preferred to sit with scholars and righteous people. He always kept in touch with the relatives and friends.

He accepted any form of apologies. He used to banter with people but would not laugh loudly. He never cursed a person. He never chastised evil with evil. He would preferably forgive. He would greet first and shake hands first. He would always utter the Lord's name when sitting down or standing up.

He would mostly sit with his legs raised and put his hands around them so he would not be noticed among his followers. He would mostly sit towards the Qiblah. He used to be always generous to whoever turns to him so much that he spread his garment for a stranger and strongly offered him his sitting pillow.

He was hard to irritate but easy to please; he was very merciful and kind to everyone. He was the most eloquent yet very brief. He used to keep silent unless it was necessary to speak.

He would always prefer to eat with people around and from one same plate; He would not eat hot food and

would eat from whatever food was close to him. When eating, he used three and sometimes four of his fingers.

He used to eat barley bread. He preferred not to eat garlic, onion and leek. He never dispraised any food; he would either eat it or leave it. He used to lick the leftovers from the plate and say "the last of food has the blessing". He would also lick his fingers so much so that they would go red. He would roll up his garment when eating.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed. Allah rewards you well. These are, in fact, great attributes. This was a great ideological and moral lesson.

*Hasan:* We here speak about everything that helps to build the human personality.

### ***Symposium 39***

## **Elements of Building Human Personality**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* You were saying something about building the human personality.

*Hasan:* Yes. The human personality is built through several elements; theology is an element that is concerned with building the human intellect. We can also mention ethics that cares for refining the human soul from vice and beautifying it with virtue.

Jurisprudence (Shari'a rules) is interested in worshipping practices, that is, the relation between mankind and their Creator, the Most Exalted Allah, in addition to practical practices or the relation between people themselves.

*Anwar:* Great! Thank you. So far, we talked about the characteristics of a claim or a call and the characteristics of a claimer or a prophet. I think it is time now to talk about the evidence to the claim and the prophecy of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). What do you say?

*Hasan:* We earlier said that a person who claims to be a prophet has to come with a miracle; the miracle has to also meet certain conditions such as having supernatural nature, being associated with challenge, having no opposition as well as matching the claim.

*Anwar:* All right. What is the miracle of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)?

*Hasan:* It is the Noble Quran, which is a Divine revelation from the Most Gracious Allah.

*Anwar:* What are the aspects that make the Noble Quran of a miraculous nature?

*Hasan:* The miraculous nature of the Noble Quran is embodied in its eloquence, fluency, poetic composition and purity of language. It is the miracle of the Wise for every aspect of life: socially, individually, law making, policy making, etc.

It includes all types of knowledge and sciences with all their deep meanings. It is free from contradiction, inconsistency disparity or disagreement. It is full of challenges as the Almighty Allah put it in the Noble Quran:

(Say: Verily, though mankind and the Jinn should assemble to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof though they were helpers one of another)<sup>17;88</sup>.

(Or they say: He hath invented it. Say: Then bring ten Surahs, the like thereof, invented, and call on everyone ye can beside Allah, if ye are truthful. And if they answer not your prayer, then know that is revealed only in the knowledge of Allah; and that there is no God save Him. Will ye then be of those who surrender?)<sup>11;13-14</sup>.

(Or say they: he hath invented it? Nay, but they will not believe. Then let them produce speech the like thereof, if they are truthful)<sup>52;33-34</sup>.

After this explicit challenge, no one can deny His miracle. The people of Mecca, especially the most eloquent of the Arabian Peninsula, heard about this challenge. Three people tried to come out with something similar to the Noble Quran; they failed to do so. This story is mentioned in the books of history in detail.

*Anwar:* I understand from what you just said that this challenge is still on for those who want to try.

*Hasan:* Of course, the Noble Quran is eternal in this miraculous nature challenging all people over ages.

*Anwar:* I hope I did not tire you out as I have one more question here.

*Hasan:* I am all ears!

*Anwar:* I believe we better take a small break first. What do you say?

*Hasan:* As you wish. I don't mind a cup of tea.

## ***Symposium 40***

### **Words on Fluency and Eloquence of the Noble Quran**

*Anwar:* Now that we enjoyed drinking the Iraqi tea, may I ask a question?

*Hasan:* Yes, go ahead.

*Anwar:* You mentioned 'eloquence, fluency and poetic composition'. What does these terms mean?

*Hasan:* All right. I will give a definition for each of them.

Eloquence: the beauty of expression and the elegance of appearance.

Fluency: the beauty of presentation and the eminence

of meaning.

Poetic composition: comprehensive style and unified composition.

In other words, eloquence is a well-expressed speech that is effective in persuading people. Fluency is a correct enunciation in a sense that there would be no ambiguity in a speech. Poetic composition refers to setting words together in a way that sound harmonious.

*Anwar:* Did mankind actually fail to come up with something similar to the Noble Quran?

*Hasan:* Yes, they did fail and they still fail to compose something similar to it or something that can dispute it, not to mention that the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) challenged all the disbelievers as well as the people of the Book in this regard. We need to remember that eloquence and fluency were of huge significance at that point in time and that the message of the Prophet (PBUH) refuted their superstitions and distortions of religions.

*Anwar:* I read that there were a lot of eloquent poets and speakers at the time when the Prophet Mohammad

(PBUH) was sent, and that majority of them were known for their fanatic views and haughtiness.

*Hasan:* Very true.

*Anwar:* Could any of those who opposed his claim like Mosailama the liar and others come up with anything similar to the Noble Quran?

*Hasan:* My dear Brother, you are going to laugh at their nonsense and ridiculousness if you know what they invented.

*Anwar:* No harm in hearing some of it.

*Hasan:* Historically, Mosailama claimed sharing the prophethood with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and he began talking rhymed nonsense: "Allah blessed the pregnant with a walking human, stuffed in within the cavity" or "by the elephant, you be aware of the elephant; he has a harmful tail and a long trunk".

There is another person called Tolaiha Bin Khowailid Al-Asadi who claimed the same as he invented these words: "By the pigeon and the dove. By the shrike and fasting, may our reign reach Iraq and Shaam".

Two more people named Sojah Bint Al-Harith and Al-Aswad Al-'Insi said even more ridiculous things than the two previous liars. The shallowness in meaning and the literary weakness is so obvious that you cannot possibly miss their false claims.

*Anwar:* You are absolutely right.

*Hasan:* Great! What else do you want to know?

*Anwar:* I would like you to give us, first, some Quranic examples on the eloquence, fluency and the poetic composition, and second, some evidence to the inability of even the most eloquent to challenge the Noble Quran.

*Hasan:* All right. Please, pay attention, my dear Brother. The Lord says:

(And of His portents are the ships, like banners on the sea)<sup>42:32</sup>.

This is an eloquent and obvious Surah recognized by all eloquent Arabs.

(Lo! We have given thee Abundance◊ So pray unto thy Lord, and sacrifice◊ Lo! It is thy insulter who is

without posterity)<sup>108;1-3</sup>.

This Surah shows the wonderful fluency of the Noble Quran.

(The Beneficent ◊ Hath made known the Quran ◊ He hath created man ◊ He hath taught him utterance ◊ The sun and the moon are made punctual)<sup>55;1-5</sup>.

What a great poetic composition. The most eloquent and fluent of Arabs agrees on this.

*Anwar*: This is obviously beautiful although I am not an expert. Let's move to the second issue.

*Hasan*: All right. Even the most eloquent people admitted that the Noble Quran is of a miraculous nature. It is said in the Prophetic history that Al-Walid Bin Al-Maghirah, one of the great eloquent Arabs, heard these following Holy Verses from the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH):

(Ha. Mim ◊ The revelation of the Scripture is from Allah, the Mighty, the Knower ◊ The Forgiver of the sin, the Acceptor of the repentance, the Stern in punishment, the Bountiful. There is no God save Him. Unto him is the journeying ◊ None argue concerning

the revelations of Allah save those who disbelieve, so let not their turn of fortune in the land deceive thee ﴿﴾ The folk of Noah and the factions after them denied their messengers before these, and every nation purposed to seize their messenger and argued falsely, thinking thereby to refute the Truth. Then I seized them, and how awful was My punishment ﴿﴾ Thus was the word of thy Lord concerning those who disbelieve fulfilled: that they are owners of the Fire ﴿﴾<sup>40:1-6</sup>.

When he heard this, he went to his people, the tribe of Bani Makhzum, and said: "By the Lord, I have just heard Mohammad uttering words which neither man nor Jinn can produce. It has such a charm and beauty; it is graceful and fruitful. It rises above all and nothing can rise above it". Then, he left home.

Moreover, it is said in that 'Otbeh Bin Rabi'a heard this Holy Verse:

(And they say: Our hearts are protected from that unto which thou callest us, and in our ears there is a deafness, and between us and thee there is a veil. Act, then. Lo! We also shall be acting)<sup>41:5</sup>.

Then, he said: "I heard something I swear I haven't ever heard anything like it. By God, it was neither poetry nor magic. O people of Qoraish, listen to me and trust me with this. Stay close to this man and from what he is doing. Stay in touch with him. By the Lord, what I heard from him will have an awful tiding. If the Arabs do the right thing, they will be content with him away from others. If he comes out to the Arabs, his supremacy will be theirs and his glory will be yours. You will be the happiest with him".

After all this, would possibly be any doubts in the miraculous nature of the Noble Quran concerning eloquence and fluency?

*Anwar:* This is crystal clear!

*Hasan:* After all this, we need to take a break, Anwar.

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot.

## ***Symposium 41***

### **Words on the Noble Quran**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* Is there anymore you want to say on the miraculous nature of the Noble Quran?

*Hasan:* No, but I need to mention some evidence to the fact that it is a celestial book.

*Anwar:* Wonderful, and I desperately need to hear that.

*Hasan:* I will try to make it short. What do you think?

*Anwar:* Nothing to say but all thanks to you, Allah

rewards you well.

*Hasan:* Thank you. The following are some evidence that the Noble Quran is a celestial Book:

- The fact that the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was illiterate is a proof in itself. The Noble Quran is full of knowledge, fair regulations and rules for life, moral principles and unseen heavenly information. This cannot be invented but revealed by the Almighty Allah to His Messenger.
- The absence of disparity in style: the fact that the Noble Quran was revealed for the period of twenty three years without any inconsistency in style is an obvious proof that it is a celestial book.
- The absence of disparity in content is another proof in this matter. The Noble Quran refers to this fact in this Holy verse:

(Will they not then ponder on the Quran? If it had been from other than Allah they would have found therein much incongruity)<sup>4:82</sup>.

- The dominance of the Noble Quran on the preceding

celestial books.

- The miraculous nature of the Noble Quran in relation to its precise law making.
- Giving unseen heavenly information such as notifying that mankind is incapable of opposing the Noble Quran, foretelling the triumph of the Romans over the Persians, the conquest of Mecca, etc.
- Giving undiscovered scientific facts: roundness of Earth, movement of Earth and celestial bodies and couple duality of creatures are only few examples.
- The moral standards and the noble qualities that the Noble Quran brought in an era of killing, rape and ignorance is another obvious evidence to the divinity of the Noble Quran.

These are pretty much the proofs in brief. I hope this would set your mind at rest in this matter.

*Anwar:* Well said. This was a very reasonable presentation on your part. But will you tell me about the miracles performed by the Prophet (PBUH) during his life?

*Hasan:* Yes, there are many of them. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) did certain miraculous acts to prove his claim, especially when the disbelievers defied him. Some of these miraculous acts are:

- The splitting of the moon
- The night of the Prophet's (PBUH) ascension
- The supplication (Mobahala)
- The movement of the tree and flow of water from between his fingers
- Pebbles praising the Lord in his hand, and many more.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed!

## ***Symposium 42***

### **Words on Universality and Finality of the Message**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* 'Alaykom As-Salam! How are you doing?

*Anwar:* fine, thanks God.

*Hasan:* I am all ready for your inquiries.

*Anwar:* I would like to know about two things;

- The universality of the message
- The Finality of the message

What do you say?

*Hasan:* I'm fine with that!

- The universality of the message

Islam is a religion of belief and action. It does not belong to a certain group of people or society, a certain geographical zone, a certain language or a certain race. It is a religion for all people. This is what these following Holy Verses referring to:

(Say: O mankind! Lo! I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, Him unto whom belongeth the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no God save Him. He quickeneth and He giveth death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the prophet who can neither read nor write, who believeth in Allah and in His words, and follow him that haply ye may be led aright.)<sup>7;158</sup>.

(And We have not sent thee save as a bringer of good tidings and a warner unto all mankind; but most of mankind know not.)<sup>34;28</sup>.

(Whatever of good befalleth thee O man it is from Allah, and whatever of ill befalleth thee it is from thyself. We have sent thee as a messenger unto mankind and Allah is sufficient as witness.)<sup>4;79</sup>.

(We sent thee not save as a mercy for the peoples.)<sup>21;107</sup>.

(Blessed is He Who hath revealed unto His slave the Criterion of right and wrong, that he may be a warner to the peoples.)<sup>25;1</sup>.

Thus, we see that the Noble Quran, through these Holy Verses and many other ones, is addressing all people without distinction. Also, the subjects – guiding people, social and individual bonds and rules, moral issues and purpose of revelations – are all of global interest. This makes Islam a universal religion.

- The Finality of the message

Muslims agreed that the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is the seal of the Prophets, his message is the seal of all messages and his book is the seal of all celestial books. Thus, the Prophet Mohammad Bin Abdullah (PBUH) is the last messenger sent by the Almighty Allah who accomplished his responsibility completely and flawlessly. This is evidently presented in the Noble Quran and the Honorable Sunna.

#### A - Finality in the Noble Quran

The Quranic Verses cannot be disputed or changed, so they are fully reliable evidence with no doubt. In this

regard, the Most Exalted Allah says in the Noble Quran:

(Mohammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah is Aware of all things)<sup>33;40</sup>.

(O you who believe! Most surely many of the scholars and the monks devour the wealth of people unjustly, and turn (them) from Allah's way; and (as for) those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way; give them tidings of a painful punishment)<sup>9;34</sup>.

There is another Holy Verse that refers to the fact that Islam is the religion that will triumph:

(...that he may cause it to prevail over all religion, however much the idolaters may be averse)<sup>9;33</sup>.

B - Finality in the Honorable Sunna and Hadith.

There are many Hadith from the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) affirming that he is the Seal of the Prophets. In one of these Hadith, he is telling Imam Ali (PBUH) that "You are to me like Haroun to Moses except there will be no prophet after me".

In another occasion, he was among his fellow Muslims when he said: "O people! There will neither be a prophet after me nor a Sunna after mine. Whoever claims so will be in Fire. So, fight him. Whoever follows him will be in Fire".

When Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) was doing the ritual ablution to the Prophet (PBUH) after his decease, he said: "O the Messenger of Allah, prophethood has stopped when you passed away unlike with other prophets".

There are many other Hadith that confirms there will be no more prophets or Divine messages.

*Anwar:* Well said! I still have another question in mind. It is very significant to say at this point that the social evolution requires an evolution in legislation and law making in return. Now that the Shari'a had been sealed long time ago, how does the Shari'a keep up with this continuous development?

*Hasan:* In this regard, we can say:

- The Shari'a came to refine the human instincts as well as the spirituals which are born with mankind and

will stay with them until the Judgment Day without any change. So, the rules of Shari'a that are permanent and eternal are beneficial at any time.

- There is no change in human instincts and the spirituals but in some possible contingencies.

*Anwar:* Will you explain with an example, please?

*Hasan:* Yes, if we say, for instance, the bond between a father and a son or between brothers is natural and spiritual. Then, the Shari'a brought a system to organize these relationships through succession, kinship and honoring. This is unchanging and so it necessitates an unchanging legislation.

Furthermore, women are different from men and each has their own rules and codes. No one can deny that. Thus, there should be a system with perfect set of rules to again organize these distinguishing features.

More to say, killing is unjust and Haram<sup>(1)</sup>, it does not matter how you do it – by a sword, a gun or an electric chair. When it is Haram, it is Haram. The Imams (PBUT)

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(1) Haram: Things which are forbidden religiously. It is an Arabic word meaning "sinful" in Islam it is used to refer to any act displeases or angers Allah. The opposite of this word is "Halal".

always asserted on this fact: "The Halal<sup>(1)</sup> of Mohammad is Halal until the Judgment Day and the Haram of Mohammad is Haram until the Judgment Day".

*Anwar:* This leads to a question, as important as the one before. The rules of Islamic Shari'a are prescribed and definite, so how can it possibly answer the countless human needs?

*Hasan:* It is not completely true. The rules of Islamic Shari'a are not prescribed or definite. They are good for all times and places if we use our reason and commit to its rules and codes. Moreover, we have to admit that any judgment is subject to good and evil unless we fully commit to the rules and the principles alongside the Ijtihad.

*Anwar:* This requires more elaboration on the details, but I think it is enough for today.

*Hasan:* See you soon, Inshallah.

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(1) Halal: is an Arabic word meaning "lawful" or "permissible" and the term not only covers food and drink, but also all matters of daily life. The opposite of this word is "Haram".

## ***Symposium 43***

### **More on the Message**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam!

*Anwar:* I think last time we concluded that the Noble Quran and the Honorable Sunna contain all rules and the codes needed for deducing thousands of judgments helpful to mankind individually and socially.

*Hasan:* Yes, no doubt in that. However, we should also remember the weightiness of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) alongside the Noble Quran and the role they have in

explaining and preserving the Shari'a as well as fulfilling the needs of people in their devotions and dealings matters. That is why the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) publicly announced the well-known Al-Thaqalain<sup>(1)</sup> Hadith.

*Anwar:* Exactly. This is very necessary for all of us.

*Hasan:* Actually, I would like to add something. It is important to believe that Islam is concerned with the content away from outer shell during the law making or legislation process. This is the reason why it still continues to be useful for all people and over all ages.

Islam also keeps this balance between the earthly issues and the spiritual issues. Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) says in this regard: "The believers have three times; a time for praising the Lord, a time for earning living and a time for sitting alone with themselves".

No doubt that these three times would create a wonderful balance in one's life.

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(1) Al-Thaqalain: (The Two Weighty Things):

Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: verily, I am leaving behind two weighty Things (Thaqalain) among you: The Book of Allah, and my kindred ('itrah), my household (Ahlulbayt), for indeed, the two will never separate until they come back to me by the pond (of Alkawthar on the judgement's day).

*Anwar:* This is a great Hadith, and I will be grateful if you explain it a bit more so I would strengthen my faith.

*Hasan:* Of course. In order to conclude this discussion on prophethood, I would say that the Imam (PBUH) wants people to worship the Almighty Allah and to devote themselves to Him as long they breath.

At the same time, they need to work hard to earn a Halal living in order to take care of themselves and the people they support. The Imam (PBUH) wants us to always keep this balance between our satisfying our needs in this life as well as the next life.



# CHAPTER FOUR

## Imamate (Imamah)

- The Concept of Imamate
- Is Imamate one of the Pillars of Islam or the Branches of the Pillars?
- Is Imamate Established through Allegiance (Bai'a) or the Scripture (Al-Nas)?
- What are the Attributes and the responsibilities of Imam?
- What is the Imam's Source of Knowledge?
- Does the Imam Know About the Divine secrets?
- Why Don't Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) Teach Their Knowledge to All of People?
- Is it Requisite to Obey and Love the Imams (PBUT)?
- Why Is 'Loving the Imams (PBUT)' Requisite?
- Is Imamate Established through the Scripture or Election?
- The Evidence to Imamate of Ali Bin Abi Talib and His offspring (PBUT)
- Is it a Duty to Believe in the Existence of Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR)?
- The Benefits of the Conceal (Al-Ghaibah)
- The Benefits of Waiting
- Words on Claiming His Mediation



## ***Symposium 44***

### **The Concept of Imamate**

*Anwar:* We were talking about the Hadith from Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) on the responsibilities of a person in life. His great words are indicative of an infallible source.

*Hasan:* True. The words of Imams are the guideline for our life in its all aspects, and Imam Ali (PBUH) is, as we all know, the gate for the city of knowledge.

*Anwar:* I can see we are going towards Imamate in our discussion, are we going to talk about it?

*Hasan:* Yes, it is time to talk about Imamate; let the Hadith from Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) be the opening for this topic. I will start with the definition of Imamate:

- General leadership in spiritual and secular issues.

- Succession of the Prophet (PBUH) for putting the religion into practice.
- Representing the owner of Shari'a in preservation of the religion and the earthly matters.
- Succession of the Prophet (PBUH) for putting the religion into practice and preserving the Muslim community.

Regardless of these definitions offered by Muslim clerks, we can say that Imamate is a Divine succession (Caliphate) that provides legislative power to its owner, external succession is one of this.

*Anwar:* As far as I know, Imams are superior to other people and consequently they act as role models to the people. Right?

*Hasan:* Yes, this is the definition of Imamate according to linguists; the ones I presented are technical definitions offered by religious experts.

*Anwar:* You said it is a Divine succession!

*Hasan:* As we all know, the purpose behind creating mankind is achieving perfection and being closer to the

Divine Entity. This can only be fulfilled through the Divine Shari'a which needs a trustworthy person able to put it into practice in a way that pleases the Almighty Allah. This leads us to the fact that this man of Shari'a has to have certain characteristics that distinguishes him from others. We have already been through this when we were discussing Prophecy and Prophethood.

When the Prophet (PBUH) passed away like any other human being, there was a need for someone who could preserve the Shari'a and spread it over generations. So, the Imamate is a natural continuation of Prophethood and the Imams (PBUT) has the same attributes as the Prophets (PBUT) except the concept of prophecy.

*Anwar:* Can we conclude that the Imams (PBUT) are no different from the Prophets (PBUT) apart from the concept of prophecy?

*Hasan:* Yes, Exactly. The Imams are holy people who perfectly know what is good and what is bad for the people. To clarify this point, I will quote the description Imam Ali Bin Mosa Al-Riza (PBUH) gave about the Imamate and the Imams (PBUT). I beseech your patience as it is one wonderful and enlightening

description.

Imam Ali Bin Mosa Al-Riza (PBUH) says:

“Imamate is greater, more exalted, more glorified, stronger and deeper than people can comprehend with their reasoning or thoughts or choose an Imam on their own. The Most Gracious Allah bestowed Imamate upon Abraham, the Intimate Companion (PBUH) after naming him Prophet, and intimacy is the third in ranks and a quality that the Almighty Allah honored him with as He put it in the Noble Quran:

(...I have appointed thee a leader for mankind...)2;124, then the Intimate Companion (PBUH) says: (...and of my offspring?). The Almighty Allah responds: (My covenant includeth not wrongdoers).

Thus, this Holy Verse invalidates the Imamate of a wrongdoer till the Day of Resurrection; the Almighty Allah put it among the Chosen and the Pure of his offspring. That is why, He says:

(And We bestowed upon him Isaac, and Jacob as a grandson. Each of them We made righteous◊◊And We made them chiefs who guide by Our command, and

We inspired in them the doing of good deeds and the right establishment of worship and the giving of alms and they were worshippers of Us alone)<sup>21;72-73</sup>.

This stayed within his offspring to inherit from one another over centuries until the Glorious Allah bequeathed it to the Prophet (PBUH) as He says in the Noble Quran:

(Lo! Those of mankind who have the best claim to Abraham are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who believe with him; and Allah is the Protecting Friend of the believers)<sup>3;68</sup>.

Subsequently, the Prophet (PBUH) passed it to Ali (PBUH) with a command from the Almighty Allah to follow this path, and it moved to the Pure among his offspring who carried knowledge and faith: (But those to whom knowledge and faith are given will say: The truth is, ye have tarried, bu Allah's decree, until the Day of Resurrection)<sup>30;56</sup>.

Therefore, it is specifically within the offspring of Ali (PBUH) until the Judgment Day. There is no prophet after Mohammad (PBUH), hence how would the

unenlightened choose a leader?!

The Imamate is of the same status of the Prophethood; it is the legacy of the Trustees. Imamate is the succession of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) as well as Ali (PBUH) and his sons, Hasan and Husain (PBUT). Imamate is the rising pillar of Islam and its lofty branch. The Imams (PBUT) complete Prayer (As-Salat), Fasting (As-Siam), Almsgiving (Az-Zakat), Pilgrimage to Mecca (Al-Haj) and Holy Wars (Al-Jihad).

The Imams (PBUT) provide aids and charities as they execute punishments and sentences; they prevent breaches and limitations, they permit the Halal and prohibit the Haram, they establish the Divine justice, they defend and protect the Shari'a of Allah, they wisely and kindly call upon working for the sake of the Lord. The Imams are like a rising lofty sun spreading its light; it is unreachable but visible to everyone.

The Imams (PBUT) are the shining full moon, the luminous lamp, the glaring glow and the guiding star in the darkness of life. The Imams are the fresh water to the thirsty for guidance and virtues; they are the saviors from evil. The Imams are like a fire on a hill that

warm people and guide them in dangerous situations.

The Imams (PBUT) are the rainy clouds and the falling rain. They are the radiant sun, the shady sky and the naturally humble earth. The Imams are the kind friend, the good companion, the affectionate father, the whole brother and the devoted mother. The Imams are God's trustees over His creatures, God's cogency to His slaves, God's successors and heralds among the people.

The Imams are purified from committing sins and preserved from making flaws; they are distinguished with knowledge and forbearance. The Imams are the religion's order, Muslims' pride, hypocrites' fury, the disbelievers' destruction. There is no man parallel to their status; they are incomparable and unmatched. The Imams are favored by Allah; they do not grow their position; it is bestowed upon them by the Lord.

The most eloquent scholars failed to even describe one aspect of their character; they all admitted their inability and weakness to comprehend the attributes of the Imams, so how would they be able to choose the Imams? This is evident in the Noble Quran:

(Thy Lord bringeth to pass what He willeth and chooseth. They have never any choice. Glorified be Allah and exalted above all that they associate with Him)<sub>28:68</sub>.

How would anyone choose them? The Imams are far from ignorance; they are the guardians that never retreat; they are of pure descendants, sanctity, piety, heavenly knowledge and devotions; they are descending from the noble Quraish, sons of Hashim, and most importantly offspring of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). Accordingly, the Almighty Allah distinguished them from others and bestowed His knowledge and wisdom to them; their knowledge always exceeds their time as we read in the Noble Quran:

(Is He Who leadeth to the Truth more deserving that He should be followed, or he who findeth not the way unless he himself be guided. What aileth you? How judge ye?)<sub>10:35</sub>.

They have the support of the Lord Who preserved them from any form flaws and sins so that they be His cogent reason and witness on earth: (That is the

bounty of Allah which He giveth unto whom He will. Allah is of infinite bounty)<sup>62:4</sup>.

Now, would they still be able to find such people to choose? Or would they just accept such chosen people?"

*Anwar:* This is an incredible description. It also proves the Imamate of Imam Al-Riza (PBUH) himself; what an eloquent and powerful account.

*Hasan:* After this long and beautiful account, I need a break to have a cup of tea.

*Anwar:* Well-said. Let's go!

## ***Symposium 45***

### **Is Imamate One of the Pillars of Islam or the Branches of the Pillars?**

*Anwar:* We are back again!

*Hasan:* Yes, and I am all ready for your inquiries.

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot for your great information. Allah rewards you well, Akhi. I actually have a question in mind that might be of interest to many other young people.

*Hasan:* All right. Go ahead!

*Anwar:* Is Imamate one of the Pillars of Islam or one of its branches?

*Hasan:* It is an expectable and beautiful question! Here is the thing. Most of the the Sunnites agree that the

Imamate is one of the branches of the Islamic Pillars (Foru' Al-Din). The Shiites disagree about this point. We have already discussed the significance of the Imamate and the role of Imams in our lives following the Prophet (PBUH). So, the Imamate is a Pillar in Islam for the same reason that the Prophecy or Prophethood is a Pillar in Islam.

*Anwar:* I understand here that the Imams are like the Prophets; they are the leaders of our Islamic societies as they preserve the Shari'a over ages, and consequently we must follow them; that is why the Imamate is no different from the Prophethood and we need to accept it as one of the Pillars of Islam (Osul Al-Din).

*Hasan:* Yes, exactly!

*Anwar:* Do you have any evidence to support this?

*Hasan:* The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

(O Messenger! Make known that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord, for if thou do it not, thou will not have conveyed His message. Allah will protect thee from mankind. Lo! Allah guideth not the disbelieving folk)<sup>5;67</sup>.

Religious experts believe that this Holy Verse was revealed for the sake of the Imamate and that it clearly shows its importance and place. We can also use this following Holy Verse to reason it out:

(Forbidden unto you for food are carrion and blood and swine flesh, and that which hath been dedicated unto any other than Allah, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which hath been killed by the goring of horns, and the devoured of wild beasts, saving that which ye make lawful by the death stroke, and that which hath been immolated unto idols. And forbidden is it that ye swear by the diving arrows. This is an abomination. This day are those who disbelieve in despair of ever harming your religion; so fear them not, fear by hunger, not by will, to sin: for him. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful)<sup>5:3</sup>.

This Holy Verse and many other Hadith refer to the guardianship and the Imamate of Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH). The Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: "Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of their time, they die in a pre-Islamic state of ignorance". This

proves that through knowing the Imam and following him, beliefs are established. After this Hadith, does anyone can doubt the fact that Imamate is one of the Pillars of Islam?

*Anwar:* Surely, it is!

*Hasan:* Thank you.

*Anwar:* If someone denies that the Imamate is one of the Pillars of Islam, would this act be considered a violation of Islam?

*Hasan:* Most religious experts agree that this is a violation of the sect and the person has deviated from the sect, and few consider this a violation of Islamic codes.

*Anwar:* The Sunnites say that the Imamate is established through consultation (Shura). Is that correct?

*Hasan:* No, it is not. Imamate can only be established according to the Scripture (Al-Nas). If Shura were the basis for ruling, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) would have clearly declared it and explained its aspects; he could illustrate, for instance, the type of people who can participate in this consultation, the qualities of the

candidates as well as the quantity and the quality of the work they do. You know, Shura takes a long approach.

*Anwar:* All right. What do you have to tell us on 'the pledge of allegiance' (Bai'a)?

*Hasan:* Before we go into details of this issue, we need to know its meaning. According to Ibn Khaldun<sup>(1)</sup>, pledge is the loyalty to give full compliance, that is, people vow to their leader to commit themselves to him in regard to Muslims affairs and obey his orders; the pledge of allegiance or Bai'a is done through placing one's hand in the hand of the leader.

*Anwar:* Was this originated by Islam?

*Hasan:* No, it was a common tradition among the Arabs even before Islam, but it was supported and celebrated by Islam.

*Anwar:* Was the Prophet (PBUH) given the pledge of allegiance?

*Hasan:* Yes, the people of Medina made pledge before

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(1) Ibn khaldun (1332 – 1406 AD) was a Tunisian Muslim historiographer and historian who is often viewed as one of The fathers of modern historiography, sociology and economics.

the Hegira<sup>(1)</sup> and also after the Hegira by a tree; it was named 'the pledge of gratification' and mentioned in the Noble Quran:

(Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down peace of reassurance on them with a near victory)<sup>48;18</sup>.

*Anwar:* Is the pledge of allegiance specifically for men?

*Hasan:* No, women also vowed allegiance to the Prophet (PBUH) as it is evident in this Holy Verse:

(O Prophet! If believing women come unto thee, taking oath of allegiance unto thee that they will ascribe nothing as partner unto Allah, and will neither steal nor commit adultery nor kill their children, nor produce any lie that they have devised between their hands and feet, nor disobey thee in what is right, then accept their allegiance and ask Allah to forgive them. Lo! Allah is forgiving, Merciful)<sup>60;12</sup>.

*Anwar:* Does this mean the pledge of allegiance is the basis for ruling?

*Hasan:* No, there is no evidence to that.

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(1) Hegira also Hijrot or Hijra, is the migration or journey of the prophet (PBUH) and his followers from Mecca to Medina between June 21st and July 2nd in 622 AD.

*Anwar:* Then, how do you explain the pledge of allegiance given to the Prophet (PBUH)?

*Hasan:* The answer can put as the following:

- The pledge of allegiance that Muslims made to the Messenger (PBUH) was neither an inauguration nor recognition of his leadership. It was a commitment to obey him because he was sent by the Almighty Allah and he was already distinguished with leadership. So, they swore allegiance to emphasize their faith to his message.
- Pledge of Allegiance is a covenant between two people that demands commitment, loyalty and obedience to the person we are making this pledge to. Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) asserts this fact in this Hadith: "However, you owe me loyalty to the allegiance, sincerity when present and absent, responding when I call you and obeying when I command you".
- There are explicit Scripts on the prophethood of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and his leadership so much that the pledge of allegiance cannot stand a hinder before it.

*Anwar:* You look tired.

*Hasan:* Yes, let's carry on our discussion tomorrow.

## ***Symposium 46***

### **Is Imamate Established through Allegiance (Bai'a) or the Scripture (Al-Nas)?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi Hasan!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa BarakatoH! Allah grants you success for your commitment to acquire knowledge.

*Anwar:* Allah rewards you well for your generosity in providing us with this knowledge. Let's continue what we started last time, if you please.

*Hasan:* Yes, of course! We said that the pledge of allegiance that Muslims made to the Prophet (PBUH) was not a means for inauguration; rather it was a commitment to obey him and follow his commands.

This is what the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) gives emphasis to in this Hadith: "If you believe in me, swear allegiance to obey me, to say prayers and pay almsgiving Zakat, to push the enemy away from me and not escape from wars".

*Anwar:* So, can we conclude here that the allegiance made to Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) is beyond dispute?

*Hasan:* Yes, we can.

*Anwar:* Will you provide us with evidence to the fact that the Imamate is a Divine affair?

*Hasan:* Yes, there are words and incidents related to the Prophet (PBUH) that evidently prove the connection between the Imamate and the Almighty Allah, some of which are:

- When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) called for the Arab tribes to enter Islam, they started to come one after the other in groups. Bani Khamir was one of the tribes that met with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) during pilgrimage to Mecca (Al-Haj) and their chief said to the Prophet (PBUH): "You see that we vowed allegiance to you, as Allah showed you your enemies.

So, will we be in control after you?" The Prophet replied: "It is up to Allah as He chooses whoever He wills". I would like to focus on what the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said so you understand the point.

- The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) sent Salit Bin Amr Al-Ameri with a message to the king of Yamamah<sup>(1)</sup>, Hauzah bin Ali Al-hanafi, who was Christian, in order to call him to embrace Islam. Salit went before the king and handed over the message. The king welcomed Salit, read the message and wrote a message back to the Prophet (PBUH) that "what a great and beautiful thing you are calling for. I am a national poet and their orator; the Arabs fear my status, so give me some authority and I will follow you". Salit went back and read the message from the king of Yamamah, then the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: "I will not give him an abandoned land for that; may he perish, may what he has perish".
- The words of the Most Exalted Allah in the Noble Quran affirms what the Prophet (PBUH) did and said:

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(1) Yamamah: was a province southern to Najad. Now, it is located within Governorate of Alkharj in KSA.

(...Allah knoweth best with whom to place His message...)6:124.

As long as the Imamate is the same as the Prophethood in regard to purpose and role, it is unquestionably a Divine affair.

*Anwar:* It is quite clear now that the Imamate and leadership of the community cannot be subjected to election or nomination. It is a Divine position written in the Scripture by the Most Gracious Allah.

*Hasan:* Yes, very well.

*Anwar:* Is it true that the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) did not commit themselves to this Divine inauguration, as it were.

*Hasan:* The true thing is that they just did not commit themselves to inauguration of Imam Ali (PBUH) which is the only Divine inauguration done at the hands of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

*Anwar:* How is that?

*Hasan:* Do you know that Omar Bin Al-Khattab was inaugurated as a Caliph by Abu Bakr? Do you also know

that Othman was inaugurated as a Caliph by Omar? He chose him from a group of six!

*Anwar:* No, I did not know.

*Hasan:* Now, you know.

*Anwar:* So, they were nominated and inaugurated by one another. How do they say it was consultation (Shura)?

*Hasan:* Pay no attention to what they say.

*Anwar:* Anyway! Thank you very much indeed.

*Hasan:* Don't mention it. See you soon, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 47***

### **What are the Attributes and the Responsibilities of Imam?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam!

*Anwar:* Now, that we know what the Imamate is and how important it is, may I ask a few questions?

*Hasan:* Of course, I am here to answer your questions.

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot! Can I extract the characteristics and the roles of Imam from the Hadith you earlier mentioned from Imam Al-Riza (PBUH) in which he gave

a description about the Imamate?

*Hasan:* Yes, there are many attributes and responsibilities of Imam mentioned in his words which definitely shows how much people need the Imams.

*Anwar:* My dear Brother, Let's go back a little bit so that we become acquainted with the attributes of Imams (PBUT) and his responsibilities. This way we can also refute those tendentious people with undue claims to be Imam.

*Hasan:* Great suggestion. I can sum up the attributes of Imams (PBUT) as the following:

- Not to be unjust from birth to death.
- To be infallible from sins intentionally and unintentionally and purified from atrocity and enormity.
- To be the best and the most learned of his time.
- To be endowed with all perfection attributes and moral qualities.
- It is reported from Imam Al-Riza (PBUH) that:

"There is no man parallel to their status; they are

incomparable and unmatched. The Imams are favored by Allah; they do not grow their position; it is bestowed upon them by the Lord.”

He also said in this regard:

“Imams are the most learned, the most virtuous, the most righteous, the most generous, the wisest and the bravest. They are born circumcised and purified from sins and flaws; they can see from behind like they see before them”, as there are many other attributes.

*Anwar:* These are the attributes. Will you please mention their responsibilities?

*Hasan:* The roles and responsibilities that Imam Al-Riza (PBUH) referred to can be put as the following:

- The Imams (PBUT) complete Prayer (As-Salat), Fasting (As-Siam), Almsgiving (Az-Zakat), Pilgrimage to Mecca (Al-Haj) and Holy Wars (Al-Jihad).
- They provide aids and charities.
- They execute punishments and sentences.
- They prevent breaches and limitations.

- They permit the Halal and prohibit the Haram.
- They defend and protect the Shari'a of Allah.
- They establish the Divine justice, as they wisely and kindly call upon working for the sake of the Lord.

*Anwar:* I have one more question to ask here.

*Hasan:* Let's postpone your question for our next meeting, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 48***

### **What is the Imam's Source of Knowledge?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom, Akhi Hasan!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* We have previously talked about the attributes of Imams (PBUH) and their responsibilities. I think this is the right time to raise the second question which is as important as the one before. Why should the Imam be distinguished with these attributes and characteristics?

*Hasan:* This an excellent question and the answer to this question will definitely silence whoever claims to have the characteristics of Imam. It will also falsify the justifications to the mistakes done by the past caliphs. That is why we need to be aware of the reasons that

make the Imam distinguished with the characteristics we mentioned earlier:

- The purpose of Prophecy to fulfill the spirits and arrive at perfection, and so is the purpose of Imamate which is a natural continuation of Prophecy or Prophethood. Moreover, just as it is of necessity for the prophet to have the best characteristics among people, the same goes for the Imam.
- It is shameful to let anyone precede the Imam, that is, it is reasonably and lawfully shameful that someone would be better than and superior to the Imam, as they need to be the best of all in their time.
- If the Imam were not superior in his community, people would not follow him. This way, the Divine purpose, that is guiding people and preserving the religion, cannot be served.
- If the Imam were to do abominable acts, they could be subjected to harm and harassment and this is absolutely rejected as the Almighty Allah put it in the Noble Quran:

(And those who malign believing men and believing

women undeservedly, they bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin)<sup>33:58</sup>.

- If the Imam were of less rank and status or even if he were of the same status to other people, it would not be permissible for him to be favored. This concludes the fact that the Imam has to be superior to everyone.
- There is still more concrete evidence on the necessity of distinguishing the Imam over the subjects. However, what we mentioned is adequately satisfactory.

*Anwar:* God bless you. Your knowledge is so valuable.

*Hasan:* I am at the service of my brother Muslims.

*Anwar:* Now, it is time to raise the third question which is related to the knowledge of Imams (PBUT). It is actually one multifaceted question; what is the Imam's Source of Knowledge? Does the Imam know about the Divine secrets? What is the difference between the knowledge of Imams (PBUT) and our knowledge?

*Hasan:* Your questions are highly significant as all people need to be aware of such inquiries. That is why I am going to answer them one by one.

To answer the first question, we need to know that the Imams' (PBUT) source of knowledge is the Almighty Allah. At times, their knowledge comes from the Prophet (PBUH) himself and at other times from internal illumination and enlightenment and as well as from speaking to angels.

The Hadith from Imam Ali (PBUH) confirms this point: "The Messenger of Allah taught me a thousand doors each of which opens up to a thousand doors; that is a thousand by a thousand doors. Consequently, I have learned about what was and what is going to be till the Judgment Day. I learned about demise and affliction and sound judgment". If we consider this Hadith carefully, we will see the references to the first two ways of earning knowledge.

*Anwar:* But if I can interrupt, Akhi Hasan, I have got to ask a question before we move to the third way. What is the significance of 'thousand' here? Is it a reference to the actual number?

*Hasan:* No, it just refers to large quantities. This Holy Verse is an example:

(...though thou ask forgiveness for them seventy times Allah will not forgive them. That is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk)<sup>9:80</sup>.

*Anwar:* Very good, Sir.

*Hasan:* To move on now to the third source of knowledge, namely speaking to angels, I would like to start with a Hadith from Abu Al-Hasan Imam Ali (PBUH): “The Imams are truthful knowers and learned talkers”. This proves what we said.

There are other ways as it is reported from Al-Harith Bin Al-Maghirah that, “I asked Abu Abdullah (PBUH) to tell me about their knowledge; he said it was a legacy from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and from Ali (PBUH). I said we know it is casted upon your hearts and spelled into your ears. He replied this as well”. This involves a fourth way, which is ‘casting upon hearts and spelling into ears’. This will pretty much end the answer to your first question as well as our session for today.

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot. I will let you get some rest, but hopefully see you soon.

*Hasan:* Thank you. See you soon, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 49***

### **Does the Imam Know About the Divine Secrets?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* You answered my first question. Will you please provide me with an answer to my second question?

*Hasan:* You were asking if the Imam knows about the Divine secrets. At first, we need to explain what Divine secret is. As a matter of fact, it is all things that are hidden or unseen to us and other creatures, and the Most Exalted Allah is the Knower of all the things unseen. However, if the Almighty Allah wills, He bestows His knowledge upon a slave. This following Holy

Verse from the Noble Quran informs us about the Virtuous Al-Khizr<sup>(1)</sup> (PBUH) who was taught this Divine knowledge by the Almighty Allah:

(Then found they one of Our slaves, unto whom We had given mercy from Us, and had taught him knowledge from Our presence)<sup>18:65</sup>.

Thus, the Most Gracious Allah teaches His knowledge to whoever He wills to be carrying His message to people. Accordingly, the Imams (PBUT) knows as much as God sees fit to teach them.

*Anwar:* As far as we are talking about the knowledge of the Imams (PBUT), may I ask you to give us a Hadith in this regard?

*Hasan:* With all pleasure! Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) says: "The Almighty Allah is far wiser and more generous and more exalted and greater than He would send His chosen people and prevents them from the knowledge on their affairs". In another occasion, Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) says: "Whoever doubts that the Almighty Allah

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(1) Al-khizr or khidr, is a revered figure in Islam, whom the quran describes as a righteous servant of Allah, who possessed great wisdom or mystic knowledge. Shi'a stated, Al-khizr was called Al-khizr (green) because he set in an white land (sand) and it became green.

sends His chosen people without providing them with whatever they need, he is making a false accusation to God”.

*Anwar:* These two Hadith serve our subject well.

*Hasan:* Exactly! The Imams (PBUT) are our pure source for all kinds of knowledge.

*Anwar:* I have got another question. We have acquired knowledge and the Divine knowledge that is ‘casted by the Almighty Allah upon whoever heart He wills’ – so to speak. Is there any difference between these two types of knowledge?

*Hasan:* The answer is obvious. The first type can be earned by most of people, but the second one is bestowed by the Almighty Allah upon some chosen people only. I explained this earlier with this Holy Verse about the Virtuous Al-Khizr (PBUH) as an example: (Then found they one of Our slaves, unto whom We had given mercy from Us, and had taught him knowledge from Our presence)<sup>18;65</sup>. This does not take place unless the heart is purified and well refined so it shines with the heavenly light and becomes ready to

receive the Divine knowledge.

*Anwar:* One last question. Are the Imams (PBUT), such as Imam Ali (PBUH) and Imam Husain (PBUH), aware of our visits to their shrines and do they hear our words and know about intentions?

*Hasan:* Great question. My dear Brother, they are aware when we visit their shrines and they do hear what we say and know about intentions. I will explain this in a series of points:

- The Imams' (PBUT) sources of knowledge are diverse; the Almighty Allah is the main source. Their knowledge also comes from the Prophet (PBUH) and internal illumination and enlightenment. Speaking to angels is also a source. I think we have already talked about this if you still remember!

*Anwar:* I do remember, but I was referring to their knowledge after they pass away.

*Hasan:* All right. Now, let's move to the second point:

- The Imams (PBUT) are alive with their Lord as the Most Exalted Allah put it in the Noble Quran:

(Think not of those, who are slain in the way of Allah, as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision)<sup>3:169</sup>.

- The Imams (PBUT) are chosen by the Almighty Allah which consequently makes it indispensable for us to obey them whether they are alive or deceased, otherwise we are making a huge error which will distance us from the Most Gracious Allah.

The Hadith from Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH) confirms this fact: "Allah is far more exalted and more generous than He would impose obligation to obey a slave and prevents him from the knowledge of His heaven and earth; he would have never done that". It is obligatory for us to obey and follow Imam Ali (PBUH) and his purified offspring (PBUT) as they are aware of what we do and they will witness over our actions in the Judgment Day.

- Our deeds are presented before them so that they witness over them. This Holy Verse proves this fact:

(And say unto them: Act! Allah will behold your actions, and so will His Messenger and the

believers...)<sup>9;105</sup>.

The word 'believers' here refers to the Imams (PBUH). This following Hadith from Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) is also a proof in this regard: "Why do you sadden the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)? Don't you know that your actions will be presented before him? If he sees wrongdoings, he will be saddened. Thus, do not sadden him; please him".

- What is wrong with the fact that the Almighty Allah reveals to His Prophet (PBUH) and to his family – Ahl Al-Bait (PBUH) – certain knowledge about people who visits them, their names as well as their inner intentions? There is nothing with that as long as it is the Almighty Allah's Will. I am going to mention some Hadith that illustrate they are in connection with us and they are informed about us and our intentions.

First of all, Imam Ali (PBUH) demonstrates in this Hadith that the Most Exalted Allah passes them our regards: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said that I am informed when someone greets me from the earth and I hear whoever greets me at the grave". In another narration from Ibn Mas'oud, he reports from the

Messenger of Allah (PBUH) that “there are angels travelling on earth sent by the Glorious Allah that pass me my people’s greeting”.

Second of all, this Hadith from Imam Ja’far Bin Mohammad Al-Sadiq (PBUH) shows clear evidence to what we have just said: “Husain Bin Ali (PBUH) looks from above in heavens upon his visitors and he is aware of their circumstances, their names, their fathers’ names and their ranks and positions to the Most Exalted Allah even more than any of you is about his own child, as he sees he who sheds tears for him and asks forgiveness for them, and so do his ancestors (PBUT)...”.

Thus, the Imam (PBUH) sees and hears and asks for forgiveness because he is a living martyr before his Lord. He also knows about the inner intention of his visitors and not their outer actions otherwise he would not be able to decide if the visitors are honest or not.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed. You are obviously tired out!

*Hasan:* I am at your service. See you soon.

## ***Symposium 50***

### **Why Don't Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) Teach Their Knowledge to All of People?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* There are still two more questions remained from last time waiting for answers.

*Hasan:* Ask whatever comes to your mind.

*Anwar:* If Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) had a vast knowledge, why didn't they teach this knowledge to their companions or even mention it in front of them?

*Hasan:* The answer to this question can be condensed in two points:

First, they did favor some with this and kept it away from others due to disparity in their comprehension, as some can take their knowledge upon themselves and some others cannot because it could causes confusion and uncertainty into their faith.

That is why it is reported from Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) that he says: "By God if I would want to, I could tell every one of you about their intentions and all their affairs, but I am afraid they accuse me with infidelity and alter from the religion of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH); thus, I am only to utter it to people of distinction who can be trusted and whom are sent in truth and chosen among all. I speak nothing but the truth as I am entrusted with it: the way they die and the way they survive and everything else. There is nothing He has not spelled into my ear or uttered upon me".

This Hadith clearly states what we were talking about.

*Anwar:* Yes, it is very clear.

*Hasan:* The second point is that it is to avoid the weak-minded from going astray, which is, of course, against the purpose of the Mohammedan Message. This is the reason why he said: "I am afraid they accuse me with infidelity and alter from the religion of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)".

In this case, the Imam becomes the reason people turn away from the religion. So, because they cannot bear their knowledge, it is concealed from people although they miss the benefit they can obtain from it.

*Anwar:* As long as there is a difference between the Divine knowledge bestowed upon Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) and the normal human knowledge, can you thankfully clarify this point?

*Hasan:* Yes, thank you for raising this significant issue. However, before we discuss the difference between the two, I have got to talk about an equally important point.

The Divine knowledge is the most honorable knowledge of all due to the fact that it is concerned with the Almighty Allah, His qualities and deeds. Therefore, the person conversant with the Divine knowledge must be

superior to the one with the human knowledge.

Moreover, the Divine knowledge which is concerned with the spiritual aspect of mankind is definitely more important than the material or secular aspect; that is why it is higher than the human knowledge with respect to human needs, and consequently, religious experts are of higher status compared to materialistic experts.

There are also many Hadith that emphasizes the importance and superiority of experts in Divine knowledge, the fact that asserts the necessity for respecting and honoring these experts.

*Anwar:* Akhi Hasan, you have just brought up an essential issue argued about these days. Do we actually have to respect whoever dressed like clergymen, taking into consideration that there are people who have no idea about the religion and still put on clergy clothing?

*Hasan:* It is an apt inquiry, Akhi Anwar. We have to respect whoever behaves respectfully, but those people pretending or claiming to be something they are not do not deserve to be respected even though they are wearing clergy clothing.

However, we cannot simply accuse people before close examination so we first make sure in order not to disrespect clergymen or their outfits. This brings to my mind a wisdom said by a sage which is something to the effect that “if we see a man in turban steals, never say he is a turbaned thief but a thief wearing a turban”. I think enough is said.

*Anwar:* Yes, indeed you clearly made your point. All rewards you well.

*Hasan:* Now, we can go back in order to give an answer to the question you raised. The difference between the Divine knowledge bestowed upon Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) and the normal human knowledge can be put as the following:

- Human acquired knowledge needs to be taught and learned and people have different understanding comprehension which will definitely causes disagreement in many issues.
- There are also many unknown issues which are off the limits of human knowledge and consequently normal people cannot make decisions about them.

- The Divine knowledge is bestowed upon the Prophets (PBUT) and holy men, and so it cannot be refuted or opposed. It also cannot be taught or learned; it is the light that is casted upon the hearts of those the Almighty Allah chooses. That is why we do not see words like 'better', 'preferable' or 'probable' in their Hadith; we actually see the opposite.
- We see such a power and manifestation in the Divine knowledge that does not accept any reconsideration. This reconsideration has nothing to do with copying the celestial laws which is out of our subject.

*Anwar:* Wonderful! Well done, Sir. I think we can call it a day.

*Hasan:* Yes, thank you. See you.

## ***Symposium 51***

### **Is it Requisite to Obey and Love the Imams (PBUT)?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* Today I would like to ask about other issues related to Imamate.

*Hasan:* You are most welcome!

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot. Dear Sir, are we required to obey the Imams (PBUT)? If yes, why?

*Hasan:* Yes, we are to submit to the Lord's order in the Noble Quran:

(O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you)<sup>4:59</sup>.

This Holy Verse includes only those who are infallible, namely the Prophet (PBUH) and the Pure Imams (PBUT) whose purity and infallibility we proved earlier.

*Anwar:* If we admit that the Imams (PUBT) are ‘the holy trustees’ or ‘people in authority’ (Wali Al-Amr), why doesn’t anyone else share this with them?

*Hasan:* Because no one except them is infallible. The others accepted this fact, and the evidence to infallibility of the offspring of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), the Pure Imams (PBUT), has already been presented.

*Anwar:* Why was infallibility stated as a condition for a person in authority (Wali Al-Amr)?

*Hasan:* You tell me why!

*Anwar:* I can say if the person in authority were not infallible, there would be a possibility that they make mistakes and commit sins, a fact that might, as a result, cause the followers to go astray.

*Hasan:* Very good. Besides, the Almighty Allah can never link the obedience to Himself and His Messenger (PBUH) with sinful people in authority. That would definitely be an inconsistency.

*Anwar:* Very good. However, there are believers who are in power like Faqih or Mujtahid – religious experts or scholars – and they are not infallible. How about them?

*Hasan:* The religious scholars (Faqih), as a matter of fact, follow the infallible Imams (PBUT), and so obeying them is part of obeying the infallible (PBUT), not to mention that they are appointed by the infallible (PBUH) and that they utter nothing but their words. Besides, ‘the people in authority’ – of course, only the infallible (PBUT) – have the right to order and rule, and the Faqih practice this right as successors of the infallible (PBUT) and we must obey them as well.

*Anwar:* In view of this, are we obliged to love the Imams (PBUT) in the same degree that we obey them? In other words, are we sinful if we neither love them nor hate them?

*Hasan:* Before we pass a judgment the affectionate or

the hateful, we need to clarify one thing. The Most Exalted Allah never prescribes or imposes affectionate for someone aimlessly; there must be a purpose to that. If we contemplate the following Holy Verse from the Noble Quran,

(Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives)<sup>42:23</sup>.

We find out that the Most Gracious Allah set only affection towards the kinfolds and Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a reward for the message he spread and the difficulties he has been through.

Moreover, this affection and love is associated with the Almighty Allah Himself, i.e we love only those loved by the Glorious Allah and resent only those resented by the Glorious Allah. That is why the love and affection has become part of our faith as the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) put it: "The affection of a believer to another believer is the greatest form of faith, as whoever loves for the sake of Allah, resents for the sake of Allah, gives for the sake of Allah and bans for the sake of Allah is of the chosen by Allah".

This Hadith clearly shows that the love for those loved by the Allah entails faith and vice versa.

*Anwar:* Would you please give more Hadith in this regard?

*Hasan:* There are many Hadith regarding the love and resent:

The Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) once asked his companions "What bond of faith is the strongest?" Some said "Allah and His Messenger know better" and some others suggested "Saying prayers, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca and holy wars". The Prophet (PBUH) said "All you mentioned have their own merits, but the strongest bond of faith is to love for the sake of Allah, to resent for the sake of Allah, to follow the people in authority and to renounce the enemies of Allah".

It is reported that Jesus Christ (PBUH) said "seek the affection of the Lord through detesting the wrongdoers, seek the favor of the Lord through avoiding them and seek the grace of the Lord through resenting them".

Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) also says in this regard “whoever does not love for the sake of religion and does not resent for the sake of religion has no religion”.

There are many other Hadith, but this would be good enough.

*Anwar:* Allah rewards you well, Akhi!

*Hasan:* We need a break now.

*Anwar:* As you wish. See you.

## ***Symposium 52***

### **Why Is ‘Loving The Imams (PBUT)’ Requisite?**

*Anwar:* Salam ‘Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* Now that we illustrated the fact that the love of the believers is a form of worship and devotions to the Almighty Allah, would you please clarify how ‘the Affection Verse’ refers to Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT)?

*Hasan:* With all pleasure, Sir! To explain this point, I have to shed light on some issues:

- The Glorious Allah, from His Eternal knowledge, knows about these holy entities that act according to the Lord’s will and that have the capacities and qualities to be chosen. The Almighty Allah exalted and elevated

them and approved them through the Holy Spirit. Thus, because they have all the qualities and because they have been chosen to carry the message and be the role model for the people, we are ordered to follow them, to obey them and to ladle from their pure spring.

- The Status of these holy entities is incomparable.
- They have tasks other than those known to people, some of which are:

The Imams (PBUT) are witnessing over people in view of the fact that they have comprehensive knowledge and awareness over the deeds, words and intentions. The following Hadith reported shows that our deeds and action are looked into by the Almighty Allah, His Messenger (PBUH) and the believers:

Abu Ja'far Al-Baqir reported from Abu Abdullah Al-Sadiq (PBUT) that "we are the medium (just) nation and we are the Lord's witnesses over people".

Al-Haskani in "The Evidence to Revelation" reports from Salim Al-Hilali that Imam Ali (PBUH) said: "We are whom Allah mentioned us as (We have made you a medium (just) nation)".

Regarding this same Holy Verse, Al-'Aiyashi reports from Abi 'Omair Az-Zobairi that Abu Abdullah (PBUT) said: "Don't you think that whose testimony over a measure of dates is not accepted in this world may never be asked by Allah for testimony in the Day of Resurrection? Will He accept this testimony in the presence of all past nations? No! Allah never meant such people".

We have to keep in mind that they are the route and the guide to the Almighty Allah as they are acting on the behalf of the Prophet (PBUH), and so knowing the Imams (PBUT) is similar to knowing the Messenger of Allah (PBUH); otherwise people will be lost and confused. Here is the evidence to this:

Abu Ja'far Imam Mohammad Al-Baqir (PBUH) says: "Whoever exhausts himself with devotions to Allah without following the guide to Allah, none of his efforts are accepted, as he is lost and confused and Allah is ashamed from his deeds".

Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) also says: "If the Most Gracious Allah wills, He could inform Himself to his slaves, but He positioned us as path and route and

means to Him; and whoever turns aside from us and favors other than us, they are deviating from the right path (As-Sirat)".

In addition to that, they provide safety and protection to the people of earth; this is in the sense that guidance is only attained through them and grasping at other than them will only lead to destruction and deviation.

The Hadith from the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) reported by Ahmad Bin Hanbal asserts this fact: "Stars provide safety for the people of the heaven and my kinfolk provide safety for the people of earth; if my kinfolk go, the people of earth go as well".

Now that we are aware of the status and the role of the Imams (PBUT) in this life and the next life, isn't it obvious why we need to obey them and love them?

*Anwar:* No need for any more inquiries. It is as clear as the sun in the midst of the sky.

*Hasan:* Thanks to Allah Who drove away the clouds of doubts covering the truth.

*Anwar:* All thanks to the Glorious Allah at all times.

*Hasan:* Let's take a break now.

*Anwar:* You have done so great, and now, we do need a small break.

## ***Symposium 53***

### **More on Affection**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* As long as we are talking about affection, will you please tell me more so it would charge my heart with their love?

*Hasan:* Of course! I will restrict myself to some Divine Hadith reported from Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) and others:

- Mohammad Bin Moslim said I heard Abu Abdullah Al-Sadiq (PBUH) saying: "A man might resent his own child, so the Most Exalted Allah insist on enjoining our love; people can take it or leave it, yet it is a duty as He

put it: (Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives)<sup>42;23</sup>". Abu Ja'far Al-Baqir (PBUH) also commented on this Holy Verse: "By God, it is a Divine duty on His slaves for the sake of Mohammad (PBUH) over his near relatives".

- Al-Tabrasi – God bless his soul – reports that Al-Hasan Bin Ali (PBUT) delivered a speech to the people in which he said: "I am from the Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) whose affection was enjoined by Allah on every Muslim, as He said: (Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives)".
- Al-Allamah Al-Tabrasi<sup>(1)</sup> – God bless his soul – writes in his book 'Kashf Al-Haq' (Discovering the Truth): "It is reported in the Sahihain, in Ahmad Bin Hanbal's Mosnad and in Tafsir Al-Tha'labi that Bin Abbas said: when the Holy Verse (Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was asked who the near relatives were, he said: Ali, Fatimah and her two sons, while to love them is to obey them".

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(1) Ayatullah Ash-Sheikh Fazal bin Hassan bin Fazal At-Tabrasi (460- 550 H) known as Amin Al-Islam was born in the holy city of Mash'had. Wrote a number of books, some of which are: Majma-ul-Bayan fee Tafseeril Quran, Uddatus-Safar...

*Anwar:* Very good. Allah rewards you well. I have another question, please. We have learned that it is requisite to love the Imams (PBUT), but does that mean that resenting them expel the resentful out of the faith?

*Hasan:* Good question. This is how I put the answer:

- It is unanimous among Muslims that disregarding the duties commanded by the Almighty Allah relating to the Pillars of Islam entails infidelity.
- Resenting Imam Ali (PBUH) and his offspring, the infallible Imams (PBUT) entails hypocrisy as the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) put it addressing Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH): "Only the believers love you and only the hypocrites resent you". Thus, we should know that the hypocrites have no faith and they are in the lower parts of Fire.
- Imam Ali (PBUH) is very identical to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as we read in the supplication (Mobahala) Verse:

(...and our near people and your near people...)3:61.

He is the flesh and blood of the Messenger of Allah

(PBUH) and whoever resents him has resented the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and whoever resents the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has, in fact, resented the Glorious Allah. Consequently, whoever resents the Glorious Allah and the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) is an infidel. What is more is that whoever likes a person resenting the Almighty Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) also is not a believer as the Most Gracious says in the Noble Quran:

(You shall not find a people who believe in Allah and the latter day befriending those who act in opposition to Allah and His Apostle...)58:22.

There are a lot more evidence in this regard, but I think this would be enough.

*Anwar:* Allah rewards you well.

*Hasan:* Thank you very much.

## ***Symposium 54***

### **Is Imamate Established through the Scripture or Election?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakato!

*Anwar:* As long as we are talking about the Imamate, I am preoccupied with some issues in this regard and I would like to raise some questions.

*Hasan:* Please, go ahead.

*Anwar:* First of all, is Imamate established through the Scripture or election?

*Hasan:* This is a very old yet very significant question.

Dear Sir, you know that Prophecy or the Prophethood is a Divine position, that is, a prophet is assigned by the Almighty Allah and not an individual or a group of people. Now, the Imamate is exactly the same; it is the natural extension of Prophethood by all means except for the Divine revelation. As long as the fact that the Imamate (Imamah) serves the same purpose as the Prophecy (Nobowa), it should exclusively be given the Glorious Allah.

*Anwar:* Why is it that you are insisting that it has to be exclusively from the Glorious Allah?

*Hasan:* I am not talking out of stubbornness or desire. It a reasonable conclusion that I can expand on:

- We have already agreed that the Imam has to be infallible and the best of his time in every single dimension.
- Infallibility is a concealed matter known only by the Almighty Allah.
- Thus, the Imamate has to be from the Almighty Allah

Who has comprehensive knowledge of all matters, including whether the person is infallible or not.

Here I have to remind you that infallibility is essential in the Imam because it is a very serious and immense position. As we discussed earlier, the fallibility in the Imam will cause a lot of complications and problems; the Imam cannot make mistakes and be a role model for the people at one and the same time. More importantly, the Imam must be disobeyed, but it will be contradictory when the Imam makes mistakes, because this will result in people making mistakes as well. This is far above the Divine Justice as we know.

*Anwar:* Very good. This was very heartwarming. The Divine inauguration is definitely essential.

*Hasan:* In addition to that, it is also commanded by the Prophet (PBUH) who speaks not as he pleases.

*Anwar:* Will you please explain what you have just said?

*Hasan:* What I am saying is that the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is the most compassionate person among all towards his people, that is why he was very concerned about the future, the endurance and the

survival of this nation, and so he had to appoint a person capable of leading the Muslim community to perfection and continuing what the Prophet (PBUH) started.

*Anwar:* It is quite obvious now that the Imamate cannot be established through election.

*Hasan:* Very good. You got the idea quite fast.

*Anwar:* Thanks God. Now, what is the proof that the Imamate is restricted to Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH)?

*Hasan:* We believe that the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) commanded that Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) succeed him at the Ghadir Day, at the day of warning the tribe, at the day the Prophet (PBUH) left him in Medina and at the day he gave his ring for charity.

*Anwar:* Will you please expand on each of these incidents?

*Hasan:* Of course! The first evidence to appointing Imam Ali (PBUH) by the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) is the day when the Most Exalted Allah commanded His Messenger (PBUH):

(And warn your nearest relations)<sup>26:214</sup>.

So, the Prophet (PBUH) gathered his tribe of near kindred, fed them and lastly asked them if any of them is willing to be his minister, trustee and successor after him. Everybody refrained except for Ali (PBUH), so the Prophet (PBUH) said: "This is my brother, trustee and successor after me; listen to him and obey him".

The second case was when the Prophet (PBUH) left him in Medina to go for Tabouk conquest. So, Ali (PBUH) wondered why the Prophet (PBUH) left him behind with women and children; the Prophet (PBUH) replied: "You are of the same status to me as Aaron to Moses except there is no prophet after me". You know better that Aaron was the successor of Moses (PBUH).

The third evidence is related to the well-known Ghadir Day and the speech the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) gave in which he said: "Whoever I am his master, then this is Ali his master. O Lord! Support whoever supports him, show enmity towards whoever shows enmity towards him and, let triumph whoever stands up for him, forsake whoever forsakes him and let the truth follow him wherever he turns".

The fourth incident was when this Holy Verse was revealed:

(Only Allah is your Vali and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow)<sup>5:55</sup>.

The expositors mentioned that this Holy Verse was revealed because Ali (PBUH) gave his ring for charity to a poor man who later told the Prophet (PBUH) about it, the fact that made the Prophet (PBUH) exclaim 'God is Great' (Allah-o-Akbar).

There are many other incidents refer to Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) as the Imam and the successor of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and you can do your own research if you like to expand on this matter.

*Anwar:* What you presented was quite enough.

*Hasan:* Excellent. Let's take a rest.

## ***Symposium 55***

### **The Evidence to Imamate of Ali Bin Abi Talib and His offspring (PBUT)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* I cannot really take a rest until I get answers for all my questions.

*Hasan:* Please, ask whatever you wish.

*Anwar:* All you mentioned so far is absolutely accurate, yet there is one significant question here. Even if we admit that Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) is the Imam and the successor of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), how can

we possibly concede the Imamate to his offspring?

*Hasan:* Dear Akhi Anwar, this is actually an essential and a very significant question, and I will try to put the ideas in some plain words:

- There are twelve Imams (PBUT) after the Prophet (PBUH); this is mentioned in the Hadith.
- It is reported from the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) that he mentioned the exclusive characteristics of the Imams (PBUT): “Of his secrets are to live the life I had, to die the death I had, to enter the Paradise I am promised by my Lord to enter, to hold on to the rod placed by my Lord in his hand, so Ali Bin Abi Talib (PBUH) be in charge and his trustees after him; they never let you go astray as they never let you off the right path. Do not teach them as they know far more than you do”.
- The Prophet (PBUH) also said: “I am the Messenger of Allah to all people, but there will be Imams after me upon people by Allah and from my near relatives (Ahl Al-Bait); they watch over people, yet they are accused of lying and oppressed by the leaders of infidelity and

deviation and by their followers”.

- Al-Thaqalain Hadith.

*Anwar:* Do you mind mentioning the names of Imams just for records?

*Hasan:* Of course, I will not only mention their names but also their dates of birth and decease.

- Amir Al-Mu'minin (The commander of the Faithful) Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Abi Talib (Al-Mortaza), born in 23 BH and martyred in 40 AH.
- Abu Mohammad Al-Hasan Bin Ali (Al-Zaki), (2-50)
- Abu Abdullah Al-Husain Bin Ali (Saiyed Al-Shohada), (3-61)
- Abu Mohammad Ali Bin Al-Husain (Zain Al-Abidin), (38-95)
- Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Ali (Al-Baqir), (57-114)
- Abu Abdullah Ja'far Bin Mohammad (Al-Sadiq), (83-148)
- Abu Ibrahim, Mosa Bin Ja'far (Al-Kadim), (128-182)

- Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Mosa (Al-Riza), (148-203)
- Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Ali (Al-Jawad), (195-220)
- Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Mohammad (Al-Hadi), (212-254)
- Abu Mohammad Al-Hasan Bin Ali (Al-Askari), (232-260)
- Abu Al-Qasim Bin Al-Hasan (Al-Mahdi), (256- )

Known also as Al-Hojja (God's Proof) – Allah hasten his revelation and ease his exit, he is concealed from people's sight and he will one day be revealed again in order to fill the earth with equity and justice after it is filled with inequity and injustice.

*Anwar:* I cannot thank you enough. I will leave my questions about the twelfth Imam, Al-Mahdi (AHHR), for next time.

*Hasan:* Thank you, Anwar. We will discuss that later, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 56***

### **Is it Requisite to Believe in the Existence of Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR)?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam, my dear Brother!

*Anwar:* We agreed to discuss the issues related to the twelfth Imam, Al-Mahdi (AHHR). I will begin with my first question. Is it requisite to believe in his existence?

*Hasan:* Yes, it is requisite and essential too, and not believing in his existence (AHHR) means not believing in Imamate and the Imams (PBUT). The faith in his existence (AHHR) comes from the fact that there must be an infallible Imam in any period of time,

consequently we believe in his existence (AHHR) in all times including ours.

*Anwar:* Will you please explain this a bit more?

*Hasan:* Of course. If there were not an Imam on earth, this would cancel the purpose which the Prophet (PBUH) came for in the first place, namely guiding people onto the right path. In addition to that, the earth will be lacking God's Proof to debate people through; this way the earth would sink with the people on it, especially after we learned about the concealed roles and responsibilities of the Imams (PBUT).

*Anwar:* Please, elaborate more!

*Hasan:* Due to the fact that the Imam is God's witness, it is required for him to exist in order to be able to witness on people in the Judgment Day. It is also required for the Imam to exist because he provides safety and protection for the people of earth and he is a means with which people can approach the Most Gracious Allah through his guidance and leadership and people's obedience to him.

*Anwar:* Excellent!

*Hasan:* I would also like to add that the existence of the Imam and his being is a fact taken for granted by most of the Muslims due to what is reported from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and the Pure offspring (PBUT): “Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his time, he dies in a state of ignorance”.

It is also reported from Om Salamah that the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: “When I was carried to the heaven, I looked and it was written on the Throne: ‘There is no God but Allah, Mohammad is the Messenger of Allah, I supported him through Ali and I grant him victory through Ali’, as I saw the lights of Ali, Fatimah, Al-Hasan, Al-Husain, and the lights of Ali Bin Al-Husain, Mohammad Bin Ali, Ja’far Bin Ali, Mosa Bin Ja’far, Ali Bin Mosa, Mohammad Bin Ali, Ali Bin Mohammad, Al-Hasan Bin Ali, and I saw the light of Al-Hojja shining among them as if it were a glittering star. So, I asked my Lord what it was. I was told ‘O Mohammad! These are the lights of Ali, Fatimah, and your grandsons’ lights Al-Hasan and Al-Husain, and these are the lights of the Imams after you, the purified and infallible offspring of Al-Husain, as this is the light of Al-Hojja who will fill the earth with equity

and justice'".

There are more Hadith in regard to his existence and his being amidst us.

*Anwar:* Now that you answered the first question, let me please ask you my second question. Is Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) the son of Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (PBUH) or is he going to be born later?

*Hasan:* We have just been discussing the importance of his existence and his being among us as we also learned earlier that he was born in the year 256 AH and that he is still alive. To answer the first part of your question on whether Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) the son of Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (PBUH), I have to say:

- There are Hadith on his personal life referring to the fact that he is the twelfth Imam and the ninth among the offspring of Imam Husain (PBUH) and that the earth cannot be existing without him as God's Proof. All is evidence that he is the son of Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (PBUH).
- Recurrence of reports on his birth and his conceal in addition to the fact that Imamate never stops or shifts

to another period of time is further evidence that he is the son of Imam Al-Askari (PBUH) and no one else.

- The occurrence of 'the Minor Conceal' and the Ambassadors taking the place of the Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) for seventy years cannot be falsified for many considerations.
- The infallible Imam Al-Askari (PBUH) had informed his companions about his birth as they had also seen him later.
- Many religious scholars and virtuous people have seen him during his 'Major Conceal'; this does not only proves his birth but also his existence to this day.

There is also other evidence referring to this fact.

*Anwar:* If the Imam exists, why doesn't he reveal himself in order to undertake his responsibilities?

*Hasan:* The Imam (AHHR) is concealed; he is on a place on earth. This is for the greater good of Islam. Do you still suspect his existence despite all the evidence presented?

*Anwar:* No. This is a question that may come to the

mind of every single person and I wanted to know the answer.

*Hasan:* Dear Sir, before I illustrate why the Imam does not reveal himself, let me clarify what 'the Conceal' is.

*Anwar:* Excellent. I am very eager to know.

*Hasan:* Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) has had two Conceals: 'the Minor Conceal' and 'the Major Conceal'. The minor Conceal took place between the years 260 AH to 329 AH – that's almost seventy years). The major Conceal started in the year 329 AH and it will continue until that pursued day. This Conceal was reported in the Hadith from Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and his purified offspring (PBUT).

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Al-Mahdi is one of my offspring; he will be concealed and confusion will lead the nations astray. He is to come with the Holy relic of the Prophets so he will fill the earth with equity and justice after it is filled with inequity and injustice".

The Prophet (PBUH) also said: "Blessed be who comes to know the Qa'em (the Revealed) from my Ahl Al-Bait

(PBUT) , who considers him his Imam before his revelation, who follows the practices of his people in charge and who renounces his enemies; such a person is among my companions, my close people and the noblest in the Judgment Day”.

Amir Al-Mu’menin (PBUH) said: “The Qa’em has a Conceal that will last long. During his Conceal, his followers will wander about like livestock, hopelessly searching for pastures. However, duration of the Conceal of Imam will not harden the heart of who clings to his religion, as he will be of my status in the Judgment Day”.

Imam Hasan (PBUH) said: “The ninth of the children of my brother, Al-Husain, is revealed after a long concealed life in a form of a young man under the age of forty; this is to be aware that Allah is capable of all things”.

Imam Husain (PBUH) said: “The Qa’em of this nation is the ninth child among my offspring; he is the one concealed as he is the one dividing his inheritance while he is still alive”.

There is also another Hadith confirming 'the two Conceals' reported from Al-Mofazzal that Imam AL-Sadiq (PBUH) said: "The person in charge of this matter has two Conceals, one is longer than the other".

All of the above Hadith and more confirm that Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) is the son of Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (PBUH) and is connected in line of ancestors to Imam Husain (PBUH). The Hadith also refers to his long life, his conceal and his revelation.

*Anwar:* After this wonderful discussion, I think we would better stop here.

*Hasan:* Of course. See you tomorrow, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 57***

### **The Details of the Two Conceals (Al-Ghaibah)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakato!

*Anwar:* Last time, we talked about 'the Minor Conceal' and 'the Major Conceal', but will you consider some details in this regard?

*Hasan:* We agreed to talk in brief and leave the details for later, but I think I can mention some of the crucial details here.

Let's start with the prayer Imam Al-Hojja (PBUH) said over his deceased father which is crystal clear reference

that the Imam (AHHR) is a living person and that he did his responsibility, namely saying prayer over the previous deceased Imam.

This proves that he is the next Imam and he must be obeyed. As a matter of fact, Imam Al-Mahdi (PBUH) stood up to deviation and allegation of his uncle, Ja'far Bin Ali, and began his guidance and direction to his supporters and followers.

His Minor Conceal started in the year 260 AH when the ruling regime went after the Imam (AHHR). During his Conceal, he was contacting his Ambassadors whom he placed as his agents. The Major Conceal started with the death of the fourth and the last Ambassador. There are more details in this regard, but this serves the purpose.

*Anwar:* Now that we know the Imam (AHHR) is in his Major Conceal, I would like to ask about the reasons for the Conceal.

*Hasan:* I clarified that the ruling regime at the time was in pursuit of Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) in order to kill him. This is the main reason. I will briefly mention the other reasons:

- The Imam (AHHR) was concealed because he was afraid he was going to be killed; it is reported from Abu Abdullah (PBUH) that Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: "The lad has to be concealed". When he was asked why, he replied: "He fears to be killed".
- Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) was concealed so he would not be having anyone's pledge of allegiance (Bai'a) as it is reported from Abu Abdullah (PBUH): "The birth of the person in charge of this matter will be concealed from people so he would not be having anyone's pledge of allegiance when he is revealed".

*Anwar:* You said he was afraid! Does the Infallible Imam become afraid?

*Hasan:* When I say he was afraid, this does not mean he was a coward or afraid of dying; such a low quality cannot come from such a perfect person. The point here is that his death would cause corruption and evil in earth and among the people which is against the purpose of his existence and being in the first place.

*Anwar:* Very good explanation. May I ask another question?

*Hasan:* Of course. Ask whatever you like.

*Anwar:* I know now the reason behind his Conceal, but what are the benefits of his Conceal?

*Hasan:* The benefits are numerous like the benefits of the sun covered and concealed by the clouds.

This is what Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) stated: "Since the creation of Adam, the earth has never been devoid of a God's Proof, either apparent or concealed, and the earth will never be devoid of a God's Proof, otherwise Allah would not be worshipped." Sulaiman said I asked Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) how people would get benefit from God's concealed Proof. He said: "The same way they get benefit from the sun concealed by the clouds".

We can put the benefit of the Conceal as the following:

- The Conceal meant to test the people as it was reported by Imam Mosa Bin Ja'far (PBUH): "If the fifth son of the seventh Imam is absented, I swear you by Allah to stick to your religion and let no one separate you from it. O my son! The person in charge of this matter has to be concealed until he is revealed again. It

is indeed an ordeal from Allah to test mankind”.

- Existence of the Imam is a grace in itself, because he is the viceroy or Khalif placed by the Most Gracious Allah on earth:

(...I am going to place in the earth a Khalif...)2;30.

- He is one of the hidden reasons for the whole existence as it is reported: “Through us, Allah holds up the heaven from falling on the earth, save His will; through us, He holds the earth from shaking with its inhabitants; through us, He brings down rain, spreads mercy and brings out the blessings of the earth; without what is on the earth because of us, it would sink with its inhabitants”.

- One of his four Ambassadors, Mohammad Bin Othman, reports from the Imam (AHHR) that “I am providing protection for the people of the earth akin to the stars providing protection for the people of the heaven”.

- He is in charge of people’s internal and external direction.

- He is considered to be one of the means people's needs is answered through supplication (Do'a) and intercession (Shafa'a) for the believers.
- He preserved and defended the believers as Sheikh Al-Mofid – God bless his soul – reports from the Imam (AHHR): "We are neither inattentive in taking care of you, nor forgetful to mentioning you; otherwise, you would be in adversity devastated by the enemies".

There are many other benefits, but I have to point out that offering all these benefits does not necessarily require his revelation as he is similar to the Unknown Soldier. What is said in the Noble Quran about the Virtuous Al-Khizr (PBUH) emphasizes this fact; he did three things with three benefits without knowing.

*Anwar:* Very true. He helped the parents by killing the child, he was of service to the people on the ship without their knowledge and he built the wall for the orphans.

*Hasan:* Well said.

*Anwar:* Now, I would like to ask about his presence and attendance when it is required for the best.

*Hasan:* It is frequently reported that he attends the pilgrimage to Mecca (Al-Haj) and the graves of his ancestors as well as the grave of his grandfather, Imam Husain (PBUH); he answers whoever calls for help and contact the virtuous people and the religious scholars according to what is best.

This is also emphasized through what Zararah reported from Abu Abdulla (PBUH): "People miss their Imam, so he attends the pilgrimage; he sees them but they do not see him".

Sheikh Al-Tousi<sup>(1)</sup> in his book 'Al-Ghaibah' (The Conceal) reports from the second Ambassador, Mohammad Bin Othman Al-Omari that "By God, the person in charge of this matter is present the pilgrimage every year; he sees people and knows them and they see him but they do not know him".

There are several other proofs confirming his presence as well as his communication with the believers.

*Anwar:* Very good. I would like to ask something.

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(1) Nasir al-Tusi Outstanding Persian philosopher, scientist, and mathematician. Educated first in Tūs, where his father was a jurist in the Twelfth Imam school, the main sect of. He made important contributions to astronomy and wrote many commentaries on Greek texts.

Although I already have some answers in mind, there is no harm to raise this question. Ok. How could the Imam (AHHR) possibly live this long?

*Hasan:* What is the answer you have?

*Anwar:* I have few ideas.

- We believe in miracles and so the fact that the Imam (AHHR) can be a miracle for the greater good. This is what Imam Zain Al-Abidin (PBUH) told us about: "It is a tradition of Noah that the Qa'em has; it is longevity".
- Longevity was not limited to the Imam (AHHR). As a matter of fact, the Prophets Noah and Shu'aib (PBUT), the Virtuous Al-Khizr (PBUH) and others had also long lives.
- Science proved the possibility of human beings enjoying a long life if they can stay healthy. That is how much I know.

*Hasan:* Very good. This is quite enough to back up your belief. I would not be adding any more.

*Anwar:* You look very exhausted. Would you like to stop?

*Hasan:* Yes, thank you. See you tomorrow, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 58***

### **Our Role During the Conceal**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakato!

*Anwar:* Going back to our discussion on Imam Al-Mahdi (PBUH), I would like to inquire about our role during the Conceal of the Imam (AHHR).

*Hasan:* Our main role is waiting for the Revelation (Al-Faraj). These following Hadith confirm this matter:

- In Yanabi' Al-Mawaddah, it is reported from Manaqib Al-Khawarizmi, from Abu Ja'far, from his father, from his grandfather, from Amir Al-Mu'menin who reported

from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) that “the best form of worship is waiting for the Revelation”.

- In Al-Ihtijaj, it is reported from Abu Hamzah Al-Thimali, from Khalid Al-Kaboli who reported from Ali Bin Al-Husain (PBUH) that “the Conceal of the twelfth trustee of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) will be lengthened. O Abu Khalid! The people at the time of his Conceal who wait for his Revelation are the best people of all times, because the Most Exalted Allah bestowed them such knowledge and understanding that it were as if they witnessed the Conceal and so they were given the same status of Muslim warriors (Mojahidin) with swords together with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH); those are the sincere people, the true followers and the heralds for the religion of Allah in secret and in public. Waiting for the Revelation is the greatest happiness”.

- It is reported, in Khisal Al-Arba’mi’a, from Amir Al-Mu’menin (PBUH) that “wait for the Revelation and do not lose hope for the Spirit of Allah, as the best practice to the Most Gracious Allah is waiting for the Revelation”.

- It is reported, in Mahasin Al-Boroqi, from Abu Abdullah (PBUH) that “whoever dies waiting for him, it is as if he is in the canopy of the Qa’em”.

*Anwar:* These delightful Hadith show how greatly waiting people are rewarded.

*Hasan:* There are also other Hadith that clarify how great it is to worship and work in an oppressive and unjust country than in fair and just countries due to the fear the believers have.

Ikmal Al-Din reports from Ammar Al-Sabati that “I asked Abu Abdullah (PBUH): ‘Which one is greater, devotions at the time of the Concealed Imam in secret in an unjust state or devotions at the time of the Revealed rightful Imam?’

He replied: ‘O Ammar! By God, almsgiving in secret is far better than almsgiving in public, and so are devotions at the time of the Concealed Imam in an unjust state when living in fear than devotions at the time of the Revealed rightful Imam in public when feeling secure.

Bear in mind that if you say obligatory prayer on time

in secret fearing your enemies, the Almighty Allah considers twenty five obligatory prayers for you; if you say supererogatory prayer on time, the Almighty Allah considers ten supererogatory prayers for you; if you do one good deed, the Most Exalted Allah considers twenty good deeds for you instead.

The Almighty Allah multiplies the believers' good deeds when they follow the religion of the Glorious Allah and his Imam in secret (Taqiyeh). Allah is indeed the Most Gracious.'

I said: 'I give my life for you. You encouraged me to devote myself, but I would like to know how we have become of better devotions than those at the time of the Revealed rightful Imam in a rightful state when we both follow the same religion, the religion of the Most Exalted Allah?'

He replied: 'You preceded them in embracing the religion of Allah and in saying prayers, fasting, pilgrimage and all other good deeds as wells as in devotions without the knowledge of your enemies.

You are following the Concealed Imam patiently and

waiting for the rightful state; you fear your life from the unjust kings yet you look forwards for your Imam. You are prohibited to follow him and forced to live in patience, yet you are worshipping your God and obeying Him when fearing your enemy. That is why Allah rewards you with multiplying your deeds; how luck you are.'

I said: 'I give my life for you. Why would we then wish to be among the companions of the Imam Al-Qa'em (PBUH) when we are of better devotions and deeds in your presence and under your Imamate than in the rightful state?

He replied: 'Glory to Allah! Don't you want the Most Gracious Allah to reveal the right and just in the land, to improve the condition of the people, to unify people so they live in peace together away from any disobedience to Allah, to establish justice among all creatures so no rights would be veiled out of fear from no one? By God, if you live this way, you are going to be given preference by the Most Exalted Allah over many of those witnessed Badr and Ohod; this is my good news to you.'"

*Anwar:* Does that mean that we wish to see the Revelation so we do not lose the rewards we are given during the Concdeal?

*Hasan:* Not at all. Focus on the reply Imam (PBUH) gave him: "Glory to Allah! Don't you want the Most Gracious Allah to reveal the right and just in the land..."

*Anwar:* It is crystal clear.

*Hasan:* There are also Holy Verses supporting waiting and anticipation for the Revelation of the Imam (AHHR):

- The book Ikmal Al-Din reports from Mohammad Bin Al-Fazeel that he asked Imam Al-Riza (PBUH) about the Revelation, so he said: "Doesn't waiting for the Revelation bring relief? The Almighty Allah says: (...wait then, I too with you will be of those who wait)"<sup>7;71</sup>.
- IKamal Al-Din reports from Imam Al-Riza (PBUH): "How great is patience and waiting for the Revelation. Haven't you heard the words of the Almighty Allah: (...and watch, surely I too am watching with you)<sup>11;93</sup>. and (...wait then, I too with you will be of those who wait)<sup>7;71</sup>? Thus, you should be patient as he brings

relief to the desperate and those prior to you were more patient that you are”.

There is also a Hadith that refers to the reward given to those waiting; in ‘Al-Ghaibah” (The Conceal), Sheikh Al-Tousi reports from Abu Abdullah (PBUH), from Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) that “There will come people after you whose deeds will be rewarded fifty times more than you’. They said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! We were in your company in Badr, Ohod and Honain, and Holy Verses from Quran were revealed about us.’ He said: ‘If you were to burden with what they burden, you would not be able to endure what they endure’”.

*Anwar:* Does that mean waiting is enough in itself in regard to one’s relationship with the Almighty Allah?

*Hasan:* Of course not. You have to work hard and to be devout and pious. This is what Abi Basir reported in ‘Ghaibah Al-No’mani’ from Abu Adullah (PBUH): “In order to be in the company of the Al-Qa’em, one needs to wait and to work piously and behave ethically, and if he dies and the Al-Qa’em is revealed after, he will have the same reward as those witness him. So, endeavor and wait; salute to you, O company”.

*Anwar:* After all these efforts and hard work, is the Revelation going to take place?

*Hasan:* I know you are not really asking; you just want some Hadith to back up the knowledge have in this regard!

*Anwar:* That's right.

*Hasan:* Yes, Sir. The Revelation will definitely take place and in a fixed and determined day, Inshallah. This is what all Muslims agree about. Here are some Hadith from the two schools:

- Obaid Bin Asbat Bin Mohammad Al-Qorashi Al-Kufi reports from Sofyan Al-Thawri, from Asim Bin Bahdalah, from Zarra, from Abdullah that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Life in this world will not end until the Arabs have a man from my kinfolk whose name is the same as mine".
- Abdujjabar Bin Al-Alaa Bin Abdujjabar Al-Attar reports from Sofyan Bin Ayinah, from Asim, from Zarra, from Abdullah that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "A man from my kinfolk will rule whose name is the same as mine". Asim also reports from Abi Horairah that the

Prophet (PBUH) said: "Even if there were one day left of this world, Allah would elongate that day until he come". Abu Isa said: "This is one fine and valid Hadith".

- Ikmal Al-Din reports from Ammar Al-Sabati that "I asked Abu Abdullah (PBUH): 'Which one is greater, devotions at the time of the Concealed Imam in secret in an unjust state or devotions at the time of the Revealed rightful Imam?' He replied: 'O Ammar! By God, almsgiving in secret is far better than almsgiving in public, and so are devotions at the time of the Concealed Imam in an unjust state when living in fear than devotions at the time of the Revealed rightful Imam in public when feeling secure'".

- Ikmal Al-Din reports from Ali Bin Mohammad Bin Ziad that I wrote to my father, Al-Hasan (PBUH) asking him about the Revelation (Al-Faraj), so he wrote back: "When your fellow is concealed from the land of the wrongful, then expect the Revelation".

*Anwar:* Very good. Now I have a very very very important question.

*Hasan:* What is this very very very important question?

*Anwar:* There are a lot of people who claim to be willing to stand up for the Imam (AHHR) and pray the Almighty Allah to grant him the chance to be one of his followers and the martyrs in his presence, yet they do not characterize themselves with the morals of his Shi'a (followers). Can that be right?

*Hasan:* This is, in fact, one of the important questions and I will give a detailed answer that delights your heart:

- Believers should distinguish themselves with certain characteristics by word and deed, as there are many Hadith in this regard:
- A man said to Husain Bin Ali (PBUT): "O the son of the Messenger of Allah! I am one of your Shi'a (followers)". The Imam (PBUH) replied: "Fear God and do not claim what Allah would call you a liar and a claimer for. Our Shi'a are those whose heart are free from deception, spite and corruption. So, you should say you are affectionate and loyal to us."
- It is reported from Mohammad Bin Sinan, from Al-Mofzil Bin Omar that Abu Abdullah (PBUH) said: "The

Shi'a of Ja'far are those who are modest, chaste, strong in Jihad, devoted to their Creator, seeking the Divine reward and fearing the Divine punishment. If you meet such people, then they are, in fact, the Shi'a of Ja'far".

- It is reported from Abdullah Bin Al-Walid that Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Ali (PBUT): "Can any of you put his hand in his Brother's pocket and take whatever he wants? We said no, then he said: "So, you are not Brothers as you allege".
- When a person is now distinguished with the characteristics of the believers, they should also distinguish themselves with the characteristics of the waiting and supportive people for the Revelation of the Imam (AHHR). I will mention some of these distinguishing features:
  - To be following the practices of the Imams (PBUT) (Al-Mowalat) and renouncing the enemies of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) (Al-Bara).
  - To be pious, working hard to do good and improving themselves before anyone else.

- To be sure that their deeds will be presented before the Messenger of Allah and the Imams (PBUT) and to do only what pleases them.
- To be fighting their desires and patient for the sake of pleasing the Almighty Allah.
- To be following the orders of the Most Glorious Allah, His Messenger (PBUH), the Imams (PBUT) as wells as Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) who orders us to obey and follow his Ambassadors.
- To follow the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) as an example and to adopt the manners of the Almighty Allah: “Adopt the manners of the Almighty Allah”: (Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah an excellent exemplar for him)<sup>33:21</sup>.
- To be characterized with the characteristics of a supporter of the Imam (AHHR) at first in order to be able to claim so. Imam Al-Baqir (PBUH) says: “Our Shi’a are those who obey and fear Allah”. Anything opposing this is detested by the Most Exalted Allah as He put it in the Noble Quran:

(It is most hateful to Allah that you should say that

which you do not do)<sup>61;3</sup>.

(Do you enjoin men to be good and neglect your own souls?)<sup>2;44</sup>.

*Anwar:* Very good. It was delightful to hear this. Allah rewards you well.

*Hasan:* Likewise. See you tomorrow, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 59***

### **Words on Claiming His Mediation**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* After what you said yesterday, I was deeply thinking about my own qualifications and I wondered if I am qualified to be among the waiting mass for the Imam (AHHR) or one of his supporters! I actually concluded that I need to chasten myself from earthly filth and to work hard in order to be closer to the Divine Entity; so, I need to be pious, to be marked with high moral standards by word and deed, to be one from inside and outside except in Taqiyeh and to be

completely obedient to the Imam (AHHR).

*Hasan:* It is such a huge step to hold yourself responsible and work hard to enrich your qualifications. Otherwise, it would remain only a claim and one remains away from the Imam (AHHR) no matter what they say they are.

*Anwar:* I like your phrase, 'one remains away from the Imam (AHHR) no matter what they say they are'.

*Hasan:* Of course. This is supported by reason as well as many Holy Verses from the Noble Quran and the Hadith.

*Anwar:* Very good! I have more questions if you do not mind.

*Hasan:* Ask whatever you like!

*Anwar:* Thanks a lot. I would like to know about the Ambassadors of the Imam (AHHR) and those who falsely claim they are in contact with him.

*Hasan:* A very good question! Here is the answer:

After the Minor Conceal, which started in the year 260 AH, the Imam (PBUH) appointed four trustworthy Ambassadors who earned the approval of the Almighty

Allah, His Messenger, the Imams (PBUT) as well as Imam Al-Hojja (AHHR).

These Ambassadors played a vital role under the patronage and consideration of the Imam (AHHR). Let me tell you what Sheikh Al-Tousi – God bless his soul – reports:

“Regarding the praised Ambassadors in the time of the Conceal, the first one was appointed by Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Askari and Abu Mohammad Al-Hasan Bin Ali Bin Mohammad (PBUT), namely the trustworthy Sheikh Abu Amr Othman Bin Sa’eed Al-Omari. Imam Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Hadi (PBUH) said, ‘Abu Amr is trustworthy and reliable; what he tells you are on my behalf and what he does is on my behalf, so witness that Othman Bin Sa’eed Al-Omari is my Ambassador and that his son, Mohammad, is my son’s Ambassador.’

The orders of the Imam (PBUH) are issued through Othman Bin Sa’eed and his son, Abu Ja’far Mohammad Bin Othman, to his Shi’a as well as to the special followers of his father, Abu Mohammad, in regard to instructions, prohibitions and answers to the questions

of Shi'a who obeyed him until Othman Bin Sa'eed – God bless his soul – passed away and his son, Abu Ja'far, washed his body and took charge. Shi'a agree about his justice, trustworthiness and reliability, as the order was issued to Sheikh Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Othman Bin Sa'eed Al-Omari – God bless his soul – during the consolation for his father that:

'Allah rewards you abundantly and offers you the best condolences. It is a loss for you and for us. We miss his departure as you do, but it is such happiness for him to have a son like you to succeed him and to ask the Lord to have His mercy upon him; the Most Gracious Allah protect you, help you and grant you success''.

Then, Sheikh – God bless his soul – went on: "The orders of the Imam (PBUH) are issued through him to the Shi'a in the same way they were issued during his father's life, Othman. None of the followers have knowledge about it except himself and all referred only to him. A lot of evidence is reported from him and miracles of the Imam appeared through him.

It is reported that when Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Othman Al-Omari was on his deathbed, Ja'far Bin

Ahmad Bin Matil was sitting near his head and Abu Al-Qasim Bin Rouh was near his legs. He turned his face to Ja'far Bin Ahmad Bin Matil and said: 'I have been ordered to appoint Abu Al-Qasim Al-Husain Bin Rouh; thus, Ja'far Bin Ahmad Bin Matil took the hand of Abu Al-Qasim Al-Husain Bin Rouh and gave him his place and he moved to sit next to his legs.

When his health deteriorated, a group of prominent Shi'a gathered and went to Abu Ja'far's – God bless his soul – and asked him: 'Who will be in place of you if something happens?' He replied: 'This is Abu Al-Qasim Al-Husain Bin Rouh Bin Abu Bahr Al-Nobakhti; he is in charge instead of me. He is the Ambassador between you and the Imam; he is trustworthy and reliable, so refer to him in your affairs and count on him in your duties. This I was ordered to announce and I just did so'

Abu Al-Qasim – God bless his soul – was considered one of the wisest people to both opponents and proponents; Abu Al-Qasim instituted Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Simri – God bless his soul – as he carried out what Abu Al-Qasim was doing. In his death

struggle, the Shi'a attended to ask him about the next Ambassador. He did not mention anyone because he was not ordered to do so. He revealed a script that says:

'In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. O Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Simri. May Allah glorify your Brothers' reward, as you will be departing in six days. So, pack up and do not appoint anyone to replace you. The Major Conceal has just taken place and there will be no revelation unless the Almighty Allah wills so. This will be in a long time after hearts are hardened and the earth is filled with injustice. Some of my Shi'a will claim seeing him, but whoever does so before the appearance of Sofyani and the Outcry, he is a fabricator of lies. There is neither strength nor power but through the Most High and Supreme Allah.'

The sheikh reports from the narrator that: 'We copied the script and left. We came back the sixth day while he was giving himself up. He was asked about his successor and his reply was that Allah has something to achieve that He made requisite; this was the last

words heard from him – God bless his soul.”.

Now, after this long presentation which is full of observations worth contemplation, have you got your answer?

*Anwar:* Will you mention the general observations?

*Hasan:* With all pleasure. Listen carefully:

- The Ambassadors are four: Abu Amr Othman Bin Sa’eed Al-Omari, Abu Ja’far Mohammad Bin Othman Bin Sa’eed Al-Omari, Abu Al-Qasim Husain Bin Rouh Al-Nobakhti and Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Simri. The infallible Imam had declared their names, and that they are trustworthy respectable and honorable men to Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT). This is evidence to the fact that they are exclusively worthy of becoming Ambassadors.
- Shi’a are in agreement that they are the only authorized representative and agents of the Imam and his forefathers (PBUT). These honorable people committed themselves to the orders of the Imam (PBUH) and followed his example; if they were to deviate as much as a hair's breadth, the Imam (PBUH) would remove them from their positions and ranks.

- Shi'a unanimously agree on them and they never disagreed with them.
- During the Minor Conceal, the Imam (PBUH) was supporting his representative via transcribed orders he used to send unlike the Major Conceal.
- The Ambassadors followed the orders of the Imam (PBUH) in appointing their successors; they did not act as they liked or pleased.
- When Abu Ja'far Mohammad Bin Othman Al-Omari was on his deathbed, a man named Ja'far Bin Ahmad Bin Matil was sitting near his head and Al-Husain Bin Rouh was near his legs. However, when he was told that his successor is Al-Husain Bin Rouh, Ja'far Bin Ahmad Bin Matil stood up, gave his place to Al-Husain Bin Rouh and he moved to sit next to his legs. The high moral standards and the true religion refer to the fact that things are conducted according to the Divine orders and not some personal desires.
- The Imam (PBUH) is filled with sadness and pain when the scholars and the agents pass away; that is why it is true to say: we offer our condolences to Imam Al-

Mahdi due to the departure of, for instance, scholar so and so.

- The Imam (PBUH) invokes Divine care for his representatives to support them and guide their steps; this means without his prayers and patronage, the Ambassadors would have faced difficulties performing their role.
- The miracles of the Imam (PBUH) appear through his representatives.

There are also utilizations in relation to the script revealed about the fourth Ambassador, Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Simri.

*Anwar:* Please, tell me about them.

*Hasan:* I will mention the utilizations after reciting the script so you can think deeply about it.

*Anwar:* All right. I am excited.

*Hasan:* The last Ambassador revealed a script to the people before he dies which says:

“In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. O Ali Bin Mohammad Al-Simri! May

Allah glorify your Brothers' reward, as you will be departing in six days. So, pack up and do not appoint anyone to replace you. The Major Conceal has just taken place and there will be no revelation unless the Almighty Allah wills so.

This will be in a long time after hearts are hardened and the earth is filled with injustice. Some of my Shi'a will claim seeing him, but whoever does so before the appearance of Sofyani and the Outcry, he is a fabricator of lies. There is neither strength nor power but through the Most High and Supreme Allah."

Now, we come to the utilizations that some of which answer your questions:

- There is a Divine reward for those believers mourning a Brother-in-religion and accepting the Great God's will.
- Knowing the moment of death is of the Minor Conceal affairs, as that is bestowed by the Almighty Allah to some people. So, it is not impossible to have such knowledge as some may claim.

- Choosing a successor for the Ambassador comes through the Imam's (AHHR) order and not the Ambassador himself.
- The Major Conceal occurred after the Minor Conceal came to an end; there is, of course, a benefit to this ending of the Minor Conceal that is totally different from the Major one in regard to the possibility of communication with the Imam (PBUH), appointing the Ambassadors, issuing orders, seeing the Imam (PBUH), etc.
- There is an emphasis on Revelation of the Imam (PBUH) which will only be fulfilled when the Almighty Allah wills so. This, in fact, has two indications:

First, it is an invitation to not losing hope in the Revelation.

Second, the issue of Revelation is entirely linked to the Almighty Allah.

- It refers to the long period of the Conceal which is described with certain signs such as hardened hearts due to spread of sins as well as injustice filling the earth. Here, we need to be aware of certain things:

- The Imam (PBUH) did not ask us to fill the earth with injustice so he would be able to be revealed.
- The Imam (PBUH) did not praise injustice; it hastens the Revelation but it is always dispraised and there is nothing that can reason out the so-called theory of filling the earth with injustice to hasten the Revelation.
- The Imam (PBUH) will purify the earth from injustice and lechery along with their advocates. Thus, there is no way the Imam (PBUH) can be pleased with those encouraging immorality and corruption.
- The Imam (PBUH) emphasizes the fact that:

“Some of my Shi’a will claim seeing him, but whoever does so before the appearance of Sofyani and the occurrence of the Outcry, he is a fabricator of lies. Reasonable people understand that these dissonance voices are nothing but lies and false allegations for earthly desires”.
- In the last part, the Imam (PBUH) says:

“There is neither strength nor power but through the Most High and Supreme Allah”.

This is a warning lesson to all people that whatever they have like knowledge, health, wealth, position and power is all through the strength and power of Allah, without which all we have is a mirage.

*Anwar:* Excellent. Thank you so much for all the information, the analysis and the utilizations from the words of he Imam (PBUH).

*Hasan:* You are most welcome. Let us have a break.

*Anwar:* Yes, of course.

## ***Symposium 60***

### **On Falsely Claiming Seeing and Representing**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* I asked, last time, about who claims seeing the Imam (PBUH) or representing him, and you said such a claimer is a liar and a falsifier and who claims having a connection with the Imam is nothing but a dissonance voice.

*Hasan:* Yes, that is right. What Sayyed Sadr Al-Din says in his book, 'Al-Mahdi', proves this: "The aim is to refute the claimer of the special representation with

indication to the context". The author of Bihar Al-Anwar also implies this: "It is probably subject to the claimer of seeing and representing the Imam (PBUH) who also delivers the news from him to the Shi'a like the Ambassador...".

*Anwar:* So, the idea here is that to claim seeing the Imam (PBUH) as a special representative is one thing and simply seeing the Imam (AHHR) is another thing and there is no problem with that.

*Hasan:* As a matter of fact, Shi'ite books are full of stories about the meeting with the Imam (AHHR) like 'Al-najm Al-Thaqib' and 'Jannah Al-Mawa' of Mirza Al-Nouri – God bless his soul.

*Anwar:* A question just came to my mind if you don't mind!

*Hasan:* Please, go ahead.

*Anwar:* What are the effects resulted from waiting for the Revelation?

*Hasan:* I will refer to what the religious scholars mentioned in this regard:

First, the waiting in itself is a spiritual exercise that guides and prepares us for meeting him.

Second, it eases the occurrence of disasters and catastrophes and the impact they have on us, especially when it ends with Revelation of the Imam (AHHR).

Third, one of the requisites of this waiting is the desire to be in the company of the Imam (PBUH) which, in turn, necessitates purifying and refining our souls.

Fourth, to wait for the Imam (AHHR) necessarily leads to getting ourselves prepared and ready for supporting him.

*Anwar:* Thank you so much for all this information.

*Hasan:* You are most welcome!

## CHATPTER FIVE

### The Hereafter

#### (Mi'ad)

- The Meaning of the Hereafter
- The Holy Verses and Hadith Indicative of the Purgatory (Al-Barzakh) and the Hereafter
- Resurrection of Animals
- Words on the Secrecy (Taqiyeh)
- Words on the Returning (Raj'a)
- Words on Visiting Graves
- What is Shi'ism?



## ***Symposium 61***

### **The Meaning of the Hereafter (Mi'ad)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* I think we talked enough about the Imamate and its branches, and it is time to move to the last Pillar of Islam, namely the Hereafter (Mi'ad). What can you tell us about this?

*Hasan:* First, we have to know the meaning of the Hereafter (Mi'ad) as a term. According to religious experts, the Hereafter (Mi'ad) is the time when the soul returns to the body it was attached to during the worldly existence.

*Anwar:* What is soul?

*Hasan:* It is an abstract creature, i.e. it is not material.

*Anwar:* So, human being is made of a material body and an abstract soul, isn't it?

*Hasan:* Yes, it is.

*Anwar:* Can you support this with a proof?

*Hasan:* Through witnessing science, we know that there is something part from the body, which is the soul; this Holy Verse from the Noble Quran confirms this fact:

(And do not speak of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead; nay, they are alive, but you do not perceive)<sup>2;154</sup>.

This Holy Verse is a proof to the fact that the soul stays alive even when it leaves the body.

*Anwar:* Very Good. This leads to another question; is there a life in the grave?

*Hasan:* Yes, there is. It is called Purgatory life (Al-Barzakh), which is a life the soul lives between this world and the next world.

*Anwar:* Will you elaborate more, please?

*Hasan:* Yes. When one dies, they go to the world of Barzakh, which is a world between this world and the next world. Now, if they are believers, they will live in happiness and bounty; but, if they were infidels or disobedient, they will live in agony and pain.

The following Holy Verse is evidence to the life of martyrs who scarified themselves for the sake of the Most Gracious Allah:

(And reckon not those who are killed in Allah's way as dead; nay, they are alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord ◊ Rejoicing in what Allah has given them out of His grace and they rejoice for the sake of those who, (being left) behind them, have not yet joined them, that they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve)<sup>3;169-170</sup>.

There is a clear reference in this Holy Verse to the joyful life of the martyrs. This next Holy Verse plainly talks about the Purgatory (Barzakh) life:

(...and before them is a barrier until the day they are raised)<sup>23;100</sup>.

So, human beings obviously go to the Barzakh when they die, and this will go on until they are resurrected.

*Anwar:* Will you also mention some Hadith in this regard?

*Hasan:* Of course. There are many Hadith agreed about by all Muslims:

- It is reported from Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) that “he stood upon the disbelievers killed in the battle of Badr and said: ‘You were bad neighbors for the Messengers of Allah (PBUH) and his kinfolk, you drove him out of his house, then you gathered to fight him, but I achieved what my Lord promised with’. Omar here said to him: ‘O the Messenger of Allah! What is the use of your speech to these repulsed heads?’ He replied: ‘O you, the son of Khattab! By God, they hear better than you do, and the angles will take them away while put in iron manacles as soon as I turn my face away like this”. There are many similar Hadith about this matter.
- A Hadith from Abu Abdullah (PBUH) about Barzakh talks about souls that have appropriate bodies suited for

that stage: "I asked him: 'I give my life for you. They say the souls of the believers will be in the crops of greenfinches around the Divine Throne.' He said: 'No, the believers are far more honorable to Allah to put their souls in crops of birds, but in bodies like their owns'".

*Anwar:* This would be quite enough to prove the Purgatory, but I have another question.

*Hasan:* Please, ask.

*Anwar:* I can conclude from what you said that death is not the end of existence, is it?

*Hasan:* There is no doubt in that. It is only the departure of the soul from the earthly body to the Purgatory body. This is confirmed by Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH): "O people! We and you were created to stay alive and not to become extinct. You only move to another home, so be supplied as you are heading to where you will be eternally living. Wish you Peace".

This same indication is proved through the words of Imam Al-Hasan (PBUH) when he was asked: "What is it about death that they do not know? He replied: 'It is

the greatest happiness for the believers as they are transported from an embittered life to eternal happiness; yet, it is the greatest affliction for the disbelievers as they are transported from their paradise to the eternal Fire”.

It is also reported from Imam Al-Husain (PBUH) that: “Be patient, you noble people. Death is nothing but an archway through which you pass from misery and adversity to gardens of heaven and eternal happiness. Who hates to move from prison to palace? However, for your enemies, it is like moving from palace to prison and torture. My father told me that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: ‘The earthly life is believers’ prison and disbelievers’ paradise, and death is a bridge to heaven for these and a bridge to hell for those. I never lied and never will”.

Death is the means to be released from the shackles of desire and the chains of low life. It is a comfort after anguish and filthiness of this earthly world.

*Anwar:* Very good. Now, you said that the Hereafter is the time when the soul returns to the body it belonged to in this life. Is this possible knowing that the body is

decayed and rotten, and sometimes it is burned and turned into ashes?

*Hasan:* The returning of the souls to their bodies is possible in itself; it is not impracticable. In other words, there is no form of hindrance preventing it from happening and it is not like it has no existence at all.

*Anwar:* The Hereafter is not impossible because it does not bring back something that is nonexistent, does it?

*Hasan:* Very good. It is true because what is nonexistent has to be something so it would be possible for it in order to be brought back.

*Anwar:* So, how do souls return to their decayed and rotten bodies?

*Hasan:* When parts of a corpse are dispersed, they are recollected as it is stated in the story of the Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH). Ali Bin Ibrahim reports from his father, from Bin Abu Omair, from Abu Ayyoub, from Abu Basir that Abu Abdullah (PBUH) said: "Ibrahim (PBUH) saw carrion on seashore being eaten by wild land and sea beasts, and then the beasts jumped over each other and started eating each other. He was wondered:

(My Lord! show me how Thou givest life to the dead)<sup>2;260</sup>.

The Almighty Allah replied:

(What! and do you not believe? He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at ease. He said: Then take four of the birds, then train them to follow you, then place on every mountain a part of them, then call them, they will come to you flying; and know that Allah is Mighty, Wise)

Thus, Ibrahim (PBUH) was asked to bring a peacock, a rooster, a pigeon and a crow, to chop them into pieces, mix them and spread them on ten mountains. Then, he was told to keep the beaks and call them; they will come flying to you. Ibrahim did so and spread them on ten mountains, and then called them: answer me, in the name of the Almighty Allah. The flesh and the bones of each bird gathered and flew towards Ibrahim. At that moment, Ibrahim said: Allah is Mighty and Wise".

In addition to that, we can always use the respond the Most Exalted Allah gives to whoever denies the Hereafter and sees it difficult and impossible:

(And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? ﴿﴾ Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation)<sup>36;78-79</sup>.

There are many other Hadith and Holy Verses to use in this regard.

*Anwar:* I believe those who deny the Hereafter know nothing about the Most Gracious Allah. Isn't that right?

*Hasan:* Very true.

*Anwar:* You look tired!

*Hasan:* Let us stop for today. We will continue tomorrow, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 62***

### **The Holy Verses and Hadith Indicative of the Purgatory (Al-Barzakh) and the Hereafter**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* Through the Holy Verses, the Hereafter is proved to be inevitable. Now, will you remind me of those Holy Verses in this regard?

*Hasan:* I will mention a bundle of Holy Verses. The Almighty Allah says in the Noble Quran:

(Nay! I swear by the Day of resurrection ﴿﴾ Nay! I swear by the self-accusing soul ﴿﴾ Does man think that We shall not gather his bones? ﴿﴾ Yea! We are able to make complete his very fingertips ﴿﴾ Nay! Man desires to give

the lie to what is before him).75;1-5.

(Woe on that day to the rejecters◊Who give the lie to the Day of judgment◊And none gives the lie to it but every exceeder of limits, sinful one)83;10-12.

(And because the hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and because Allah shall raise up those who are in the graves)22;7.

(Those who disbelieve think that they shall never be raised. Say: Aye! By my Lord! You shall most certainly be raised, then you shall most certainly be informed of what you did, and that is easy to Allah)64;7.

There are also many Hadith proving the Hereafter:

- The Hereafter is also used referred to as 'the Day', the Day of Judgment, promised by the Almighty Allah:

(Our Lord! Surely, Thou art the Gatherer of men on a day about which there is no doubt; surely, Allah will not fail His promise)3;9.

This is confirmed by this Hadith from Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH): "Fear God in the sense that when you hear, you show reverence", and he went on to say: "you have

your hearts purified, you build for the Hereafter and you take along provisions for your day of departure”.

- This supplication is another proof: “O Lord! May peace be upon Mohammad and his kinfolk, people of praise, who Thou ordered us to obey, to seek their affection, to sustain their rights and who Thou grant the Paradise to whoever follow their traces”.
- It is reported from Amir Al-Mu’menin (PBUH) that: “O people! We and you were created to stay alive and not to become extinct. You only move to another home, so be supplied as you are heading to where you will be eternally living. Wish you Peace”.
- Imam Al-Hasan (PBUH) was asked: “What is it about death that they do not know? He replied: ‘It is the greatest happiness for the believers as they are transported from an embittered life to eternal happiness; yet, it is the greatest affliction for the disbelievers as they are transported from their paradise to the eternal Fire’”.

*Anwar:* Excellent! Can you please offer us a rational proof to support these reported proofs?

*Hasan:* In fact, the reported proofs are the ones that support the rational proofs because reason produces these proofs even before law comes to existence.

*Anwar:* What do you mean?

*Hasan:* It is easy. Mind thinks and comes to conclusions, then law recognizes what mind concluded if it is compatible with its.

*Anwar:* It will be fine if you tell us what mind concludes in this regard.

*Hasan:* Of course. Pay attention. Here, we say:

- The Almighty Allah is Wise, and so, He is far above any absurd and irrational acts. Moreover, if there were no other life than this, there would be no purpose for the creation of mankind. Thus, because the Almighty Allah does not do any absurd and irrational acts, the Hereafter has to exist. This following Holy Verse is an obvious proof to the existence of Hereafter and that human beings are not creature in vain:

(What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us? ﴿So Exalted be Allah, the True King; no god is there but He, the Lord of the honorable dominion﴾<sup>23;115-116</sup>·

- We can also say: The Almighty Allah is Just, and so, He is far above that to treat the oppressor and the oppressed equally. The oppressor has to be punished. Then, we say: if there were no Hereafter, the oppressor and the oppressed would be equal, and as far as the Almighty Allah does not treat the oppressor and the oppressed in the same way, we have this Holy Verse in the Noble Quran:

(Shall We treat those who believe and do good like the mischief-makers in the earth? Or shall We make those who guard (against evil) like the wicked?)<sup>38:28</sup>.

Al-Jathiya Chapter from the Noble Quran is also specified to talk about this matter.

- We say; The Almighty Allah promised to reward the obedient and to punish the disobedient; it is either heaven or hell.

As long as the Most Gracious Allah never breaks His promises, there must be the Hereafter where He fulfills His promises.

*Anwar:* I have more questions, but I will leave them for our next meeting.

*Hasan:* As you wish. I am at your service.

## ***Symposium 63***

### **Resurrection of Animals**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* I have some questions related to the Hereafter and the Day of Judgment. Can I ask?

*Hasan:* Please! This is what we are here for.

*Anwar:* I once read Holy Verses from the Noble Quran that talk about resurrecting some animals, like these:

(And there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings but they are genera

like yourselves; We have not neglected anything in the Book, then to their Lord shall they be gathered)<sup>6,38</sup>.

(And when the wild animals are made to go forth)<sup>81,5</sup>.

What can you tell us in this regard?

*Hasan:* My answer will be what the honorable religious expert, Al-Fadil Al-Miqdad<sup>(1)</sup> – God bless his soul – said: “The Holy Verse, (there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings but they are genera like yourselves; We have not neglected anything in the Book, then to their Lord shall they be gathered), reasonably proves the necessity of resurrection so everyone would be treat with justice; yet, some say it is not a necessity but just a possibility” .

What is reported from Abu Zar can also offer an answer: “I was with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) when two goats butted one another. The Prophet (PBUH) said: ‘Do you know why they were butting?’ We said, no. So, he said: ‘But Allah knows and He will adjudge them’” .

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(1) Sharaf Al-Deen, Miqdad Bin Abdullah Bin Mohammed Bin Husain Bin Mohammed Al-sairoy Al-Asadi Al-Helli Al-ghrawy, was known as (Al-Fadel Al-Miqdad) or (Al-Fadel Al-Saiory),(... - 826 AH), He was one of the honorable reliquious scholars, and traditions expert in the 9th Hijri century.

The honorable religious expert, Al-Majlisi – God bless his soul – said: “Many tackled the resurrection of animals in many different ways. There are reports about resurrecting animals in general and in specific; some might be in heaven and some other at heaven’s door; some might be ridden in the Day of Judgment, etc.

They (PBUT) said about whoever avoids almsgiving (Zakat): ‘they will tear them into pieces with their teeth and other will set hooves on them’.

Al-Sadouq says in ‘Al-Faqih’ reporting from Al-Sokouni that the Prophet (PBUH) saw a camel shackled with trousseau. He asked: ‘Where is its owner? Tell him to prepare himself for prosecution’.

It is reported from Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) that ‘every camel taken to the Pilgrimage (Haj) for three years – it is also reported seven years – it will be among the blessings of the heaven’.

It is reported from the Prophet (PBUH) that ‘be kind to your animal sacrifices as they will be your riding animals on the Path’, as it is also reported that the horses of conquerors in this world will their horses in

heaven”.

What is said so far can offer an answer.

*Anwar:* Excellent! My last question would be about the benefit of believing in the Hereafter.

*Hasan:* In fact, there are several benefits:

- Believing in the Hereafter, alongside with the reward and the punishment and the frightening and pleasing aspects, urges us to adjust our beliefs, intentions, words and deeds in accordance with the Shari’a.
- Working on the basis of the Shari’a will fulfill happiness in this world for individuals as well as communities.
- The desire for the heaven necessitates dedication in our work and adopting good manners, as hatred for the hell and its horrible phase prevent us from committing sins and crimes and generally any wrongdoings.
- Believing in the Hereafter gives hope and repels despair.
- Believing in the Hereafter reduces from the suffering due to disasters and catastrophes, as it gives us patience

and restrains our earthly desires that drive us to committing deadly sins, not to mention other psychological and social benefits.

*Anwar:* Thank you so much. Now that we are done discussing the Hereafter, I would like to raise some ideological questions.

*Hasan:* Let us put off your curiosity for next time.

*Anwar:* As you wish, Akhi Hasan.

*Hasan:* Thank you. See you next time, Inshallah

## ***Symposium 64***

### **Words on the Secrecy (Taqiyeh)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakato!

*Anwar:* I would like you to give us a brief explanation about the Secrecy (Taqiyeh) and whether it is a religious duty or not.

*Hasan:* Before explaining the nature of Taqiyeh, let me define it first and point out the reasons why we have Taqiyeh:

The Secrecy (Taqiyeh): is taking precautions in the sense that we show approval to what is wrong; this is the

definition of Sheikh Al-Ansari<sup>(1)</sup> – God bless his soul.

Reasons for Taqiyeh:

- The fear from any forms of harm and damage to Muslims, their properties, their families and Islam in general.
- Taqiyeh can be a form of compliance – away from fearing damage – to create cordiality, reconciliation and unity among Muslims and people in general.

These Hadith from the honorable Imams (PBUT shows the necessity of Taqiyeh):

A – It is reported from Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH) that “Taqiyeh is my faith as well as my ancestors’” and also “No Taqiyeh, no faith”.

B – Hisham Al-Kindi reports from Abu Abdullah (PBUH) that “Stay away from doing what might bring disgrace to us, as ill-bred offspring’s wrongdoings bring disgrace to their fathers. Put your entire efforts for others, no less; say prayers with their tribes, visit their sick,

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(1) Sheikh Mortada Al-Ansari (1781 – 1864 AD), was a shi'a jurist who "was generally acknowledged as the most eminent jurist of the time. Ansari has also been called "first effective" model or Marja of the Shiite or "the first scolar universally recognized as supreme arthotity in matlers of shiite law".

attend their funerals and always be first for doing good as you are more deserving for it. By God, devotions to the Almighty Allah are greater to Him when they are done covertly. When he was asked about what 'covertly' refers to, he said, 'The Secrecy' (Taqiyeh)".

C – Sheikh Al-Ansari – God bless his soul – said: "To talk about it from a religious perspective, Taqiyeh can be divided into five types:

A religious duty: when it is to push away all forms of serious damages; examples in this regard are numerous.

A desirable act: when it is to protect yourself on condition that you refrain from it gradually like when you comply with other people.

An allowable act: when whether you protect yourself or not would have the same result like showing disbelieving acts; it is reported that once two people from Kufa were ordered to curse Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH).

A repulsive act: when it is rather take the damage than practicing it; showing disbelieving acts is an example as

the purpose of faith is to exalt Islam and not the other way round.

A Forbidden act: when it is about shedding blood”.

*Anwar:* Excellent. Now, some say that Taqiyeh is hypocrisy, and that hypocrisy is a religiously forbidden act (Haram). What do you say?

*Hasan:* I will explain in details. Please, listen carefully.

First of all, Taqiyeh is only permissible with those who resent truth and justice.

Second of all, Taqiyeh is the very opposite of hypocrisy. If we say that Taqiyeh is showing wrong and disbelieving acts and hiding the truth, then hypocrisy is showing the truth and rightful acts. But, Taqiyeh is, in fact, the exact opposite; it is, as we define it earlier, taking precautions in the sense that we show approval to what is wrong. This is also supported by Holy Verses from the Noble Quran:

(Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends rather than believers; and whoever does this, he shall have nothing of the guardianship of Allah, but you should guard yourselves against them, guarding

carefully; and Allah makes you cautious of retribution from Himself; and to Allah is the eventual coming)<sup>3;28</sup>.

(He who disbelieves in Allah after his having believed, not he who is compelled while his heart is at rest on account of faith, but he who opens his breast to disbelief - on these is the wrath of Allah, and they shall have a grievous chastisement)<sup>16;106</sup>.

Third of all, human beings, by nature, act in self-defense, and the oppressed, in particular, have the right to do something to protect themselves; this is also clarified by Al-Bokhari in his 'Sahih' under 'Compulsion' section. However, these Holy Verses are crystal clear:

(...not he who is compelled while his heart is at rest on account of faith, but he who opens his breast to disbelief - on these is the wrath of Allah, and they shall have a grievous chastisement)<sup>16;106</sup>.

(...but you should guard yourselves against them, guarding carefully...)<sup>3;28</sup>.

(Surely as for those whom the angels cause to die while they are unjust to their souls, they shall say: In what state were you? They shall say: We were weak in the

earth. They shall say: Was not Allah's earth spacious, so that you should have migrated therein? So these it is whose abode is hell, and it is an evil resort ﴿ Except the weak from among the men and the children who have not in their power the means nor can they find a way to escape ﴿ So these, it may be, Allah will pardon them, and Allah is Pardoning, Forgiving) <sup>4:97-99</sup>.

(And what reason have you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, of those who say: Our Lord! cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper) <sup>4:75</sup>.

The oppressed and the weak are excused by the Almighty Allah to refrain from the orders of Allah. Al-Hasan said: "Taqiyeh is until the Day of Judgment". Of course, "it is all about the intention" as the Prophet (PBUH) put it. There is a lot to say if we want expand in this regard.

*Anwar:* It is all right. It will be great if you tell us about Taqiyeh from the religious perspective.

*Hasan:* I can tell you what Sheikh Al-Ansari – God bless

his soul – said again:

“To talk about it from a religious perspective, Taqiyeh can be divided into five types:

A religious duty: when it is to push away all forms of serious damages; examples in this regard are numerous.

A desirable act: when it is to protect yourself on condition that you refrain from it gradually like when you comply with other people.

An allowable act: when whether you protect yourself or not has the same result like showing disbelieving acts; it is reported that once two people from Kufa were ordered to curse Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH).

A repulsive act: when it is rather take the damage than practicing it; showing disbelieving acts is an example as the purpose of faith is to exalt Islam and not the other way round.

A Forbidden act: when it is about shedding blood”.

*Anwar*: Thank you very much. Can we talk a bit about the Returning (Raj'a)?

*Hasan*: Let us discuss this next time, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 65***

### **Words on the Returning (Raj'a)**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* All right. What can you tell us about the Returning (Raj'a)?

*Hasan:* We believe that the Almighty Allah brings back some people from the death to this world with the same appearance they used to have; this is in accordance with what Sheikh Al-Muzaffar.

This will happen at the time of the Revelation of Imam Al-Mahdi (AHHR) when the Most Gracious Allah brings

back to life some pure believers and some pure disbelievers; the believers defeat the disbelievers and punish them in this world, then they are moved to such a disgrace and grave torment in the Hereafter; this is all to serve justice and to give the oppressed their rights back.

*Anwar:* So, it is possible!

*Hasan:* Yes, it is very similar to the Hereafter as far as possibility of happening is concerned. The difference between the two is that in the Hereafter, people are resurrected and there is no coming back; it is not temporary, but with the Returning (Raj'a), it takes place in this life and it is temporary, not to mention that the Returning (Raj'a) has to do with certain people part from others.

*Anwar:* Thank you. God rewards you well. Will you now give us some evidence about the Returning?

*Hasan:* Of course! As a matter of fact, the Returning has already occurred in the past, of which we can mention these incidents:

The revivification of the children of Israel as it is

mentioned in the Noble Quran:

(Have you not considered those who went forth from their homes, for fear of death, and they were thousands, then Allah said to them, Die; again He gave them life; most surely Allah is Gracious to people, but most people are not grateful)<sup>2;243</sup>.

The revivification of Uzair is also evident in the Noble Quran:

(Or the like of him who passed by a town, and it had fallen down upon its roofs; he said: When will Allah give it life after its death? So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him to life. He said: How long have you tarried? He said: I have tarried a day, or a part of a day. Said He: Nay! you have tarried a hundred years; then look at your food and drink -- years have not passed over it; and look at your ass; and that We may make you a sign to men, and look at the bones, how We set them together, then clothed them with flesh; so when it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allah has power over all things)<sup>2;259</sup>.

The revivification of seventy men from the people of

Moses; these Holy Verses from the Noble Quran clearly state that:

(And when you said: O Musa! we will not believe in you until we see Allah manifestly, so the punishment overtook you while you looked on ﴿﴾ Then We raised you up after your death that you may give thanks) <sup>2;55-56</sup>.

Jesus Christ also brought the dead to life:

(And make him an apostle to the children of Israel: That I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I determine for you out of dust like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allah's permission and I heal the blind and the leprous, and bring the dead to life with Allah's permission and I inform you of what you should eat and what you should store in your houses; most surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers) <sup>3;49</sup>.

The revivification of the Fellows of the Cave (Ashab Al-Kahf) as it is mentioned in the Noble Quran:

(And they remained in their cave three hundred years and some add another nine) <sup>18;25</sup>.

Now, I give you a number of Holy Verses, from the

Noble Quran, evident to the Returning (Raj'a):

- (And when the word shall come to pass against them, We shall bring forth for them a creature from the earth that shall speak unto them, because people did not believe in Our communications◊◊And on the day when We will gather from every nation a party from among those who rejected Our communications, then they shall be formed into groups◊◊Until when they come, He will say: Did you reject My communications while you had no comprehensive knowledge of them? Or what was it that you did?)<sub>27;82-84.</sub>
- (Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them rulers in the earth as He made rulers those before them, and that He will most certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will most certainly, after their fear, give them security in exchange; they shall serve Me, not associating aught with Me; and whoever is ungrateful after this, these it is who are the transgressors)<sub>24;55.</sub>
- (They shall say: Our Lord! Twice didst Thou make us subject to death, and twice hast Thou given us life, so

we do confess our faults; is there then a way to get out?)<sub>40;11</sub>.

- (And they swear by Allah with the most energetic of their oaths: Allah will not raise up him who dies. Yea! it is a promise binding on Him, quite true, but most people do not know◊So that He might make manifest to them that about which they differ, and that those who disbelieve might know that they were liars)<sub>16;38-39</sub>.
- (How do you deny Allah and you were dead and He gave you life? Again He will cause you to die and again bring you to life, then you shall be brought back to Him)<sub>2;28</sub>.
- (And We desired to bestow a favor upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the Imams, and to make them the heirs◊And to grant them power in the land, and to make Firon and Haman and their hosts see from them what they feared)<sub>28;5-6</sub>.
- (And it is binding on a town which We destroy that they shall not return)<sub>21;95</sub>.
- (Most surely, We help Our apostles and those who believe in this world's life and on the day when the

witnesses shall stand)<sup>40;51</sup>.

*Anwar:* I am so grateful that you mentioned this great number of Holy Verses, but I still need to know how I can reason out the idea of Returning using these same Holy Verses.

*Hasan:* You are right. I am going to explain the Holy Verses one by one.

The first Holy Verse:

(And when the word shall come to pass against them, We shall bring forth for them a creature from the earth that shall speak unto them, because people did not believe in Our communications◊◊ And on the day when We will gather from every nation a party from among those who rejected Our communications, then they shall be formed into groups◊◊ Until when they come, He will say: Did you reject My communications while you had no comprehensive knowledge of them? Or what was it that you did?)<sup>27;82-84</sup>.

Explanation:

A – It is quite clear that (on the day when We will gather from every nation a party) refers to a

resurrection different from that of the Day of Judgment because it talks about a 'party' and not all the people as it is the case with the Day of Judgment.

This is confirmed by Ali Bin Ibrahim, in his interpretation, reporting from Hamad, from Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUH): "What do people say about this Holy Verse, (on the day when We will gather from every nation a party)? I replied, they say it is about the Day of Judgment. He said, it is not like what they say. It is about the Returning (Raj'a). Is it reasonable that Allah will gather from every nation a party and leave the others? The Holy Verse about the Day of Judgment is: (...and We will gather them and leave not any one of them behind...)"

B – Sending a creature is one of the signs of the Hour of Resurrection. Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) says: "I am the one with repetitive raids and the state of states, with the stick and the brand, and the creature that speaks to people".

The second Holy Verse:

(Allah has promised to those of you who believe and

do good that He will most certainly make them rulers in the earth as He made rulers those before them, and that He will most certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will most certainly, after their fear, give them security in exchange; they shall serve Me, not associating aught with Me; and whoever is ungrateful after this, these it is who are the transgressors.)<sup>24;55</sup>.

Explanation:

Sheikh Al-Kolayni<sup>(1)</sup> – God bless his soul – reports from Abdullah Bin Sinan that “I asked Abu Abdullah (PBUH) about these words of Almighty Allah (Allah has promised to those of you who believe...). He said, they are the Imams (PBUT)”.

The third Holy Verse:

(They shall say: Our Lord! Twice didst Thou make us subject to death, and twice hast Thou given us life, so we do confess our faults; is there then a way to get out?)<sup>16;38-39</sup>.

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(1) Abu Ja'far Mohammed ibn Ya'qub ishaq Al-kolayni Al-razi (864 -944 AD), is the foremost shia' compiler of Hadith following into the footsteps and the traditions of Imams of Ahlulbayt (PBUT) He is the author of kitab Al-kafi source book of shi'a Hadith.

'Dying twice' here is a reference to a death at the end of life and a death after they were back to life during the Returning (Raj'a).

To make this short, I will move to explain Holy Verses number five and eight.

*Anwar:* As you wish.

*Hasan:* The fifth Holy Verse:

(How do you deny Allah and you were dead and He gave you life? Again He will cause you to die and again bring you to life, then you shall be brought back to Him.)<sub>2:28</sub>.

Explanation:

As Sheikh Al-Hor Al-Ameli<sup>(1)</sup> put it, 'this Holy Verse proves revivification twice as it ends with (...then you shall be brought back to Him) which is a reference to the Day of Judgment.

The eighth Holy Verse:

(Most surely, We help Our apostles and those who

(1) Sheikh Al-Hor Al-Ameli (1624 – 1693 AD), was a Muhaddith (he who work in Hadith science) and a promineat Twelver shi'a scholar. He is best known for his comprehensive Hadith compilation known (Wasael Al-shi'a).

believe in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses shall stand.)

Explanation:

It is reported from both Imam Al-Baqir and Imam Al-Sadiq (PBUT) that "this help will be in the Returning; this is because many of the Prophets and the Trustees were murdered and oppressed, but they did not get the help; Allah never breaks His word".

*Anwar:* Please, explain this Hadith of the Imams (PBUT).

*Hasan:* Yes. The Imam (PBUH) says that the Prophets and the Trustees who came with Divine legislations were killed and oppressed, but they did not prevail.

Now, when does the Almighty Allah help them to prevail? There should be a day when they are back to this life so they prevail, as they will also prevail in the next life; the words of the Lord, (on the day when the witnesses shall stand), refer to the fact that there are two victories, one in this world and another in the next world, and the victory in this life is fulfilled only through the Returning (Raj'a).

*Anwar:* Thank you very much. God rewards you well.

*Hasan:* Likewise, Akhi Anwar. There are more than forty books I can recommend in case you like to learn more about the Returning.

*Anwar:* Will you mention a few of them, please?

*Hasan:* Of course!

- The book, 'Al-Iqaz Min Al-Haj'ah Bil-Borhan' (The Awakening With Reasoning), by Sheikh Al-Hor Al-Ameli. This book expands on this topic with more than 600 Hadith and 63 Holy Verses and many other proofs.
- The book, 'Shi'a and Raj'a', by Sheikh Mohammad Riza Al-Tabasi.
- 'Raj'a' is a book by Sayyed Mohammad Momin Al-Husaini.

*Anwar:* Thank you.

*Hasan:* You are welcome.

## ***Symposium 66***

### **Words on Visiting Graves**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakatoh!

*Anwar:* Today, I would like to ask you about visiting the graves!

*Hasan:* All right. This is one of the issues that Shi'a are concerned with; we go to visit the graves of the Prophet and the Imams (PBUT), as we also tend to build shrines for them and actually be available all around them. It is, in fact, part of the orders of the Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT).

*Anwar:* Some prohibited it. How do you respond?

*Hasan:* All Muslims agree on the fact that visiting graves are religiously desirable except the Wahabists and their supporters; they depend on two things in this:

- Visiting the graves is of no use and a waste of time as they are only bricks and mud.

This is our respond: it is actually of use to both the visitor and the visited. It is a lesson and an example for those visiting the graves to keep reminding themselves of death so they lead an honorable life. As for the visited, they are blessed and rewarded when the visitors read them from the Noble Quran; now, when they are the Prophets and the Imams and especially the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), it is a form of glorification and exaltation to visit their tombs and it is the visitors that are well rewarded. We have some Hadith in this regard:

Qasim Bin Yahya reports from his grandfather, Al-hasan Bin Rashid, from Abdullah Bin Sinan that "Abu Abdullah, Al-Husain Bin Ali (PBUH) was on the lap of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), when he raised his head and asked: 'O my father! What do your visitors get after you are passed away?' He replied: 'O my son! Whoever comes to visit me after I am passed away has

the Paradise and so does whoever comes to visit your father as well as your brother'".

It is reported from Ahmad Bin Mohammad Bin Isa, from Ali Bin Asbat, from Othman Bin Isa, from Al-Mo'ala Bin Abu Shihab that "Abu Abdullah Al-Husain (PBUH) asked the Messenger of Allah (PBUH): 'What is the reward of your visitors?' He replied: 'Whoever visits me dead or alive or visit your father or your brother or visit you will be visited by myself in the Day of Judgment to save them from sins'".

Moreover, visiting the grave of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), graves of martyrs and the grave of Al-Husain Bin Ali (PBUH) is equal to a pilgrimage to Mecca with Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

- Visiting the dead is of no use as they cannot hear or understand you; the proofs are these Holy Verses from the Noble Quran:

(...and you cannot make those hear who are in the graves)<sup>35,22</sup>.

(Surely you do not make the dead to hear, and you do not make the deaf to hear the call when they go back

retreating)<sup>27;80</sup>.

This is our respond: the visitors of the graves do not, in fact, address the dead bodies under the ground; they address the live spirits in the Purgatory (Barzakh). We have already discussed this issue when we talked about the Hereafter and the world of Barzakh. Here are a few Hadith in this regard:

(And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient)<sup>2;155</sup>.

(Rejoicing in what Allah has given them out of His grace and they rejoice for the sake of those who, being left behind them, have not yet joined them, that they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve)<sup>3;170</sup>.

(And when they shall contend one with another in the fire, then the weak shall say to those who were proud: Surely we were your followers; will you then avert from us a portion of the fire?)<sup>40;47</sup>.

*Anwar:* Will you, please, present some evidence on visiting graves?

*Hasan:* Yes. There are many Hadith in this regard:

- Barida reports from the Prophet (PBUH) that: "I have told you about visiting the graves, so visit them".
- Abu Sa'eed Al-Khidri reports from the Prophet (PBUH) that: "I told you about visiting the graves, so visit them as there is an example in it".
- Anas Bin Malik reports: "I have told you about visiting the graves, so visit them; it reminds of death".

*Anwar:* Excellent! Let me here ask you a question. Visiting the graves to supplicate for forgiveness and salvation is, to some people, an act of polytheism. How do you respond to that?

*Hasan:* This is a good question? We earlier said that the only people trying to distort and discredit these facts are the Wahabists, and this only due to their ignorance and narrow-mindedness. However, this how we respond to such people:

First, asking for forgiveness and salvation is neither polytheism nor worship.

Second, the person I ask for forgiveness is in no way considered a god doing whatever I ask him to do. He is

just a close slave to the Almighty Allah whose prayers are answered more than mine.

Third, they are virtuous people and forgive only with God's will and according to certain conditions, that is, the one asking for forgiveness and salvation has to be believing in the Almighty Allah, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and his pure offspring (PBUT); they follow the instructions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), but they have certain sins that prevent their prayers from being answered.

Fourth, the Most Exalted Allah, in the Noble Quran, provides us concrete evidence in this regard:

(And We did not send any apostle but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission; and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Apostle had also asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Oft-returning to mercy, Merciful)<sup>4:64</sup>.

With a bit of consideration, one can find out that repentance and forgiveness is associated with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH); we should try forgiveness

through such pure people:

(...and seek means of nearness to Him...)5:35.

Here are more proofs from the Noble Quran:

(Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases, His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great) There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error; therefore, whoever disbelieves in the Shaitan and believes in Allah he indeed has laid hold on the firmest handle, which shall not break off, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing)2:256.

(And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for intercession, but he who bears witness of

the truth and they know him)<sup>43:86</sup>, and many more.

*Anwar:* However, they say those supplicating for forgiveness through certain people are similar to disbelievers and polytheists getting close to god through their idols!

*Hasan:* Again, this proves what ignorant people they are.

First of all, we do not see the Prophets and the Imams (PBUT) as gods or in the same way pagans and disbelievers see their idols.

Second of all, we do not claim that the Prophets and the Imams (PBUT) do what the Almighty Allah does unlike the disbelievers.

Third of all, supplication the Prophet and the Imams (PBUT) is allowable according to the Almighty Allah:

(O you who believe! be careful of your duty to Allah and seek means of nearness to Him and strive hard in His way that you may be successful)<sup>5:35</sup>.

(He said: I will ask for you forgiveness from my Lord; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful ﴿﴾ Then when

they came in to Yusuf, he took his parents to lodge with him and said: Enter safe into Egypt, if Allah please)<sup>12:98-99</sup>.

Finally, the Prophets and the Imams (PBUT) are means through which the Divine abundance is received looking at their status and capabilities.

*Anwar:* This last one I could not really comprehend. What do you mean?

*Hasan:* I mean when the Most Gracious and Generous and Munificent Allah want to give generously to His creatures, there must be human beings capable of bearing this responsibility without being subject to pride or exceeding the limits; these people are the Infallibles.

I will give you some examples to clarify this point. Jesus Christ (PBUH) had the ability to bring the dead to life and create a bird from clay, all in accordance with God's will. Moses (PBUH) had miracles using his cane. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) also had the ability to deal conclusively with the universe, yet they never misused their power for their own interest or advantage; such status and capabilities qualify these people to receive

the Divine abundance. Thus, they are better and of higher status than us, the fact that qualify them to be those mediators between the sinners and their Glorious Allah.

*Anwar:* Very good, Sir!

*Hasan:* I would to add that Jesus Christ (PBUH) is a person of distinction to Most Exalted Allah as it is mentioned in this Holy Verse from the Noble Quran:

(When the angels said: O Marium, surely Allah gives you good news with a Word from Him of one whose name is the Messiah, Isa son of Marium, worthy of regard in this world and the hereafter and of those who are made near – to Allah)<sup>3,45</sup>.

This means that he is a link and a mediator in order to fulfill people's needs. There is a lot more to learn about supplication and forgiveness if you like.

*Anwar:* What you presented has been quite sufficient and satisfactory. Thank you so much!

*Hasan:* Thanks God! See you soon, Inshallah.

## ***Symposium 67***

### **What is Shi'ism?**

*Anwar:* Salam 'Alaykom!

*Hasan:* Alaykom As-Salam Wa Rahmatollah Wa Barakato!

*Anwar:* The Shi'ite and the Sunnis are two common words I hear a lot. This makes us wonder why the followers of one same religion split into two sects.

*Hasan:* Before we discuss this question, we need to know what this word, Shi'ism, means linguistically and idiomatically.

Shi'ite linguistically means the followers and the supporters or a group of people getting together.

Shi'ite idiomatically means the followers of Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) who give preference to him over others; so, the followers and the supporters and the defenders and the loyal partisan of Imam Ali Bin Abu Talib (PBUH).

We have evidence from the Hadith in this regard. It is reported, in 'Tafsir Al-Safi', from Al-Amali that Jabir Bin Abdullah said: "We were with the Prophet (PBUH) when Ali Bin Abu Talib arrived. So, the Prophet (PBUH) said: 'my brother has come', then he turned to Ka'ba, struck it and said: 'By He who has my life, this man and his followers (Shi'a) are the victorious in the Day of Judgment.'

He added: 'He is the first to believe with me among you and the most loyal towards the vows to Allah, the most committed to the commands of Allah, the most objective and just towards people, the most straightforward and of most advantages to Allah.' Then, he mentioned this Holy Verse:

(As for those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men)<sup>98:7</sup>.

The Companions of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) used to call Ali 'the best of men' whenever he arrived".

Now, the reason why Muslims are divided into two sects is due to political reasons as well as worldly greediness.

*Anwar:* How is that?

*Hasan:* Let us not speak about it as it brings up negative issues!

*Anwar:* I think it is all right if we just go through it quickly.

*Hasan:* We have already proved the preference and precedence of Imam Ali (PBUH) as the next in line to succeed Prophet Mohammad (PBUH); this was during his life, but after the Prophet (PBUH) passed away, some people retraced their steps and we all know the story of Saqifat Bani Sa'edah. Since then, Muslims are practically split into two sects. A sect kept following Imam Ali (PBUH) and another sect showed rejection although they were hiding this at the time of the Prophet (PBUH).

*Anwar:* What do you mean Muslims are 'practically' split into two sects?

*Hasan:* I mean they were hiding their rejection the Imamate of Ali (PBUH) at the time of the Prophet (PBUH) but they practically showed it after his death.

*Anwar:* Some say that ideology of Shi'ism was a heresy originated by a Jew named Abdulla Bin Saba?

*Hasan:* It is mere fabrication and false accusation. Here are these proofs refuting this lie:

- Al-Hakim Al-Haskani Al-hanafi Al-Neisabouri – a prominent figure of fifth century AH – reported that Yazid Bin Sharahil Al-Ansari – the writer of Imam Ali (PBUH) said: “I heard Imam Ali (PBUH) say: The Messenger of Allah told me once: Haven't you heard the words of Almighty Allah:

(As for those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men)<sup>98:7</sup>?

They are you and your Shi'a (followers) as my appointed time and your appointed time is the Pool (Al-Hawz). When nations gather for the Judgment, you are called upon honorably.”

Furthermore, Al-Qandouzi Al-Hanafi reported in several ways from Al-Deilami as well as Al-Tabarini from Abu

Rafi' that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "O Ali! The first four entering the Paradise are me, you, Al-Hasan and Al-Husain, then come our offspring, our spouses and followers of our good features and faith".

- The ideology of Shi'ism was proved by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) himself as we have just mentioned above and also earlier in our discussion; this was long before the appearance of this fabricated Abdulla Bin Saba.
- Abdulla Bin Saba is a made-up myth invented by the enemies of Shi'a.
- How is it possible to believe that a Jew who later converted to Islam had such huge intellectual influence on such great Companions like Salman Al-Faresi, Abu Zar, Ammar, Al-Miqdad and many others?
- Even if this person existed, Amir Al-Mu'menin (PBUH) incinerated him for his excessiveness as it is reported from some Shi'a scholars.

*Anwar:* What can you tell us about the theories related to the origin of Shi'im?

*Hasan:* There are no such things as theories! With a little thinking, they appear to be unacceptable.

*Anwar:* Will you please mention them in brief?

*Hasan:* These are some of the theories.

First theory: Shi'ism was originated after the death of the Prophet (PBUH); this is rejected because we have already given evidence that Shi'ism existed during the life of the Prophet (PBUH).

Second theory: Shi'ism was originated during the reign of Othman Bin Affan; this is also rejected.

Third theory: The origin of Shi'ism goes back to the tragic incidents of Al-Taf and the martyrdom of Imam Al-Husain (PBUH).

Fourth theory: Shi'ism has Persian origins.

Fifth theory: Shi'ism was originated during the life of Imam Al-Sadiq; there are still more of these so-called theories and they are wholly rejected.

*Anwar:* Excellent job! You seem you would want to say something.

*Hasan:* I would like to end our discussion with these following points:

- This teaching of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT) was established during the time of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and by the Prophet (PBUH) himself unlike other created teachings.
- This teaching is open for everyone as there is neither ambiguity nor illusion in it.
- We have to separate between the teaching and its followers so that the wrongdoings of some people would not be considered part of the teaching; this is totally unfair.
- If anyone wants to judge this teaching of Ahl Al-Bait (PBUT), they have to read carefully about it and then judge it against the Noble Quran, the true rubric of a prophet (Sunna) and the true Islam to see how close they match up.
- We invite all open and free intellectuals to come to know about our teaching in order to have open and free debates with our true religious scholars before they pass any judgments.

- I also invite you, Anwar, to carefully contemplate on our discussions so you can be able to justly and fairly judge our teaching.

*Anwar:* Thank you very much indeed for your efforts and for the practical and the scholarly discussions we have had; I am so proud to be one of the true believers.

**Publications of The Intellectual and Cultural Affairs Department  
In The Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain (AS)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>
1.	Kamiluz Ziyaraat (Merits and method of visiting holy tombs)	Abil Qasim Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Musa (Ibne Quluwayh)
2.	Discovering Islam	S. Mustafa Al-Qizwini
3.	Inquiries About Shi'a Islam	S. Mustafa Al-Qizwini
4.	When Power and Piety Collide	S. Mustafa Al-Qizwini