



A Selection from Raḍawī Book of Wisdom

Muhammadi Rayshahri

Translated by:
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Preface

One of the most outstanding features of the Household of the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.A.) or (*Ahl al-Bayt*) (A.S.) is that they are the inheritors of the knowledge and wisdom of the Seal of the prophets, or better say, all the Divine prophets¹ and thus, they are the manifestations of Divine Wisdom and leading figures among the sages. Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) says about this feature of the Ahl al-Bay (A.S.):

Verily, the knowledge that Adam (A.S.) was descended with and whatever the prophets, up to the Seal of the prophets, were given superiority over, is in the household of the Seal of the prophets and messengers, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.). Then, where have you been bewildered and where are you heading?!²

And Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) says in this respect:

1 See: *Dānishnāma-yi Amīr al-Mu‘minīn* (A.S.), vol. 10, p. 33 (Jāyghāh ‘Ilmī, scholarly status). Also see: *Ahl-i Bayt dar Qur‘ān wa Ḥadīth*, vol. 1, p. 253 (‘Ilm-i-Ahl-Bayt, knowledge of Ahl al-Bayt), p. 181 (Jānishīnān-i-Khudā, Allah’s vicegerent), p. 183 (Jānishīnān-i-Payāmbār, the Prophet’s [S.A.W.] successors).

2 *Tafsīr al-Ayyāshi*, vol. 1, p. 102, h. (=ḥadith no.) 300; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 367, h. 64; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 100, h. 59.

We are the tree of prophethood, the house of mercy, keys to wisdom, and mines of knowledge.¹

On this basis, knowing the Ahl al-Byat (A.S.) and benefitting from the splendor of their divine knowledge is obligatory and replete with guidance.

To this end, for years the idea of compiling books of wisdom (*ḥikmatnāma*) of great religious leaders has been conceived in “Ḥadīth Sciences and Knowledge Research Institute”, and up to the present five volumes of these compilations have been presented to the scholars and the interested readers. The last volume of these five selected works is a book entitled ***Raḍawī Book of Wisdom*** (*Ḥikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*), which consists of the sagacious guidelines of the eighth luminous beacon of guidance from the Household of the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.A.), Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).

A Selection from Raḍawī Book of Wisdom

Given the wide expanse of Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) ḥadīth heritage and the publication of *Ḥikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī* into a multi-volume set, it was decided to publish a selection of a single volume containing the sayings of that magnanimous Imam for the interested readers. With the grace of Allah this decision was implemented through the endeavors of the learned scholar, Mr. Murtaza Khushnaṣīb. I express my gratitude to him for his good taste in selecting the most

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 221, h. 3; *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 77; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 245, h. 8. Also, see: *Dānishnama-yi ‘Aqā’id-i Islāmī*, vol. 3, p. 481 (Sublime examples of the science of wisdom/Muḥammad’s household).

appropriate *āyās* and *ḥadīths* of the book. Also, I feel obliged to sincerely appreciate the endeavors of other researcher and colleagues who assisted me in the formation and arrangement of this work, especially the erudite scholar Mujtaba Faraji, who undertook compiling the *ḥadīths* of *Ḥikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī* and the attempts made by the proficient translator Hamid Reza Shaykhi, who highly contributed to the popularization of this exquisite collection of doctrinal knowledge by rendering it into Persian. In conclusion I ask the Exalted Allah a reward befitting His grace for all our colleagues.

﴿Our Lord, pour out upon us patience, and make firm our feet, and give us aid against the people of the unbelievers!﴾

Our Lord! Receive this from us; Thou art the All-hearing, the All-knowing.

Muhammad Muhammadi Rayshahri

Mordad 14, 1394\August 4, 2015

Introduction¹

The reappraisal of Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), from the beginning to his martyrdom, comprises many precious and instructive points. The relatively long period of his Imamate, on one hand, and the formation of deviated trends and political event, on the other, made his life distinct from the life of other Imams. Before presenting the text of *Ḥikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, a brief history of his life is hereby provided in eight sections in order to make the respected readers familiar with the Imam. Enjoyment of numerous and reliable historico-*ḥadīths* sources as well as brevity of writing are among characteristics of this selected volume.

One. Birth, Name, Title of Honor, Nickname

‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was born on Thursday² or Friday³ Dhu'l-Qa‘da 11⁴, 148¹/December 29, 765 in Medina².

¹ Written by the learned scholar, Mahdi Ghulam ‘Ali.

² *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 18; *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 247; *I‘lām al-Warā*, p. 302.

³ *Majmū‘a Nafisa*, (*Tāj al-Mawālīd*), p. 48; *I‘lām al-Warā*, p. 302.

⁴ *Majmū‘a Nafisa*, (*Tāj al-Mawālīd*), p. 48; *al-Miṣbāḥ*, Kaf‘amī, p. 523. Other views have also been reported: sixth, seventh, and eighth of Shawwāl, eleventh of Dhu'l-Qa‘da, eleventh of

Najma, Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) mother, reminisces her pregnancy period as follows:

During the time I was pregnant with my son 'Alī, I never felt the heaviness of pregnancy. In those days I would hear from the inside of my abdomen the sound of glorification (*tasbīḥ*), the statement "*lā ilā ha illallāh*" (*tahlīl*), and praise of Allah (*tamjīd*). This sound frightened and bewildered me; but when I would get up, it would stop and I would hear nothing. At childbirth, 'Alī put his both hands on the ground, raised his head to the sky, and moved his lips, as if he was saying something. After the birth of my child, his noble father, Mūsā b. Ja'far (A.S.) came to visit me and said, "O Najma! May you enjoy this Divine Blessing."

Then I wrapped the baby in white clothing and gave it to him. Mūsā b. Ja'far (A.S.) said *adhān* (call to prayer) to his right ear and *aqāma* (declaration of standing for prayer) to his left ear and asked for Euphrates water. Then, he poured the water in his mouth (palate) and returned the baby to me and said, "Take him as he is the *Baqīyat Allah* (Allah's remainder) on earth".³

Mūsā b. Ja'far (A.S.) named his son 'Alī and gave him the nickname Riḍā.⁴ Whenever he wanted to talk about his son, he would mention him by the name Riḍā, and of course, if his son was present, he would

Rabī' al-Awwal, eleventh of Rabī' al-Ākhar. For more details, see: *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq*, vol. 12, p. 346 and vol. 19, p. 556; *Awālim al-'Ulūm*, vol. 22, p. 29.

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 486; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 247.

2 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 18; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 247; *I'lām al-Warā*, p. 302.

3 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 20, h. 2.

4 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 14, h. 2; *Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 3, p. 86.

address him as Abū al-Ḥasan.¹

Later on – perhaps after the martyrdom of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – it was rumored among the opponents that when Ma'mūn had chosen 'Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.) as his heir apparent, he had given him the nickname al-Riḍā. Imam al-Jawād denied this projection in his decisive words and said:

By Allah, they tell lies; rather, Allah – the Blessed and Exalted – has named him Riḍā, because he was *marḍīyy* (pleasing and agreeable) to Allah in Heaven and to the Prophet and the Imams after him – may Blessings of Allah be upon them – on His earth.

It is worth-mentioning that although Riḍā has been known as the most popular nickname of the Eighth Imam, in some ḥadīth texts, other nicknames have also been counted for him, too, including:

*Al-Ṣābir, al-Fāḍil, al-Zakīyy, al-Ṣadiq, al-Walī, al-Wafī, al-Raḍī, al-Dāmin.*²

Similarly, in ḥadīth sources, he has been mentioned by the two titles of honor, Abū al-Ḥasan³ and Abū Muḥammad¹.

1 Ibid.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 486; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 250; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 366; *Dalā'il al-Imāma*, p. 183; also see: *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq*, vol. 12, p. 347 and vol. 19, p. 553.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 486; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 18. Also, see: *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq*, vol. 12, p. 347 and vol. 19, p. 553; *I'lām al-Warā*, vol. 2, p. 64. A nickname as *Dāmin-i Āhū* (protector of the gazelle) has also become popular among the people. A story is also recounted concerning this nickname, which, despite frequent research, it was not found in reliable sources. However, Shaykh al-Ṣadiq tells a story of a gazelle taking refuge in mausoleum of the Eighth Imam, which is totally

Two. Family

1. Mother

Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) mother was from Nawba² and her name is recorded as Tuktam³, which after her moving to the Imam's (A.S.) house, she was named Najma.⁴

Lady Ḥamīda, Imam Mūsā b. Ja'far's (A.S.) mother told him when introducing her to his son:

My child! Tuktam is a woman, no better than whom I have never seen. I am sure if she conceives a child, she will have a pure progeny. I grant her to you. Appreciate her value.⁵

After giving birth to her son, 'Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.), Tuktam was given the nickname Ṭāhira. Although her milk did not decrease, she intended to take a wet nurse for her son. When asked for the reason, she answered, "My milk is not decreased; but I have been engaged in supplications and prayers that since his birth they have been cut back."⁶

The ḥadīth and historical sources have recorded numerous names, nicknames, and titles of honor for Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) mother,

different from what is renowned among the people (see: *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 285, h. 11).

1 *Dalā'il al-Imāma*, p. 183.

2 Nawba or Nubia is the name of a vast region in the Northeast of Sudan that is located on the West coast of Red Sea.

3 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 14, h. 1 and 2.

4 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 16, h. 3 and p. 20, h. 2.

5 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 14, h. 2.

6 Ibid.

including:

Tuktam, Nawbiya, Sakīna, Khayzarān, Ṭāhira, Najma, Umm al-Banīn, Najīyya, Taḥīyya, Salāma, Samāna.¹

2. Wife

Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) only wife was first called Durra, whom, after marriage, he renamed as Khayzarān. Her other name was Rayḥāna and her title of honor is said to be Umm Muḥsin.² She has been Imam al-Jawād's (A.S.) mother.³

3. Child

There is disagreement as to the number of the Imam's (A.S.) children. What is more renowned is that Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) has been Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) only child.⁴

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 486 and 492; *Dalā'il al-Imāma*, p. 183; *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 14, h. 2; *I'lām al-Warā*, p. 329; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 367; *Majmū'a Nafisa*, (*Tāj al-Mawālīd*), pp. 49 and 51; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 222. Also, see: *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq*, vol. 19, p. 555; *'Awālim al-'Ulūm*, vol. 22, pp. 25, 26, and 220.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 492; *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 273; *I'lām al-Warā*, p. 344; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 379.

3 Furthermore, according to some reports, Ma'mūn married off her daughter, Umm Ḥabība, to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) after his being appointed as heir apparent. (*Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 367).

4 See: p. 340 (Section Three/Chapter Six/What is related from the Imam (A.S.) about the Imamate of his son Imam al-Jawād (A.S.)).

Three. The Scholarly and Practical Splendor

1. Scholarly Authority

The Imam's (A.S.) Divine knowledge was evident to the jurists of Medina before the beginning of his Imamate, too. He was engaged in teaching jurisprudence during the Imamate of his father in Medina – which was the jurisprudence center of the Muslim World and a gathering place of such jurists as Mālik b. Anas.¹ Dhahabī wrote about the Imam's (A.S.) knowledge:

He had an eminent status in knowledge, religion, and magnanimity. It is said that, while still a youth, he used to give *fatwa* (legal edict) during the time of Mālik b. Anas.²

According to Dhahabī's report and the death year of Mālik (d. 179/795), it seems that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) used to teach jurisprudence and give *fatwa* before the age of thirty. Similarly, in his *al-Muntaẓam*, Ibn Jawzī quotes the following from Muḥammad 'Umar Wāqidī (d. 207/822):

He ['Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.)] used to give *fatwa* in his twenties in Masjid al-Nabī (S.A.W.A.).³

Therefore, the above-mentioned teaching sessions have been held years before the martyrdom of Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) (i.e. before the year 183/799).

Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) would constantly refer his of their children to

1 *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 10, p. 119, No.1114.

2 *Syar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, p. 388, No. 12530.

3 *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 10, p. 119, No.1114.

his son, ‘Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.) to acquire knowledge:

This is your brother ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) who is the learned of the household of Muḥammad. So, ask him about your religion and hold onto what he says; as I have frequently heard my father, Ja‘far b. Muḥammad, telling me, “Verily, the learned of the household of Muḥammad is in your progeny and I wish I could have met him. He has the same name as the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī (A.S.).”¹

Although the beginning of the Imamate of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was simultaneous with the challenging deviation of the *Wāqifiyya* order, the scholarly status of the Imam (A.S.) was so brilliant that even the opponents were humble before his erudition. As stated by Shaykh al-Mufīd, the superiority of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) after his father over his brothers and others was manifest; especially, both common people and the experts were unanimous as to his superiority over others concerning his knowledge, forbearance, piety, and legal reasoning (*ijtahād*).²

Before the birth of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) had mentioned him with such titles as “The rescuer of this Nation and its helper, chief, light, excellence, and wisdom, who is the best of the newborn”.³ This prediction of Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) was fulfilled quite well, to the extent that Ma’mū praised the Imam’s (A.S.) erudition again and again and considered him as the most learned of the world’s

1 *I‘lām al-Warā*, vol. 2, p. 65.

2 *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 247.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 314, h. 14.

learned ones.¹ Ma'mūn's vizier, Ḥasan b. Sahl (d. 215/830) – who was a renowned scholar – also admitted the scholarly superiority of the Imam (A.S.) in a letter reported by Ṭabarī. He wrote in this letter, “Ma'mūn appointed 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) the heir apparent after him, as he viewed the scholars of the Abbasid and Alawid and didn't find anyone more superior, more Allah-fearing, and more erudite than him.”²

One day Ma'mūn was discussing with the Eighth Imam (A.S.) about the interpretation of some controversial verses [of the Qur'an]. After the session, he asked Muḥammad, son of Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) – who was also present at the session – “What is your opinion about your nephew, 'Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.)?” Muḥammad answered, “'Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.) is a learned person and we never saw him going to any scholar to acquire knowledge.” When the caliph heard this, confirmed his words and added:

Your nephew is from the household of the Prophet; those about whom the Prophet said, ‘Verily, the good among my household and the purest of my lineage are the wisest of all the people at childhood and the most learned at adulthood. So, do not teach them, as they are more knowledgeable than you. They do not lead you away from doors of guidance and do not enter you through doors of misguidance.’³

Ma'mūn had stated similar words in praise of the Imam (A.S.) since the very first session after allegiance. It may be said that, the most

1 *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 261.

2 *Ta'rikh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 7, p. 139.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 204.

evident display of the Imam's (A.S.) knowledge has been in the debate sessions with scientists and nobles of the religions of the time, which had earned the praise of both the opponents and the proponents.¹

One of the best descriptions of the Imam's (A.S.) scholarly authority and his scholarly superiority in those days has been stated by his contemporary scholar and poet Ibrāhīm b. 'Abbās Ṣawli (d. 247/861)². He said:

I never saw that Riḍā (A.S.) being asked a question, unless he knew the answer to it. I had not seen anyone more learned than him up to that time; Ma'mūn used to ask him about anything to test him, he would answer, and his words, answers, and examples were always from the Qur'an.³

2. A Genuine Paradigm of Ethics and Practice

The Eighth Imam's life is the perfect instance and a full-length example of a Divine life. Rajā' b. Ḍaḥḥāk accurately⁴ reported his devotional behavior from Medina to Marv to Ma'mūn⁵ and could not hide his bewilderment and captivation of so much devotedness from the caliph. Ma'mūn asked him not to tell anyone about these excellences so that the caliph himself would spread about these virtues; but Ma'mūn never did so. The agent appointed as guard to the Imam

1 See: *al-Ihtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 401.

2 *Mustadrak Safīnat al-Biḥār*, vol. 5, p. 227.

3 See: *Hikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, vol. 3, p. 190, h. 1089.

4 He reported the number of *rak'ā* of his prayers, even the number of supplications that the Imam (A.S.) uttered in his mid-night prayer or the style of his reciting the Qur'an.

5 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 3, p. 180, h. 5.

(A.S.) in Sarakhs¹ also reported beautiful descriptions of the Imam's (A.S.) devotional acts to Abū al-Ṣalt.²

Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) ethical features are also related in numerous narrations.³ In this brief account, we just suffice to report a rather inclusive narration.⁴ Scrutinizing Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) conduct, Ibrāhīm b. 'Abbas, the poet and writer who was in the company of the Imam (A.S.) for a while, describes a part of his ethical and devotional *sīra* as follows:

I never saw Imam al-Riḍā (A.S) be verbally tough or rude to anyone. I never saw him interrupt anyone. He would always wait for them to finish talking and then if he deemed right, he would talk. I never saw him refuse to fulfill anyone's needs that he was capable of fulfilling. He would never stretch his legs out in front of anyone. He would never lean back in front of anyone. I never saw him reproach any of his servants or administrators or spit in the presence of others.

I never saw him burst into loud laughter; rather he would smile gently. When everyone left and they spread the tablecloth out for him to dine on, he would call every one of his servants and attendants, even the door-keeper and groom to dine with him.

He would sleep very little and would stay awake most of the time engaged in worship from dawn till early morning rise. He fasted a lot.

1 See: *Hikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, vol. 1, p. 65, footnote 1.

2 See: h. 267.

3 See: *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 178, chapter 44 (Chapter on al-Riḍā's (A.S.) Noble Characteristics and Description of His Devotional Acts).

4 See: h. 266 (The Imam's (A.S.) Sublime Morality and Conduct).

He would always fast for at least three days each month. He used to say, “This fasting is like fasting all year long.”

He would often give charity and do good deeds in secret. He did most of this in the darkness of the night. If anyone claims that he has seen anyone as noble as him in virtue, do not believe him.¹

Four. Imamate Period

Thirty five years of the blessed life of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) had passed when he was bereaved of his father and since that same year (183/799) he took over the Imamate of the Shī‘as. The Shī‘a’s enjoyed his Imamate until 203/818, when he was martyred in Ṭūs.²

In his twenty-year period of Imamate, the Eighth Imam spent seventeen month in Medina and three years in Khurāsān. This period was simultaneous with the rule of Hārūn al-Rashīd, Amīn, and Ma’mūn.³ Hārūn and Ma’mūn have been among the most renowned Abbasid caliphs.

With the help of the competent Barmakī ministers (viziers), Hārūn was able to powerfully maintain some relative peace in the Islamic lands and by close observation, severely suppress any opposition. In a fully totalitarian and military rule, the life of an ideological opposite group, such as the Alawids, definitely seemed very difficult; and most of all the movements of the Shī‘a leader, i.e., Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.)

1 See: h. 266.

2 *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 247.

3 *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā*, p. 218, *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19; *Dalā’il al-Imāma*, p. 175.

was strictly controlled. In such a rule, the frequent arrests and imprisonments of the Seventh Imam, and finally his martyrdom didn't seem much surprising. The clear phrasing of one of the Eighth Imam's companions, i.e., Muḥammad b. Sinān, about Hārūn's personality, quite well depicts the fact that nothing but stranglehold governed over the very vast expanse of the Abbasid rule. He said:

“Blood drips from Harūn's sword.”¹

These harsh treatments of the Shī'as continued after the martyrdom of Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.); however, not only no serious aggressions have been reported on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) during Hārūn's period, but also it is related in ḥadīth texts that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) had frequently predicted that, “Hārūn is not able to do any harm to me.”² These reports indicate that the Shī'as were anxious for the Imam's (A.S.) safety, and he would pacify them with these words. History has failed to accurately clarify various angles of the Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) positioning during Hārūn's rule and even the five-year period of Amīn and Ma'mūn's clashes; but the outcome of his achievement was preservation of Shi'ism from the enemies' harm.

During Ma'mūn's rule, numerous uprisings of the dissidents, from the Alawid *Sādāt* (pl. *Sayyid*: descendants of Imam 'Alī – A.S.) to the groups rival to the Abbasids, had put the community into tumult. Apart from the rulership situation, after the martyrdom of Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.), the Shī'a community faced with the very crucial and

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 257.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 258.

challenging double standard of the Waqifites (*Wāqifiyya*).¹ Some of the Imams' deputies and Shī'a scholars refused the Imamate of the Eighth Imam and turned into the standard bearers of a fabricated sect. A considerable number of the Waqifite rebels sparked off such great deviation merely with the intention of accumulating wealth and coveting the properties left behind by the deputation system.

The Barmakids' ministry continued until 188/803. In this year, Hārūn disfavored them and put an end to them. Hārūn is reported to have died in 193/808.² Since Hārūn's death up to the year 200/815 there were war and bloodshed among his children (Amīn, Ma'mūn, and Qāsīm); but in this year, Ma'mūn's troops gained victory over Amīn's troops and with latter's murder the clashes among the Abbasids, subsided. Ma'mūn summoned Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to Khurāsān in 201/816 and in Ramadan of the same year, he took people's allegiance for his heir apparenency.³ Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) resided in Khurāsān till the end of his life, that is, about two years and five months.

1 After the martyrdom of Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.), a group of the Shī'as refused to accept the Imamate of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said, "Mūsā b. Ja'far has not died; rather he has hidden form sight and will soon return." This group, who have ceased (*waqafa*) at the Imamate of the Seventh Imam, were called *Wāqifiyya* (or the Waqifites). It is worth mentioning that the formation of the Waqifite sect, was the result of seeking worldly gains by some of the deputies of the Seventh Imam, who appropriated the legal properties that was at the Imam's (A.S.) disposal with the intention of amassing wealth and seeking positions and misguided many of the unaware Shī'as.

2 *Ta'rikh al-Ya'qūbī*, vol. 2, p. 430.

3 *Ta'rikh Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, p. 310.

Five. Summoning the Imam (A.S.) to Khurāsān

After murdering his brother Amīn and relatively establishing his caliphate, Ma'mūn wrote frequent letters to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and summoned him to Khurāsān.¹ The Imam's (A.S.) numerous excuses cause the caliph not to suffice with writing letters and finally forced the Imam (A.S.) to come to Marv.

The rule's agents wanted to misrepresent this journey as normal or ceremonial; however, the Imam's (A.S.) actions and the way the itinerary was set clearly indicated that this journey was mandatory and was actually intended to distance the Imam (A.S.) from the center of the Muslim world's political and scholarly activities as well as keeping him under surveillance in the seat of the rule.

Having been aware of the aftermath of this journey, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) made his family and the people of Medina aware of this non-return journey. The Imam (A.S.) said farewell to the blessed mausoleum of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) several times, while crying out loud and being overtly sorrowful. He said to some people of Medina who thought it was an ordinary journey:

I take leave of the vicinity of my grandfather ['s grave] and will take my leave from the world in away from my homeland (in *ghurba*) and will be buried beside Hārūn.²

In Khurāsān, he said to his companion, Ḥasan b. 'Alī Washshā':

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 149, h. 21.

2 See: h. 279

When they wanted take me out of Medina, I seated all my family around me and told them to weep for me so that I would hear the sound of their weeping over me. Then, I divided twelve thousand dinars among them and told them that I would not return from this journey.¹

By the order of Ma'mūn, the Imam's (A.S.) journey was taken through Baṣra, Ahwāz, and Fārs;² because he emphasized that the Imam would not pass through the Shī'as settled cities of Kūfa and Qum.³ The historical reports on the events taking place along this journey are very few. The gathering of several thousand people of Nayshābūr is the only passionate gathering that has taken place on the way and reported; that is where Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) dictated the well-known ḥadīth of *Silsilat al-Dhahab* (the Golden Chain Tradition) to the people.⁴

At that time, Nayshābūr was regarded as one of the most important ḥadīth center of the Sunnīs and many scholars and tradition experts such as Ishāq b. Rāhiway, Bukhārī's master, were present in this city. The Imam's (A.S.) meeting in Nayshābūr and the statement of the

1 See: *Hikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, vol. 2, p. 488, h. 806.

2 According to the research carried out in recent years, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) had passed through the following regions in his journey from Medina to Marv: Naqra, Nabāj, Baṣra, Ahwāz, Bihbahān, Shiraz, Istakhr, Abarqū, Dihshīr, Yazd, Kharāniq, Ribāṭ Pusht Bādām, Nayshābūr, Dihsurkh, Tūs, and Sarakhs (See: *Jughrāfiyā-yi tārikhī-yi hijrat-i Imām Riḍā* (A.S.) *az Madīna tā Marv* [Historical Geography of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) Migration from Medina to Marv], Jalil Erfanmanesh, Islamic Research Foundation of Āstan Qurds Raḍawī)

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 181, h. 5.

4 *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 126, h. 3 (Quoted from *Kashf al-Ghumma* from Ta'rikh-i Nayshābūr).

ḥadīth of *Silsilat al-Dhahab* is variously reflected in both Shī'a and Sunnī tradition texts. Some narrations report of the presence of such scholars as Muḥammad b. Rāfi', Aḥmad b. Ḥārith, Muḥammad b. Rāfi' Qushayrī, Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā, Ishāq b. Rāhiway,¹ Abū Zur'a, Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī² and a group of the city's scholars. In *Kashf al-Ghumma*,³ it is reported as follows:

The author of *Ta'rikh-i Nayshābūr* wrote: When 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) reached Nayshābūr on this journey, he entered the Nayshābūr market place (*mahalla-yi bāzār*). He was sitting in a pure silver [coated] carriage on a white mule. Two of the great memorizers of ḥadīth and tradition experts, namely, Abū Zur'a Rāzī and Muḥammad b. Aslam Ṭūsī drew near and said:

O Master, son of Master and O Imam and son of Imams! O pure offspring and purified essence of the Prophet! We swear you by your pure forefathers and blessed ancestors to reveal to us your blessed countenance and narrate a ḥadīth from your noble ancestors so that we may learn it.

Then the author of *Ta'rikh-i Nayshābūr* recounted in detail the way those present reacted after observing the luminous visage of the Imam (A.S.) and said, "The sound of weeping and lamenting arose from the

1 *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 122, h. 3 (quoted from '*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* [A.S.]).

2 *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 126, h. 3 (Quoted from *Kashf al-Ghumma* from *Ta'rikh-i Nayshābūr*).

3 Ibn Ḥajar has also reported a text similar to this from Ḥākīm Nayshābūrī and his book *Ta'rikh-i Nayshābūr (al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥarriqa*, p. 205. Also see: *al-Muntazam*, vol. 10, p. 120).

several-thousand-people gathering. Then, by way of the transmitters of ḥadīth, the Imam (A.S.) mentioned one after another of his forefathers up to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and dictated to them the well-known Divine tradition (*ḥadīth qudsī*), *kalimatu Lā ilāha illā Allāh ḥiṣnī, fa man dakhala ḥiṣnī amana min ‘adhābī* (the phrase “There is no god but Allah” is My stronghold, so he who enters My stronghold is safe from My chastisement). Ḥākim Nayshābūrī announced the number of the writers present at this gathering to 24 thousand people.¹ This very public writing made this ḥadīth perpetuating in various books of tradition and is seen today in narrative sources of both Shī‘a and Sunnī.

The Shī‘ī reports have a famous addenda that has been endured due to the way the Imam (A.S.) presented it and the public wrote it down. After stating the first part of the ḥadīth and when his mound had begun to move on, the Imam (A.S.) took his head out of the carriage and told the rest of the ḥadīth. The narrator says:

When the carriage moved on a little, the Imam (A.S.) said, “[But all] this depends on some conditions, and I am considered to be one of those conditions.”²

This statement refers to the fact that monotheism (*tawḥīd*) cannot bring man to the happiness they deserve without acceptance of the guardianship of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.).³

1 *Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 2, p. 308.

2 See: *Hikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, vol. 2, p. 214, h. 518.

3 Explaining this part of the tradition, Shaykh al-Ṣadūq wrote, “One of the conditions of *Lā ilāha illā Allāh* is to admit that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) has been [appointed] an Imam to His

The narration of Rajā' b, Abī Ḍaḥḥāk, the state agent of the ruling caliphate, is also among the important and documented historical reports on the Eighth Imam's (A.S.) journey. He said:

Ma'mūn sent me to bring 'Alī b. Mūsā (A.S.) from Medina to him in Khurāsān and advised me to take care of him in person and ordered me to bring him there by way of Baṣra, Ahwāz and Fārs, but not by way of Qum. He ordered me not to separate from him day and night and guard him the whole way, until we reached Ma'mūn. I was constantly with him all the way from Medina to Marv and did not separate from him. I swear by Allah that I have never seen any man more God-wary than him, or anyone who remembers the Exalted Allah as often as he does at all times, or fear Him more than he does.¹

Rajā' b, Abī Ḍaḥḥāk, then, fully reported in details all the Imam's devotional practices, including the number of *rak'as* he prayed in his supererogatory prayers, the supplications he recited in his *qunūt* (the prayer said after the second *rak'a* with hands raised) in his daily prayers, as well as his mid-night prayer. He also pointed out the Imam's preaching sessions and answering the religious questions of the people of every city. It is related at the end of this long narration:

When I took him to Ma'mūn, he asked me about his state and conducts along the way. I told him what I had seen of actions in days and at nights, during his traveling and staying. Then Ma'mūn told me, "O Ibn Abī Dhahhāk! This man is the best person on the Earth, whose knowledge is higher and whose worshipping is more proper and

slaves and his obedience is obligatory." (*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 135, h. 4.).

¹ *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 181, h. 5.

timelier. Then, do not tell anyone what you have seen of him, so that no one can recognize his nobility unless he hears it directly from me. I seek help from Allah to do what I have intended to do, that is, to raise his rank and spread around his fame.¹

Six. Heir Apparency

The issue of heir apparency is a unique chapter in the period of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) Imamate, which has made his life distinct from other Infallible Imams. After gaining victory over his brother Amīn, Ma'mūn took over a rule that was intermingled with internal challenges. Although Ma'mūn lacked the authority of his father, he was rare, or even unmatched, in shrewdness and diplomacy. One of the most important problems he faced was the Alawid uprising, the Iranians turning away from him, and the Shī'a's perpetual dissatisfaction with the Abbasid rule. Ma'mūn's policy demanded him to introduce 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent.

According to the historical evidences, the people of Khurāsān swore allegiance to 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as the heir apparent of the Abbasid rule on Ramadan 5, 201/March 27, 817.² This news was spread all over the Muslim world in a very short time. The spread of this news undoubtedly marveled the friends and foes. Although this allegiance caused dissatisfaction among a great part of the Abbasids

1 *Ibid.*

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 245; *I'lām al-Warā*, p. 328; *Ta'rikh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 8, p. 554; *Ta'rikh Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, p. 310. The text of heir apparency contract is related in hadīth sources (*Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 3, p. 123; *Iḥqāq al-Haqq*, vol. 12, p. 376).

and even prompted them to revolt in Iraq,¹ it was more or less influential in advancement of Ma'mūn's political objectives. The caliph's ingenious conduct and his ostentatious considerateness made some Shī'as to believe his pretentiousness.

Some questions have always been raised as to Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) heir apparenacy, some of which can be briefly pointed out as follows:

First: What was the formation process of heir apparenacy?

Second: What objective did Ma'mūn pursue by raising the issue of presenting caliphate or proposing heir apparenacy?

Third: What was the outcome of this historical event?

1. The Formation Process of Heir Apparenacy

Upon Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) arrival in Marv, Ma'mūn proposed the position of caliphate and rulership to him. Ma'mūn "Proposed Caliphate" to the Imam (A.S.) in numerous sessions within two months in Marv and in all these sessions the Imam (A.S.) refused it. The close to Ma'mūn were surprised of so much insistence by him and would consider this as contrary to the interests of the rule. Faḍl b. Sahl, his Iranian vizier and diplomat, was strongly unhappy about Ma'mūn's insistence and would say, "I have never seen caliphate more ruined than this."²

1. 1. Decisive Rejection of Caliphate Proposal

In the last of the sessions that Ma'mūn had held to propose

1 *Ta'rikh Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, p. 310.

2 See: *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 146, h. 6.

caliphate to the Imam (A.S.), the caliph said:

O son of the Apostle of Allah! I am aware of your erudition, excellence, asceticism, devotedness, and piety, and thus consider you as more deserving of the caliphate than myself.¹

Then, he addressed the Imam (A.S.) and said:

I am considering resigning from caliphate and leave it to you and swear allegiance to you.²

This time the Imam (A.S.) gave Ma'mūn so scathing a reply that made him very furious. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) turned to Ma'mūn and said:

If this caliphate is yours, then Allah has assigned it to you and it is not permissible for you to take off what [the garment] Allah has clothed you with and give it to another one; and if you have no rights in this position, you are not permissible to give me what is not yours.³

This statement would clearly disclose that the Abbasid had been usurped, the illegitimacy of Ma'mūn's caliphate, as well as the insistence of the idea of Imam's (A.S.) Divinely appointment.

1. 2. Negative Response to the Proposal of Heir Apparency

Ma'mūn, set a second option before the Imam (A.S.). After giving lengthy talks about caliphate, Ma'mūn proposed the heir apparency position to the Imam (A.S.). Having been quite aware of Ma'mūn's motivation, the Imam (A.S.) opposed this proposal, too. One of the

1 See: h 283.

2 See: *Ibid.*

3 See: *Ibid.*

Imam's (A.S.) reasons was that, "According to what my ancestors have related from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.), I will be poisoned and wrongfully be martyred in your lifetime, while the angels of heaven and the earth would be weeping for me and I will be buried in a strange land near Hārūn al-Rashīd.

When Ma'mūn heard these words, he wept and asked, "O son of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.)! Who will kill you? Who will have the power or dare to do you any evil, as long as I am living,"

The Imam (A.S.) said, "I will introduce my murderer and say who will kill me, if I wish."¹

1. 3. Acceptance of Heir Apparency with Reluctance

Resorting to force and threatening to murder was the only way in which Ma'mūn was able to persuade the Imam (A.S.) to accept heir apparency. Although in the early days of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) presence in Marv, the caliph appealed to superficial compliments and niceties and proposed caliphate to him; when he encountered his refusal, his demeanor and speech tone was totally changed. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) would also give decisive responses and assert that:

I will never do this on my own volition.²

Many of the dialogues of this session are narrated; but the conclusion of all the narrations reporting this and the other sessions states that the caliph had threatened the Imam (A.S.) and stressed that there were no other alternative to the Imam (A.S.): either acceptance of

1 See: *Ibid.*

2 See: *Ibid.*

heir apparency or death.

Various narrative texts indicate that the only reason that made Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) accept heir apparency was coercion. There are several groups of traditions narrated on this issue:

The first group contains the traditions that explicitly denote coercion of the Imam (A.S.) to accept heir apparency. Some examples of such traditions are related as follows:

1. Ma'mūn was angered of the Imam's (A.S.) rejection and said:

You always treat me in such a way that I do not like, and you are immune from my power. I swear by Allah that you have to accept the heir apparency yourself, or not I will force you to do so. Then, if you accept it, it is fine; otherwise, I will cut off your head!¹

In response to Rayyān b. Ṣalt, who was surprised of his accepting heir apparency, the Imam (A.S.) said:

Allah knows that I do not like it; but because I am given option between being killed and accepting heir apparency, I preferred to accept heir apparency.²

At the same time the people of Medina said about Ma'mūn:

During his rule, Ma'mūn secured covenant from people for 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) succession to the throne [after him] without the Imam's consent. He did so after having threatened him to death and insisted on it again and again and every time the Imam (A.S.) refused until he was on the verge of murder for not accepting it.³

1 See: *Ibid.*

2 See: *Hikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, vol. 2, p. 533, h. 854.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1.

Abū al-Ṣalt, the Imam's (A.S.) companion in Khurāsān, said:

By Allah, Riḍā (A.S.) did not give in to this willingly!¹

Similarly, we can refer to the supplications that the Imam (A.S.) recited after accepting the heir apparenacy.² In some traditions, the Imam (A.S.) had compared himself to Imam 'Alī (A.S.), who, out of expediency, was forced to participate in the six-person caliphate council.

The second group includes the traditions that state the Imam's (A.S.) conditions for accepting the heir apparenacy:

When Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) noticed the caliph's rebellious coercion, he accepted Ma'mūn's proposal on some conditions. In response to Ma'mūn's threats, the Imam (A.S.) said wisely and bravely:

Allah has forbidden me to destroy myself with my own hand. If it is willed so, do whatever has come to your mind. I would accept it, provided that I would not interfere in dismissals and appointments of anybody, and I would not change any custom or alter the earlier traditions, and I would be only a distant consultant and guide.³

These conditions, i.e. renouncement of all state powers of authority, and talking this way are in itself a reason for compulsion and force in

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 141, h. 5.

2 "O Allah! You have forbidden me to kill myself with my own hand, and I have been forced that if I do not accept heir apparenacy, I would be murdered by Ma'mūn. I have been forced to, just as Joseph and Daniel were forced by the despots of their time to accept the reign." (*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1. Also see: Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, p. 757, h. 1022).

3 See: h. 283.

accepting heir apparenacy.

Ma'mūn accepted the Imam's (A.S.) conditions and introduced him as his successor and heir apparent and issued several orders in a single day. First, he ordered to pay the whole salary of a year to each one of the troops as an expression of thanksgiving for this important event. Then, he ordered to declare the appointment of the Imam (A.S.) to all the governors and the Muslims of other Muslim cities; and to mint coins in the name of "Riḍā", too. Another order that was issued on the same day was that he ordered the people to take off black clothing – that was the Abbasids' color – and put on green clothes, instead.¹

The third group comprises of the traditions that denote the Imam's (A.S.) obligation in observing the conditions for accepting heir apparenacy. The process of the Imam's (A.S.) non-interference in the state's affairs, his not settlement in the palace, and not abiding by the state's matters of prestige left behind of the heir apparenacy position nothing but only a name.

Not a long time had passed since the acceptance of heir apparenacy by the Imam (A.S.) that the caliph asked the Imam (A.S.) to perform the Eid al-Aḍḥā (also called the sacrifice feast) prayer.² The Imam

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 147, h. 18.

2 In the sources, the word Eid (feast) is not openly mentioned; however, from the incantation that the Imam (A.S.) recited on the way to the prayer place, *Allāhu akbar 'alā mā razaqnā min bahīmat al-an'ām* (Allah is the greatest for providing us with quadruped livestock), which is among the incantations of the days of *tashrīq* (three day from 11th to 13th of Dhu'l-Hijjah during which *Hajj* rituals are performed) and Eid al-Aḍḥā, it can be understood that it had been Eid al-Aḍḥā prayer.

(A.S.) reminded the conditions set between them when accepting the caliphate and excused. The caliph's insistence caused the Imam (A.S.) to move towards the prayer place like the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) did and not like the rulers. The reports to caliph as to the Imam's (A.S.) Prophet-like moving style caused the caliph to stop him from performing the prayer.¹

In other instances, Ma'mūn asks for the Imam's (A.S.) help; but Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) reminds him of the conditions for the acceptance of heir apparenacy and refuses to cooperate with the Abbasid rule. For example, the caliph asks the Imam (A.S.) to introduce a trustworthy person as the governor of a perturbed region and the Imam (A.S.) answered as follows:

I accepted the heir apparenacy on the condition that I would not command or prohibit and dismiss or appoint [anyone] until Allah would take me out of this fleeting world, before you.²

Similarly, after Faḍl b. Sahl died, Ma'mūn tells the Imam (A.S.):

O Abū al-Ḥasan! Now is the time of my needing you. So, take charge of the affairs and help me.

But Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) goes on refusing and says:

O Commander of the Faithful! You are in charge of managing the affairs, and I am in charge of praying.³

This way, the Imam (A.S.) disappointed Ma'mūn in achieving his political objectives in this action.

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 488, h. 2; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 149, h. 2.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 167, h. 29.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 146, h. 25.

2. Ma'mūn's Motivation for Proposing Heir Apparency

It is worthwhile to make three points as an introduction to the topic before examining Ma'mūn's Motivation:

2. 1. Ma'mūn's Personality

Historical sources have always introduced him as a politician and scholar among the Abbasid caliphs. Damīrī Shāfi'ī wrote:

There was no one wiser [as a caliph] than Ma'mūn among the Abbasids. He was ingenious and diplomatic.¹

Ibn Nadīm views him as the most erudite in jurisprudence and theology among the Abbasid caliphs.² Dīnawarī writes about him in *al-Akhhbār al-Tuwāl*:

He was the Abbasids' bright star in scholarship and philosophy and had a hand in science.³

Similarly, Suyūtī praises Ma'mūn in prudence and scholarship as follows:

He was the most far-sighted, willful, authoritative, ingenious, awe-inspiring, and courageous man among the Abbasids.⁴

Of course, in Shī'a texts, there are bitter reproaches of Ma'mūn, calling him *al-'ifrīt al-kāfir* (the infidel devil)⁵ or *al-'ifrīt al-mustakbir*

1 *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān al-Kubrā*, vol. 1, p. 111.

2 *Al-Fihrist*, p. 168.

3 *Al-Akhhbār al-Tuwāl*, p. 442.

4 *Ta'rikh al-Khulafā*, p. 326.

5 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 291, h. 566.

(the arrogant devil)¹.² According to what was said, the Ma'mūn's bravery, ingenuity, and scholarship should not be neglected in his political decisions.

2. 2. The Socio-Political Milieu during Ma'mūn's Reign

Amīn's succeeding to caliphate in Baghdad was the most important complicated predicament faced by Ma'mūn that was ended by murdering Amīn in 198/813. After Amīn's murder, the most critical concern of the Abbasid rule, which resulted in anarchy and insecurity of the Muslim world, was the small and big revolts that took place all over the Islamic countries. The Alawids had a major role in most of these movements. The slogan of most of these uprisings had been, "Calling to Riḍā (consent) of the Household of the Prophet".³ These revolts made the foundations of the Abbasid rule face serious a danger of collapse, which are briefly listed in the following:

In 198/813, a movement took place headed by Naṣr b. Shīth 'Aqīlī in Aleppo and its suburbs.⁴ In the same year, another movement took place in Mosul called *wāqī'a maydan* (field event) which was followed by a twenty thousand-man invasion and massacre of thousands of

1 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 308, h. 1.

2 For more information about Ma'mūn, see: *Sfīnat al-Biḥār*, vol. 1, pp. 112-115, under the entry *amana*. Also, in Sunnī sources, see: *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, vol. 10, p. 300. Ibn Athīr asserts that Ma'mūn believed in a kind of Shi'ism the would lead to the Mu'tazilites and believed in the superiority of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib over the caliphs and he had had stated in his will to perform a prayer with five *takbīrs* on him [his corpse].

3 *Hayāt al-Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā* (A.S.), Qurshī, vol. 2, p. 284.

4 *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 60, p. 301.

people.¹

In 199/814, Abū al-Sarāyā's movement in Kūfa delivered a fatal blow on Ma'mūn's rule. Together with Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Ismā'īl Ḥasanī, in this uprising, he managed to establish a government for a short time in Kūfa. Abū al-Sarāyā was able to spread the flames of his movement over to such cities as Basra, Mecca, Yemen, Fars, Ahwaz, and Madain. His commanders were all from among the Alawids: 'Abbās b. Muḥammad b. 'Īsā Ja'farī, Ḥasan b. Aftas, Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. Dāwūd b. Ḥasan b. Ḥasan (A.S.) and three of them: Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā b. Ja'far (A.S.), Ismā'īl b. Mūsā b. Ja'far (A.S.), Zayd b. Mūsā b. Ja'far were Imam al-Riḍā's [A.S.] brothers.² The number of the Abbasids killed in Abū al-Sarāyā's movement in less than a year was reported to amount to twenty hundred thousand.³

In 200/815, Muḥammad b. Ja'far Dībāj, one of Imam al-Ṣādiq's (A.S.) sons, pledged allegiance with a group in Mecca and then revolted. 'Īsā Jalūdī crushed his army, gave him pledge of security, and he proclaim the rule to belong to Ma'mūn, and travelled along with a group the Buyids to Khurāsān.⁴

2. 3. The Politico-security Nature of Heir Apparency Proposal

Although different motivations have been brought up for proposing

1 Ibid, p. 300.

2 Ibid, p. 305.

3 *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, p. 366.

4 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 224, h. 8.

heir apparency to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); with regard to Ma'mūn's personality on one hand and the socio-political milieu on the other, and most important of all, with respect to the convincing narrative and historical documents, it can be decisively said that the proposal of heir apparency by the caliph had been an entirely political and security issue. Thus, it is natural that its reasons and the lower layers of objectives of its devisers should not be clearly specified, especially that centuries have gone by from this historical event and the documents left behind are very limited.

Fortunately, there are some historical evidences and admitted tenets that can seemingly help us in a proper analysis. For instance, it was the Abbasid's perpetual and bloody enmity with the Alawids that spared no attempt in martyring the *Sādāt* [the descendants of Imam 'Alī (A.S.) and the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)] and even their own allies and confederates, as the Ḥasanī *Sādāt*. In addition to this, the story of Amīn's being murdered by Ma'mūn simply for taking over the rule prevents any fair historian from any optimistic view about Ma'mūn in the event of heir apparency. Therefore, a group of Shī'a scholars have always believed that Ma'mūn, in his decision to grant caliphate and heir apparency, had not had an honest intention and it had merely been a political hoax in statesmanship.¹

3. Evaluating Different Perspectives concerning the Motivation for

¹ See: *Ḥayāt al-Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā* (A.S.), Qurshī, vol. 2, p. 282; *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), Ja'far Murtaẓā 'Amilī, p. 442; *Tahlilī az Zindigī-yi Imā Riḍā* (A.S.). Muḥammad Riḍā Faḍl al-Allāh, p. 98.

Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) Heir Apparency

The narrative and historical sources are also perplexed as to explaining the heir apparency issue. These perplexities have given rise to various perspectives in this field.

Many thinkers have examined the reasons behind the proposal of heir apparency and have enumerated up to ten motivations for it.¹ It seems that according to the narrative texts, the most important motivations of Ma'mūn can be divided into three basic ones:

1. 3. Enforcing the Abbasid Rule

Given the obvious instability that occurred in the Abbasid

¹ One of the researchers has listed Ma'mūn's ten motivations brought up in sources, as follows: Ma'mūn's belief in the Imam's (A.S.) being the most learned, the most graceful, the most God-wary and the most pious; Ma'mūn's fulfilment of the vow he had already made; Ma'mūn's Shi'ism; getting himself rid of the problems of governance; making reconciliation and friendship between the Abbasids and the Umayyads; misrepresenting the Imam's (A.S.) personality in peoples sight; confronting the prevalence of the Isma'ilism's thought; taking revenge of the Abbasids for their reliance on Amīn and deriding Ma'mūn.; confronting the Alawid's uprisings and providing security for the interests of Abbasid rule (*Al-Imām al-Riḍā 'Ind Ahl al-Sunna*, p. 181). The late Muḥammad Bāqir Sharīf al-Qurshī has also stated seven motivations as follows: strengthening the Abbasid rule headed by Ma'mūn in opposition to the followers of Amīn in the Muslim world; changing public opinion of opposition and conflicting against the Abbasid rule; attracting the affection of the troopers and soldiers (as most of them were interested in Imam al-Riḍā [A.S.]); suppressing the uprisings that were carried out in the name of calling to "*Al-Riḍā min Āl-i Muḥammad*"); legitimizing Ma'mūn's rule and considering his rule to be contrary to that of his father; identifying the non-Shi'a elements; promoting the idea that the Imam (A.S.) is not from among the pious. (*Hayāt al-Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā* (A.S.), Qurshī, vol. 2, p. 282).

government after Hārūn, the pillars of the rule still continued to seem unstable. The predicament over Amīn, a considerable number of the Abbasids being displeased with Ma'mūn, the Alawids' uprisings, fondness of a group of Ma'mūn's soldiers in Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the public displeasure with the Abbasids' tyranny,¹ prompted Ma'mūn to decide to summon the Imam (A.S.) to Marv and propose to him the highest state position. Having been originated from a merely political motive, such a proposal was naturally unacceptable to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Thus, Ma'mūn was able to persuade the Imam (A.S.) to accept the heir apparenacy only by threatening him to death.

In this case, the following objectives would be accomplished:

Drawing the attraction of the Alawids and suppressing their uprisings

Attracting the Iranians' support

Legitimizing the Abbasid rule

Giving hope to the Muslim community (Specially the Alawids)

Creating rapport between the Alawids and the Abbasids

Ruining the status of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)

Granting this position could create serious doubts at least in the Alawids' uprisings and suppress many of the riots. Later on the people of Medina found out these have been done by force and coercion, and asserted:

During his rulership, Ma'mūn secured allegiance for the succession of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) [to the caliphate after himself] without the

¹ *Hayāt al-Imam 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā* (A.S.), Qurshī, vol. 2, p. 282.

Imam's (A.S.) consent; and he did so after threatening him to death, insisting over and over and he refused until finally he was on the verge of being murdered because of this refusal.¹

In fact, it can be found out from Ma'mūn's frequent threats that the Imam did not have any choice but acceptance, and Ma'mūn viewed this [acceptance] as the only way to rescue his rule to pass through the internal challenges and difficulties.

There is a report in hand indicating that Ma'mūn submitted to the Imam's heir apparenacy to preserve the Abbasid ruling system:

After the heir apparenacy of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), there was no rainfall for a long time. The faultfinders criticized Ma'mūn that since the Imam's (A.S.) heir apparenacy the sky has withheld its blessings from the Muslims. Ma'mūn asked the Imam (A.S.) to pray, and after his praying it rained all over the Muslim cities. The jealous deemed this event as dangerous for the caliph and were afraid that the people would turn away from caliph and the caliphate would be turned over from the Abbasid to the Household of 'Alī (A.S.). Once again they asked the caliph to dismiss the Imam (A.S.) from heir apparenacy. The caliph replied as follows:

This man is secretly calling the people to his commandment. We wanted to appoint him as my heir apparenacy so that he would call the people to follow me and admit my caliphate by his accepting the post of heir apparenacy. [Thus] Those who have been fascinated to him would doubt him and realize that whatever he had claimed, whether a little or

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1.

a lot, had been false. They should realize that the rule is for us and not for him, albeit with his implied endorsement. We were afraid that if we leave him alone, he might infiltrate among us and create such a gap that I could not fill and he might bring about a calamity for us that we could not tolerate.¹

It is related in another report: In this way, Ma'mūn wanted to obliterate his father's [i.e. Hārūn al-Rashīd's] harshness and sacrilege against the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) from the people's mind.² Hereby, he would portray his rule, contrary to that of his father, as loyal to the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and thus would deceive the people.

3. 2. Devastating the Status of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the Shī'as

With his craftiness, Ma'mūn wished to blemish the high status of the Shī'a Imamate. He imagined that Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) sacredness was subject to his ascetic life in Medina and he would bid farewell with asceticism and piety and would lose his previous status if he is seated in a state position. In that case he could ruin the Imam's (A.S.) status in the sight of the Shī'as.

When Ma'mūn encountered the Imam's (A.S.) rejection [of his proposal], he asserted his motive and told him:

O Son of the Apostle of Allah! By saying this you want to take this task off your shoulder and reject it so that the people would say that you are reluctant to the world.

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 181, h. 1.

2 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1.

And the Imam (A.S.) answered:

By Allah, since He created me I have not told a lie and have not practice asceticism in the world for the sake of the world, and I know what you want. In this way you want the people say: ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was not unwilling toward the world; rather, his hand did not reach it. Do you not see how he accepted heir apparency by his greed for caliphate?¹

The Imam’s (A.S.) answer aroused Ma’mūn’s anger and he threatened the Imam (A.S.) to death.

After the acceptance of heir apparency, this question was still raised by the Muslims. They would surprisingly ask the Imam (A.S.):

O Son of the Apostle of Allah! People say you have accepted heir apparency although you express asceticism [and unwillingness] toward the world?²

But the Imam’s (A.S.) refusing to reside in the palace, avoiding luxury, sharing meals with the lowly people, keeping company with the poor, and the most important of all, the Imam’s (A.S.) preconditions for accepting heir apparency, all resulted in Ma’mūn’s objective of desacralizing the Imam (A.S.) to be frustrated. In the very first month that he invited the Imam (A.S.) to perform Eid prayer in *muṣallā*, Ma’mūn found out that the Imam’s (A.S.) status did not damage at all by accepting heir apparency and it was the status of Ma’mūn’s caliphate that was blemished and weakened.

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 152, h. 3; *‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, vol. 1, p. 237, h. 1; Ṣadūq, *Al-Amālī*, p. 125, h. 115.

2 See: h. 2.

It is not unlikely that “The caliph’s motive had been to gradually eliminate the Shi‘as and obliterate Shi‘ism. Of course, it has to be noticed that by inviting the Imam (A.S.) to Khurāsān, Ma‘mūn pursued several objectives; however, his most important objective was to transform the Shi‘as’ critical revolutionary scene to an arena of peaceful and safe political activities. That was because the Shi‘as’ struggles under the guise of dissimulation were unending and these struggles were always accompanied by two very effective characteristics that used to damage the caliphate: first, oppressiveness; second, sacredness.

Ma‘mūn wanted to take away that secrecy and camouflage from this combatting community once for all and draw the Imam (A.S.) for the revolutionary battle field to the political scene and, thereby, nullify the efficiency of the Shi‘ī movement that was on the rise as a result of that very secrecy and camouflage. Having done this, he had taken away those two efficient characteristics from the Alawid, because a community whose leader is a high-ranking figure at the caliphate apparatus is neither oppressed nor so much sacred”.¹

Summoning the Imam (A.S.) to Marv, of course, had this benefit for Ma‘mūn to keep Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) under surveillance, control the Shi‘as comings and goings, and to better identify and watch over the dignitaries of the Shi‘as; but he was never able to inflict any damage on the status of the Shi‘a Imamate.

1 *Insān-i 250 Sāli (250 Year-old Man)*, Statements of the Supreme Leader on the Political Combats and Struggles of Infallible Imams [A.S.], pp. 309-311

As it was said before, Ma'mūn's objective was entirely political. He intended to achieve his political goals by ruining the status of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) as the true successor of the Prophet (W.A.S.) and through strengthening the Abbasid rule.

3. 3. Ma'mūn's Fulfillment of his Vow.

Shaykh al-Ṣadūq relates a ḥadīth that Ma'mūn would call for Rayyān b. Ṣalt, a companion of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), and inquired him about the public opinion concerning heir apparency. Then, Ma'mūn recounted to him in detail that previously, due to the difficulties being posed to him, he had vowed that if he got to power he would hand it over its true owner. He said:

After I did not see myself secure from the harm of my brother Amīn and other rulers of the region, I found no better way to free myself than repenting to Allah of my sins, seek His assistance regarding these difficulties, and seek refuge with Him. Then I ordered that the attendants clean this house – (and he pointed to a room), and they cleaned it. Then I poured water over my head and made *ghusl* (major ablution), put on a white shirt and trousers and performed four *rak'as* of prayers in which I recited whatever of the Qur'ān I knew. I prayed to the Exalted Allah, sought refuge in Him, and sincerely made a strong covenant with Him that if He helps me overcome these difficulties, to return the right to its true place and to hand over the Imamate to its proper owner whom Allah has set. Then I calmed down and my sorrow disappeared.

Then, I sent Ṭāhir [b. al-Ḥasan dhū al-Yamīnayn] towards 'Alī b. Isa b. Māhān. With him things went on as I mentioned before. Again I sent

Harthamat b. A'yan to suppress Rāfi'[b. Layth b. Naṣr b. Sayyār], and he defeated him and killed him. I invited the governor of al-Sarīr¹ to make peace and sent him gifts; I treated him with kindness until he quit opposing me and made peace. I got stronger and stronger until what happened to my brother Muḥammad Amīn the way it did. And Allah turned all the caliphate affairs over to me and put me in power. Since my Lord fulfilled what I had asked Him for, I wanted to honor my covenant with my Lord, too. I saw that no one but Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā deserved the right to be in charge of this (caliphate). Therefore, I offered it to him, but he refused, except in the way that you know of. This was the reason for this allegiance for heir apparenacy.²

Shaykh al-Ṣadūq believes that at first Ma'mūn honestly intended to fulfill his vow and appoint the Imam (A.S.) as his heir apparent. He wrote:

I believe that Ma'mūn made him his successor and swore allegiance to him so as to fulfill the vow that was mentioned before, and Faḍl b. Sahl constantly incurred enmity to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and was in bad terms with him and did not like him, because he was reared among the Barmakids.³

This view can also be implied from the selected texts of Shaykh al-

1 A vast settlement between Lān and Bāb al-Abwāb bordering with Armenia and Caspian area (tr. Adopted from: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, Yaqut al-Hamawī, Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī, Beirut, 1399 AH, vol. 3, p. 218).

2 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 164, h. 22.

3 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 177.

Mufīd (d. 413/1022) and Abū al-Faraj Iṣfahānī (d. 356/966).¹

This view seems to be unacceptable, because:

Ma'mūn is the one who did not have mercy on his close relatives foe rising to power. How can one believe the he has presented the rule to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) without having any expectations?

Fulfilling one's vow is not consistent with resorting to force. If Ma'mūn wanted to leave this post to the Imam (A.S.) out of cordiality and devotion, he would not have consented to his displeasure, let alone threatening him to death.

A single narration on Ma'mūn's vow cannot outdo numerous narrations that express threatening him. There is no doubt that this utterance by Ma'mūn had arisen from his ingenuity so that he could introduce himself as lover of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.).

There is no talk of fulfilling a vow in narrations concerning Ma'mūn's insisting on Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); rather, Ma'mūn has only stated this to Rayyān b. Ṣalt – who was one of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) trustworthy companions and of course one of the administrators of Ḥasan b. Sahl and the Abbasid rule. Therefore, there are undoubtedly specific political motives hidden in this statement.

If Ma'mūn really wanted to do so for fulfilling his vow, he should have insisted only on bestowing caliphate and not heir apparenacy; as heir apparenacy has not been included in his vow.

If the Imam (A.S.) had known Ma'mūn's devotion to be deep and sincere, it was meaningless to treat the caliph unkindly.

¹ *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 259; *Maqātil al-Tālibiyyīn*, p. 376.

3. 4. Belief in the Imam's (A.S.) Rightfulness in Caliphate

This idea is common among the non-Shi'as. They say since Ma'mūn has had Shi'i thoughts, he intended to surrender heir apparenacy and caliphate to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). They believe that the caliph had from the beginning appointed 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his heir apparent with honest intention and that he had died a natural death. Ibn Khaldūn, Dhahabī, and Ibn Athīr can be regarded as among the proponents of this theory.¹

The apparent meaning of some of Ma'mūn's sayings in some meetings confirms this view. For instance, in two different sessions, Ma'mūn says:

O Son of the Apostle of Allah! I am aware of your erudition, excellence, asceticism, devotedness and piety, and I consider you as more deserving of the caliphate than myself.²

And I did not see anyone more competent for caliphate that Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.); thus, I appointed him as my heir apparent.³

Similarly, as reported by Ṭabarī, it is related in Ḥasan b. Sahl's letter as follows:

1 *Ta'rikh Ibn Khaldūn*, vol. 3, p. 310; *Ta'rikh Islām*, vol. 14, pp. 5, 13. Some Sunnī historians have regarded eating too much grapes as the cause for the Imam's (A.S.) death!! (*Ta'rikh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 7, p. 150; *al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rikh*, vol. 6, p. 351). Mas'ūdī adds to the saying of Ṭabarī and Ibn Athīr, "it is said that he had been poisoned". (*Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 441).

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 151, h. 3.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 164, h. 22.

Ma'mūn appointed 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) as his successor because he looked at the Abbasids and Alawids and found no one superior, wiser, and more pious than him and called him the Riḍā (consent) of the Household of the Prophet and told him to throw away the black clothes and to put on green ones.¹

This point is also asserted in a letter from Sahl b. Faḍl to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):

This is a letter out of firm intention and diligence from the commander of the faithful, 'Abd Allāh Imam, Ma'mūn, and also from me so as to give back to you what has been taken away from you oppressively and to fixate your rights in your own hands and to cut short the hands of others from it; and I have asked from Allah who is well aware of it that in this way I will be the happiest man in this world and be one of the felicitous and the conferrers of the right of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.).

And I will be your assistant so that I may help you to attain heir apparenacy and the goodness [of the two worlds].

When the letter reaches you – may I be your ransom – do not put it down until you set out for the threshold of the commander of the faithful (Ma'mūn); the one who sees you as his colleague, counterpart in genealogy, and the most deserving of all the people in what is in his possession...²

This view is compatible with the content of some traditions that

1 *Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 9, p. 390.

2 *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), Ja'far Murtaẓā 'Amilī, pp. 442, 443. Ja'far Murtaẓā has related this text from a manuscript.

narrated Ma'mūn's sayings; but it is not reconcilable with most of his actions against Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.); because:

Ma'mūn's sayings are somewhat pretentious and it is natural that the caliph would not easily disclose his real motives.

Historians such as Ṭabarī were also living in the Abbasid government and were indebted to the Abbasid rulers. Naturally, they would write in a way that the rulers wished.

These reports are not compatible with the various narrations according to which the caliph forced the Imam (A.S.) to accept heir apparenacy.

Similarly, how can forcing the Imam (A.S.) to accept heir apparenacy and threatening him to death be compatible with Ma'mūn's devotedness, Shi'ism, and sincere intention?

Numerous reliable texts suggest that the Imam (A.S.) refused the caliphate and heir apparenacy. If the caliph had goodwill, it was the Imam's (A.S.) right to accept heir apparenacy. Sayyid Murtaḍā wrote:

The one who is rightful can by every means reach his right; especially if he is entitled with an obligation for that right, then it would be obligatory for him to find the means and the path to way it. Imamate was Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) right because his forefathers had asserted it. So, when his right was usurped and then given back otherwise, it was incumbent upon him not to accept it until he would get it the right way, and there is no ambiguity in it, because the reasons for the Imam's (A.S.) deservingness prevents any doubt to involve.¹

1 *Tanzih al-Anbiyā*, p. 232.

He goes on to say that the only reason for the Imam (A.S.) to accept heir apparenacy had been fear and dissimulation:

Refusing to accept is useless for the one who is forced and imposed on; and in case of refusal [in such a position], it would wind up in overt contention, for which there has been no exigency here, and this is quite evident.¹

If Ma'mūn had proposed caliphate to the Imam (A.S.) honestly and with true intention of [approving] his deserving caliphate, it would have been meaningless that after accepting it, the Imam (A.S.) claim the following:

O Allah! You have forbidden me to kill myself with my own hand, and I have under pressure in a way that if I do not accept heir apparenacy, I will be murdered by Ma'mūn; and I have been forced to, just like the way Joseph and Daniel were forced by the despots of their time to accept the reign.²

According to what happened, it can be said that Ma'mūn's true intention by proposing caliphate as well as heir apparenacy has definitely been nothing but strengthening the Abbasids rule; but Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) alertness brought his plot to naught.

4. The Politico-Social Acceptance of Heir Apparenacy

Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) non-interference in the state's affairs and renouncement of all the authorities of the heir apparenacy, made Ma'mūn's plot encounter new problems. The Abbasids's discontent,

1 Ibid.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1; Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, p. 757, h. 1022.

non-submissiveness of the Alawids, and people's regarding the heir apparenly order as showy and pretentious were among the challenges faced by the ruling system. On the other hand, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) used this opportunity to propagate Shī'a thought, especially the issues concerning Imamate, in public meetings. Khurāsān turned into a safe center for the Alawids and many of the Shī'as set out for this land to meet the Imam (A.S.). The Imam's (A.S.) numerous scholarly meetings with various dignitaries and scientists of various religions also revealed the Imam's (A.S.) infinite knowledge to the public. Also, many of the renowned poets of the time, like Ibrāhīm b. 'Abbās, Di'bil b. 'Alī Khuzā'ī, Razīn b. 'Alī Khuzā'ī, and Abū Nuwās, came to the presence of the Imam (A.S.) in Khurāsān and composed poems in praise of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) that lasted for ever. Apart from Di'bil's popular elegy *madāris āyāt...* (the schools of Qur'an verses...) that was spread around in cities at that same time, the poems of the greatest poet of that time, Abū Nuwās, was published as a cultural document. When Ma'mūn asked Abū Nuwās why he did not attend the poet's meeting to say poems for 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, he said an impromptu poem, whose last two couplets are as follows:

[I was told] Why did you give up praising the son of Mūsā?

While most characteristics have been gathered in him?

I said [in reply], I cannot afford praising the Imam,

That Gabriel had been his father's servant.

Sometime later, when he met Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), he told the Imam (A.S.) that he had composed some poems for him as follows:

They are the purified, chaste and modest

Whenever they are remembered, saluted they are

Whoever is not Alawid when tracing their lineage
 They will have no honor since early times
 When Allah created people and maintained them
 He chose you and made you the select of mankind
 You are the Supernal Elite¹, and with you are
 The Book's knowledge and all that are given in the *Ṣūras* of the Qur'an.

In short! After Ma'mūn felt that the Imam's (A.S.) watchful encounter with his political proposal not only had frustrated his political intrigue but on the contrary, the Imam's (A.S.) popularity in the Muslim community had been increasing day after day and the usurped caliphate of the Abbasid had been put under pressure and barred from going on, he decided to imprison the Imam (A.S.) in Sarakhs for a while.² It seems that the Imam's (A.S.) imprisonment had taken place in the final months of his presence in that region. On the other hand, it is reported in a ḥadīth that some fabricated material attributed to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) had been rumored among people.³ It is not unlikely that this rumor had been spread against the Imam (A.S.) and the caliph had the intention to ruin the Imam's personality.

1 Referring to a Qur'ānic phrase in verse 8 of *Sūrat al-Ṣāffāt* and verse 69 of *Sūrat al-Ṣād*.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 183, h. 6. We found the report about the Imam's (A.S.) being imprisoned only in this ḥadīth and it was not seen in any other sources; however, the important point is that the *sanad* of the ḥadīth is "sound" and it is related in the ḥadīth that the Imam (A.S.) had been imprisoned in a house in Sarakhs, and while in jail, the jailers first prevented Abū al-Ṣalt to enter that house. This imprisonment had probably taken place on the way back from Marv to Ṭūs and then to Baghdad after decision about murdering the Imam.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 183, h. 6.

Abū al-Ṣalt went to the prison and after meeting the Imam, he told him it was rumored that, “you have claimed that people are your slaves.”¹ Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) got very upset upon hearing this rumor and raised his hands in prayer, saying:

O Allah! O Creator of the heavens and the earth! Knower of the manifest and the hidden! You are witness that I never said that, neither have ever heard any of forefathers saying it; You know what injustice these people have done to us, and this is one of them.²

In case this report is sound, this imprisonment must not have lasted too long; because, a while later the caliph gives the news about his army’s victory over the infidels to the Imam (A.S.) in his house (the place of imprisonment) and the Imam (A.S.) suggests him to return to Baghdad and he agrees. Before returning, Faḍl b, Sahl gets killed in Sarakhs and Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is martyred on the way to Ṭūs.

Seven. Raḍawī Narrations

Important incidents happened in the age of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), which have affected the number and types of the narrations related from him. These incidents can be summarized under such headings as “spread of theological thought” and “the *Wāqifiyya* sedition”

1. Spread of Theological Thought

Various theological thoughts appeared in that day of scientific and religious community in the second half of the second century AH.

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 183, h. 6.

2 See: h. 585.

Relative freedom in conveying thoughts and the intra-religious and out-religious debates were expanded day by day, to the extent that some circles were set up in Baghdad only for debate. For example, Yaḥyā b. Khālīd's house in Baghdad was a place for holding debate sessions between Muslims and non-Muslims.¹ These sessions further developed during Ma'mūn's reign. Translation movement and the relative freedom of expressing ideas, even in the caliph's court, were among the elements of these freedoms.

The official scholars, who had only half of the Prophetic narrations at their disposal through uncertain intermediaries, were not able to answer the new misconceptions and questions; for, a part of the misconceptions raised were basically rational and they were not answerable only through relating narrations. However, the Shī'ī theologians, who always had the favor of enjoying the clear fountainheads of knowledge, were endowed with a very better situation. On top of this trend, the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) appeared very splendid. He would answer the questions of the Muslim and non-Muslim theologians. Therefore, the theological narrations of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) are more voluminous in number than other narrations related from him.² It also seems the Imam's (A.S.) theological discourses to be more, comparing to other Infallibles. More than thirty percent of all the narrations left behind today from Imam

1 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 362.

2 The number of the Imam's (A.S.) theological narrations amounts to 818 in 355 pages and his jurisprudential narrations amount to 1038 in 290 pages. See: *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.)

al-Riḍā (A.S.) are related to theological issues. We can daresay that if Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) and Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) set the foundations of the Shi'ī jurisprudence in their own periods, so also Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) strengthened the foundation of Shi'ī theology, especially Imamate, more than ever in his period. The ideological discourses that were more manifest in society in this period and the Imam had talked about them are the following: Divine Unity (Attributes of Allah, vision of Allah, corporeality, predestination, determination and free will),¹ prophethood (introducing and exonerating them from faults and sins), and Imamate (almost all discourses related to it).²

Imam's (A.S.) different view about Divine Oneness – which contrasted the views common among the theologians of that time – prompted some individuals and groups to come to Khurāsān in the heir apparenity period out of curiosity to become familiar with the Imam's (A.S.) monotheistic views.

2. The *Wāqifiyya* Sedition

The beginning of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) Imamate coincided with the *Wāqifiyya* sedition. Cessation at the Imamate of the Seventh Imam and establishment of a deviated sect in Shi'ism created new misconceptions about the issue of Imamate in the intra-religious Shā'a circles and soon afterwards these misconceptions permeated outside. Exposure of religious questions and misconceptions, on one hand, and

1 See: *Al-Tawḥīd*, pp. 47, 113, 128; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, pp. 95, 96 and vol. 2, p. 374; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 117.

2 See: p. 101, Section Two: Ideological Maxims.

the rise of deviation in of deputies of Imam al-Kāzīm, on the other hand, prepared the ground more than ever for elucidating the issues of Imamate. Therefore, in this period, the discourses concerning Imamate were more clearly and overtly brought up by Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).¹ Such discourses were more outstanding in the Imam's (A.S.) heir apparenacy period. The following report to some extent displays the climate prevailing in Khurāsān.

It is related in a ḥadīth quoted from 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Muslim:

I was in Marv in the time of 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) and we had gathered in the Great Mosque on Friday. The people were discussing about Imamate and expressed different opinions existing about Imamate. I went to my sayyid and master Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and informed him of people's talk. He smiled and said, "O 'Abd al-'Azīz! The folk have inflicted by ignoranc and deceived in their beliefs; that is, they took whatever they considered to be religion and lost the truth, whereas, the Exalted Allah did not take the soul of His noble Prophet except that He had perfected religion for him and revealed to him the Qur'an, in which the details of everything is stated. All the things lawful and unlawful, the sanctions and ordinances, and that entire people require, are mentioned... And the Exalted Allah revealed this verse, ﴿Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion.﴾² And

1 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 200.

2 Q. 5: 3.

this was the last obligation [on the necessity of Imamate] that was revealed and after that no other obligations were revealed.¹

Then the Imam (A.S.) portrayed the status of Imamate for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in detail.²

Endeavors of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Ḥadīth

1. Emphasis on Dissemination of Ahl al-Bayt’s (A.S.) Ḥadīths

With respect to the expansion of the Sunnī’s ḥadīth circles and the existence of deviated theological groups in this period, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) warned the Shī‘as to be careful in adopting ḥadīth, lest they should adopt what the pseudo-transmitters of ḥadīth (our opponent’s fictionists) or the theologians far from the Ahl al-Bayt’s school of thought say; since they are among the idiots.³ The Imam (A.S.) tells his disciple companion, Abū al-Ṣalt:

May Allah have mercy upon the servant who revives our affair (*wilāya*).

Abū al-Ṣalt, who was himself among those interested in reviving the *wilāya*, asked how one should do this and he hears the following:

He should learn our knowledge and teach it to people; that if people learned of the excellence of our words, they would follow us.⁴

This precious saying is self-evident for encouraging the followers of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) to learn ḥadīth and spreading his knowledge,

1 See: h. 181.

2 See: p. 252 (The Role of Imamate in Completion of Religion and the Imam’s Characteristics).

3 See: *Ḥikmat Nāma-yi Raḍawī*, vol. 1, p. 110, h. 32.

4 See: *Ibid*.

especially that further on he tells Abū al-Ṣalt the knowledge has to be acquired from the learned [scholars]. In describing the scholars, the Imam (A.S.) says:

They are the learned of the household of Muḥammad, whom Allah has made their obedience as obligatory and their love and friendship as incumbent.

2. Ḥadīth Circles

Setting up various circles of ḥadīth by the Shī'ī thinkers, and above all, 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.), is among the eminent features of this period. Despite the deviated movement of the *Wāqifīs* and the damage done to the identity and solidarity of the Shī'as, there are various reports of the widespread referrals to the Imam in this period. These reports show that the people in Medina, Kūfa, Mina, and Khurāsān would eagerly take part in the Imam's (A.S.) sessions.¹

In 194/809, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) would hold sessions in Medina and he would relate traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) along with their *sanads*. The outcome of these sessions turned into the book *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), which Aḥmad b. 'Āmir Ṭā'ī has narrated.

Another transmitter of ḥadīth called Dāwūd b. Sulayman al-Ghāzī also attended such sessions and compiled the book *Musnad al-Riḍā* (A.S.). In some narrations, even the location of the sessions is also mentioned. For instance, the Imam (A.S.) has had a session in Dār Mu'āwiya Mosque in Medina.² It is worth mentioning that numerous

1 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 200.

2 *Ibid.*

circles used to be held in the presence of the Imam (A.S.) in Hijaz, where a great number of people would attend.¹

Extensive presence of people in such sessions, both in Medina and Khurāsān, has been frequently reported. When Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Naṣr Bazantī describes the Imam's session about Eid al-Ghadīr in Medina, he says:

We were with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and the meeting place was full. The day of al-Ghadīr was mentioned and some people denied it...²

This report indicates the substantial presence of various people and even opponents in the Imam's ḥadīth session. In this session the Imam (A.S.) expresses the traditions that the narrator says, "Bazantī has related these tradition over fifty times in different sessions".³ In Khurāsān, these sessions were not only decreased, they rather increased as well. In Ma'mūn's sessions, where the Imam (A.S.) was also present, the very expression "the session was packed with people"⁴ was exactly used and, even in some instances, the number of the audience was also reported:

'Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was in Marv and three hundred and sixty men from among his followers from various cities were in his

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 23. It can be implied for the evidences existing in the text these sessions were held in Hijaz and it is not clear whether it has been held Medina or Mina (*Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā li al-Rāwandī*, p. 160).

2 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 24, h. 9.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 415.

company.¹

3. Debate Sessions

Many argumentations have been reported from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), most of which are on Divine Unity and then Imamate. The Imam's (A.S.) debate with the atheists,² his argumentation with such people as Sulaymān Marwazī,³ debate with Muslim scholars,⁴ debate with proponents of Mu'tazilite thought,⁵ the Murjites,⁶ the Sunnī interpreters,⁷ or the dualists (*thanawīyya*),⁸ and similar instances, have been frequently reported. Ṭabrisī alone has reported 38 debates of the Imam (A.S.) in his *al-Iḥtijāj*. Two sessions have been much more outstanding among the Imam's (A.S.) debate. First, a long discussion with Ma'mūn about the prophets and their infallibility, in which the caliph started the session with the following words:

O Son of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.)! Did you not say that the prophets are infallible?

And when he hears the Imam's (A.S.) positive answers, he asks: "So, what is the meaning of the words of Almighty and Glorious Allah

1 *Al-Mujtanā*, p. 22. Also there have been mentions of the Imam attending these sessions in Marv.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, pp. 250, 269.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, pp. 441-454.

4 *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 313.

5 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 406.

6 *Tafsīr al-'Ayyāshī*, vol. 1, p. 18.

7 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 149.

8 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 269.

that said, ﴿Adam disobeyed his Lord, and went amiss﴾?

The splendor of this session is that the Imam (A.S.) answers him only with reference to the verses of the Qur'an. This clear-cut debate is reciprocal and lengthy, at the end of which Ma'mūn cannot hide his amazement. Thereupon, he says:

O Abū al-Ḥasan! I swear by Allah that the true knowledge is not found except in the hands of the people of this household and the knowledge of your forefathers have been bequeathed to you. May Allah grant you good reward from Islam and the Muslims!¹

Similarly, during the debate, Ma'mūn says the following again and again:

I bear witness that you are the rightful son of the Apostle of Allah.²

Narrative books, such as *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) and *al-Iḥtijāj*, have reported numerous sessions, in which Ma'mūn or the opponents have debated with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Ishāq b. Ḥammād – narrator of one of the important debate sessions – says, “Ma'mūn, used to hold debate sessions and gather the opponents of Ahl al-Bayt and talk to them about the Imamate of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.). He would always consider the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī (A.S.), superior to all the companions [of the Prophet – S.A.W.] in order to show himself close

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 200, h. 1.

2 Ḥasan b. Jahm, one of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) Shi'as present in the session, becomes delighted of M'mūn's honoring and respecting the Imam (A.S.), but the Imam tells him, “Be not deceived by the glory and respect you saw him giving to me, because he will soon kill me unjustly with poison. I know this through the advice I received from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) through my forefathers. As long as I am alive, do not say this to anyone.)

to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).¹ Ma'mūn, who was renowned among the caliphs as an erudite man, was again and again overwhelmed by the Imam's vast knowledge. At the end of one of these sessions he said to the Imam:

O Abū al-Ḥasan! May Allah not keep me alive after you! I bear witness that you are the inheritor of the Apostle of Allah's knowledge.²

The second important session of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is the debate session of the dignitaries and thinkers of various religions with him in Ma'mūn's court and in his presence. In this lengthy session, which had been held at the caliph's invitation and the chief of the East Nazarene (Catholicos), the chief of the Jews (Exilarch), and the Sabaeen and Zoroastrian dignitaries, as well as Naṣṭās Rūmī (the Christian scholar) and a group of theologians had participated in it,³ the Imam debated with them simply with reference to their own books such as the Torah and the Bible and convinced them.

In general, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) would hold numerous theological sessions. These sessions have been more widespread in Khurāsān. Ma'mūn has also been displeased with these sessions. Abū al-Ṣalt said:

Ma'mūn was informed that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) holds theological sessions and the peoples get fascinated by his knowledge.⁴

Of course, Ma'mūn could not tolerate the Imam's scholarly authority and popularity and had commissioned his chamberlain –

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, pp. 180-200, h. 1 and 2.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 86, h. 30.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, 417-441; *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 154.

4 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 172, h. 1.

Muḥammad b. ‘Amr Ṭūsī – to disrupt the Imam’s sessions.¹

4. Presentation of Ḥadīth and Instructing its Critique

One of the characteristics of this period is that fabrication of ḥadīth, besides being published among general public in society, was penetrating into the Shi‘a community under the disguise of affection and praising, as the Imam (A.S.) himself said:

The *ghālīs* (extremists) have ascribed to us traditions about determinism and assimilation (*tashbīh*); the *ghālīs* who have belittled the Divine magnificence.²

Presentation of ḥadīth caused many of the untrue ideas about Divine Oneness,³ such as determination, assimilation,⁴ etc., infallibility and the stories about the prophets and the like, to be eliminated.⁵

In a narration, the Imam (A.S.) has very systematically stated the origin of many fabricated narrations on such issues as the stories of prophets and the excellences of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.). In other words, the styles of ḥadīth critique in these kinds of Raḍawī narrations are worth deliberation. In a report, Ibrāhīm b. Abī Maḥmūd asks the Imam (A.S.) about some of the Sunnī’s narrations and tells Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), “O Son of the Apostle of Allah! There are narrations from you opponents with us about the excellences of the Commander of the

1 *Ibid.*

2 *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 414.

3 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 271.

4 See: *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, chapter 11.

5 For further details about presentation of ḥadīth, See: Articles by Mr. Abdu’l Hadi Mas’udi in *Faṣlnāma-yi ‘Ulūm-i Qur’ānī* (No. 6 & 9).

Faithful [‘Alī (A.S.)] and you the household [of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)], that I do not see the like of them in your narrations. Shall we believe in them?

After reminding a Prophetic narration on the importance of proper transmission of sayings, says the following in a very proper classification:

O Son of Abū Maḥmūd! Our enemies have fabricated three types of traditions on our excellences: exaggeration about us; belittling us; and asserting the evils of our enemies and swearing at them. When the people hear their traditions boasting about us, they accuse us of heresy and say that the Shī‘as believe in the Divinity of their Imams. When they hear their traditions belittling us, they will believe them, and when they hear the traditions about the wickedness of our enemies and their being sworn at, they swear at us, whereas the Exalted Allah says, ﴿Do not abuse those whom they invoke besides Allah, lest they should abuse Allah out of hostility, without any knowledge.﴾¹

O Son of Abū Maḥmūd! Abide by our path when the people deviate to the right or left, because we will be with whoever follows us. We will separate from whoever separates himself from us. The least thing that might lead one to abandon faith is to say that a pebble is a fruit stone and then to believe it and to renounce those who oppose his idea. O Son of Abū Maḥmūd! Commit to your memory and preserve what I told you, since the best of this world and the Hereafter is for you in these words.²

1 Q. 6: 108.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 304, h. 63.

5. Writing and Dictation of Ḥadīth

Various reports are in hand indicating that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) would compile the Prophet's (S.A.W.A.) sayings or his own sayings and supplications for his companions and sometimes he would dictate them to his disciples. Sometimes these texts were written in the presence of those requested them and sometime through correspondence. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Najrān says, "Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) wrote a ḥadīth from Imam Zayn al-'Ābidīn (A.S.) and then he read the same to me."¹

The Shī'as had also learned to relate the Imam's (A.S.) writings for one another.² Ḥusayn b. Sa'īd is among the ones who received the Imam's (A.S.) letters sent to Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm and recounted them for his disciples.³ It was even common to copy the Imam's (A.S.) handwritings and religious inquiries. In a narration, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Naṣr Bazantī said:

I copied a writing written in Imam's (A.S.) handwriting.⁴

There are 188 writings left behind from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), most of which, i.e. 111 writings, are on jurisprudence. Some of the most important writings ascribed to him are: *Kitāb al-Fiqh*,⁵ *Kitāb al-'Ilal*,⁶

1 *Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, p. 119.

2 See: *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 165, h. 44, p. 193, h. 26, and p. 265, h. 38.

3 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 364.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 7, p. 29, h. 1.

5 *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 406.

6 See: *Makātīb al-A'imma* (A.S.), vol. 5, pp. 95, 109.

the text of prostration prayer,¹ numerous written supplications,² and *Risāla-yi Dhahabiyya*.³

The late Ayatollah ‘Alī Aḥmadī Miyānjī, who has compiled the collected writings of the Imams (A.S.), has categorized Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) writings in number, as follows:

Divine Unity: 8; Imamate and miracles: 29; jurisprudence, 111; medicine: 1 (*Risāla-yi Dhahabiyya*); supplication: 13; preaches: 10; letters to *Wāqifiyya*: 7; political: 4; miscellaneous issues: 4.

6. Number of Ḥadīths

According to the latest research conducted on the compilation of Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) *ḥadīths*,⁴ the number of his traditions amounts to 2427.⁵ Various subjects of these narrations include:

Jurisprudential narrations: 1038.

Ideological narrations: 794.

Ethical narrations and preaches: 61.

Supplication narrations and argumentations: 118.

Exegetical narrations: 204.

Narrations about narrators and the miscellaneous traditions: 212.

It is worth mentioning that the number of Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) narrations in all the four books is 2301, which include 928 narrations

1 *Mahj al-Da’wāt*, p. 307.

2 *Mahj al-Da’wāt*, p. 307; *Al-Iqbāl*, p. 76.

3 See: *Risāla-yi Dhahabiyya* in medical maxims.

4 Although this research is not complete, it is the most perfect on this subject.

5 See: *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), ‘Uṭārōdī, (vol. 2). Of course this number consists of the repeated ones, too; but they are very few in this book.

in *al-Kāfi*, 208 narrations in *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, 793 narrations in *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, and 372 narrations in *al-Iṣṭibṣār*.

Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) narrations in the four books are mostly mentioned by the names of Abū al-Ḥasan (897 narrations), al-Riḍā (645 narrations), Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (592 narrations) and by other names such as: Abū al-Ḥasan al-Akhīr, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Thānī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māḍī, Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā, al-Khurāsānī, and Ibn 'Abd al-Ṣāliḥ.

Most of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) *ḥadīths* in number are on jurisprudence; however, in terms of volume, the number of the pages of the narrations on theology and ideology quoted from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is more than the other subjects.¹

Similarly, in the present book (Raḍawī Book of Wisdom), over 1800 instances of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) wise directives are compiled.

7. Training Disciples

Many narrators have been among the Imam's companions. Barqī² has named 62 and Shaykh Ṭūsī³ 318 of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.)

1 Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) jurisprudential narrations are also very varied and we can see narrations from him in almost all jurisprudential branches. Meanwhile, most of the branches of jurisprudential narrations are earmarked to foods and drinks (176), prayer (130), and marriage (118). Most theological narrations are related to Imamate (492). Thus, it is quite clear that in this period the issue of Imamate was well studied and its branches openly clarified.

2 *Rijāl al-Barqī*, pp.127-130.

3 *Rijāl al-Ṭūsī*, pp. 351-370. The narrations of the narrators mentioned in *Rijāl al-Ṭūsī* do not exist in narration texts today.

narrators. One of the contemporary researchers has compiled the names of 312 narrators of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) along with their narrations.¹ This number of narrators is obtained from the texts whose narrations are stated as *musnad* (through chain of transmitters); although, a part of the sources that have compiled Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) narrations such as *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, *Rawḍat al-Wā'izīn*, Rāwandī's *al-Nawādir* and Sayyid b. Ṭāwūs's works have stated the narrations as *mursal* (incomplete in chain of transmitters).

One of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) attempts can be viewed as his attention to the scholarly improvement of his disciples. In the period of the latter Imams, a considerable part of transmitters of ḥadīth have narrated indirectly from the previous Imams. There are great jurists and ḥadīth scholars seen among the Imam's (A.S.) narrators. The Imam's (A.S.) special attention to the narrators' ideas on jurisprudence and theology is very praiseworthy. For instance, while asking questions from Yūnus b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, the Imam (A.S.) tests his knowledge on determinism, free will, and will and then teach him their correct answers. Reminding the end of this session, Yūnus says:

I asked his permission to kiss his head and said, "You opened up a window to me, of which I was ignorant."²

In another session, Yūnus b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān along with Muḥammad b. 'Īsā discussed with the Imam (A.S.) about a jurisprudential branch (will of property) in detail and inquired about

1 See: *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, pp. 511-556.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 158.

its derivatives.¹

In Di‘bil’s poetry-reading sessions, the Imam (A.S.) teaches him – who has the art tool at his disposal – some issues about Mahdism that he would perpetuate them in the form of poetry.² Sometimes, the Imam (A.S.) asks his disciples about the accusations rife among people against the Shī‘as and teaches them how to answer. For instance, the Imam (A.S.) asks Ḥusayn b. Khālīd about the assimilation (*tashbīh*) narrations ascribed to the Shī‘a Imams:

Tell me, are the traditions you quoted about assimilation and determination from the Imams and my forefathers more or those you quoted from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)?!

Then the Imam (A.S.) teaches him how to answer in a person to person dialogue.³

The Imam’s (A.S.) disciples had found out quite well to write down whatever that was learnable. They carefully watched over the Imam’s (A.S.) gestures while talking and even while performing devotional acts and reported them. Narrators have narrated the way the Imam (A.S.) did supplications, circumambulated in *Hajj*,⁴ said farewell at the Holy House of Allah,⁵ performed prayers,⁶ as well as the way he did

1 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 200.

2 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 372.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 363; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 142.

4 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 16.

5 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 529; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, pp. 17 and 18.

6 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 320, h. 5; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 181, h. 5.

pilgrimage in the noble city of Najaf.¹

Some of Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) famous narrators, who have reported the most narrations from him in the Four Reliable Books and in *Wasā'il al-Shī'a*, are respectively as follows:

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Naṣr Bazantī, Muḥammad b. Sanān, Fḍl b. Shdhān, Muḥammad b. 'Ismā'il b. Bazī', Ḥasan b. 'Alī Washshā', Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Faḍḍāl Taymī, Ṣafwān b. Yaḥyā, Yūsuf b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, Sulaymān b. Ja'far b. Ibrāhīm Ja'farī, Aḥmad b. 'Āmir Ṭā'ī, Muḥammad b. Fuḍayl Ṣayrufī and Mu'ammir b. Khallād. These narrators have reported over forty percent of the narrations quoted from the Imam (A.S.).

The most important feature of the Shī'a scholars of ḥadīth in the time of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) is known to be founding the style for compiling ḥadīth collections. By topically compiling ḥadīth books and then compiling them in a collection, such as the collection of Ḥasan b. Sa'īd² and Ṣafwān b. Yaḥyā's *Thalāthīn Kutub*,³ or Yūnus b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān's *Jawāmi' al-Āthār* and *al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*,⁴ they innovated a new method that was pursued by other writers.⁵ In this period, holding ḥadīth debate sessions had developed in Shī'a settled cities. Ḥasan b. 'Alī Washshā' says:

1 *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, h. 41.

2 *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, p. 58; *Fihrist al- Tūsī*, p. 149.

3 *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, p. 197; *Fihrist al- Tūsī*, p. 241.

4 *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, p. 447.

5 *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, p. 254; *Fihrist al- Tūsī*, p. pp. 242, 266, 407, 408, 412, etc.

I saw seven narrators in Kūfa, who were engaged in debating on ḥadīth and saying, *qāl al-Ṣādiq, qāl al-Bāqir*.¹

8. Presence of Shī‘ī Narrators in Khurāsān

The short period of Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) stay in Khurāsān region made a group of the interested Shī‘as narrators of traditions come from Iraq and Hijaz to Khurāsān. The Shī‘as present in Khurāsān took great advantage of this opportunity and even from distant regions of Khurāsān, such as Transoxiana,² came to Marv and Sarakhs and the Imam’s (A.S.) residences to acquire doctrinal knowledge.

Some of the narrators who have travelled to this region are: Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā Qazāz,³ Ḥasan b. Jahm b. Bukayr b. A‘yan,⁴ Ḥasan b. ‘Alī Washshā’,⁵ Khalaf b. Ḥammād Asadī,⁶ Mūsā b. Sayyār, Rayyān b. Ṣalt Ash‘arī Qummī,⁷ ‘Abd al-Rāmān b. Yaḥyā, Di‘bil Khuzā‘ī, Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā ‘Umar b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Yazīd b. ‘Umayr b. Mu‘āwiya Shāmī,⁸ Mu‘ammar b. Khallād,⁹ and Muḥammad b. Sanān.¹⁰

1 *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, p. 40.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 88; *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 125.

3 *Al-Kharā‘ij wa al-Jarā‘ih*, vol. 1, p. 337.

4 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 200.

5 *Al-Kharā‘ij wa al-Jarā‘ih*, vol. 1, p. 364. He says, “We were in Marv with a man and a *Wāqifī* man was also with us.” This shows that a group of the *Wāqifīs* was still doubtful of the Imam’s (A.S.) Imamate till the final years of his life.

6 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 491.

7 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 198.

8 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 124.

9 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 198.

10 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 263. h. 1.

Eighth. Martyrdom and Pilgrimage

Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred with poison¹ in Ṭūs² on Friday,³ the last day of Safar⁴ 203⁵/ September 6, 818. His purified body was buried in Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba Ṭā’ī, in Sanābād village, one of Nawqān’s villages, in the land of Ṭūs.⁶

His noble age was 55,⁷ during twenty of which he undertook the Imamate of the Shī‘a.⁸

A. How his Martyrdom Happened

Various narrations are seen in sources about how Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was martyred. A part of these reports are inconsistent and cannot be reconciled. In this writing, we would review a portion of the

1 *Dalā’il al-Imāma*, p. 177; *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā*, p. 218; *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 303; *Majmū’a Nafīsa (Tāj al-Mulūk)*, p. 50; *al-Ansāb*, vol 6, p. 139.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 486; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 303.

3 *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā*; p. 128; *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 303; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, and vol. 2, p. 245 (it is worth mentioning that there are other views denoting it was Saturday, Monday, or Tuesday), *‘Awālim al-‘Ulūm*, vol. 22, p. 482; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 293.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 486; *al-Irshād*, p. 304; *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 303. There are other views in other sources: seventeenth of Safar, twenty first of Ramadan, thirteenth of Dhu’l Qa’da, twenty third of Dhu’l Qa’da, twenty fifth of Dhu’l Hijja, and the end of Dhu’l Hijja.

5 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 486; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *al-Irshād*, p. 304. Other views have mentioned the years 201, 202, and 206.

6 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 486; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 367.

7 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 83; *Al-Irshād*, p. 304, *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 303.

8 *Al-Irshād*, p. 304, *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 303; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 367.

most important narrations. Seven of Shaykh al-Ṣadūq's masters have conveyed these narrations to him.¹ These seven scholars have all related these narrations from their master 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm Qummī and he has related them from his father Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim, who had related them from Abū al-Ṣalt al-Haravī, the Imam's (A.S.) faithful companion.² It is related in this narration:

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told me, "O Abū al-Ṣalt! Tomorrow I will go to this wicked sinner; if I came out with bare head, talk to me and I will answer; but if I came out with covered head, do not talk to me."

... the next day his holiness put on his clothes and sat in his prayer niche waiting. As he was waiting, suddenly Ma'mūn's retainer came and said, Amīr has summoned you. The Imam (A.S.) put on his shoes, pulled his cloak over his shoulder, stood up, and set off. I followed him until he arrived to Ma'mūn. There was a basket of grapes and a basket of other fruits before Ma'mūn. There was a bunch of grapes in his hand, some of which he had already eaten. As soon as he saw the Imam (A.S.), he rose to his feet, hugged the Imam, kissed him on his forehead, and seated him next to him, and offered the grapes that he had in his hand to his holiness and said, 'O son of the Apostle of Allah! I have seen no better grapes than this.' The Imam (A.S.) told him, 'It is likely that they are good grapes from the Paradise!' Ma'mūn said, 'Eat from them.' The Imam (A.S.) said, 'Spare me from eating them.' Ma'mūn

1 These seven noble scholars are: Muḥammad b. 'Alī Mājilūya, Muḥammad b. Mūsā Mutawakkil, Aḥmad b. Ziyād b. Ja'far Hamdānī, Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad b. Hishām Mu'addiab, and 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh Warrāq.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 241, h. 1.

said, 'There is no way. Why don't you eat? Are you suspicious of me?' The Imam (A.S.) took the bunch, picked three grapes, put them in his mouth, and threw the rest on the ground and stood up. M'mūn said, 'Where are you going?' The Imam (A.S.) said: 'Where you have sent me to.' Then, he pulled his cloak over his head and left.

Abū al-Ṣalt said, "I did not talk to him until he entered the house. Then He said, 'Close the doors and do not let anyone in.' They closed the doors and the Imam (A.S.) lay down in his bed. A while later, I was sadly standing in the courtyard, when I saw a handsome curly-haired youth entered the house, who looked most like Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). I ran to him and said, 'The doors were closed; how did you come into the house?' He said, 'The One who brought me here from Medina at this moment, the same One took me into the house through the closed door.' I asked, 'Who are you?' He said, 'I am the proof of Allah to you, O Abā al-Ṣalt! I am Muḥammad b. 'Alī.' Then, he went toward his noble father, entered the room, and told me to enter with him. As soon as Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) saw his son, he rose to his feet, hugged him, and kissed him on his forehead and pulled him into the room with him. Muḥammad b. 'Alī was bending down and kissing his father and whispering to him something that I did not understand; but I saw some foamy saliva on Imam al-Riḍā's (A.S.) lips that was whiter than snow... Some moments later the Imam (A.S.) departed from the world.¹

B. The Imam's (A.S.) Pilgrimage Reward

The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and almost all the Imams have

¹ *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 241, h 1.

emphasized on the pilgrimage to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). Shaykh al-Ṣadūq has called the sixty sixth section of his *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) the “Chapter on the Reward for Pilgrimage to ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)” and has given 37 narrations on this subject. In most of these narrations, the Infallibles have regarded Paradise, forgiveness of sins, and the Ahl al-Bayt’s (A.S.) intercession as the reward for the pilgrims who visit the Holy Mausoleum of the Imam (A.S.) in Ṭūs with spiritual understanding. We set forth two of these narrations as a good ending to this writing:

Yāsir, the Imam’s (A.S.) servant said, “‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, ‘No trip will be prepared for pilgrimage to any grave, except for the pilgrimage to our graves, the Ahl al-Bayt’s. Indeed, I will be poisoned to death and buried in a strange land. Then, whoever travels for a pilgrimage to my grave, their supplications will be fulfilled and their sins forgiven.’”¹

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Whoever visits me despite a long distance and come to visit me from far away, I will come to them on three occasions on the Day of Resurrection to relieve them from the horrors of those states:

First, when the records of deeds are handed out from the left and the right, second, when passing over the *ṣirāt* (the bridge over Hell leading to Paradise) and third, when reaching the *mīzān* (balance) and

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 254, h 1.

one's actions are being examined and measured.”¹

O Allah! Grant peace and blessing upon ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā, the chosen one; the pious and the pure Imam; and Thy sign [for the people] on the surface of the earth and beneath the soil; the truthful, the witness; peace and blessings plentiful, complete, pure, consecutive, successive, uninterrupted; best of peace and blessing that Thou hast granted upon each one of Thy saints.²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 255, h 2.

2 *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, p. 301, h. 1.

Section One

Rational and Scholarly Maxims

Chapter One

Perfection and Effects of Wisdom

1/1

Value of Intellect

A. Divine Gift

1. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Abū Hāshim Ja‘farī: I was in the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and we talked about intellect and courtesy. The Imam (A.S.) said, “O Abū Hāshim! Intellect is a Divine gift and courtesy is an acquisition. Then, whoever tries to acquire courtesy, they will achieve it; and whoever tries to acquire intellect, they will but add to their ignorance.”¹

B. Prohibition of whatever Spoils Intellect

2. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Allah prohibited drinking wine because it causes corruption; it changes the intellect of the one who drinks it; it drives them to deny the Almighty and Glorious Allah and to ascribe

¹ *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 23, h. 18; *Tuḥaf al-Uqūl*: p. 448.

false accusations to Him and His Apostles. There are also other corruptions and malicious acts like killing.¹

1/2

Results and Signs of Intellect

A. Self-Knowledge

3. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** The most excellent intellect is self-knowledge.²

B. Knowledge of Allah

4. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Through Allah's manufactures, He is known to exist and by means of intellects, His knowledge is achieved; and by inner nature (*fiṭra*), His evidence [of existence] is approved.³

C. Rescue from Dangerous Situations

5. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Quoting from his forefathers from Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.): Allah did not entrust any human being with wisdom unless one day He rescued them with it.⁴

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 98, h 2; *'Ilal al-Sharāyī'*, p. 475, h. 1.

2 *Al-'Udad al-Qawiyya*, p. 292, h. 18; *Nuzhat al-Nāzir*, p. 44, h. 7.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 35, h. 2; *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 14, p. 151, h 51.

4 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 56, h. 79 from Dāwūd b. Sulaymān al-Ghāzī; *Nahj al-Balāgha*, C 407.

Chapter Two

Knowledge and Wisdom

1/2

Seeking Knowledge¹

6. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Knowledge gathers its seekers more than fathers [gathering their family members].²

7. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Quoting from his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): Wisdom is the believer’s lost belonging. So, seek it even if it is with the polytheist; because you are more deserving and competent for it.³

8. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Quoting from his forefathers from Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.): I heard from Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) who said, “Kings are commanders of people and knowledge is commander of the

1 See: *Mawsū‘at al-‘Aqā’id al-Islāmiyya*, vol. 1 (part four: knowledge).

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 131, h 12, from Ibrāhīm al-‘Abbās; *Bihār Al-anwār*, vol. 74, p. 175, h. 8.

3 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 625, h. 1290, from ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm b. al-‘Alawī al-Naṣībī from Imam al-Jawād (A.S.); *al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 167, h. 186.

kings.”¹

2/2

The Importance of Learning Ḥadīth

9. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Quoting from his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): Whoever from among my nation memorizes forty ḥadīths so that people would benefit from them, Allah would resurrect them as knowledgeable scholars on the Resurrection Day.²

2/3

Understanding Ḥadīth

10. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Quoting from his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): be knowledgeable of ḥadīth not its narrator. Understanding one ḥadīth is better than narrating a thousand ḥadīth [and not knowing its meaning].³

2/4

Signs of Knowledge and Wisdom

11. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Of the signs of understanding are forbearance, knowledge, and silence.⁴

1 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 56, h. 78, from Sulaymān al-Ghāzī; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 287, h. 34.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 131, h 12; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 49, h. 7.

3 *Taʾrīkh Isbahān*, vol. 1, p. 174, No. 173; *al-Faqīh wa al-Mutifaqqih*, vol. 2, p. 156.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 113, h. 1; *al-Khiṣāl*, p. 158, h. 202.

2/5

Rules of Conduct for Teaching Wisdom

12. *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā* – quoted from Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayda: I arrived in the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). The Imam (A.S.) sent for Ṣāliḥ b. Sa‘īd and we all got present and the Imam (A.S.) admonished us... and then said, “‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) said, ‘The philosophers (*ḥakīms*) ruined wisdom, because they taught it to the rascals’.”¹

2/6

Rules of Conduct for Asking from a Scholar

13. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib was in Kūfa Grand Mosque when a man from Shām stood up and said, “O Commander of the Faithful! I have some questions from you.” He answered, “Ask to understand, not out of obstinacy.”²

1 *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā li al-Rāwandī*, p. 160, h. 176; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 78, p. 345, h. 3.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 241, h 1; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 381, h. 7.

Section Two

Ideological Maxims

Chapter One

Faith

1/1

Meaning of Faith

14. *Maʿānī al-Akḥbār* – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt al-Haravī: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about faith. He said, “Faith is belief in the heart, expression by the tongue, and acting out by the body parts. Faith would not be other than these.”

15. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** in *Maḥḍ al-Islām* treatise: Faith is knowledge in the heart, confession by the tongue, and actions by parts [of body].

16. *Al-Amālī*, Mufid – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt al-Haravī quoting from Imam al-Riḍā from his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): faith is words spoken, actions done and knowledge by intellects.

Abū al-Ṣalt said: I recounted this ḥadīth in Aḥmad Ḥanbal’s [lesson] session; Aḥmad told me, “If these *isnād* are read to the insane,

they would recover!”¹

1/2

Difference between Islam and Faith

17. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** in *Maḥḍ al-Islām* treatise: Islam is something other than faith. Every believer is a Muslim; but every Muslim is not a believer. A thief is faithless while committing theft and an adulterer is faithless while committing adultery. Those who are subject to religious punishments (*ḥadd*) are Muslims; they are neither believers nor infidels. The Sublime Allah will not submit the believers to Hell, because He has promised them Paradise. He will not take the infidels out of the Fire, since He has threatened them to the Fire and an eternal stay in it. He will not forgive anyone who associates partners with Him. Except that, He will forgive any other sins that He wishes. Those sinners who believe in the Unity of Allah will not remain in the Fire eternally. They will finally be taken out of it and intercession is permissible for them. The land is now the land of *taqiyya* (dissimulation) since this land is only the land of Islam; it is neither the land of infidelity nor the land of faith. It is obligatory to enjoin good and forbid evil when possible, that is when it would not endanger one’s life. Faith includes returning what we are entrusted with, and keeping away from all major sins. It is knowledge in the heart, confession by the tongue, and actions by parts [of body].²

1 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 275, h. 2; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 36, h. 39.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 125; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 100, h. 1.

1/3

What are Obligatory to Have Faith in

18. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever bears witness to the Oneness of Allah and His matchlessness, exonerates Him of what does not befit Him and bear witness that power, strength, will, volition, creation and command, and predestination all belong to Him and that the servants' actions are created by discretional creation rather than genetic creation; and bears witness that Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) is the Apostle of Allah, and 'Alī and the Imams after him (A.S.) are proofs of Allah; and loves their lovers and be enemy to their enemies; to keep away from major sins, admits to *raj'a* (return of the Riser of Ahl al-Bayt – A.S.) and the two *mut'as* (that of temporary marriage and 'Umra pilgrimage); and have faith in the Ascension, questioning in the grave, the Kawthar pond, intercession, Paradise and Hell being created, the *ṣirāt* (the bridge over Hell leading to Paradise), Resurrection, revival of the dead, reward, and reckoning, then he/she is the real believer and among the followers of us, the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.).¹

1/4

Levels of Faith

19. Al-Kāfi on the authority of Yūnus: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about faith and Islam. He said, "Abū Ja'far (Imam al-Bāqir – A.S.) said, 'The basis is Islam; and faith is one level higher than that; and God-wariness is one level higher than faith; and certitude is one level

¹ *Ṣifāt al-Shī'a*, p. 129, h. 71; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 69, p. 69, h. 11.

higher than God-wariness; and nothing less than certitude has been distributed among people’.

I asked, “What is certitude?”

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S) said, “Trust in Allah, contentment with Divine decree, and entrustment [of all affairs] to Allah.”

I asked, “How is this interpreted?”

He said, “Abū Ja‘far (Imam al-Bāqir – A.S.) said so.”¹

20. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): When he was asked about the word of Allah to Abraham, ﴿“Do you not believe?”﴾ He said, “Yes indeed, but in order that my heart may be at rest.”² as to whether he was in doubt. The Imam answered, “No, he was certain; but he asked Allah to add to his certitude.”³

1/5

Pillars of Faith

21. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Faith has four pillars: trust in the Almighty and Glorious Allah; contentment with His decree; surrender to Allah’s command; and entrustment [of all affairs] to Allah. A pious servant [of Allah] has said, ﴿and I entrust my affair to Allah. Indeed Allah sees best the servants. Then Allah saved him from their evil schemes.﴾⁴

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 488, h. 2; *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 43, h. 20.

2 Q. 2: 260.

3 *Al-Mahāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 851; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, p. 176, h. 34.

4 Q. 40: 44-45. *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 354, h. 1268; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 56, h. 5.

1/6

The Effects of Faith and the Features of the Faithful

22. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): No servant would fully achieve the truth of faith unless he/she has three features: acquiring knowledge of religion; discreet administration of livelihood; and patience for misfortunes.¹

23. *Al-Maḥāsīn* – on the authority of Sulaymān b. Ja‘far from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O Suyalmān! The Blessed and Exalted Allah created the faithful of His Light, shaded them in His Mercy, and secured their covenant for our guardianship (*wilāya*). Therefore, the faithful are brothers of the same parents; their father is Light and their mother Mercy. So, be wary of the believer’s acumen, since they see with Allah’s Light, by which they have been created.²

24. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.), from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The one who transacts (associates) with the people and does not wrong them, talks to them and does not lie to them, and promises them and does not break it, is among those whose generosity is perfect, whose justice is evident, brotherhood with them is obligatory, and backbiting them is unlawful.³

1/7

Rights of the Faithful

25. *Qaḍā’ al-Ḥuqūq al-Mu’min*: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was asked:

1 *Tuḥaf al-Uqūl*, p. 446; *al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 66, h.11.

2 *Al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 131, h. 396; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 67, p. 73, h. 1.

3 *Al-Khiṣāl*, p. 208, h. 28; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 239, h. 28.

What is the believer's right upon the [other] believer? The Imam answered: among the believer's right upon the believer is to have affection for them; help them with their property; and assist them against those who wrong them; if the Muslims have spoils or tributes, take their share for them; when they die, escort their funeral; do not wrong them; do not deceive them; do not betray them; do not backbite them; do not call them liar; do not say to them "fie on you"; that if they do so, there would no longer be a friendship bond between them; and if one of them tells the other one, "you are my enemy", one of them has counted the other one as infidel. Whenever they slander the other one, faith will fade out in their heart just like salt dissolving in water.¹

¹ *Qaḍā' al-Ḥuqūq al-Mu'min*, p. 35, h. 45; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 171, h. 7.

Chapter Two

Knowledge of the Almighty and Glorious Allah

1/2

The Value of the Knowledge of the Almighty and Glorious Allah

A. Beginning of Worship

26. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Beginning of worshipping Allah is to know Him.

B. Foundation of Religion

27. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Religiousness is not achieved unless after knowledge; and knowledge is not attained unless through sincerity.

C. Unwavering Stronghold

28. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: When Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was leaving Nayshābūr, I was with him and he was riding a gray mule. Then Muḥammad b.

Rāfi‘, Aāmad b. al-Ḥarb, Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā, Ishāq b. Rāhawayh, and some of the scholars grabbed the mule’s rein at Marba‘a¹ and said, “By your purified forefathers, narrate a tradition to us from your father.”

The Imam (A.S.) brought his head out of the carriage while he was wearing a double-sided fur cloak. He then (A.S.) said, “My father Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.) –the good-doing servant – narrated that his father Ja‘far b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) narrated on the authority of his father Abu Ja‘far Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (A.S.) – the cleaver of the Knowledge of the prophets – on the authority of his father ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (A.S.), the Master of the youth in Paradise - on the authority of his father ‘Alī b. ‘Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), on the authority of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said that the Almighty and Glorious Allah say, “I am Allah. There is no god but Me. Worship Me then. Whoever of you sincerely bears witness that “There is no god but Allah” will enter My Stronghold. And whoever enters My Stronghold is secure from My punishment.”²

1 The late Badī‘ al-Zamān Furūzānzādeh said in the edited introduction to the translation of *Risāla-yi Qushayriyya* (p. 16), “In this city [Nayshābūr], there were special bazaars for artisans and traders, the most important of which was the large intersection bazaar (*al-marba‘at al-kabīra*) and the other one was the small intersection bazaar (*al-marba‘at al-kabīra*) that were...” Therefore, it is not unlikely that what is meant by *marba‘a* in the above ḥadīth is one of these two intersections; possible the large one.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, pp. 24, h. 22; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 134, h. 1.

2/2

Rules of Knowing Allah, the Almighty and Glorious

A. Allah’s Grace

29. *Qurb al-Isnād* on the authority of Bazantī: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Do people have any role in knowing [Allah]? He said, “No.”

I said, “Is there a reward for them for it?” He said, “Allah bestows reward upon them as He bestows knowledge upon them.”

B. Inner Nature and Intellect

30. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Through Allah’s manufactures, He is known to exist and by means of intellects, His knowledge is achieved; and by inner nature (*fiṭra*), His evidence [of existence] is approved.¹

31. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** In response to the question asked by a man from among the atheists, “What is the reason for the existence of Allah?” He answered, “When I looked at my body and saw that I could not add to its length or width, subtract from it, remove diseases from it, or attract benefits to it, I found out that this building has a Builder. Then I acknowledged it. In addition, when I saw the movement of the heavenly sphere by His power, the creation of the clouds, the movements of the winds, the sun, the moon, and the stars and other amazing manifest signs, I knew that these have a Designer and Creator.

1 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 254, h. 4; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 2, h. 28.

C. *Wilāya* of (Devotion to) the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

32. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever is delighted to see Allah without a veil and Allah sees him/her without a veil, then he/she should accept the *wilāya* of Muḥammad’s (S.A.W.A.) household, be aversive of their enemies, and follow them as the leaders of the faithful. Thereby, when the Day of Resurrection comes, Allah will look at him/her without a veil and he/she will see Allah without a veil.¹

3/2

Oneness of Allah

A. Meaning of Oneness

33. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā b. ‘Ubayd: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told me, “If someone tells you, “Tell me if Allah is a thing or not.”, what do you say?”

I said, “Allah has mentioned Himself as ‘thing, where He said, ﴿Say, “What thing is greatest as witness?” Say, “Allah! [He is] witness between me and you.”﴾² Therefore, I say, “He is a thing, but not like other things; because denying thingness requires His refutation and negation.”

He said, “You said the truth and you are right.”

Then he said to me, “People are of three opinions about Oneness: negation (*ta’ṭīl*); assimilation (*tashbīh*); and proof (*ithbāt*) without

1 *Al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 165; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 27, p. 90, h. 42.

2 Q. 6: 19.

assimilation. The idea of negation is not permissible. The idea of assimilation is not permissible, either; because nothing is like the Blessed and Exalted Allah. The true path is the third idea; namely, proof without assimilation.”¹

34. *Al-Tawhīd* – on the authority of Ja‘far b. Muḥammad Ash‘arī from Faṭḥ b. Yazīd Jurjānī: I wrote to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and asked him something about Oneness. The Imam (A.S.) wrote back to me in his own handwriting. Ja‘far (the narrator) said, “Faṭḥ showed me the letter and I read it in Abū al-Ḥasan’s (A.S.) own handwriting:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. All praise belong to Allah who inspired praise to His servants, created them in accordance with knowledge of Divinity, guided to His Being through His creation, by createdness of his creatures to His eternity, and by their being identical to His uniqueness. He made His signs as evidence to His power; Allah whose essence cannot be described, who cannot be seen with eyes, the imaginations cannot imagine Him, His being does not have a beginning, His surviving has no ending.

Senses do not encompass Him, veils do not cover Him; the veil between Him and His creatures is their createdness, because what is possible to their essence is impossible to Him, and what His Essence refuses is possible to their essence; and because there is a difference between the Maker and the made, the Lord and the servant, and the Limiter and the limited.

He is One, not in the sense of number. He is Creator, not in the

¹ *Al-Tawhīd*, p. 107, h. 8 and p. 101, h. 10; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 3, p. 262, h. 19.

sense of movement [of limbs]. He is All-hearing, not with by a means [ear]. He is All-seeing, not by blinking an organ [like eyes]. He is present, not by touching. He is separate, not by having a distance. He is hidden, not by being covered. He is apparent, not by being face-to-face. Eyes cannot see into His true essence and imaginations cannot reach His true Being.

The beginning of religion [and belief in Allah] is His knowledge, and the perfect knowledge is to know Him as One, and knowing His perfect Oneness is denying the [extra] attributes [ascribed] to Him; because every attribute testifies that it is other than the attributed one, and every attributed one testifies that it is other than the attribute, and both testify to their duality, which is not compatible with eternity. So, whoever describes Allah, has limited Him and whoever limits Him, has numbered Him, and whoever numbers Him, has nullified His eternity. Whoever says, “What is He like?” has wished Him to be described; and whoever says, “Wherefore is He?” has known Him to be upon something; whoever says, “Where is He?” has regarded some place empty of Him; and whoever says, “How far is He?” has set a time for Him.

He was a Knower when there was nothing known; He was a creator when there was nothing created; He was a Lord when there was no servant; He was worshipped when there was no worshipper. [Indeed] Thus is our lord described and He is beyond what the describers describe Him.¹

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 56, h. 14; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 139, h. 5.

B. Value of Oneness

35. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): Oneness is half religion.¹

36. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): “*lā ilāha illallāh*” is a great and dignified expression to the Almighty and Glorious Allah. Whoever utters it with sincerity, will deserve Paradise; and whoever utters it falsely [out of disbelief] their property and souls are secured, but they are doomed to the Fire.²

C. Reason for Oneness

37. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – In response to a dualist man who said, “The creator of the world is two. What is the reason for His Oneness?” He answered, “Your saying ‘He is two’ is a reason for His being One; because you claim the second just when you have proven one. Then, there is consensus for One Allah; it is more than one that is disagreed on [and you, who claim the second Allah, must prove it].³

D. Oneness in Worship

38. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in the treatise *Mahḍ al-Islām* –: The pure Islam bears witness that There is no god but Allah, the One Unique Allah, the One Allah, Unitary, Independent, Self-subsisting, All-hearing, All-seeing, Omnipotent, The Everlasting, The Eternal, Omniscient

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 47, h. 24; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 35, h. 75.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 23, h. 18; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 3, p. 5, h. 13.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 270, h. 6; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 3, p. 228, h. 18.

without ignorance, The All-powerful without inability, The All-sufficient without need, the Just without injustice, and indeed the Creator of all things, to whom nothing is like. He has neither a parallel, nor an opposite nor a peer nor any equal; and He is the object of worship, supplication, and hope and fear.¹

E. The Lowest Level of Knowledge

39. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): In response to the question about the lowest level of knowledge: professing that there is no god but Him, that He has no parallel nor an equal; He is eternal, an Existent that is never lost, and nothing is like Him.²

4/2

Names of Allah and His Attributes

A. Meanings of Allah's Names

40. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Muḥammad b. Sanān: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about name. He said, "It is a quality for a qualified."³

41. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Know that no quality is without the qualified and no name without meaning [the possessor of the name]

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 121, h. 1; *Tuḥaf al-ʿUqūl*, p. 415.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 86, h. 1; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 283, h. 1.

3 ʿAllāma Majlisī says, "It is a quality for a thing qualified", that is a sign that denotes an essence. Then quality is other than essence. Or, its meaning is that: the Names of the Almighty Allah denote qualities that are true for him, or what is meant here by name is what we mentioned before; that is the general concept as the subject of the word.

and no limit without limitation. Attributes and names [of Allah] all denote the perfection of [His] existence and they do not signify confinement such as *tarbī'* (quadrangle), *tathlīth* (triangle), *tasdīs* (hexangle); because the Almighty, Exalted, and Glorified Allah is known by names and attributes and He is not understood by limitation to length, width, scarcity, excess, color, size and the like; and nothing of these apply to the Almighty and Glorious Allah so that His creatures can know Him by knowing themselves, according to the necessity we already mentioned.

Nevertheless, the Almighty and Exalted Allah's attributes denote Him and He is perceived by means of His Names....

If the Attributes of Allah – glorified by His praise – do not denote Him and His Names do not invite to Him, and the creature's knowledge does not reach their meaning, people would be worshippers of His names rather than their meaning; if it was otherwise, the Worshipped One would be other than the Exalted Allah, since the names and attributes are other than Him.¹

B. Creational Names

42. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whenever hardships befall you seek assistance from Allah through us. This is the word of Allah, ﴿To Allah belong the Best Names, so supplicate Him by them.﴾² Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) said, “By Allah, these Best Names are us, and no one's [actions and devotions] would be accepted except through our knowledge.

¹ *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 437, h. 1; *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 174.

² Q. 7: 180.

Then, supplicate Him by them.”¹

C. Supreme Name

43. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever says, *Bismillāh-ir Raḥmān-ir Raḥīm. Lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā bi Allāh al-‘Alī al-‘Azīm*, for one hundred times after morning prayers, it would be nearer to the Supreme Name of Allah than [the nearness of] the pupil to the iris; indeed, the Supreme Name of Allah is within these words.²

44. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): *Bismillāh-ir Raḥmān-ir Raḥīm*, is nearer to the Supreme Name of Allah than [the nearness of] the pupil to the iris.

D. What is to be Observed in Describing Allah

1. Describing Him as He has Described Himself

45. Imam al-Jawād (A.S.): A man addressed Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said, “O Son of the Apostle of Allah! Describe your Lord to me; because our scholars are disagreed about it.”

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Whoever describes their Lord by analogy is always wrong, deviated from the path, diverted to distortion, lost on the way, and speaking disagreeable words.

I know Allah as He has made Himself known: invisible; and describe Him as He has described Himself: without a face; not perceived by senses and not compared with people; known without being compared. He is near, although [seemingly] far, but without

1 *Tafsīr al-Ayyāshi*, vol. 2, p. 176, h. 1662; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 143, h. 4.

2 *Muhaj al-Da‘awāt*, p. 379; *Kaf amī*, *al-Miṣbāh*, p. 411.

equal. He is not compared to His creatures and does not do injustice in His judgment. People would be led where He knows and pass through what has been written in the Hidden Book [destiny]; they do nothing except what He knows and do not seek otherwise. Then, He is near, without adhering. He is far, but accessible. He is real, but not by similitude. He is One and without parts. He is known by signs and proven by marks. Then, there is no god but Him, the Great and the Exalted.”¹

2. His Attribute of Oneness

46. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – in describing the Almighty and Exalted Allah: He is One but not in the sense of number.²

3. His Attribute of Knowledge

47. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)**: Allah’s knowledge of the things before creating them is like His knowledge of the things after creating them.³

4. His Attribute of Power

48. ***Al-Tawḥīd*** – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Arafa: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Did Allah create things with His power or without His power?

He answered, “It is not permissible [to say] that he has created things with His power; because if you say, ‘He has created things with His power,’ it seems as if you have taken power as something other

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 47, h. 9.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 255, h. 4; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 23, h. 28.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 107, h. 4; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 145, h. 13.

than Him and taken it as a tool, by means of which He has created things, and this is polytheism. Similarly, if you say, ‘He has created things with power,’ then, you have described Him as having created them by His authority and power over them; but He is not weak and incapable and not in need of others.¹

49. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Faḍḍāl: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O Son of the Apostle of Allah! Why did Allah create creatures in different species and not in a single species?

He said, “So that it would not make someone believe that He is incapable; and no image forms in any atheist’s mind unless Allah has created it; and that no one would say can Allah create such and such an image unless they would find it among the creatures of Allah – The Blessed and Exalted – and that by looking at different species of creatures, they would know that He is capable of everything.”²

5. His Attribute of Aliveness

50. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority of Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān: I said to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.): It is related to us that Allah is [the very] Knowledge in which there is no ignorance, Aliveness in which there is no death, Light in which there is no darkness. He said, “So he is.”³

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 130, h. 12; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 117, h. 7.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 75, h. 1; *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, p. 14, h. 13.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 138, h. 12, o. 137, h. 11; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 4, p. 84, h. 17

6. His Attribute of Hearing

51. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Our lord is called “Hearing”, not in the meaning that He has an ear hole through which He hears [only] sounds, but does not see anything with it, like us who have ear holes to hear with but not to see with; rather, He Himself has informed us that no sound is covered from Him, but not in meaning that we are called hearing. So we share the name “Hearing” [with Allah], but the meaning is different.¹

7. His Attribute of Seeing

52. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in response to one of the atheists: We said, “He is Seeing, but not with eyes”; because He sees the footstep of an ant on a black stone at a dark night; he sees the movement of the ant at the dark night and sees [and knows] its loss and benefit, the result of its mating, its eggs, and progeny. This is where we say, “He is Seeing but not like His creature’s seeing.”²

53. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): He hears with what He sees and sees with what He hears. He is Seeing, not with the eyesight similar to the eyesight of the creatures; He is Hearing, not with the hearing similar to the hearing of the creatures; however, since nothing of the footsteps of a tiny black ant on a solid stone at the dark night beneath the ground or in the seas is left hidden from Him, we said He is Seeing, not with something similar to the eyesight of the creatures.³

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 121, h. 2; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 188, h. 2.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 252, h. 3; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 133, h. 3.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 65, h. 18; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 4, p. 292, h. 21.

8. His Attribute of Will

54. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Wishing and will are among the attributes of actions. So, whoever believes that Allah always wills and wishes, is not a Monotheist.¹

55. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Verily, Allah has two kinds of will and wishing: indispensable and intentional. He prohibits while He wishes, and commands, while He does not wish. Did you not see that He prohibited Adam and Eve from eating from [the fruit of] the tree, whereas He wished it so, and if He did not want them to eat, their wishes had never prevailed the wish of the Exalted Allah; and He commanded Abraham (A.S.) to sacrifice Isaac while He had not wished him slain; and if He had wished Abraham's wish had never prevailed Allah's wish.²

9. His Attribute of Speech

56. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): the Interlocutor of Allah, Moses son of 'Imrān (A.S.) knew that Allah was too Exalted to be seen with the eyes; but since Allah talked to him and whispered to him up close, he returned to his folk and informed them that Allah had talked to him, drew him near, and whispered to him. They said, "We will not believe in you unless we hear His Voice, too, like you did.

Folk of Moses (A.S.) consisted of seven hundred thousand people. He selected seventy thousand people from among them; then selected seven thousand from among them, and then seven hundred, and

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 338, h. 5; *Mukhtaṣar Baṣā'ir al-Darajāt*, p. 77.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 151, h. 4; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 64, h. 18.

finally seventy people for the tryst that Allah had set; and took them to the Mount Sinai, kept them at the mountainside, went up the Mount, and asked Allah – The Blessed and Exalted – to talk to him to deliver His talk to his people. Then, Allah – Exalted is His Remembrance – talked to him and they heard His Speech from above, bellow, right, left, behind, and front; because the Almighty and Exalted Allah conversed into the tree and then dispersed it through the tree so that they heard it from every side.¹

10. His Attribute of Light

57. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of ‘Abbās b. Hilāl: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about this saying of the Exalted Allah, ﴿Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.﴾²

He said, “It means it is guidance for the inhabitants of the heaven and guidance for the inhabitants of the earth.”

And it is related in Barqī’s narration, “It has guided whoever is in heaven and whoever is on the earth.”³

11. His Attribute of being the Manifest and the Hidden

58. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): [Allah is] Manifest, but not meant to be touched; Apparent, not meant to be seen. [He is] Hidden, but not meant to be apart [from other things].⁴

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 121, h. 24; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 200, h. 1.

2 Q, 24: 35.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 115, h. 4; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 155, h. 1.

4 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 255, h. 4; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 23, h. 28.

59. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): [Allah is] Hidden, but not by being covered. [He is] Manifest, but not by appearing to sights.¹

12. His Attribute of Rising up (*Qiyām*)

60. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): He is Arisen (*Qā'im*), not in the meaning of rising up and standing on foreleg in travail, such as things that stand up; rather, “He is *Qā'im* in the meaning of guardian; like when one says, “such and such is guardian of our command” and Allah is the Guardian of any person in what he/she has acquired; and *Qā'im* in people’s language means subsisting. Another meaning of *Qā'im* is chargé d’affaires, like when you tell someone to be “in charge of such a person’s affairs”. The *qā'im* from among us (humans) stands on his/her feet. So, we [Allah and us] are common in name but are not common in meaning.²

13. His Attribute of being Creator

61. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Any maker of something makes it out of something; but the Creative, Accurate, and Majestic Allah has created and made [the world of being] from nothing.³

14. His Attribute of Generation

62. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on purification of the Supreme Being: He had the Truth of Lordship when there was no object of Lordship; He had the Truth of Godhood when there was no servant; He had the

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 56, h. 14; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 140, h. 5.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 121, h. 2; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 188, h. 2.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 119, h. 2; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 63, h. 18, and p. 186, h. 1.

Truth of Knowledge when there was nothing known; He had the Truth of Creation when there was nothing created; He had the Truth of Hearing when there was nothing heard. He did not become deserving of the Truth of Creativeness since He began to create¹ and did not enjoy the Truth of creativeness with the generation of the creatures. How is this possible, whereas the word “since” does not make him absent [at some times], and the word *qad* (probably) [which is a sign of temporal nearness] does not get Him near [to certain times], and the word *la’alla* (perhaps) does not veil [between Allah and His desire], and the word “when” does not make Him time-bound; and the word “while” does not encompass Him; and the word “with” does not make Him accompany anything?! Tools limit themselves [not the Allah]. A tool points at its like.²

15. His Attribute of Being Dominant

63. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): ... As for dominant (*al-Qāhir*), it does not mean overwhelming with endeavor, suffering, deception, tolerance, and slyness in the way that the servants dominate each other, whereby the dominant turns dominated and the dominated turns the dominant. Rather, Allah’s – The Exalted and Almighty – being dominant means that He has clothed all His creatures in a garment of humiliation toward their Creator and lack of resistance to His Will. Not an eye’s wink will pass to His command of “Be!” that it will be; whereas, the dominant from among us is as I mentioned and described. Thus, we

¹ Because He had the competence of creating before Creation, too.

² *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 38, h. 2; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 152, h. 51.

[and Allah] are common in the name [of *qāhir*] and the meaning is different; all names are as such, although we did not gather them [in this discourse].¹

16. His Attribute of Being All-Aware

64. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): As for All-Aware (*al-Khabīr*): It means that nothing is hidden from Him and will not remain concealed from Him; but this being All-Aware does not originate from experiencing and taking lessons from things, because there are two types of knowledge in experiencing and taking lessons and if these two did not exist, there would be no knowledge; and the one who is like this [and his knowledge is acquired through experience and lessons] has been ignorant before, whereas the Exalted Allah had been aware of what He had been creating. But *khabīr* among the people is the one who is ignorant and seeks to become aware. Thus, we [and Allah] are common in the name; but the meaning is different.²

17. His Attribute of Nearness

65. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in description of Allah (The Glorious and Exalted): ... He is far, not in distance; He is near, not in [terms of] place.³

66. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in description of Allah (The Glorious and

1 Given the rest of the Imam's (A.S.) discourse, it means that the semantics of other names that are not mentioned in his sayings, is on the same basis.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 122, h. 2; *al-Tawhīd*, p. 189, p. 189, h. 2.

3 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 255, h. 4; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 23, h. 28.

Exalted): ... He is near, not being attached, and He is far, not being distanced.¹

18. His Attribute of Being Planner

67. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): He administers everything that He has created.²

19. His Attribute of Being the Preordainer

68. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Know that the One (*Wāḥid*), who rests on no predestination (*taqdīr*) or restriction, has created a creation which has been predestined and restricted, and what He created of two [types]: predestination and the predestined. So, there was no color, taste, and weight in any of these two. Then, he made one of the two [in such a way] to be understood by the other and made both of them known by themselves [that are understandable without needing anything else].³

E. Necessities of Divine Transcendence

1. Negation of Equal for Him

69. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in response to one of the atheists who asked, “What quality is Allah and where is He?”: “Woe on you! What comes to your mind is wrong. He created place without [Himself] having a place and created quality without [Himself] having a quality.

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 47, h. 9; *Tafsīr al-Ayyāshi*, vol. 2, p. 337.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 122, h. 2; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 189, h. 2.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 438, h. 1; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 176, h. 1.

So, He is neither recognized by quality nor by place. He is neither comprehend by senses nor measured by something.”¹

70. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – stating the reason why it is necessary to admit that Allah does not have an equal: For several reasons ... including that if it was not necessary for people to admit that Allah does not have any equal, they would indeed be allowed to ascribe to Him attributes such as inability, ignorance, change, vanishing, annihilation, falsehood, and violation that are ascribed to the creatures and the one who has these attributes is subject to annihilation and there is no trust in his justice, speech, commands, prohibitions, promises, threats, rewarding and punishing. He would not actualize, and this will result in the destruction of creation and invalidation of His Lordship.²

2. Negation of Limitation

71. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on transcendence of Allah (The Almighty and Glorious): If behind is regarded for Allah, He would have front and if perfection is needed for Him, deficiency would be required for Him.³

3. Negation of Division

72. Al-Tawḥīd – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh Khurāsānī, Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) attendant: A man from among the

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 78, h. 3; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 31, h. 28.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 103, h. 1.

3 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 258, h. 4; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 24, h. 28.

atheists arrived in the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said, “Describe to me Allah’s limitation.” He said, “He does not have a Limitation [and is not limitable].” The atheist said, “Why?” The Imam (A.S.) said, “Because every limited one is barred by its limit and when it is limitable, it would be increasable too, and when it is increasable, it would be reducible, as well. Therefore, Allah does not have limit and He is not increased, decreased, nor divided, nor He is conceivable.¹

4. Negation of Drowsiness or Sleep

73. *Biḥār al-Anwār* – on the authority of Ḥusayn b. Khālid: Abū al-Hasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) recited the verse, ﴿Allah – There is no god except Him – is the Living One, the All-Sustainer. Neither drowsiness befalls Him nor sleep.﴾^{2,3}

5. Negation of Movement

74. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in description of Allah (The Glorious and Exalted): He is the Administrator; but not with movement [of thought and limbs].⁴

6. Negation of Needfulness

75. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Allah (The Exalted and Glorious) did not create the Throne because He needed it. He is needless of all the

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 250 and 252, h. 3; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 132, h. 28.

2 Q. 2: 255.

3 *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 92, p. 263, h. 6.

4 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 255, h. 4; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 23, h. 28.

things He has created.¹

7. Negation of Being Seen

76. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the Oneness of Allah (The Exalted and Glorious): He has been known by not being seen and described by not having a form, and depicted by not having body. There is no god but the Great and Exalted Allah.²

77. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – about the verse, ﴿The sights do not apprehend Him, yet He apprehends the sights﴾³: The fancies of the heart do not apprehend Him; then, how would the sight of the eyes apprehend Him?!⁴

78. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh Khurāsānī, Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) attendant: A man from among the atheists arrived in the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). A group of people were in Imam’s (A.S.) presence. The man asked, “Why does not the sense of sight perceive Him?”

He answered, “It is because of the difference between Him and His creatures that human and non-human’ sense of sight cannot perceive Him. Furthermore, He is too magnificent to be seen by sight or pictured by imagination or grasped by intellect.⁵

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 320 h. 2; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 132, h. 28.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 105, h. 3; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 98, h. 5.

3 Q. 6: 103.

4 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 494, h. 673; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 99, h. 11.

5 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 250, h. 3; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 132, h. 28.

Chapter Three

Divine Ordainment and Predestination

1/3

The Status of Divine Ordainment and Predestination in Creation

79. *Al-Mahāsīn* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Ishāq: Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.)¹ said to Yūnus, a relative of ‘Alī b. Yaqtīn, “O Yūnus! Do not talk about predestination (*qadar*).”

He said, “I do not talk about predestination; rather I say: Nothing comes into being except through Allah’s will, providence (*mashī’a*), ordainment (*qaḍā*), and predestination.”

The Imam (A.S.) said, “But I do not say so; rather, I say: nothing comes into being except through Allah’s providence, will (*irāda*), predestination, and ordainment.” Then he said, “Do you know what providence is?” “No.” He answered.

The Imam (A.S.) said, “To intend something. Do you know what

¹ What is meant of Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) here can be Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.) or Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).

will (*irāda*) is?” “No.” He said.

The Imam (A.S.) said, “To complete providence.” Then he said, “Do you know what predestination is?” “No.” He said.

The Imam said, “To engineer and determine the length and width and duration of life.”

Then he said, “Verily, when Allah desires something, He wills it; and when He wills it, He ordains it; and when He ordains it, He predestines it; and when He predestined it, He would carry it out.”¹

80. *Al-Maḥāsin* – on the authority of Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Nothing comes to being except what Allah desires and wills and predestines? He answered, “Nothing would come to being except when Allah desires, and wills, and He predestines, and ordains.”

I asked, “What does desire mean?”

He said, “Beginning of Work.”

I said, “What does ‘He wills’ mean? He said, “Establishing the work.”

I asked, “What does predestination mean?” He said, “Determining the length and width of something.”

I asked, “What does ordainment mean?” He said, “When He ordains something, He carries it out; it is then that there is no return [and it is finalized].”²

1 *Al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 1, p. 380, h. 840; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 122, h. 69.

2 *Al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 1, p. 380, h. 839; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 150, h. 1.

2/3

Predestination of Servants' Actions

81. *Al-Tawhīd* – on the authority of Ḥamdān b. Sulaymān: I wrote to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) asking whether the servants' actions are created or uncreated.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) wrote, “The servants' works have been predestined in Allah's knowledge two thousand years before creation of the servants.”¹

82. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): “Two thousand years before creation of Adam, Allah (the Almighty and Glorious) predetermined measures and made arrangements.”²

3/3

The Meaning of Predestination of Actions

83. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – in the ḥadīth of *Maḥḍ al-Islām*: Allah (The Blessed and the Exalted) Allah does not task any soul beyond its capacity. The servants' actions are created by the Exalted Allah; but by predestined creation, not by genetic creation. Allah has created everything. We do not believe in predetermination and free will. Allah does not reproach the innocent for the guilty, nor does He punish children for their fathers. ﴿No bearer shall bear another's burden﴾³

1 *Al-Tawhīd*, p. 416, h. 16; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 136, h. 34.

2 *Al-Tawhīd*, p. 376, h. 22; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 141, h. 39.

3 Q. 35: 18.

﴿and that nothing belongs to man except what he strives for.﴾¹ Allah is entitled to forgive and do favor. He does not do injustice, because He transcends doing this.²

84. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Burayd b. ‘Umayr b. Mu‘āwiya Shāmī: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “The servants do not do anything good or evil except that Allah has an ordainment (*qaḍā*) in it.”

I asked, “What is the meaning of this ordainment?”

He said, “Judging them according to their actions by giving them reward and punishment in this world and the Hereafter.”³

1 Q, 53: 39.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 125, h. 1; *Tuḥaf al-Uqūl*, p. 421.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 124, h. 17; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 398, h. 304.

Explication of Divine Ordainment and Predestination and its Relation to Divine Judgment

Ordainment and predestination issue, which is also recalled as “destiny” and “dispensation”, is one the important theological and philosophical issues. This issue is of high importance in the Qur’an’s sciences (*ma‘ārif*) and Ahl al-Bayt’s traditions (A.S.) traditions, since according to one of Imam al-Ṣādiq’s (A.S.) traditions, one of the features of the Qur’an is that it has presented the knowledge of “ordainment and predestination” and the *ma‘ārif* related to this important issue; and the one who is not aware of this Qur’anic knowledge is, in fact, neither aware of the truth, nor of the Qur’an, nor is he devoted to the Qur’an.¹

The information that can be obtained with the blessing of the Qur’an and the traditions of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) in relation to ordainment and predestination includes: the meaning of ordainment and predestination, their characteristics and types, the role of *badā’* (change in the earlier Divine decree) in them, their role in creation, their role in predicaments and adversities, their

¹ *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, p. 4.

role in man's actions, their role in happiness and misery, and man's role in them.

This issues are so intermixed with the warp and woof of the Qur'anic *ma'ārif* that without their understanding, it is impossible to properly comprehend this Reveled Book. Similarly, their proper cognition would pave the ground for belief in ordainment and predestination, contentment with them, and achievement to pinnacle of human perfections.

One. *Qaḍā* and *Qadar* in Terminology

Qaḍā (ordainment) in Arabic, from the root *q-d-y*, means prescribing, fixating, and setting something in its due place.

Similarly, *qadar* (predestination), from the root *q-d-r*, means amount and measure of something; and *taqḍīr*, means specifying the measure of something.

Two. *Qaḍā* and *Qadar* in the Qur'an and Ḥadīth

Qaḍā and *Qadar* have various applications in the Qur'an and ḥadīth. According to a ḥadīth from Imam 'Alī (A.S.) the word *qaḍā* has ten different applications in the Qur'an;¹ but in this discourse, *qadar* means the engineering of objects and their measuring; and *qaḍā* means ordaining their fulfillment.

In other words, every phenomenon to be fulfilled requires preliminaries for which *qaḍā* and *qadar* are two of their important and

1 *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 93, p. 18.

essential preliminaries; one is measurement and the other ordainment to be fulfilled. In explanation of the first preliminary, Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.) said:

It [*Qadar*] is measurement in length, width, and durability.¹

In another ḥadīth, he said:

Estimation (*taqdīr*) of the object is in its length and width.²

Similarly, it is related in a ḥadīth from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):

It [*qadar*] is specifying the limits of the preordained life-span, daily sustenance, survival, and passing away.³

Thus, before performing something and bringing any phenomenon into being, the Almighty Allah first determines its existential limit in any aspect. That limit is called *qadar* and this action is called *taqdīr*. After *taqdīr*, the turn comes for the second preliminary, i.e., *qaḍā*. Interpreting this preliminary, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) says in a ḥadīth:

Qaḍā is endorsement and bringing into being.⁴

In this stage, the Almighty Allah actualizes in the world of being what He has predestined. In other words, the objective existence of any phenomenon is in fact establishing its predestined existence.

Therefore, *qadar* is prior to *qaḍā*, although *qaḍā* comes first in writing and speaking for convenience.

1 *Al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 380, h. 840; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 122, h. 69.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, 150, h. 1.

3 *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, p. 24; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 117, h. 49.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, 157, h. 4; *al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 380, h. 840; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 122, h. 69.

Three. Warning against Inquiring about the Secret of Qadar

The deliberative point in familiarization with the science of *qaḍā* and *qadar*, whose importance is revealed by knowledge of the Qur'an, is that in Islamic teachings, searching for finding out the secret of *qadar* is strongly prohibited. The message of the ḥadīths about this issue is that attempting to acquire knowledge of *qaḍā* and *qadar* is desirable but attempting to learn the secret of *qaḍā* and *qadar* is forbidden and undesirable.

In other words, awareness of the meaning and different types of *qaḍā* and *qadar*, the role of *qaḍā* and *qadar* in: creation, adversities, human actions, happiness and unhappiness, and similar issues include among the knowledge of *qaḍā* and *qadar*, which is not only desirable, but it is necessary, too; but trying to know “why the Exalted Allah has *taqḍīr* in such an instance and other *taqḍīr* in another instance” is trying to find out the secret of *qaḍā* and *qadar*, which is not only undesirable, but prohibited, as well.

The wise reason for this prohibition is that:

Firstly, access to it is normally impossible, just as Moses (A.S.), in his accompanying the pious servant, could not understand the secret for making a hole in the ship, killing the boy, and repairing the wall by the pious servant and for this reason, he protested to him; but, when he revealed the secret of his actions to him, he found out that he was right.¹ Thus it is related in ḥadīths:

¹ See: Sūrat al-Kahf, verses 65-82.

Qadar is the secret of Allah; then, do not task yourself to learn it.¹

Takalluf means putting oneself in trouble and here it means the secret of *qadar* is an issue that Allah's wisdom has concealed it. Thus, man must not task himself or get into trouble to obtain it; because he won't succeed. Such phrases as "a dark way" and "a profound sea" about the cognition of the secret of *qadar* also refer to man's inaccessibility to this secret.

Secondly, man's perfection takes place in light of his unconditional obedience and surrender to the Exalted Allah and contentment with his ordainment; and this goal is in conflict with the secret of *qadar*.

Thirdly, awareness of the secret of *qadar* is not only helpful, but for some people it is also harmful, too; like when someone finds out that the reason for his trouble has been his being born from adultery!

Fourthly, since in the order of creation one cannot find out the secret of *qadar*, the outcome of his attempt for discovering it would be nothing but bewilderment and probably misguidance.²

Four. The Important Features of *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

Although the secret of *qadar* is hidden from man, Divine decrees have five important features that are essential to know about:

1. *Qaḍā* and *qadar* are two of Allah's actions, two of His creature, and two of world's phenomena, whose qualitative and quantitative change are subject to His will.

2. All Divine decrees are good and there are no bad *qaḍā* and *qadar*

1 *Al-Firdaws*, vol. 3, h. 4703; *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, vol. 10, p. 262, h. 10606.

2 See: *Dānishnāma-yi 'Aqā'id Islāmī*, vol. 8, p. 167 (Avoiding to think about *qadar*).

in the order of creation.

3. All Divine decrees are wise and there is no unwise action in Allah's actions.

4. All Divine decrees are based on justice and there is injustice in the order of creation that is ascribed to Him.

5. All Allah's decrees in the life of the faithful are ultimately to their benefit, although apparently seems harmful for them.

Five. Different Types of *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

Qaḍā and *qadar* are divided into several types in terms of being legislative and genetic, unavoidable and avoidable:

1. Legislative *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

The legislative *qadar* means that the Exalted Allah has measured man's voluntary actions and as per their benefits and evils has divided them into obligatory, preferential, unlawful, detestable, and permissible. He has also determined the amount of their reward.

The legislative *qadar* is that Allah has issued the command of execution of the legislative *qadar*, as Imam 'Alī (A.S.) says in a ḥadīth interpreting *qaḍā* and *qadar*:

Commanding to obedience and prohibiting disobedience ... and promise and threat, encouragement and warning are all Allah's *qaḍā* about our acts and His *qadar* for our actions.¹

Similarly, it is related from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) on the interpretation of *qaḍā*:

¹ *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 492, h. 129; *Kanz al-Fawā'id*, vol. 1, p. 363.

It is ordainment on them for their acts deserving reward and punishment in this world and the Hereafter.¹

2. Genetic *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

The genetic *qaḍā* and *qadar* are in two types: the genetic *qaḍā* and *qadar* about the creation of creatures, which means measuring and issuing the command for their creation; and the genetic *qaḍā* and *qadar* about human actions, which means that Allah has granted man the power and ability to choose and execute tasks to a limited and specific measure and it means executing these measures.

It is worth-mentioning that the limited power that is left to man does not impede Allah's possession and domination of man's actions. The genetic *qaḍā* and *qadar* neither cause predetermination nor free will.

3. The Inevitable and Suspended *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

The inevitable (*maḥtūm*) *qaḍā* and *qadar* are unchangeable; but the suspended (*mawqūf*) *qaḍā* and *qadar* is dependent upon conditions and it would fulfill if those conditions are fulfilled; otherwise, it won't.

Six. Meaning of Faith in *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

Given the above discourses, the meaning of faith in *qaḍā* and *qadar* would be clarified. In sum, faith in *qaḍā* and *qadar* consists of: admitting that all the phenomena of the world (including what is related to man and what is not related to him) are dependent upon

¹ *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 124, h. 17; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 398, h. 304.

Divine *qaḍā* and *qadar* and Divine decrees neither cause determinism nor free will.

Therefore, what has been narrated in a number of ḥadīths as to “A servant is not faithful unless he believes in *qadar*, either good or bad, and knows that whatever befalls him and whatever he is deprived of are among Divine decrees” is in fact one of the true evidences of faith in *qaḍā* and *qadar*; because the one who believes in Allah’s predestination clearly knows that what happens in his life and what does not, either good or bad, beautiful or ugly, are all based on Divine decree.

Seven. The Importance of Faith in *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

Since faith in Divine ordaining is coupled with negation of the role of other than the One Allah in administrating the world of being, it is one of the main pillars of Monotheism. It is related in a ḥadīth from the Holy Prophet (S.A.):

Faith in *qadar* is the substructure of Monotheism.¹

In many ḥadīths it is emphasized that as far as man does not enjoy faith in Divine ordaining, he would not enjoy the blessings of real faith. Similarly, the one who claims to be a Muslim and denies *qadar* would be called *kāfir* (disbeliever), *majūsi* (Magian), and *mal’un* (cursed).²

However, it is also important to be noted that faith in *taqdīr* is not only in accord with prudence and planning for a better life, but prudence and endeavor are also a kind of *taqdīr*, as the Qur’an puts it:

1 *Al-Firdaws*, vol. 1, h. 114, h. 385; *Sīyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5, p. 343.

2 Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, vol. 1, p. 35, h. 92; *al-Mu’jam al-Awsat*, vol. 4, p. 368, h. 4455.

﴿and that nothing belongs to man except what he strives for.﴾¹

The verse means that in the world of creation, according to Divine predestination, man only benefits from his own striving. Accordingly, employment of medicine, supplication, and other means is useful for man, as it is related in a ḥadīth from the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.):

Cure is a part of predestination and it is sometimes effective with permission from Allah.²

On this basis, if some ḥadīths denote the inconsistency of prudence and predestination, they definitely intend differently.

Eight. The Effects of Contentment with *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

One of the important Islamic teachings is contentment with Divine ordaining, which means the Muslim, after striving for achieving a desirable life, should be content with what comes up and is out of his control. Many ḥadīths have encouraged Muslims to acquire this trait in order to benefit from the outcomes and blessings of this excellent trait by strengthening its factors and removing its obstacles.

Contentment with Divine *qaḍā* and *qadar* brings along many blessings for man's individual, social, this-worldly, and other-worldly life.

Contentment with *qaḍā* would free man from avarice and jealousy and brings along spiritual self-sufficiency for him.

Contentment with *qaḍā* causes man not to be afraid of anyone other than Allah and to carry out his social responsibilities

1 Q. 53: 39.

2 *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 12, p. 131, h. 12784; *Kanz al-'Ummāl*, vol. 10, p. 5, h. 28081.

courageously.

Contentment with *qaḍā* gives man power to combat against different types of worldly calamities and prevent from other-worldly troubles.

Contentment with *qaḍā* removes sorrow from the heart, creates joy, brings about peace and tranquility, and creates the best and sweetest life for man. As it is related in a ḥadīth from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.):

The most successful people in life are those who are content with Allah’s dispensation.¹

In short, contentment with *qaḍā* is the most important element in human perfection and the highest rank in human excellences, and in fact, the very station of the perfect man.²

4/3

Preordaining Happiness and Unhappiness

85. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Preordainment of happiness of the one who has faith and is God-wary and the unhappiness of the one who does not have faith and is disobedient is outlined by Allah (The Blessed and Exalted).³

86. *Qurb al-Isnād* – on the authority of Bazantī: I requested Imam

1 *Ghurur al-Ḥikam*, h. 3397

2 See: *Mizān al-Ḥikam*, (Persian translation): under the entries *khursandī* (contentment) and (certainty), vol.4, p. 474, “contentment is the highest level of certainty”; and vol. 13, p. 577, “The ultimate goal of faith is certainty”. Also, for detailed familiarization with the Qur’anic and ḥadīth discourses of *qaḍā* and *qadar*, see: *Dānishnāma-yi ‘Aqā’id Islāmī*, vol. 8 and 9.

3 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 355, h. 1270; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 154, h. 4.

al-Riḍā (A.S.) to pray for a woman from our family who was pregnant. He said, “Abū Ja‘far [Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.)] has said, ‘Prayer is [effective] as long as no more than four months has passed [from pregnancy].’”

I said, she has less than that.

Then, the Imam prayed and said, “The drop of fluid in the womb is [remains] for thirty days, a clinging mass for thirty days, a fleshy tissue for thirty days, and for thirty days it has perfect creation and [probably] it does not. When the four months is completed, Allah (The Blessed and Exalted) sends two creator angels to it in order to form it and outline its livelihood, life span, and happiness or unhappiness.¹

¹ *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 353, h. 1262; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 16, h. 6.

Explanation of the Meaning of Human Happiness and Unhappiness before his Birth

It is implied from the outward meaning of the recent ḥadīth and similar ḥadīths¹ that happiness and unhappiness are congenital and human beings' happiness and unhappiness are determined before their birth. In other words, whoever is happy in his mother's womb, he would also be happy in his life after birth; and if he had been ordained to be unhappy in his mother's womb, he would be unhappy after birth, too.

According to this impression, the question rises as to: Doesn't this ḥadīth denote that human beings are forced to follow the path of happiness and unhappiness?

Before answering this question, it is necessary to note that belief in predetermination means denying man's presential knowledge of his free will and freedom as well as meaning to ascribe oppression and evil act to the Exalted Allah and that in case of predetermination of man's actions, religion, Shari'a, and ethical values would be meaningless. According to this indisputable point, Divine *qaḍā* and *qadar*, including

¹ See: *Dānishnama-yi 'Aqā'id-i Islāmī*, vol. 9, pp. 65-75.

preordaining man's happiness and unhappiness is definitely to be interpreted in such a way that it wouldn't lead to man's being forced (predetermined) to choose his way of life.

Taking this ḥadīth into consideration, it can be said that this ḥadīth refers to one of the following concepts:

1. Allah has knowledge of human beings' happiness and unhappiness before their birth, The Exalted Allah knows the fate of all human beings before their birth; but it is clear that Allah's Eternal Knowledge is not the reason for occurrence of man's acts. In other words, the Almighty Allah knows what way every person chooses in life by his own will and choice. With this presumption, man is not forced to choose a good or evil way of life. This interpretation of ḥadīth is exactly related from Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.):

Unhappy is the one whom Allah knows that from the very time he is in his mother's womb he would act as the unhappy; and happy is the one whom Allah knows that from the time he is in his mother's womb he would act as the happy.¹

In clearer words, if the meaning of the ḥadīth in question was that the Exalted Allah has created a group of people naturally happy and believer and some other people naturally unhappy and unbeliever, the people were forced to follow the path of happiness and unhappiness; whereas, it is not so and the Creator of the world has not created anyone unhappy and unbeliever and has created all naturally Monotheist (*muwaḥḥid*), as it is related in a ḥadīth from Imam al-

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 356, h. 5; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 157, h. 10.

Şādiq (A.S.):

Allah created all his creatures surrendered and commanded and prohibited them; and unbelief would join the unbeliever when he commits unbelief. When Allah created man He did not create him an unbeliever. Indeed, the servant became an unbeliever when he received proof from Allah and truth was presented to him, but he denied them. So, he became an unbeliever because of denying the Truth.¹

2. Happiness is Ordained for the Believer and Unhappiness for the Unbeliever

Another meaning that can be rendered for the ḥadīth is that the Exalted Allah has ordained happiness for the children in their mothers' wombs who Allah knows would in the future choose the right way of life and profess faith and has ordained unhappiness for the children in their mothers' wombs who Allah knows would in the future choose the wrong way of life and blaspheme, as it is related in a ḥadīth from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.):

Knowledge took the lead, the pen was dried, and the ordainment was endorsed by Allah for the book to realize, for the prophets to be confirmed, and for the happiness of every believer and God-wary, and for the unhappiness of every denier and unbeliever and for the guardianship of Allah over the believers and His disavowal from the polytheists.²

Therefore, happiness and unhappiness, although ordained by Allah,

1 *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, pp. 212 and 222, h. 223; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 18, h. 29.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 343, h. 13; *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 20, p. 210.

are maintained for man according to the faith and piety, unbelief and denial – which are human voluntary actions.

3. Human Choice in the World of Preexistence is Effective in his Happiness and Unhappiness

The third meaning for the ḥadīth in question is that according to some traditions human choice in the world of preexistence (*dhar*), a world prior to the present world, has been in development of his disposition, that is to say, those who had chosen the right path in that world, their disposition in this world is inclined to choose the right path, too, which lead to their happiness; and those who had chosen the wrong path, are naturally inclined to evil acts, which lead to their unhappiness, although those tending to evil can choose the right path and those inclined in good acts can choose the wrong path, as in both cases there is no reluctance.

Summing Up

It seems that the meaning of the ḥadīth in question is the first ḥadīth that is related from Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.) and the second meaning is somehow related to the first meaning; but as for the third meaning, besides being based on belief in the world of preexistence, which is in itself a problem, requires further examination, since its application to the ḥadīth, “Happy is happy in his mother’s womb...” is difficult.

It is worth-mentioning that other ḥadīths that are related on this issue, although do not refer to the ḥadīth in question, can be utilized in their interpretation and explanation.

5/3

Predestination of Obligations, Excellences, and Sins

87. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): Actions have three modes: obligations, excellences, and sins. Obligations are by the command, pleasure, ordainment, predestination, providence, and knowledge of Allah (The Glorious and Exalted). Excellences are not by Allah’s command; but they are by Allah’s pleasure, ordainment, predestination, providence, and knowledge. Sins are not by the command of Allah either; but they are by Allah’s ordainment, predestination, providence, and knowledge. Then, He punishes for them.

6/3

Negation of Predetermination and Free Will

A. Invalidation of Predetermination

88. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): One day Abū Ḥanīfa left the presence of Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) and faced Imam al-Kāẓim (A.S.) and told him, “O Young man! Who is sin and disobedience from?”

The Imam (A.S.) said, “It is not out of three modes: it is either from Allah (The Glorious and Exalted), which is not so because it does not behoove the Beneficent to punish His servant for something he has not done.

Or it is from Allah (The Glorious and Exalted) and the servant, which is not so either; because it does not behoove the powerful partner to wrong His weak partner.

Or it is from the servant, which is certainly so. Then, if He

punishes him, it is for his sins and if He forgives him it is because of His beneficence.”¹

89. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. Abū Maḥmūd: I asked Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) about this statement of the Exalted Allah: ﴿and [Allah] left them sightless in a manifold darkness.﴾² He said, “Allah’s (The Blessed and Exalted) leaving is not like that of His creatures; rather, when He knows that they would not abandon unbelief and misguidance, He would refuse them His favor and assistance and leaves them to their own choice.”

I asked him about this statement of the Exalted Allah: ﴿Allah has set a seal on their hearts and their hearing.﴾³

He said, “Sealing is stamping on the hearts of the unbelievers for their unbelief; as Allah (The Glorious and Exalted) said, ﴿Allah has set a seal on them for their unfaith, so they do not have faith except a few.﴾⁴

I asked, “Does Allah force His servants to commit sins?”

He said, “[No.] He gives them the option and respite to repent.”

I asked, “Does He obligate His servants to do what they are not able to do?”

He said, “How would He do so when He says, ﴿and your Lord is not tyrannical to the servants.﴾?⁵

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 96, h. 2; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 138, h. 37.

2 Q. 2: 17.

3 Q. 2: 7.

4 Q. 4: 155.

5 Q. 41: 46.

Then, he said, “My father Mūsā b. Ja’far related on the authority of his father Ja’far b. Muḥammad, who said, “The one who believes that the Exalted Allah obligates His servants to commit sins or to do what is not in their capacity, do not eat the meat he has slaughtered, do not accept his bearing witness, do not say prayer behind him, and do not give him anything of the *zakat*.¹

B. Invalidation of Free Will

90. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Yāsir, the Imam’s attendant: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): What do you say about free will (*tafwīḍ*)? He said, “Allah (The Glorious and Exalted) entrusted his religious affairs to His Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and said, ﴿Take whatever the Apostle gives you, and relinquish whatever he forbids you﴾;² but not the affairs of creation and giving sustenance.” Then he said, “Allah says, ﴿Allah is creator of all things﴾.³ And says, ﴿It is Allah who created you and then He provided for you, then He makes you die, then He will bring you to life. Is there anyone among your partners who does anything of that kind? Immaculate is He and exalted above [having] any partners that they ascribe [to Him]!⁴

91. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Believer in free will is polytheist.⁵

1 ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 123, h. 16; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. h. 303.

2 Q. 59: 7.

3 Q. 39: 62.

4 Q. 30 :40. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol., p. 202, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 7, h. 9.

5 ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 124, h. 17; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 398.

92. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Abū Hāshim Ja‘farī: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about the extremists (*ghālīs*) and advocates of free will. He said, “Extremists are unbelievers and advocates of free will are polytheists. Whoever associate or mingle with them, eat and drink or have relationship with them, marry off or get married to them, trust them and leave something to them in trust, believe their words or help them with a single word, would leave the friendship (*wilāya*) of Allah and the friendship of the Apostle of Allah, and the friendship of us, the Ahl al-Bayt.”¹

C. Invalidation of Determinism and Free Will

93. *Al-Kāfī* – Ḥasan b. ‘Alī Washshā’: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Has Allah entrusted affairs to His servants? He said, “Allah is too glorious to do that.”

I asked: Has He forced them to commit sins?

He said, “He is too just and wise to do that.” Then he said, “Allah has said, ‘O son of Adam! I am superior to you in your good deeds and you are superior to me in your misdeeds. You committed sins with the power I provided in you.’”²

94. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abbās: I heard someone asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Does Allah force the servants to do something they are not able to do?

He said, “Allah is too just to do that.”

[The man] Said: Are they able to do what they have the volition to

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol., p. 202, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 7, h. 9.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 157, h. 3; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 362, h. 10.

do?

He said, “They are too weak for that.”¹

95. *Al-Ṭarā’if* It is related that Faḍl b. Sahl asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in the presence of Ma’mūn: O Abū al-Ḥasan! Are people forced?

He said, “Allah is too just to force His creatures and then punish them.” Faḍl asked: Are they abandoned?

The Imam answered, “Allah is too wise to abandon His servants and leave them on their own.”²

D. Middle of Determinism and Free Will

96. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Barīd b. ‘Umayr b. Mu‘āwiyā Shāmī: I arrived in the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Marv and said: O son of the apostle of Allah! It is related to us from Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) who said, “It is neither determinism nor free will; rather, it is a middle position.” What does that mean?

He said, “Whoever supposes that Allah does our deeds and then punishes us according to that, has indeed believed in determinism; and whoever supposes that Allah (The Glorious and Exalted) has entrusted people’s deeds to His authorities (A.S.), has indeed believed in free will. The believer in determinism is an unbeliever and the believer in free will is a polytheist.”

I said: O son of the Apostle of Allah What is then the middle position?

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 142, h. 43; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 1, p. 151, h. 4141.

2 *Al-Ṭarā’if*, p. 330; *al-‘Adad al-Qawīya*, p. 299, h. 34.

He said, “The existence of a way for doing what they are commanded to do and to abandon what they are prohibited.”

I said: Does Allah have a providence and volition in them?

The Imam said, “Allah’s providence and volition is about the devotional acts, commanding them, pleasing with them, and assisting them; and Allah’s providence and volition about sins, is prohibiting them, anger at them and not assisting them.”

I asked: Is there an ordainment from Allah in them?

He said, “Yes. The servants do not do anything good or evil except that Allah has an ordainment in it.”

I said: What does this ordainment mean?

He said, “Judging them according to their actions, for what they deserve, either punishment or reward in this world or the Hereafter.”¹

97. *Al-Tawhīd* – on the authority of Sulaymān b. Ja‘far Ja‘farī: In the presence Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) determination and free will was brought up. He said, “Would you like to give you a principle on this issue that you would no longer differ on it and do not debate with anyone except that you would defeat him?”

We said: If you deem it advisable.

He said, “Indeed, Allah has not been obeyed out of force or disobeyed out of defeat and has not abandoned His servants in His kingdom. He is the possessor of what by which He has taken possession of them; and He is able in what He has made them dominated over it. If the servants gather in His obedience, Allah would

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 124, h. 17; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 397, h. 304.

not impede them; and if they [intend to] submit to His disobedience [commit a sin] and Allah wishes to bar between them and it (the sin), He would do that; but if He does not impede and they commit the sin, it is not that He has caused them to sin.”

Then he said, “Whoever masters this discourse, will definitely win over his opponent.”¹

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 361, h. 7; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 144, h. 48.

An Analysis of Determination and Free Will and the Middle Position

Discussion about determinism and free will has preoccupied man since long time ago. If we look at the ancient philosophy, we see that in fourth century BC the Stoic philosophers¹ believed in predetermination and the Epicureans believed in free will.² Similarly, in the modern age, Descartes believes in free will³ and Espinoza believes in determinism.⁴

It is mentioned that the polytheists of Mecca utilized determinism to justify their polytheism:

﴿The polytheists will say, “Had Allah wished we would not have ascribed any partner [to Him], nor our fathers.﴾⁵

Historical reports indicate that belief in determinism or at least asking questions about this issue has been seriously common in the

1 *Tārīkh Falsafā*, vol. 1, pp. 537-538.

2 *Tārīkh Falsafā*, vol. 1, pp. 557.

3 *Uṣūl-i Falsafā*, p. 62; *Tā‘ammulāt*, p. 63.

4 *Akhlāq*, p. 119.

5 Q, 6: 148.

early Islam.¹

In order to clarify this issue, we would examine it in three parts “theory of determinism”, “theory of free will”, and “theory of neither determinism nor free will”.

One. Theory of Determinism

Determinism is opposite to free will. A forced (*majbūr*) person is one who does not have any power, option, and freedom. Man is able and free to take any particular action when he has the ability to will and perform that action as well as the ability to abandon the will for that action and not performing it. In definition of power, ‘Allāma Ḥillī says:

Power is an attribute that contains the possibility of producing deeds by the doer and not necessarily actualizing the deed; because the possessor of power is the one who at the same time has the power of (both) doing and not doing actions.²

Therefore, the forced person is one who does not have such a power and option. For example, if the hands and feet of someone are tied up and wine is poured in his throat by force, although this person drinks wine, he is not free in drinking it; because he could not avoid it. The proponents of determinism believe that man has no choice and is not free in any action; that is, no action can be found that doing it or abandoning it is possible for man.

1 See: *Tabaqāt al-Mu‘tazila*, pp. 9-11; *Ta‘rīkh al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyya*, p. 95.

2 *Kashf al-Murād*, p. 248.

Proponents of the “theory of determinism” are Different in Sciences

The theory of determinism has advocates in various sciences and in each science a specific origin is maintained for it. In sociology, social determinism is set forth – which is resulted from social relations governing human beings. In psychology, psychological determinism is set forth – which is resulted from the individual’s physical and psychological condition. In philosophy, some regard the origin of the cause-and-effect determinism to be the origin of determinism; and in theology, determinism is believed to be resulted from Allah and his will, predestination, and ordainment.

In this discourse, the determinism brought up in theology is taken into consideration, although after proving the invalidity of this type of determinism, a reference is also made to the invalidity of other types of determinism. About the determinism brought up in theology and its different types, Shahristānī said:

In fact, determinism is the denying action of man and ascribing it to the Exalted Allah. Determinism has different types: pure determinism that does maintain any action and power for the servant at all and middle determinism that maintains brief power for the servant, but with no effect.¹

In the books of Islamic schools and sects, the first sect that has been called *jabriyya* is *Murji’a Jabriyya* headed by Jahm b. Ṣafwān.² This

1 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, vol.1, p. 85.

2 Jahmiyya are the companions of Jahm b. Ṣafwān. He was among the pure determinists and his heresy (*bid’a*) was disclosed in Tirmidh. Muslim b. Aḥwiz Māzanī killed him in Marv

group is called *Jahmiyya*, too. They are “pure determinist”.¹ Shahristānī describes *Jahmiyya*’s ideology as follows:

Indeed, man is not described by having power on something and having free will. He is obliged in his works and does not have any power, volition and, free will. The Almighty Allah creates his actions, the way He creates [the actions of] all inanimate objects; but actions are figuratively ascribed to man, the way they are figuratively ascribed to the inanimate objects, as it is said, “The stone moved”, “The sun rose and set”, “The water flowed”, “The sky turned cloudy and rained”, “The earth shuddered and grew” and so forth. Reward and punishment are deterministic (*jabr*) as all actions are compelling...when determinism is proved, then obligation becomes deterministic, too.²

One of the important ideological trends in Islam is [that of] the traditionists. They do not regard themselves as determinist; but their sayings correspond to determinism. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal says in his book of beliefs:

Allah pronounced His decree over His servants and they cannot get out of His decree; rather, they are moving in the direction that is decreed for them. They have to remain in what is destined for them; and that is the very justice of Allah (The Exalted and Glorious). Adultery, robbery, wine drinking, homicide, eating up wrongfully, ascribing partners to Allah (The Exalted and Glorious), sins, and disobedience are all with Allah’s predestination and ordainment, without anyone having authority

in the latter period of the Umayyad rule (*al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, vol.1, p. 85).

1 *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, p. 211.

2 *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, vol.1, p. 86.

over Allah. Rather, Allah has absolute authority over His servants and ﴿He will not be questioned for what He does and they will be questioned﴾...Whoever presumes that Allah (The Exalted and Glorious) has wished good and obedience for the servants who are disobedient and the servants desire evil and disobedience for themselves and act according to their desire, has presumed that the servants' desire is superior to Allah's desire. And what false accusation against Allah is greater than this?!¹

The true evidence of "middle determinism" is the Ash'arites, although they do not regard themselves as determinist. The Ash'arites accept the universality of *qaḍā* and *qadar* in action and believe that everything, including man's voluntary actions are created by Allah. Abū al-Ḥasan Ash'arī (the founder of Ash'arite theory) says:

There is no deed, except that Allah is truly the doer.²

In order to get rid of determinism and consider a role for man, he brings up the "theory of acquisition (*kasb*)". He believes that only the eternal power is effectual in creating action and this power belongs to Allah; however, man also enjoys the contingent power, and the effect of the contingent power is the feeling of freedom and choice, not doing things.

Acquisition here means conjunction of creating action and creating power in man; but since contingent action and power are both carried out by Allah, "acquisition" is also created by Allah. He says:

1 See: *Buḥūth fī al-Mīlāl wa al-Niḥāl*, vol. 1, p. 161.

2 *Al-Luma'*, p. 39.

If someone says, “Why do you say that servants’ achievement is created by the exalted Allah?” It is told him, “We said this because the Almighty Allah said, ﴿And Allah has created you and whatever you make.﴾¹

Therefore, the Ash‘arites consider man as having a contingent power that has no effect in creating action; and this is the theory of middle determinism.

The reason why the Ash‘arites ascribe “acquisition” to man is that contingent action and power are created in man, just as what movement (*ḥaraka*) has penetrated in it is called moving (*mtaḥarrik*).²

The Reasons Given by the Proponents of Determinism Theory and Criticizing them

The proponents of determinism theory have resorted to two reasons, which we would briefly bring up and criticize:

1. Resorting to *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

The most important reason of the determinist theologians is Allah’s *qaḍā* and *qadar*. We saw in Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal’s words that he considered man’s free will as inconsistent with the universality of Allah’s *qaḍā* and *qadar*. He believes that if Allah has ordained something like drinking wine for man but man would be free to refuse it, Allah would be assumed as dominated and man as dominant.

1 Q. 37: 96. *al-Luma’*, p. 40.

2 See: *al-Luma’*, p. 37.

Critique of the first Reason

In response to this reason, it is to be said that *qaḍā* and *qadar* in man's voluntary actions does not mean forcing him to perform certain actions; rather, Allah's ordainment (*taqdīr*) in this issue means that Allah has maintained a limit to man's ability and has bestowed man a limited amount of power.

Similarly Allah's *qaḍā* means that Allah has commanded this limitation and created it. Of course, using this limited power is also subject to Allah's permission. Therefore, if man commits sins, Allah would not become dominated, because Allah has Himself given man the power of committing sins and has not genetically prevented the sins when being committed, although canonically and through His prophets He has proclaimed that He does not canonically approve sins.

2. Resorting to Unity of Divine Acts

The other reason of the proponents of determinism, including the Ash'arites, for the determinism theory is Allah's unity of Divine acts, according to which the doer of all acts is Allah. He has referred to the verse, ﴿And Allah has created you and whatever you make.﴾¹ as evidence.

Critique of the Second Reason

It is to be said about unity of Divine acts that if this unity means that all things (including man's voluntary acts and sins) are done by Allah, this *is* determinism, hence incorrect.

¹ Q. 37: 96.

The true meaning of unity of Divine acts is that the power and ability of doing all things is (granted) from Allah; that is, even when man does something voluntarily, he has received its power from Allah. The above-mentioned verse is addressed to the idolaters and “whatever you make” are the idols, not the human beings.

The Reasons for the Invalidity of Determinism Theory

Besides the insufficiency of reasons given by the proponents of determinism for proving their claims, and in fact there is no reason for this theory, there are several reasons that invalidate this theory:

1. Knowledge by Presence about Freedom in Actions

The clearest reason for rejecting the determinism theory is the man’s conscience and knowledge by presence about himself and his actions. If man recollects his past and pay attention to his own actions, he would find out that what he has willed and done, he could not have willed and done; or what he has not willed and done, he could have willed and done. On the other hand, meaning of free will is this very freedom in doing something or not doing it and knowledge by presence is man’s strongest and most reliable knowledge.

Accordingly, both the invalidity of the pure determinism theory is proved (since man has knowledge by presence and intuitive knowledge about his own power) and the middle determinism theory is invalidated (since man has knowledge by presence about his own power over his voluntary action).

Besides invalidating the theological determinism, this argument would invalidate the social, psychological, and philosophical

determinism, as well; because although the structure of the society and the body and the psych are effective upon human actions and this effect is sometimes very strong, man finds out through knowledge by presence that the impact of the above factors is not the complete cause for doing things; rather, despite the psychological and social exigencies, he can choose another alternative.

In other words, the mental and social factors may make one's choice difficult; but choosing a difficult task is not impossible and man can choose a difficult task too. Reality bears witness to this claim; because we personally see that some people, despite indecent family and corrupt society, choose the right path in life; and on the contrary, some of those who have been reared in decent families and sound and healthy living conditions have taken the path of corruption and misguidance.

Philosophical causality is also nothing but a collection of factors influential in human actions, which would never cause disavowal of one's will, and in other words, philosophical causality would never actualize about human actions.

2. Impermissibility of Ascribing “Evil Acts” and “Injustice” to Allah

Another reason for the invalidity of determinism theory is that this theory necessitates ascribing evil acts to Allah and considering him as unjust. If we consider Allah as the doer of all actions, including man's evil acts, these acts will be ascribed to Allah. On the other hand, forcing man to commit sins and punishing them for it is an overt injustice. Whereas, it is rationally improbable that Allah would do injustice and evil acts.

It is because of this very relation between determinism theory and Allah's justice that the Imāmī theologians bring up the discourse of determinism and free will under the discourse of Allah's justice or Allah's actions and by rejecting the determinism theory, they disprove injustice and evil acts of Allah.¹

The Holy Qur'an asserts that any human being will be rewarded as per his achievements and no one will be wronged by Allah:

﴿Whoever brings virtue shall receive ten times its like; but whoever brings vice shall not be requited except with its like, and they will not be wronged.﴾²

﴿Today every soul shall be requited for what it has earned. There will be no injustice today. Indeed Allah is swift at reckoning.﴾³

Undoubtedly, if man is predetermined to do evil acts, his actions are not his achievements and punishing him is injustice.

In religious doctrines, determinism and free will and something in between have been explained in detail from the viewpoint of the Qur'an and the Islamic ḥadīths; and the contradiction of determinism theory with Allah's justice has been emphasized. It is related from Imam 'Alī (A.S.):

Do not say: [Allah has] forced them to sin, for you will do injustice to Him.⁴

1 See: *Kashf al-Murād*, p. 308.

2 Q. 6: 160.

3 Q. 40: 17.

4 *Al-Ihtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 493, h.122; *'Awālī al-Li'ālī*, vol. 4, p. 109, h. 164; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 95, h. 16.

Similarly, it is related from Imam al-Şādiq (A.S.):

Allah is too just to force a servant to do something and then to torment him for having done it.¹

3. Rejection of Negating the Rational Good and Evil of Religious Doctrines

Besides contradicting Allah's justice, determinism theory negates the wisdom of prophethood, Imamate, return, as well as the religious doctrines and rational good and evil; because the determined man would be like animals and inanimate objects, in which case one cannot talk about responsibility, duty, shar'ia, return, and other religious doctrines.

Therefore, the reasons that prove the above-mentioned doctrines are all the reasons for rejecting determinism theory.

Two. Free Will Theory

Tafwīd (free will or delegation) lexically means entrustment of something to another one and has various meanings in ḥadīths and theology. Here, first we would point out these meanings and then would explain the meaning discussed concerning determinism and free will.

Meanings of *Tafwīd*

The word *tafwīd* has various applications in the Qur'an, ḥadīths,

¹ *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 361, h. 6; *Mukhtaşar Başā'ir al-Darajāt*, p. 133; *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, p. 24.

and scholar's terminology, such as:

1. Moral *tafwīd*; meaning that man should entrust to Allah the matters related to Allah and trust in Him in whatever he does.

2. Legislative *tafwīd* (permissibility); that is, Allah has not set a task on man and has entrusted legislation to him.

3. Entrusting (*tafwīd*) of a part of the religious affairs to the prophets or their legatees by Allah.

4. Creational *tafwīd*; meaning to entrust the creation or administration of the creatures' affairs to the prophets or their legatees.

5. Entrusting the interpretation of a number of Allah's attributes (such as traditional attributes¹) to Him.

It is worth-mentioning that we will not examine the truth or untruth of any of these meanings here.

6. *Tafwīd* vs. *jabr* (determinism), meaning entrusting man's actions absolutely to himself.

According to free will theory – vs. determinism – man has received the principle of “ability to do things” from Allah and after this reception, he is independent in his actions and the realization of these actions is not subject to Allah's genetic permission; rather, Allah lacks authority in relation to these actions.

This theory has been attributed to two groups in the history of theology, sects, and schools:

¹ Traditional (*khbarī*) attributes, are those ascribed to Allah in the Qur'an and ḥadīths, the proving of which is not possible by the intellect, such as face and hand. Some of ḥadīth experts (such as Mālik b. Anas and Mātirīdī) believe in this meaning of *tafwīd*. (See: *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, vol. 1, p. 85 and *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 74).

The first group is the early fatalists (*qadariyan*), on top of which is Ma'bad Juhanī and Ghilan Damashqi. Of course, the historical and ḥadīth documents do not prove their being *mufawwiḍa* (delegators), but in books on sects and schools, this group have been described with opinions of *tafwīḍ* and negation of Divine *qaḍā* and *qadar*.¹ Since the books of these theologians are not at hand, this cannot be definitely judged on.

The second group is the Mu'tazila. This group does not consider itself *mufawwiḍa* or *qadari*. The Imāmī theologians usually consider the Mu'tazila as proponents of free will and of the same opinion with the Imāmīs;² but some of the Mu'tazila's opinions necessitate *tafwīḍ*.

According to this theory, Allah does not have power over man's actions; because man has power over his voluntary actions. Consequently, if Allah has power over these actions too, there would be two power-wielders (*qādir*) dominant over one object of power (*maqdūr*), which is impossible.

This theory necessitates Allah's inability, weakness, and effacement of His sovereignty, because according to this theory, Allah does not have dominance over human beings' voluntary actions and is unable to their issuance of actions; whereas restriction and weakness are among the creatures' features and cannot be ascribed to Allah.

About the invalidity of the theory of free will (along with invalidating determinism), Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) says:

1 *Āshnā'ī bā Firaq wa Madhāhib Islāmī*, vol. 6, p. 45.

2 *Nahj al-Haqq wa Kashf al-Ṣidq*, p. 101; *Anwār al-Malkūt fī Sharḥ al-Yāqūt*, p. 110; *Kashf al-Murād*, p. 308; *Al-Nāfi' yawm al-Ḥaṣhr*, p. 27, 156; *Awā'il al-Maqālāt*, p. 15.

Allah has not relegated tasks on His creatures out of weakness and inability and has not forced them to sin out of injustice.

It is related that a *qadarī* person arrived in Shām and the people were unable to debate with him. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān asked the governor of Madīna to send Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) to Shām for debate with him. Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) sent his son Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) for debate. The *qadarī* said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.), “Ask whatever you wish.” Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) said, “Recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa.”

That person began to read Sūrat al-Fātiḥa up to the verse, ﴿You alone do we worship, and You alone do we turn for help﴾. At this moment the Imam (A.S.) told him:

Stop! Who do you turn for help to and what do you need help for? In fact, authority is entrusted to you.

The *qadarī* was at a loss to answer, and kept silent in bewilderment.

It is worth mentioning that the Mu‘tazila approve man’s free will on the basis of the same evidences that were mentioned for rejection of determinism theory; but as we saw, their free will ended up in *tafwīd*. In the theory of “something between determinism and *tafwīd*” while proving free will, *tafwīd* is also rejected.

Three. Theory of Neither Determinism nor Tafwīd

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.), while rejecting the theory of free will and the theory of *tafwīd*, have considered the right theory to be “a status between determinism and *tafwīd*.” Imam al-Ṣādiq said in a ḥadīth:

It is neither determinism nor predestination; rather, it is something between the two.¹

According to this theory, human beings are not forced (because they have power and free will) and on the other hand, things are not absolutely entrusted to men (because Allah also has power over the things human beings are able to do.); rather, human possession is along with the possession of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, and He is more possessive and abler in having power. Thus, any moment He wishes He can prevent the power being used by man or the impact of the power granted to him, or deny him the very the power itself. It related in a ḥadīth:

It is He... the Omnipotent, Who has empowered them to do things.²

To sum up, according to the theory, “neither determinism nor *tafwīd*”, both the man’s freedom and authority – which is self-evident and intuitive – is accepted (according to which Allah’s justice, the prophets’ prophethood, return and obligation are rational and logical) and the Exalted and Glorious Allah’s jurisdiction and kingdom do not become limited. On this basis, the reasons for the invalidity of determinism and *tafwīd* are the reasons for proving the theory of “neither determinism nor *tafwīd*”, too.

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 159.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 361.

7/3

Contentment with *Qaḍā* and *Qadar*

98. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): Allah Said, “Whoever is not content with my *qaḍā* and does not have faith in my *qadar*, then [let him] look for a god other than Me.”¹

99. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Quoting from his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): “There is goodness for the faithful in all predestinations of the Exalted and Glorious Allah.

¹ *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 371, h. 11; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 141, h 42.

Chapter Four

General Prophethood

1/4

The Philosophy of Prophethood

100. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): about the reason for the necessity of recognition and confirmation of the prophets and obeying them: Since people do not enjoy such a nature and ability to fully perceive their interests and on the other hand the creator of the world of being is to sublime to be seen and the weakness and inability of the servants in perceiving Him is quite obvious, so there must be an infallible messenger between Allah and people to deliver to them His commands, prohibitions, and instructions and make them aware of what provides their interests and repel their losses; because there is no means in them to enable them to realize what they need as well as their benefit and loss.

If the recognition of the Prophet and obeying him was not obligatory to people, the coming of the Prophet would be of no benefit to them and would not solve any problem and sending him would be useless, and this is far from an All-Wise who has created everything in an orderly manner and perfect.

2/4

The Wise Reason for the Difference in the Prophets' Miracles

101. *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Abū Ya'qūb Baghdadī: Ibn Sikkīt said to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā: Why did Allah send Moses son of 'Imran (A.S.) with cane and the white hand tools for [neutralizing] sorcery, Jesus with the weapon of medicine, and Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) with speech?

The Imam (A.S.) said, “When the Exalted and Glorious Allah sent Moses (A.S.), sorcery was more prevalent among the people. Thus, on behalf of Allah, he brought something to people that was neither available among them nor they were able to do the like of it; and thereby he neutralized their sorcery and fully proved his authority to them.

And Exalted and Glorious Allah sent Jesus (A.S.) in a time when paralysis was prevalent and people needed medicine. Thus, Jesus (A.S.) brought something from Allah to them that they did not have the like of it and he revived the dead by Allah's leave and healed the born-blind and the leprous; and in this way he fully proved his authority to people.

And the Exalted and Glorious Allah sent Muḥammad to people in a time when oratory and rhetoric – and I suppose he said ‘and poetry’ – was more prevalent among the people of his time. Then he brought the Book of Allah (the Exalted and Glorious), the sermons and ordinances to people, whereby he neutralized their speech and fully proved his authority to them.”

Ibn Sikkīt said: I swear by Allah I have never seen anyone like you! Then, what is Allah's authority over people at this time?

He answered, “Intellect; by which the one who ascribes truth about Allah is recognized and confirmed, and the one who fabricates lies against Allah is recognized and falsified.”

Ibn Sikkīt said: By Allah, this is the real truth.¹

3/4

The Number of Prophets

102. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): The Exalted and Glorious Allah created one hundred and twenty four thousand prophets, of whom I am the noblest one in the sight of Allah and I do not boast about it. Also, the Exalted and Glorious Allah created one hundred and twenty four thousand legatees, of whom the noblest and most superior one is ‘Ali in the sight of Allah.

4/4

The Prophets of Great Resolution

103. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The prophets of great resolution are called so in fact because they possessed Shari‘as and religions; because every Prophet after Noah followed his Shari‘a, his way and his book up to the time of Prophet Abraham (A.S.). Any Prophet in the time of Prophet Abraham (A.S.) and after him followed his Shari‘a, his way, and his book until the time of Moses (A.S.). Any Prophet in the time of Moses and after him followed his Shari‘a, his way, and his book

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 79, h. 12; *‘Ilal al-Sharāyi‘*, p. 121, h. 6.

until the time of Jesus (A.S.). Any Prophet in the time of Jesus (A.S.) and after him followed his Shari'a, his way, and his book until the time of our Prophet, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.). These are the five prophets of great resolution and they are the most superior of the prophets and messengers. Muḥammad's Shari'a would not be abrogated until the Day of Resurrection and after him no other prophet would come until the Resurrection; therefore, whoever claims prophethood after him or brings a book after the Qur'an, his blood would be permissible for anyone who hears it from him.¹

¹ *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 80, h. 13; *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, p. 122, h. 2.

Chapter Five

Some Stories and Narrations about the Prophets

1/5

Adam (A.S.)

104. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O Son of the Apostle of Allah! Tell me what was the tree from which Adam and Eve ate, because people are divided over this issue. Some say it was wheat; some others say it was grape; yet, others say it was the tree of jealousy!

He said, “All of these are correct.”

What does this difference of aspect means?

He said, “O Abā al-Ṣalt! The Paradise tree has different fruits. That was the tree of wheat that had grapes too. The Paradise tree is not like the trees of the world [that each has a different fruit]. When the Exalted and Glorious Allah honored Adam (A.S.) with being prostrated to by the angels and going to Paradise, Adam said in his heart, “Has Allah created a man superior to me?” The Exalted and Glorious Allah knew what he said and inspired him, “O Adam! Raise

your head and look at the base of my Throne!” Adam raised his head and looked at the base of the Throne. He saw there was written, “There is no god but Allah, Muḥammad is His Messenger, ‘Alī is the commander of the faithful, his wife is the Lady of the two worlds, and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the masters of the youth in Paradise.” Adam said, “Who are these?” The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, “These are from among you progeny. They are superior to you and all my creatures. If they did not exist, I would have created neither you nor the Paradise or the Hell or the heaven or earth. Never may it occur to you to think of them with jealousy or I will expel you from my proximity.” But Adam looked at them with jealousy and yearned for their status; thus, Satan dominated over him and persuaded him to eat from the forbidden tree. He also dominated Eve, who had been jealous of Fāṭima (A.S.), and like Adam she also ate from the tree and Allah expelled them both from His Paradise and sent them from His proximity down to the earth.¹

2/5

Noah (A.S.)

105. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): For what reason did the Exalted and Glorious Allah drowned the entire world, in whom there were innocent children and people? He said, “There were no children among them; because the Exalted and Glorious Allah made the men

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 306, h. 67; *Ma‘ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 124, h. 1.

and women of the folk of Noah (A.S.) barren and their generation was cut off. Thus, when they were drowned, there were no children among them. The Exalted and Glorious Allah would not torment the innocent with His punishment, either. As for the rest of the folk of Noah (A.S.), those who denied their Prophet (Noah – A.S.) were drowned and another group who were satisfied with the denial of those deniers was also drowned. Whoever does not witness something but is satisfied with it is like a person who had witnessed and performed it.¹

3/5

Abraham (A.S.)

A. The Reason Why Allah Took Abraham as His Friend

106. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – I heard my father quoting his father who said, “The Exalted and Glorious Allah took Abraham as His friend because he did not reject anyone and asked no one but the Exalted and Glorious Allah for help.”²

B. The Father of the Seal of the Prophets

107. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): When the Day of Resurrection comes, a call is sent out to me from the heart of the Throne, “What a good father he is, your father Abraham the Friend [of Allah]! And what a

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 329, h. 2; *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿi*, p. 30, h. 1.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 76, h. 4; *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿi*, p. 34, h. 2.

good brother he is, your brother ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.”¹

C. Abraham’s (A.S.) Restlessness over the Tragedy of al-Ḥusayn (A.S.)

108. *Al-Khiṣāl*: On the authority of Faḍl b. Shādhān: I heard from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) saying, “When the Exalted and Glorious Allah ordered Abraham (A.S.) to slaughter the ram that He had sent him instead of his son, Abraham (A.S.) wished he would have slaughtered his son Ishmael with his own hand and was not ordered to kill that ram instead of his son so that it would give him the feeling of a father who sacrificed his son with his own had and thereby deserve the highest reward over the disaster.”

The Exalted and Glorious Allah inspired him, “O Abraham! Who is the most beloved servant of mine to you?”

He said, “My Lord! You have not created a creature more Beloved to me than Your loved one, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.).

The Exalted and Glorious Allah inspired him, “Is he more beloved to you than yourself?”

He said, “He is more beloved to me than myself. He said, “Is his son more beloved to you than your own son?” He said, “His son.”

He said, “Is his son’s being slaughtered by his enemies more painful to you or your son’s being slaughtered by you to obey Me?”

He said, “O Lord! His son’s being slaughtered by his enemies is more painful to me.”

He said, “O Abraham! A group calling themselves the nation of

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 30, h. 39; *‘Ilal al-Sharāyi’*, p. 184, h. 1.

Muḥammad will kill his son al-Ḥusayn after him out of cruelty and enmity, just as they slaughter a ram, and thereby deserve my wrath.”

Abraham (A.S.) became restless and his heart ached and began to weep.

The Exalted and Glorious Allah inspired, “O Abraham! I replaced your restlessness for your son Ishmael – if you had slaughtered him with your own hand – with your restlessness for al-Ḥusayn and his being killed and granted you the highest degree of those receiving reward for tragedies.

This is the very word of Allah, ﴿Then We ransomed him with a great sacrifice.﴾¹ There is no power and no strength save in Allah, the All-exalted, the Almighty.²

4/5

Joseph (A.S.)

A. Joseph’s Complain of Prison

109. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Joseph complained to Allah in prison and said, “O Lord! For what did I deserve the prison?” Allah inspired him, “You yourself chose it, when you said, ﴿He said, “My Lord! The prison is dearer to me than to what they invite me.﴾. Why did you not say, “Prosperity is dearer to me than to what they invite me?”

1 Q. 37: 107.

2 *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, p. 354; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 12, p. 247, under h. 12

B. Strong-mindedness of the Old Woman of Children of Israel

110. *Al-Khiṣāl*: On the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Faḍḍāl from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The moon was hidden from the sight of Children of Israel. The Almighty and Glorious Allah inspired Moses to take the bones of Joseph (A.S.) from Egypt and promised him that when he takes them away the moon would rise again. Moses (A.S.) looked for someone who knew the burial place of Joseph (A.S.). He was told that there was an old woman who knew that place. Moses (A.S.) sent for her. They brought in a blind and disabled old woman. Moses (A.S.) told her, “Do you know the place of the grave?” She said, “Yes.” Moses said, “Then, Show it to me.” The old woman said, “I won’t, unless you grant me four wishes: heal my feet, give me back my youth, return me my eyesight, and settle me next to you in Paradise.”

This request sounded burdensome to Moses (A.S.). The Almighty Allah inspired him and said, “O Moses! Give her what she wishes; because I will take charge of it.”

Moses (A.S.) did so and the old woman showed him Joseph’s (A.S.) burial place. Moses (A.S.) took it out [Egypt] by way of the Nile’s shore in a marble coffin. As soon as he took it out, the moon rose and Moses (A.S.) took his bones with him to Shām. For this reason, the People of Scripture take their dead to Shām.¹

¹ *Al-Khiṣāl*, p. 205, h. 21; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 144.

5/5

Moses (A.S.)

A. Moses' (A.S.) Signet

111. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Moses's (A.S.) signet contained two statements that he had adopted from Torah: "Be patient to get rewarded; be truthful to be delivered."¹

B. A Ḥadīth on what was Inspired to Moses (A.S.)

112. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.): The Exalted and Glorious Allah inspired to His confidant, Mūsā b. Imrān (A.S.), "O Moses! Love Me and make Me loved by My creatures." Moses (A.S.) said, "O Lord! I love You but how should I make You loved by Your creatures?" He said, "Remind them of My blessings and favors because they remember – or know – nothing but blessings about Me."²

6/5

Khiḍr (A.S.)

113. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Khiḍr (A.S.) drank from water of life and thus he is alive and would not die until the Trumpet is blown into. He comes to us and greets and we hear his voice; but we do not see him. Wherever his name is mentioned, he becomes present. Therefore,

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 55, h. 206; Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, p. 542, h. 726.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 484, h. 1058; *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā li al-Rāwandī*, p. 205, h. 267.

whoever of you calls his name should greet him. He becomes present every year in *Hajj* season and performs all the rituals and stand in 'Arafā and says amen to the prayer from the faithful. Soon Allah would make him intimate to our Riser (*qā'im*) in his desolation during his occultation and take him out of his loneliness.

7/5

Solomon (A.S.)

114. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his father (A.S.) from his forefather (A.S.) about the statement by the Exalted and Glorious: ﴿Where at he smiled, amused at its words,﴾¹ when the ant said, ﴿O ants! Enter your dwellings; lest Solomon (A.S.) and his hosts should trample on you while they are unaware.﴾² the wind took the voice of that ant to Solomon (A.S.), whereas he was flying in the air by the wind. Solomon said, “Summon (A.S.) that ant.” When they took it to Solomon (A.S.), he said, “O Ant! Do you not know that I am the Prophet of Allah and do not do any injustice to anyone?” The ant said, “Yes.” Solomon (A.S.) said, “Then, why did you warn the ants of my injustice and told them to go into their dwellings?” The ant said, “I feared they would see your jewelry and be tempted and get far from the Exalted Allah’s remembrance.” The ant went on to say, “Are you greater or your

1 Q. 27: 19.

2 Q. 27: 18.

father David (A.S.)?” Solomon (A.S.) said, “I am not informed of it.” The ant said, “As your father David treated his injury by *wadd* (friendship) was named David; however, you O Solomon! I hope you join your father.” Then, the ant said, “Why from among the creatures of the kingdom only wind was disposed for you?” Solomon (A.S.) said, “I am not informed of it.” The ant said, “What Allah meant by this was that if everything in the kingdom was disposed for you like the wind, losing them was like losing the wind [which is rapidly lost].” And here Solomon smiled at its words,¹

8/5

John [Yaḥyā] (A.S.)

A. John’s (A.S.) Wisdom

115. *Majma‘ al-Bayān*: It is related from Mu‘ammar who said: The children told John (A.S.) let’s play together. John (A.S.), “We are not created for playing.” That is why Allah said about him, ﴿And We gave him judgment while still a child.﴾² This ḥadīth is also related from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 78, h. 8.

2 Q. 19: 12.

3 *Majma‘ al-bayān*, vol. 6, p. 781.

B. A Trait that Bewildered the Satan

116. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – from his forefathers: Since Prophet Adam (A.S.) until Allah sent forth Jesus (A.S.), Satan used to come to the prophets, talk to them, and ask questions from them, and was fond of John son of Zechariah more than all. One day John (A.S.) said to him, “O Father of the bitterness! I have a request from you.”

Satan said, “You are too dear to reject your request. Ask whatever you wish. Indeed, I will not oppose you in what you wish.”

John (A.S.) said, “O Father of bitterness! I want you to show me your traps and snares with which you entrap human beings.”

Satan said, “[Alright] with respect and interest!” And he promised for the morrow.

When the morning broke, John (A.S.) sat waiting in his house for the appointment and closed the door tightly; but all of a sudden he saw Satan entered from the window and his face looked like a monkey and his body like the body of a swine and the crevices of his mouth and eyes were vertical. His teeth and mouth were a one-piece bone without a chin and beard. He had four hands: two hands on the chest and two on the shoulder. His hamstrings were on the front and his toes on the back. He was wearing a robe, the middle of which was fastened with a colorful striped belt and was holding a big bell in his hand. A helmet was on his head and a piece of iron like a hook was hanging from it. John (A.S.) looked at him carefully and then said, “What is this belt on your waist?”

He said, “This is a Magian sign. I made it into a custom and adorned it to them.”

He asked, “What are these colored stripes?”

He said, "This is a collection of women's colors. They put on colors after colors to fit their body and I deceive people by them."

He asked, "What is this bell in your hand?"

He said, "It contains all the joys, including *tār* (a stringed instrument), lute, kettledrum, flute, and trumpet. When people sit at the wine tablecloth and enjoy it, I clang this bell among them. When they hear it, rapture makes them slack. Some dance, some snap their fingers, and some tear their clothes.

He asked, "What is a source of delight of your eyes?"

He said, "The women. They are my traps and snares, whenever the curse of the good people comes down on me, I go to women and tranquil my soul with them."

John (A.S.) said, "What is this helmet on your head?"

He said, "I preserve myself from the curse of the faithful."

He asked, "What is the iron that I see inside it?"

He answered, "I stir the hearts of the pious.

John (A.S.) said, "Have you ever triumphed over me?"

He said, "No. But there is a trait that I like."

John (A.S.) said, "What is that trait?"

He said, "You are a gluttonous person. When you break your fast, you eat so much that you become completely full and this prevents you from prayer and keeping night vigil."

John (A.S.) said, "I swear allegiance to Allah that from now on, not to eat my fill until I meet Allah."

Satan said, "I also swear allegiance to Allah not to give advice to

any Muslim until I meet Allah.”

Then, he left John (A.S.) and never went back to him.¹

C. Weeping John (A.S.) and Laughing Jesus (A.S.)

117. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Jesus (A.S.) would both laugh and weep. John (A.S.) would weep but not laugh. What Jesus (A.S.) would do was better.²

9/5

Jesus (A.S.)

A. Alteration in Jesus' (A.S.) Birth

118. Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā: Rāwandī – on the authority of Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Abī Ṭalḥa: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Is it possible that the prophets say something on behalf of Allah, but the opposite happens? The Imam said, “Yes. If you wish, I will tell you a ḥadīth and if you wish I will quote its example from the Book of Allah. The Exalted Allah says, ﴿enter the Holy Land which Allah has ordained for you...﴾³ to the end of the verse; but they did not enter that land; rather, their grandchildren entered it.

‘Imrān said, “Indeed, Allah promised me that in this very year and month He would grant me a son to become a prophet; but ‘Imrān died and his wife gave birth to Mary (A.S.) and Zechariah (A.S.) took her custody. A group of people said: the Prophet of Allah [‘Imrān] told the

1 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 339, h. 692; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 63, p. 226, h. 71.

2 *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā li al-Rāwandī*, p. 273, h. 353; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 665, h. 20.

3 Q. 5: 21.

truth. Others said: he told a lie! And when Mary gave birth to Jesus (A.S.), those who believed in truthfulness of ‘Imrān said: this is the promise that Allah had made to us.”¹

B. The Signet of Jesus (A.S.)

119. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The signet of Jesus (A.S.) contains these two statements that he had adopted from the Bible: “Blessed be to the servant who reminds one of Allah and woe be to the servant who makes one forget Allah.”²

1 *Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā li al-Rāwandī*, p. 214, h. 280

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 55, h. 206; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 11, p. 63, h. 1.

Chapter Six

The Seal of the Prophets (S.A.W.A.)

1/6

The Witness to the Seal of the Prophets (S.A.W.A.)

120. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): On a Friday, Imam ‘Alī was delivering a sermon on the pulpit and said, “I swear by Him who split the grain and created man, there was no Qurayshi man who reached puberty unless a verse of the Book of Allah, the Exalted and glorious, was revealed about him and I know that man and that verse.”

A man stood up and asked, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! What is the verse that was revealed about you?”

He said, “Now that you asked, listen, and you do not need to ask about this from anyone else. Have you read Sūrat Hūd? He said, “Yes, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn!” He said, so you have heard that Allah has said, ﴿Is he who stands on a manifest proof from his Lord, and whom a witness of his own [family] follows?》¹ The man said, “Yes.” He said,

¹ Q. 11: 17.

“He who stands on a manifest proof from his Lord is Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and that witness of his own is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. I am that witness, and I am of him.”¹

2/6

The Miracle of Cleaving of the Moon (*Shaqq al-Qamar*)

121. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): The moon was split in two in Mecca. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “Bear witness, bear witness to it!”²

3/6

His Traits and Sunna

122. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers from Imam al-Ḥusayn from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) in a sermon he delivered in Kūfa Mosque: “I testify that there is no god but Allah, having faith in His Lordship and opposing whoever denies Him. I testify that Muḥammad is His Servant and Apostle, residing in the best lodging-place (world of the spirits/noble and pure loins), having passed from the noblest of loins and immaculate wombs, extracted in lineage from the noblest of treasures and in origin from the noblest of plantations, and (derived) from the highest of summits and the most glorious roots, from the tree from which Allah fashioned His prophets and chose His trusted ones: (a tree) of excellent wood, harmonious stature, lofty

1 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 371, h. 800; *Khaṣā’iṣ al-A’imma* (A.S.), p. 55.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 341, h. 697; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 353, h. 3.

branches, flourishing limbs, ripened fruit, and filled with nobility, implanted in generosity and cultivated in a sacred precinct [Divine sanctuary]. There it put forth branches and fruit, became strong and unassailable, and then made him (the Prophet Muḥammad) tall and eminent, until the Exalted and Glorious Allah honored him with the Holy Spirit [sent to him], the Illuminating Light, and the Manifest Book [the Qur'an]. Moreover, He subjected al-Burāq to him and the angels shook hands with him.

His tradition (*sunna*) was integrity (*rushd*); his conduct (*sīra*) was justice and his decision was the truth. He executed what was commanded by his Lord, and he delivered what he was charged until he made plain his mission through the profession of Unity and made manifest among the creatures that there is no god but Allah alone and that there are no partners for Him; until His Unity became certain and His Lordship became purified. Allah made manifest the Prophet's (S.A.W.A.) authority (*ḥujja*) through the profession of His Oneness and raised his rank with the blessing of Islam and the Exalted and Glorious Allah chose for His Prophet what was with Him of repose, rank and means. May Blessings of Allah be upon him and his pure Household as many as the number of the blessings Allah has sent to His sent prophets.”¹

123. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): An angle came to me and said,

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 72, h. 26; *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 122, h. 15.

“O Muḥammad! Your Lord greets you and says: If you wish I would turn the valley of Mecca into gold for you.” I raised my head toward the sky and said: O Lord! One day to be satiated and be thankful to You and one day to be hungry and make a request from You [this is enough for me and like it more].¹

124. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): Whenever something pleasant happened, the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) would say, “All praise be to Allah, by whose grace and blessings the righteous deeds are done.” And whenever unpleasant things happened, he would say, “All praise be to Allah in all states.”²

125. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Allah sent me with mercy [kindness] and not with disobedience [to parents].³

126. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) [who said,] “I inherited two books from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): one is the Book of Allah and the other a book (writing) that is in the hilt of my sword.” He was asked, “O Commander of the Faithful! What is that book that is in the hilt of your sword?” He said, “[it is written] May Allah’s curse be upon whoever kills other than his [would be] murderer or hits his hitter.”⁴

1 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 124, h. 1; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 131, h. 102.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 50, h. 64; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 97, h. 19.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 159, h. 8; *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 278, h. 836.

4 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 40, h. 122.

4/6

The Superiority of his Nation (*Umma*)

127. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Moses (A.S.) asked his Lord to place him among the nation of Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.). The Exalted and Glorious Allah inspired to him, “O Moses! You will not reach that [time].”¹

5/6

His Knowledge of all His Nation

128. **Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt:** on the authority of Maqātil b. Maqātil from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Abū Jaʿfar [Imam al-Bāqir] said, “The nation of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) were materialized for him in the [world of] clay and the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) recognized them by their names and the names of their fathers and their ethics and behavior.”

Maqātil says: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): May I be ransomed for you, the entire nation from beginning to the end? He said, “Abū Jaʿfar (A.S.) said so.”²

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 31, h. 47.

2 *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, p. 85, h. 8 and 9; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 153, h. 57.

Chapter Seven

The Qur'an

1/7

The Miracle of the Qur'an

129. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The Exalted and Glorious Allah revealed this Qur'an with the same letters [language] that all the Arabs deal with. He said, ﷻ Say, “Should all humans and jinn rally to bring the like of this Qur'an, they will not bring the like of it, even if they assisted one another.”¹

2/7

The Features and Excellences of the Qur'an

130. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): in veneration of the Qur'an and its amazing orderliness: The Qur'an is the unbreakable cord of Allah and His most dependable support and His superior path that leads to Paradise and liberates from Fire. It will not get old with the passage of time and nor lose it value by tongues, because the Qur'an has not been

¹ Q. 17: 88.

ordained for a specific time; rather, it was ordained as a guide toward proof and an authority for every human being. ﴿falsehood cannot approach it, from before it nor from behind it, a [gradually] sent down [revelation] from One all-wise, all-laudable.﴾¹

131. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his father (A.S.): A man asked Imam al-Ṣādiq: Why does the Qur'an become more and more succulent as it is promulgated and studied?

He said, "Because Allah did not send it for a specific time and people. Therefore, the Qur'an is new and succulent for any people till the Day of Resurrection."²

132. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): People do not know and think mistakenly. The Exalted and Glorious Allah did not take the life of His Prophet (S.A.W.A.) until He completed his religion and sent the Qur'an – in which everything is explained – to him. He fully explained the lawful and the unlawful, the legal punishments and ordinances and whatever people are in need of and said, ﴿We have not omitted anything from the Book.﴾³ and explained to the nation everything needed. Therefore, whoever believes that the Exalted and Glorious Allah has not completed His religion has undoubtedly rejected the Book of Allah and whoever rejects the Book of Allah, is unfaithful to Him.

1 Q, 41: 42.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 130, h. 9; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 213, h. 18.

3 Q, 6: 38.

3/7

The Value of the Opening Chapter (Sūrat al-Fātiḥa)

133. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam al-Ḥasan (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): I heard from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) who said, “The Exalted and Glorious Allah told me: “O Muḥammad ! ﴿Certainly We have given you [the sūra of] the seven oft-repeated verses and the great Qur’an.﴾¹ Then, He granted the blessing of the Opening Chapter to me and equaled it to the Great Qur’an.”

Indeed, the Opening Chapter is the most honorable thing which existed in the Treasures of the Throne. The Exalted and Glorious Allah allocated it especially to Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and honored him with it. Allah did not make any of the other prophets – except for Solomon – a partner in this honor. Allah bestowed the verse ‘In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful’ upon him, when quoting Bilqīs (Queen of Sheba), Allah says, ﴿Indeed a noble letter has been delivered to me. It is from Solomon, and it begins in the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.﴾²

Indeed, whoever recites it along with belief in Muḥammad and his Household’s guardianship; obeys their orders; believes in their outward appearance and inner characteristics, the Exalted and Glorious Allah will grant a reward for each letter of it that is better for him than this world, and all its goods and all the wealth in it. Whoever listens to

1 Q. 15: 87.

2 Q. 27: 29-30.

someone reciting the Qur'an will receive a reward one third as much as the reward the reciter receives. Therefore, each one of you can gain more benefits from this good which you have been granted as it is highly valuable. Let it not become too late, as you may regret it in your hearts.¹

134. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam 'Alī (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, "I divided the Opening Chapter between Myself and My servant: Half belongs to Me and half to My servant, and to My servant belongs what he wishes."

Whenever the servant says, ﴿In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful﴾, Allah would say, "My servant began in My Name. It is incumbent upon Me to do his works for him and bless him in his living conditions." Whenever he says, ﴿All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds﴾, the Exalted and Glorious Allah would say, "My servant praised Me and learned that the blessings he has are from Me and the calamities repelled from him have been repelled by My grace and power. I take you as witness that I will add the blessing of the Hereafter to the blessings of his world and repel the calamities of the Hereafter from him, as I have repelled the calamities of the world from him."

Whenever he says, ﴿the All-beneficent, the All-merciful﴾ Allah says, "My servant bore witness that I am All-beneficent and All-merciful. I take you as witnesses that I will increase My mercy for him

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 302, h. 60; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 241, h. 255.

and add up to My bounties for him. When he says, ﴿Master of the Day of Retribution﴾ the Exalted and Glorious Allah will say, “I take you as witnesses that as he has testified that I am the Master of the Day of Retribution, I will make his reckoning easy on the Reckoning Day and I will forgive his bad deeds.”

When he says, ﴿You [alone] do we worship﴾ the Exalted and Glorious Allah will say, “My servant is right. He only worships Me. Bear witness that I will grant him such a reward for this worshipping that whoever opposes him in this worship will envy him.”

When he says, ﴿...and You [alone] do we turn for help﴾ the Exalted and Glorious Allah will say, “My servant is seeking My Help and is taking refuge in Me. I take you to witness that I will assist him in his affairs and will support him in times of difficulty, and rescue him on the days of hardship.”

When he says, ﴿Guide us on the straight path.﴾ till the end of the Sūra, the Exalted and Glorious Allah will say, “This belongs to My servant. What My servant wants is fulfilled and whatever he wills, will be done. I will protect him against what he fears.”

Commander of the Faithful (A.S.) was asked, “O Commander of the Faithful! Let us know if ﴿In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful﴾ is a part of the Opening Chapter.” The Commander of the Faithful (A.S.) replied, “Yes. The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) recited it and considered it to be a part of that verse. He said that the Opening Chapter is the same as the Seven Repeated Verses.”¹

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 6, h. 12; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 239, h. 253.

4/7

The First and the Last Revealed Sūras

135. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): I heard from my father [Imam al-Kāẓim – A.S.] who narrated from his father [Imam al-Ṣādiq – A.S.] that, “The first Sūra that was revealed was, ﴿In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful. Read in the Name of your Lord who created﴾ and the last Sūra that was revealed was, ﴿When Allah’s help comes with victory.﴾¹

5/7

Referring the Ambiguous Verses of the Qur’an to its Self-Evident Verses

136. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever refers the ambiguous verse of the Qur’an to its self-evident verse is guided to the straight path.²

6/7

Prohibition of Interpreting the Qur’an by Personal Opinion

137. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, “Whoever interprets My Words by his personal opinion has no faith in Me.”³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 6, h. 12; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 628, h. 5.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 290, h. 39; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 92, p. 377, h. 9.

3 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 68, h. 23; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 116, h. 4.

7/7

Interpretation and *Ta'wīl* of the Qur'an

1-7/7

Verse 1 of Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, verse 87 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr, and verses
29 and 30 of Sūrat al-Naml

﴿In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful﴾

﴿Certainly We have given you [the sūra of] the seven oft-repeated verses and the great Qur'an﴾.

﴿She said, "O [members of the] elite! Indeed a noble letter has been delivered to me. It is from Solomon, and it begins in the name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful﴾.

138. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – On the authority of his forefathers from Imam al-Ḥasan from Imam 'Alī (A.S.): ﴿In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful﴾ is a verse from Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, and it is seven verses, which is completed with ﴿In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful﴾.

I heard from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) who said, "The Exalted and Glorious Allah told me: "O Muḥammad ! ﴿Certainly We have given you [the sūra of] the seven oft-repeated verses and the great Qur'an.¹ Then, He granted the blessing of the Opening Chapter to me and equaled it to the Great Qur'an." Indeed, the Opening Chapter is the most honorable thing which existed in the Treasures of the

¹ Q. 15: 87.

Throne. The Exalted and Glorious Allah allocated it especially to Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and honored him with it. Allah did not make any of the other prophets – except for Solomon – a partner in this honor. Allah bestowed the verse ‘In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful’ upon him, when quoting Bilqīs (Queen of Sheba), Allah says, ﴿Indeed a noble letter has been delivered to me. It is from Solomon, and it begins in the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.﴾¹

Indeed, whoever recites it along with belief in Muḥammad and his Household’s guardianship; obeys their orders; believes in their outward appearance and inner characteristics, the Exalted and Glorious Allah will grant a reward for each letter of it that is better for him than this world, and all its goods and all the wealth in it. Whoever listens to someone reciting the Qur’an will receive a reward one third as much as the reward the reciter receives. Therefore, each one of you can gain more benefits from this good which you have been granted as it is highly valuable. Let it not become too late, as you may regret it in your hearts.²

2-7/7

Verse 5 of Sūrat al-Fātiḥa

﴿Guide us on the straight path﴾.

139. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – On the authority of his father from Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) – about the noble verse, ﴿Guide us on the

1 Q. 27: 29-30.

2 ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 302, h. 60; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 241, h. 255.

straight path﴾ – It means direct us toward the straight path; that is to faring the path that would lead to your affection and take to your religion and prevents us from following our whimsical desires and thereby get destroyed or act according to our personal opinion and lead to fatality.¹

3-7/7

Verse 188 of Sūrat al-Baqara

﴿Do not eat up your wealth among yourselves wrongfully, nor proffer it to the judges﴾.

140. *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām* – On the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Faḍḍāl: I read in Abū al-Asad’s letter to Abū al-Ḥasan II, [Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.] that was in the handwriting of Abū al-Asad himself, who asked: What is the interpretation of this saying of the Exalted Allah, ﴿Do not eat up your wealth among yourselves wrongfully, nor proffer it to the judges﴾? The Imam wrote back to him in his own handwriting, “*al-ḥukkām* means the judges.”

Then he had written bellow it, “This is when someone knows he is oppressive, but the judge has passed judgment against him. In this case, he is excused to receive what the judge has passed judgment in his favor, of course if he had known that he was oppressive.”²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 305, h. 65; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 92, p. 228, h. 6.

2 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 219, h. 10; *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī*, vol. 1, p. 191, h. 312.

4-7/7

Verse 237 of Sūrat al-Baghara

﴿So do not forget graciousness among yourselves. Indeed Allah sees best what you do﴾.

141. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – On the authority of his forefathers from Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.): The Commander of the Faithful told us, “A severely biting time will come to people that the believer will stick to what he has in hand whereas he is not tasked with it. The Exalted Allah says, ﴿so do not forget graciousness among yourselves. Indeed Allah sees best what you do﴾, and a time will come that the evil ones will take lead and the good ones are forgotten and (people) transact with the desperate; whereas the Apostle of Allah has prohibited transacting with the desperate and making risk-taking sale. Thus, O people! Be wary of Allah and improve your relations among yourselves and keep me with my Ahl al-Bayt.”¹

5-7/7

Verse 200 of Sūrat Āl-i ‘Imrān

﴿Be patient, stand firm, and close [your] ranks﴾.

142. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – About the words of the Exalted Allah, ﴿Be patient, stand firm, and close [your] ranks﴾: When the Resurrection Day comes, a herald will call: Where are the Patient? Then, a large number of people stand up. Then, it is called again: Where are those who stand firm? Then, a large number of people

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 45, h. 168; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 73, p. 304, h. 19.

stand up.”

I say: May I be ransomed for you! Who are the patient? He said, “Those patient in doing the obligations, and those who stand firm in avoiding the unlawful acts.”¹

6-7/7

Verse 31 of Sūrat al-Nisā'

﴿If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden﴾

143. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – About the words of the Exalted Allah, ﴿If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden﴾ – That is avoiding idolatry, drinking wine, homicide, disobeying the parents, accusing the chaste women, fleeing from the battleground, and consuming an orphan's property.²

7-7/7

Verse 67 of Sūrat al-Mā'ida

﴿O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people﴾.

144. **'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – on the authority of Sahl b. al-Qāsim al-Nawshajānī: A man told Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O son of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.)! They have narrated that Urwat b. al-Zubayr had said that the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) passed away

1 *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, p. 129; *Biḥār al-Anwār* vol. 71, p. 83, h. 25.

2 *Tafsīr al-'Ayyāshī*, vol. 1, p. 392, h. 950; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 79, p. 15, h. 20.

while practicing dissimulation!”

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) replied, “After the following verse from the Exalted and Glorious Allah was revealed, ﴿O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people﴾, he abandoned any dissimulation by the Exalted and Glorious Allah’s guarantee and stated the Exalted Allah’s commandment. However the Quraysh did as they wished after his demise. However, he has been practicing dissimulation before this verse was revealed.”¹

8-7/7

Verse 59 of Sūrat al-An‘ām

﴿No leaf falls without His knowing it, nor is there a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or withered but it is in a manifest Book﴾.

145. *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī* – On the authority of Ḥusayn b. Khālid: I asked Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.)² about this saying of Allah, ﴿No leaf falls without His knowing it, nor is there a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or withered but it is in a manifest Book﴾. He said, “What is meant by leaf is the fetus that falls off its mother’s womb, before it starts crying.” I asked, ﴿nor is there a grain﴾? He said,

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 130, h. 10; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 16, p. 221, h. 16.

2 It is likely that Abū al-Ḥasan here is meant to be Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) or Imam al-Kāzīm (A.S.). There is no evidence as to which one of the two nobles he is, because Ḥusayn b. Khālid has narrated ḥadīth from both of them.

“It means the child in its mother’s womb when it starts crying and falls before the birth time.” I said, ﴿nor anything fresh﴾? He said, “It means the embryo when it is implanted in the womb and before its creation is completed and before it is transferred.” I said, ﴿or withered﴾? He said, “It is the full child.” I said, ﴿in a manifest Book﴾? He said, “In a manifest Imam.”¹

9-7/7

Verse 31 of Sūrat al-A’rāf

﴿Put on your adornment on every occasion of prayer﴾.

146. *Tafsīr al-’Ayyāshī* – On the authority of Muḥammad b. Fuḍayl from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – about the saying of the Exalted Allah, ﴿Put on your adornment on every occasion of prayer﴾: it means garment.²

10-7/7

Verse 41 of Sūrat al-Anfāl

﴿Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth of it is for Allah and the Apostle, for the relatives﴾.

147. *Al-Kāfi* – On the authority of Bazantī: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was asked about this saying of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, ﴿Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth of it is for Allah and the Apostle, for the relatives﴾ and they said to him: Whose is that which is

1 *Tafsīr al-’Ayyāshī*, vol. 2, p. 99, h. 1424; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 4, p. 90, h. 36.

2 *Tafsīr al-’Ayyāshī*, vol. 2, p. 141, h. 1563; *’Awālī al-Li’ālī*, vol. 2, p. 70.

for Allah? He said, “To the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.), and what is for the Apostle of Allah belongs to the Imam.” They said to him: Tell us if one of these groups [objects of *khums*] was more and the other less, what should be done? He said, “This is up to the Imam. How do you think the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) act? Was it not that he granted on his own choice?! So also did the Imam.”¹

11-7/7

Verse 105 of Sūrat al-Tawba

﴿Allah will see your conduct, and His Apostle and the faithful [as well]﴾.

148. *Tafsīr al-'Ayyāshī* – On the authority of Muḥammad b. Faḍl: I asked Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) about this saying of Allah, ﴿Allah will see your conduct, and His Apostle and the faithful [as well]﴾. He said, “The deeds of his nation, either good or evil, are presented to the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) every morning. So, be careful!”

149. *Al-Kāfī* – On the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. Abān Zayyāt: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to pray for me and my family. He said, “Am I not [praying]?! I swear by Allah that all your deeds are presented to me every night and day.”

‘Abd Allāh said: This sounded gross to me. The Imam (A.S.) said, “Do you not read the Book of Allah that says, ﴿Go on working: Allah will see your conduct, and His Apostle and the faithful [as well]﴾?! ”

¹ *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 544, h. 7; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 4, p. 126, 363.

By Allah the faithful is meant to be 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.)."¹

12-7/7

Verse 24 of Sūrat Yūsuf

﴿had he not beheld the proof of his Lord﴾.

150. *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of 'Āmir b. Sulaymān Ṭā'ī from Imam al-Riḍā from his forefathers from Zayn al-'Ābidīn, about the saying of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, ﴿had he not beheld the proof of his Lord﴾: The wife of the [Egyptian] Ruler went to the idol and covered it with a piece of cloth.

Yūsuf (A.S.) told her, "Why are you doing this?"

She said: I am ashamed to be seen by the idol.

Yūsuf (A.S.) told her, "Are you ashamed of something that does not hear, see, understand, eat, or drink and I should not be ashamed of He Who created man and taught him?!"

This is what is meant by the saying of the Exalted Allah, ﴿had he not beheld the proof of his Lord﴾.²

13-7/7

Verse 72 of Sūrat al-Isrā'

﴿But whoever has been blind in this [world], will be blind in the Hereafter, and [even] more astray from the [right] way﴾ .

151. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – About the words of the Exalted Allah,

1 *Tafsīr al-'Ayyāshī*, vol. 2, p. 99259 h. 1891; *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 293, h. 37.

2 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 45, 162; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 257, h. 186 (similar).

﴿But whoever has been blind in this [world], will be blind in the Hereafter, and [even] more astray from the [right] way﴾: He is the one who would postpone *Hajj* – that is the obligatory *Hajj* – and would say: I will go on the *Hajj* this year, I will go on the *Hajj* this year, until he dies.¹

14-7/7

Verse 30 of Sūrat al-Rūm

﴿the origination of Allah according to which He originated mankind﴾.

152. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his father from his forefather from Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.), – on the interpretation of the saying of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, ﴿the origination of Allah according to which He originated mankind﴾: This origination [monotheism and Divinity] is [attestation of] “There is no god but Allah, Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allah, ‘Alī is the Friend of Allah”. Up to here [and all of this] is monotheism.²

15-7/7

Verse 72 of Sūrat al-Aḥzāb

﴿Indeed We presented the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it﴾.

153. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – about this saying of the Exalted and

1 *Tafsīr al-Qummi*, vol. 2, p. 155.

2 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 447; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 269, h. 2.

Glorious Allah, ﴿Indeed We presented the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it﴾: What is meant by Trust is *wilāya* (guardianship, friendship). Whoever claims it unrightfully is unbeliever.¹

16-7/7

Verse 4 of Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt

﴿By the angels who dispense livelihood by His command﴾.

154. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – About this verse, ﴿By the angels who dispense livelihood by His command﴾: The angels distribute people's livelihood from dawn till sunrise. So, whoever sleeps at this time is deprived of his livelihood.²

17-7/7

Verses 22 and 23 of Sūrat al-Qiyāma

﴿Some faces will be fresh on that day, looking at their Lord﴾.

155. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – about this saying of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, ﴿Some faces will be fresh on that day, looking at their Lord﴾: That is, some faces are radiant waiting for their Lord's reward.³

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 306, h. 66; *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār*, p. 110, h. 3.

2 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 504, h. 1450; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 139, 541.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 115, h. 2; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 116, h. 19.

8/7

Medication with the Qur'an

156. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – On the authority of his forefathers from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Whenever anyone of you gets a headache or other than that, he should open up his hands and recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ, Sūrat al-Falaq and Sūrat al-Nās and rub his hands on his face, his pain will be gone.¹

¹ *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 2, p. 187, h. 2505; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 10, p. 368, h. 9.

Chapter Eighth

Death and the Related Issues

1/8

The Angel of Death

157. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The night I was carried to the sky, in the seventh sky I saw a man who was sitting, with one leg in east and one leg in the west and holding a tablet, looking at it, and shaking his head. I asked Gabriel who he was. He said, “The Angel of Death.”¹

2/8

Death of the Angel of Death

158. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): When the Resurrection Day comes, the Exalted and Glorious Allah will tell the Angel of Death, “O Angel of Death! I swear by My Glory and My Majesty and the

¹ *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 32, h. 38.

Loftiness of My Sublimity that I will make you taste the favor of death, as you made My servants taste!”¹

3/8

Preparedness for Death

159. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.): The Commander of the Faithful said in one of his sermons, “O People! Know that the world is the abode of annihilation and the Hereafter is the abode of everlastingness. Then, take provision from you passing abode for your lasting abode and do not divulge with Him from Whom your secrets are not hidden. Before your bodies leave the world, take heart away from the world, because you would live in this world for a few days and you are created for other than that. The world is in fact like poison. He would eat the poison who does not know it. When the servant dies, the angels would say, “What has he sent forth?” And people would say, “What has he left behind?” Send ahead the extra of your properties from which you may benefit. Do not leave behind what would cause you regret, because whoever gets deprived of the good benefits of his own wealth is really deprived; and happy is he who makes the balance of his deeds heavier on the side of the good deeds by giving charity and benevolence; and makes his residence in Paradise sublime and the passing over the *Ṣirāṭ* (the bridge over Hell leading to Paradise)

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 32, h. 50.

favorable.”¹

160. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): It was said to the Commander of the Faithful (A.S.): What is preparedness for death?” He said, “Performing the obligatory deeds, avoiding the forbidden deeds, and being good-tempered. For such a person it does not make any difference whether he approaches death or death comes towards him. I swear by Allah that it does not make any difference for the son of Abī Ṭālib whether he goes towards death or death comes towards him.”²

4/8

Remembrance of Death

161. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Remember very much the destroyer of joys [i.e. death].³

162. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): Hurry up doing devotions before times pass by, because it is as if the destroyer of joys [i.e. death] comes to you and you have no place to run way to or any chance to get rid of it.⁴

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 298, h. 56.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 297, h. 55.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 70, h. 325.

4 *Mibāḥ al-Mutihajjid*, p. 757, h. 843; *al-Iqbāl*, vol. 2, p. 259.

5/8

Fear of Entering the Other World

163. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers from Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.): When al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī’s (AS.) death was near, he cried. He was asked, “O Son of the Apostle of Allah! Are you crying, while you have such a relation to the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and he has said those [praising] words about you; you have performed *Hajj* on foot twenty times; divided your wealth with your Lord three time, and even gave away your shoes?!”

Imam al-Ḥasan (AS.) said, “I cry for two reasons: fear of the Resurrection and separation from friends.”¹

6/8

Shī‘as of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) at Death Bed

164. Imam al-Jawād (A.S.): A man from among [my father] Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) got sick. He went to visit him and asked him, “How are you?” The man answered, “Far be it from you! I saw death.” He meant the pain he was suffering from his severe illness. My father said, “What was it like? The man said, “Painful and hard.”

He said, “You have not seen death; rather, you have seen its warning signs and that which shows you a hint of its states. People are two groups: those who are comforted with death, and those by whose death others are comforted. Then, renew faith in Allah and in *wilāya* so that you are among those comforted.”

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 303, h. 62; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 291, h. 325.

That man did so. Then he said, “O son of the Apostle of Allah! These are my Lord’s angels who have come with praises and gifts and are standing before you and greeting you. Give them permission to sit down.” Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said “Be seated, O angels of my Lord!” Then he said to that sick man, “Ask them if they are ordered to stand before me.” The sick man said, “I asked them, they said, “If all the angels that Allah has created come to your presence, they would stand before you and would not sit until you permit them to. Allah has ordered them so.”

Then the man closed his eyes and said, “Salutations to you O Son of the Apostle of Allah! Such are your face and the face of the Prophet and the Imams after him are materialized before me.” He said so and died.¹

7/8

What Prevents Torments of Grave

165. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Take it upon yourself to perform midnight prayer; because no servant would get up late at night and perform eight *rak‘as* [of prayer], two *rak‘as* of *shaf’* [prayer] and one *rak‘a* of *watr* [prayer] then recite *qunūt* and ask forgiveness from Allah seventy times in his *qunūt* unless he will be secured from the torment of grave and punishment of the Fire [of Hell].²

1 *Al-Da‘wāt*, p. 248, h. 698; *al-I‘tiqādāt li al-Ṣadūq*, p. 55.

2 *Al-Da‘wāt*, vol. 2, p. 141, h. 801; *Rawḍat al-Wā‘izīn*, vol. 2, p. 141, h. 801.

8/8

**The Sinners among the Believers in Truth would only be
Tormented in Purgatory**

166. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – About the verse, ﴿On that day neither man nor jinn will be questioned about his sins.﴾¹: One who believes in the Truth and commits a sin and leaves the world without repentance, will be tormented in the purgatory for that sin and on the Resurrection Day he comes out while he does not have any sins to be questioned for.²

See h. 179 (Those who would finally leave purgatory)

1 Q. 55: 39.

2 *Majma' al-Bayān*, vol. 9, p. 312; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 81.

Chapter Nine

Resurrection Day

1/9

The Imam’s (A.S.) Argument against the Denier of Resurrection

167. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh Khurāsānī, Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) attendant: A group of people were in the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) when an atheist entered. The Imam (A.S.) said to him, “If your saying is true, which is not, then aren’t we and you the same and our prayer, fasting, legal alms, and faith would do no harms to us?” That heretic kept silent. Then, the Imam said, “And if our saying is true – which *is* – have you not been perished and we rescued?!”¹

2/9

The Most Important Thing that will be Questioned about on the Resurrection

168. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): On the Resurrection Day no

¹ *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 78, h. 3; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 250, h. 3.

servant would take any steps except after four things are questioned about from him: his life as in what way he had spent it; his youth as to in what way he had worn it away; his wealth as to how he had earned it and in what way he has spent it; and about love of us, the Ahl al-Bayt.¹

3/9

The one who will be taken to the Fire without Reckoning

169. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Indeed, the Exalted and Glorious Allah reckons every creature, except the one that ascribes partners to Allah. Such a person would not be reckoned on the Resurrection Day and is ordered to take him [directly] to the Fire.²

4/9

The one who will be taken to the Fire without Reckoning

170. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): When the Resurrection comes, the Exalted and Glorious Allah is manifested to His servant and makes him aware of each and every one of his sins and then He forgives him. Allah would not inform anyone about it, neither an Archangel nor a Prophetic Messenger; and would cover up what He does not like others become aware about that servant. Then, He tells to his sins, “All turn to good deeds.”³

1 *Jāmi‘ al-Akhhbār*, p. 499, h. 1384; *al-Khiṣāl*, p. 253, h. 125.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 34, h. 66.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 34, h. 66; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 260, h. 7.

Chapter Ten

Paradise and Hell

1/10

Choosing Paradise

171. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Choose Paradise over Hell and do not revoke your actions, for you will fall into the Fire [of Hell] and will remain there forever.¹

172. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Allah's commodity is cheap; so purchase it before it becomes expensive.²

2/10

Paradise is Veiled in Hardships

173. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The one who asks Allah for Paradise and

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 32, h. 52; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 154, h. 97.

2 *Faḍā'il al-Ashhur al-Thalātha*, p. 116, h. 111 and p. 55, h. 33; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 97, p. 81, h. 42.

is not patients in hardships, has indeed ridiculed himself.”¹

3/10

The Things for which People will Mostly go to the Fire

174. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) was asked about the things for which people will mostly go to the Fire. He said, “Two deceitful things: belly and private parts.”²

4/10

What Prevents from Going to Hell

175. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Exalted and Glorious Allah keeps away the Fire from the corpse of any believer who visits me and a drop of [rain] water hits him.³

176. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Whoever smiles at his brother in faith, Allah would write a reward for him, and whoever Allah writes a reward for, He would not punish him.⁴

5/10

Those Abiding in Hell Forever

177. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): There are five whose fire would

1 *Kanz al-Fawā'id*, vol. 1, p. 330; *Tanbih al-Khawātir*, vol. 2, 110.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 38, h. 107; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 79, h. 5.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 227, h. 1; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 102, p. 36, h. 23.

4 *Maṣādiqat al-Ikhwān*, p. 157, h. 1; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p., 205, h.1.

not extinguish and whose bodies would not die: the one who ascribes partners for Allah; the one who disobeys his parents; the one who speaks evil about his brother to the ruler resulting in his murder; the one who kills someone unjustly; and the one who commits a sin and ascribes it to the Exalted and Glorious Allah.¹

6/10

Those who will be Doubly Punished

178. *Al-Kāfi*: On the authority of Aḥmad b. ‘Umar Ḥallāl: I said to Abū al-Ḥasan [al-Riḍā] (A.S.): Will those among the sons of Fāṭima (A.S.) who show enmity toward you and do not recognize your rights [and do not accept your Imam] be punished as other people?

He said, “‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn would say, ‘Their punishment is double’.”

7/10

Those who would Finally Get out of Fire

179. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The monotheist sinners will not abide in Fire permanently; rather, they will [finally] be released from it and intercession will be allowed for them.²

See h. 166 (The Sinners among the Believers in Truth would only be Tormented in Purgatory).

¹ *Kanz al-Fawā'id*, vol. 2, p. 47; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, p. 362, h. 36.

² *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 125, h. 1; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, p. 362, h. 36.

Section Three

Ideological and Political Maxims

Chapter One

General Imamate

1/1

Difference between Messenger, Prophet, and Imam

180. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Ismā‘īl b. Marrār [or Mihrān]: Ḥasan b. Ma‘rūfī wrote to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): May I be ransomed for you! Tell me, what is the difference between Messenger (*rasūl*), Prophet (*nabī*), and Imam?

The Imam (A.S.) wrote back – or answered orally: The difference between Messenger, Prophet, and Imam is this: Messenger is the one to whom Gabriel (A.S.) descends, he sees him, hears his words, and receives Revelation, and sometimes he has [true] dreams, like Abraham’s (A.S.) dream. Prophet is the one who sometimes hears the words [of Gabriel (A.S.) but he does not see him] and sometimes sees him, but he does not hear his words. Imam is also someone who hears [the words of Gabriel (A.S.)] and he does not see the person [Gabriel (A.S.)].¹

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 2.

2/1

The Role of Imamate in Completion of Religion and the Imam's Characteristics

181. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Muslim: We were in Marv. When we arrived on Friday, at first we gathered in the Friday Mosque. People talked about Imamate and mentioned the many disagreements in this respect. I went to my master and informed him of the people’s disagreements about Imamate. He smiled and said, “O ‘Abd al-‘Azīz! These people do not know and they have deviated in their opinions. The Exalted and Glorious Allah did not take the soul of His Prophet (S.A.W.A.), except when He completed his religion and revealed the Qur’an to him, which represents each and everything, expressing the lawful (*ḥalāl*) and unlawful (*ḥarām*), sanctions and ordainments, and whatever all people need. The Exalted and Glorious Allah has said, ﴿We have not omitted anything from the Book.﴾¹ In the farewell pilgrimage that took place at the end of the Prophet’s (S.A.W.A.) life, this verse was revealed: ﴿Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion.﴾²

Imamate is also part of completion of religion, and [thus] the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) did not depart from the world until he elucidated his doctrines for his nation, clarified their path for them, set them on the highway of Truth, appointed ‘Alī (A.S.) as the milestone and

1 Q. 6: 38.

2 Q. 5: 3.

leader, and exactly explained anything the nation needed. Then, whoever says that the Exalted and Glorious Allah has not completed His religion has indeed rejected the Qur'an and whoever rejects the Qur'an has disbelieved in it.

Do people know the status of Imamate among the nation so that their election in this respect could be permissible?! The Imamate is too lofty in status and dignity and too profound for the people to grasp it with their wisdom, to understand it with their minds, or to elect an Imam on their own choice. The Exalted and Glorious Allah has bestowed Imamate upon Abraham (A.S.) followed by the rank of prophethood and friendship and honored him by this excellence and said, ﴿I am making you the Imam of mankind.﴾ And Abraham said joyfully, ﴿And from among my descendants?﴾ The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, ﴿My pledge does not extend to the unjust.﴾¹ So, this verse has denied the leadership of any unjust person until the Resurrection Day and dedicated upon the elect. Then the Almighty Allah honored him with maintenance of Imamate among his elect and purified children and said, ﴿And We gave him Isaac, and Jacob as well for a grandson, and each of them We made righteous. We made them Imams, guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the performance of good deeds, the maintenance of prayers, and the giving of *zakāt*, and they used to worship Us.﴾²

From then on, Imamate was unceasingly maintained among his

1 Q. 2: 124.

2 Q. 21: 72, 73.

children, one inheriting from the other, generation after generation, until the Exalted Allah made it heritage of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and said, ﴿Indeed the nearest of all people to Abraham are those who follow him, and this Prophet and those who have faith, and Allah is the guardian of the faithful.﴾¹ Then, Imamate was dedicated to him and he entrusted it with ‘Alī (A.S.) by the Exalted Allah’s command and by the procedure that Allah maintained and it was handed over among his chosen children; those whom Allah granted knowledge and faith, when He said, ﴿But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, “Certainly you remained in Allah’s Book until the Day of Resurrection.﴾²

Then, Imamate is dedicated to ‘Alī’s (A.S.) children; because there is no prophet after Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.).

Now, how can these ignorant people elect [an Imam]? Imamate is the rank of the prophets and heritage of the legatees. Imamate is succession to Allah, to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and to the position of Imam ‘Alī (A.S.), a heritage to al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. Imamate is the rein of religion, the binder of Muslims, the source of welfare and prosperity to the world, and glory of the faithful. It is the flourishing root of Islam and its topmost branch. It is through Imam that prayer, legal alms (*zakāt*), fasting, *Hajj* pilgrimage, and *jihād* are completed, the spoils and alms are distributed equitably, the legal punishments and ordinances are carried out, and the borders are guarded.

1 Q. 3: 68.

2 Q. 30: 56.

Imam treats that which Allah has deemed unlawful as unlawful and observes that which He has deemed lawful as lawful, maintains Allah's commands, defends Allah's religion, and calls to His path with wise sayings, admonition, clear arguments and reasons. Imam is like the shining sun that enlightens the world with his light and it is at that horizon that the hands and eyes cannot reach him.

Imam is a full moon, a shining lantern, a bright light, and a guiding star in the darkness of the night through towns and cities, deserts, and deep seas

Imam is the fresh drinking water for the thirsty, the guide to the straight path, and liberator from perishing.

Imam is the fire on the hilltop [to guide the travellers and wayfarers], warmth of the warmth-seeker, and a guide through predicaments. Whoever is separated from him would perish.


Imam is the raining cloud, the torrential rain, the shining sun, shadowy sky, the vast land, flowing spring and an oasis and orchard.

Imam is an empathetic companion, a compassionate father, a full blood brother, a mother affectionate to [her] child, and the refuge for the servants in calamities. Imam is the Allah's trustee among His creation, His proof for His servants, His successor in His towns and cities, a caller toward Allah, and a defender of Allah's sanctities. Imam is purged from sins and detached from defects. He is specified by knowledge and characterized by forbearance. He is the binder of religion, source of dignity for the Muslims, fury to the hypocrites and destroyer of the infidels.

Imam is unique in his time. No one can emulate him and no scholar is equal to him. No substitute can be found for him and there

is no one like him. He has all excellences without having sought for them or made any attempt to acquire them; rather, all these excellences have been granted to him by the most gracious and bounteous Allah.

Therefore, who is there to achieve knowledge about the Imam or possible for him to choose him? Far from it! In describing one aspect of his dignity, one excellence of his excellences, the intellects have gone astray, wisdoms have perplexed, the hearts have puzzled, the eyes have incapacitated, the nobles have felt inferior, the wise have been bewildered, the sages have been astonished, the orators have failed, the thinkers have been stupefied, the poets have fatigued, the literati have been frustrated, the eloquent have become inarticulate, and [all of these] have admitted incapability [in describing him].

How can he be fully described? Or his reality recounted? Or any of his authorities understood? Or how can one find a deputy to take up his position? No [Not possible]. How and where is it possible, whereas he is like a star far from the reach of those trying to reach him and those seeking to describe him?! So, how far is this position from election? How far is his wisdom from wisdoms [of others]? Where is like of him found?! Have they imagined they can find the Imam anywhere except from among the household of the Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)? By Allah! They have lied; they have fostered idle wishes; they have climbed a tough and slippery ladder from which they keep sliding down; they have wanted to elect Imam with their immature and insufficient wisdoms and misguided thoughts; but it did not add up but to their distance [from truth].  May Allah assail them,

where do they stray?!¹ They intended to embark on a hard task, fabricated a lie, were deeply misguided, and emerged in perplexity because they knowingly abandoned the Imam. ﴿Satan made their deeds seem decorous to them, thus he barred them from the way [of Allah], though they used to be perceptive.﴾²

They turned their back on what Allah and the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and his Ahl al-Bayt had chosen, turned to their own choice whereas the Qur'an had overtly addressed them, ﴿Your Lord creates whatever He wishes and chooses. They have no choice. Immaculate is Allah and exalted above [having] any partners they ascribe [to Him].﴾³ He also said, ﴿A faithful man or woman may not, when Allah and His Apostle have decided on a matter, have any option in their matter.﴾⁴ He also said, ﴿What is the matter with you? How do you judge?! Do you possess a scripture in which you read that you shall indeed have in it whatever you would like? Do you have a pledge binding on Us until the Day of Resurrection, that you shall indeed have whatever you decide? Ask them, which of them will aver [any of] that! Do they have any partners [they ascribe to Allah]? Then let them produce their partners, if they are truthful.﴾⁵ And He, the Exalted and Glorious said, ﴿Do they not contemplate the Qur'an, or are there locks on the

1 Q. 9: 30.

2 Q. 29: 38.

3 Q. 28: 68.

4 Q. 33: 36.

5 Q. 68: 36-41.

hearts?)¹ Or, ﴿and their hearts have been sealed. So they do not understand.﴾² Or, ﴿... those who say, “We hear”, though they do not hear. Indeed the worst of beasts in Allah’s sight are the deaf and the dumb who do not apply reason. Had Allah known any good in them, surely He would have made them hear, and were He to make them hear, surely they would turn away, being disregarding.﴾³ Or, ﴿They said, “We hear, and disobey.”﴾⁴

[Indeed, Imamate is not a position to elect], Rather it is, ﴿That is Allah’s grace, which He grants to whomever He wishes, and Allah is dispenser of a great grace.﴾⁵ So, what have people got to do with electing an Imam? Imam is learned and is not ignorant; he is a caretaker who does not give up. He is the mine of holiness, purity, piety, asceticism, knowledge, devotion; he is entitled with the Prophet’s (S.A.W.A.) call, born to a purified and chaste lady (Fāṭima – A.S.), there is no defect and shame in his genealogy, and no noble one would catch up with him. He is of the Quraysh household, Hāshim’s progeny, the offspring of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.), and the Exalted and Glorious Allah is pleased with him. He is noble among the dignitaries, a descendant of the ‘Abd Manāf, outstanding in knowledge, perfect in forbearance, powerful in leadership, and knowledgeable in politics. His obedience is obligatory. He is the upholder of Allah’s command,

1 Q. 47: 24.

2 Q. 9: 87.

3 Q. 8: 21-23.

4 Q. 2. 93.

5 Q. 57: 21.

benevolent to Allah's servants, and guardian of Allah's religion.

Allah makes the prophets and Imams – may Allah's blessings be upon them – succeed and grants them from the treasures of His knowledge and wisdom that, which He does not give to others. For this reason, their knowledge is higher than the knowledge of other people of their time, as the Exalted Allah said, ﴿Is He who guides to the truth worthier to be followed, or he who guides not unless he is [himself] guided? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?》¹ And He, the Exalted and Glorious said, ﴿and he who is given wisdom, is certainly given an abundant good.﴾² And He said about Saul, ﴿Indeed Allah has chosen him over you, and enhanced him vastly in knowledge and physique, and Allah gives His kingdom to whomever He wishes, and Allah is All-bounteous, All-knowing.﴾³ And He said to His Apostle (S.A.W.A.), ﴿Allah has sent down to you the Book and wisdom, and He has taught you what you did not know, and great is Allah's grace upon you.﴾⁴ And He said about the Imams from among his household – may Allah's blessings be upon them – and progeny and children, ﴿Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them out of His grace? We have certainly given the progeny of Abraham the Book and wisdom, and We have given them a great sovereignty. Of them are some who believe in him, and of them are

1 Q. 10: 35.

2 Q. 2: 269.

3 Q. 2: 247.

4 Q. 4:113.

some who deter [others] from him; and hell suffices for a blaze! ﴿﴾¹

When Allah chooses one of His servants for guiding His servants, He would expand his breast for this task [and would grant him the competence for this leadership], put springs of wisdom in his heart, and inspire knowledge to him so that from then on he would not fail to answer any question and is not confused in giving the right answer. Then, he is infallible and enjoys Allah's [uninterrupted] confirmation, assistance, and guidance and is secured from any slipperiness and error. Allah has bestowed this upon him to be His proof to His servants and His testimony to His creation and ﴿﴾That is Allah's grace which He grants to whomever He wishes, and Allah is dispenser of a great grace. ﴿﴾²

Now, do people have access to such a person to elect him? Or, is it possible that their elected person has such features to be appointed as a leader?! By Allah's House! These people threw the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they do not know, whereas guidance and cure is in the Book of Allah; but people put it aside and followed their own vain desires. Thus, Allah reproached them, took them as enemy, and made them miserable. The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, ﴿﴾And who is more astray than him who follows his desires without any guidance from Allah? Indeed Allah does not guide the wrongdoing lot. ﴿﴾³ and said, ﴿﴾As for the faithless, their lot will be to fall [into ruin], and He

1 Q. 4: 54, 55.

2 Q. 62: 4; 57: 21.

3 Q. 28: 50.

will make their works go awry.﴾¹ and said, ﴿[that is] greatly outrageous to Allah and to those who have faith. That is how Allah seals the heart of every arrogant tyrant.﴾² And may abundant blessings and peace of Allah be upon the Prophet Muḥammad, and on his family.”³

3/1

The Role of Imam in Survival of the Earth

182. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Fuḍayl: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Will the earth remain empty of the Imam?

He said, “No.”

I said: It is related from Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) that, “The earth will not remain without the Imam, unless the Almighty Allah would become wrathful with the inhabitants of the earth or the servants.”

Imam al-Riḍā said, “No, it won’t; because in that case it will fall in.”⁴

4/1

The Role of Recognizing the Imam in Fulfillment of Ultimatum

183. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Exalted and Glorious Allah’s ultimatum will not be fulfilled unless with a recognized Imam.⁵

1 Q. 47: 8.

2 Q. 40: 35.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 198, h. 1; *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 675, h. 31.

4 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 179, h. 11; *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 202, h. 2.

5 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 177, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 23, p. 51, h. 103.

5/1

The Danger of not Recognizing the Imam

184. *Kamāl al-Dīn* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said: “Whoever dies and does not have an Imam, has died a death of Paganism (*Jāhiliyya*).”

I asked him: Will all who die and do not have an Imam, have died a death of *Jāhiliyya*?

He said, “Yes.”¹

6/1

When will the Imam Find out he is an Imam?

185. *Al-Kāfī* – on the authority of Ṣafwān: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Tell me when will an Imam find out he has become an Imam? Is it the time when he is informed that the previous Imam has died, or when he departs from the world, like Abū al-Ḥasan [Imam al-Kāẓim] (A. S.) who died in Baghdad and you were here (in Medina)?

The Imam said, “The same moment that the previous Imam dies, he will find out.” I asked: How? He said, “Allah will inspire him.”²

7/1

The Reciprocal Rights of the Imam and the Nation

186. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – Addressing Abū Hāshim Dāwūd b.

1 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 668, h. 11; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 146, h. 123; *al-Imāma wa al-Tabṣira*, p. 220, h. 71.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 381, h. 4; *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, p. 466, h.31.

Ja'farī: "O Dāwūd! We have a right upon you on behalf of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and you have a right upon us, too. Then, whoever recognizes our right, his [right] will be incumbent upon us, and whoever does not recognize our right there is no right [upon us] for him."¹

8/1

Obeying Imam

187. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Zayd Ṭabarī: I was in Khurāsān standing Behind Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). A group of the Banī Hāshim were with him and Ishāq b. Mūsā b. 'Īsā al-'Abbāsī was also among them. The Imam Said, "O Ishāq! I was informed that people say that we have said: People are our servants! I swear by my kinship to the Apostle of Allah that I have never said so and I have not heard any of my forefathers to have said so and none of my forefathers have been reported to have said so; rather, I say, people are our servants in obedience [to us] and our followers in religion. Then, those who are present convey [this statement] to those who are absent."²

1 *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 446; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 78, p. 340, h. 39.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 187, h. 10; *al-Amālī*, Mufīd, p. 253, h. 3.

Chapter Two

Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

1/2

Who are the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

188. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Rayyān b. Ṣalt: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was present in Ma’mūn’s session. A group of people from Iraq and Khurāsān were gathered in his session... Ma’mūn asked, “Who are the purified progeny?”

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “The ones whom Allah has mentioned in His Book and said about them, ﴿Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification,﴾ and those the Prophet has said about them, “I leave among you two precious things; the Book of Allah (the Holy Qur’ān) and my *‘Itrat* (Ahl al-Bayt). The two will not separate from one another until they join me at the Pond of Kawthar. Then, see how you follow me through them. Do not teach them; for they are more learned from you.”

The scholars present at the session said, “O Abā al-Ḥasan! Tell us about the *‘Itrat*. Are they the household (*Āl*) or other than the household?”

Imam al-Riḍā said, “They are the household.” The scholars said, “But it is related from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) that ‘My nation are My household and also the companions relate in well-known (*mustafīd*) traditions, which cannot be rejected [because it has many narrators,], that the household of Muḥammad are the same as his nation’.”

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Tell me, is charitable donation (*ṣadaqa*) to the household of Muḥammad unlawful?” They said, “Yes.”

The Imam said, “So, will it be unlawful to the nation too?” They said, “No.”

The Imam answered, “This is the very difference between nation (*Umma*) and household (*Āl*).”¹

2/2

The Number of Imams from among the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

189. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): “The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Whoever likes to hold onto my religion and after me sin in the Ark of Salvation, then he should follow the example of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and be enemy to his enemy and befriend to his friend; because he is my legatee both in my life and after my death and my successor among my nation. He is the Imam of any Muslim and commander of any believer after me. His words are my words, his command is my command, and his prohibition is my prohibition. His follower is my follower, his helper is my helper, and

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 229, h. 1; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 291, h. 325.

whoever abandons helping him has abandoned helping me.”

Then he said, “Whoever separates from ‘Alī after me, neither will he see me nor I will see him on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever opposes ‘Alī, Allah would forbid the Paradise for him and sets him in fire, and this is an evil destination. Whoever leaves ‘Alī alone, Allah will leave him alone on the day that they enter His presence; and whoever helps ‘Alī, Allah will help him on the day who visits Him and at the interrogation, He will induce His *ḥujja* (argument) to him.”

Then he said, “al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, after their father, are the Imams of my nation and the masters of the youth of the Paradise. Their mothers are the ladies of the two worlds’ ladies and their father is the master of the *awṣiyā* (spiritual heirs). There will be nine Imams from the progeny of al-Ḥusayn, whose ninth will be the *Qā’im* (Riser) from among my progeny. Obeying them is like obeying me and disobeying them is like disobeying me. I complain to Allah about the deniers of their excellence and superiority and those who disrespect them after me. Allah suffices for protecting and helping my progeny and the Imams of my nation and for revenging the deniers of the Truth, ﴿And the wrongdoers will soon know to what goal they will return.﴾¹

1 Q. 26: 260. *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 260, h. 6; Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Taḥṣīn*, p. 553.

3/2

Traits of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

A. They are People of the Remembrance

190. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – about the noble verse, ﴿Ask the people of the Remembrance if you do not know.﴾: We are the people of the Remembrance and we should be asked.¹

B. Equiponderant to the Qur'an

191. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): It seems that I have been called to leave. So, I leave among you two precious things, one of which is greater than the other; Allah's Book – which is a rope extended down from the heavens onto the earth – and my *'Itrat*, my Ahl al-Bayt. Then, see how you treat them after me.²

C. They are the Middle Haven

192. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): We, the household of the Prophet are the middle type that the hardliners will not reach us [unless they return to us] and the lagging behind [deniers of *Wilāya*] will not take the lead on us.³

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 210, h. 3; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 23, p. 179, h. 23.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 30, h. 40; *Ṣaḥīfāt al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 287, h. 34.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 101, h. 3; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 4, p. 40, h. 18.

D. They are Light for their Followers

193. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): We are light for those who follow us and source of guidance for those who seek guidance from us.¹

E. They Have Eyes not Like People's Eyes

194. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): We have eyes that do not resemble people's eyes and there is light in them that the Satan is deprived of.²

F. Their Youngers Inherit from their Elders

195. Al-Kāfi: on the authority of Mu'ammad b. Khallād: I heard from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) saying something [about Imamate]. Then, he said, "What need do you have to this?! I have appointed Abū Ja'far as my successor and deputy." And said, "We are a household whose younger ones inherit from the older ones, detail by detail."³

G. They are the Beginning and the End of Religion

196. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Allah began religion with us and will end it with us.⁴

H. No One is Comparable to them

197. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from Imam 'Alī (A.S.): We are the household that no one can be compared

1 *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 2, p. 104; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 242, h. 5.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 245, h. 427; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 24, p. 126, h. 3.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 320, h. 2; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 276.

4 *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 2, p. 104; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 242, h. 5.

to us. The Qur'an was reveled among us and the mine of apostleship is among us.¹

4/2

Noble Moral Traits of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

198. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – In his letter to Faḍl b. Sahl: It is of their religion – that is, the Imams' (A.S.): piety, chastity, honesty, truthfulness, hardworking, returning the trustees to both the benevolent and the evil-doer, long prostrations, nightly devotional acts, avoiding of the unlawful, waiting patiently for the reappearance of *al-Hujja*, good companionship, good behavior toward neighbors, doing good, harmless, cheerful disposition, benevolence, and kindness to the faithful.²

199. Al-Kāfi: on the authority of 'Alī b. Asbāṭ from Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn b. Yazīd: I heard from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Khurāsān saying, "We are a household that have inherited forgiveness from the House of Ya'qūb (A.S.) and thankfulness from the House of David."

'Alī b. Asbāṭ said: There was another statement that Muḥammad [b. Ḥusayn b. Yazīd] has forgotten it and I told him, "And patience from the House of Ayyūb." Muḥammad said: It is most likely.³

200. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): We are a household that we see what we have promised as a debt upon us just as the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) used to do.⁴

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 66, h. 297; *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 179, h. 2.

2 *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 416; *al-Khiṣāl*, p. 475, h. 46.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 308, h. 480.

4 *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 446; *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 301, h. 928.

5/2

***Wilāya* of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and Aversion of their Enemies**

201. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – Perfection of religion is [acceptance of] our *Wilāya* and aversion toward our enemy.¹

202. *Ṣifāt al-Shī'a* – On the authority of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Khazzāz: I heard from Imam al-Riḍā who said, “Some of our ardent friends are more dangerous than *Dajjāl* (Anti-Christ) to the Shī'as.”

I said: Why? O son of the Apostle of Allah!

He said, “Because of their friendship with our enemies and their enemies with our friends. When this happens, the truth and the falsehood are intertwined and the situation of the society would become suspicious, hence, no distinction between the faithful and the hypocrites.”²

203. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The first thing, about which the servant will be asked is the love of us the Ahl al-Bayt.³

204. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Love of us the Ahl al-Bayt would erase the sins and double the good deeds.

The Exalted Allah would compensate any iniquity that is upon lovers of us the Ahl al-Bayt, except what has been inflicting loss and doing oppression on the faithful. Allah would tell our evil deeds, “Turn

1 *Mustaṭrafāt al-Sarā'ir*, p. 149, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 27, p. 301, h. 19.

2 *Ṣifāt al-Shī'a*, p. 86, h. 14; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 391, h. 11.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 62, h. 258; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 260, h. 8.

into good deeds.”¹

6/2

Adhering to the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

205. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Whoever likes to sit on knowledge boat and hold onto a strong handhold and get hold of Allah’s unwavering rope, then he should love ‘Alī after me, be an enemy to his enemies, and accept the guiding Imams from among his progeny as leaders; because they are my successors and vicegerents after me and authorities of Allah on creation and are the masters of the nation, who would lead the God-wary toward Paradise. Their party is my party and my party is Allah’s party; and the party of their enemies is the Satan’s party.²

7/2

Presenting Actions to the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

206. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Works, either good or bad, will be presented to the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.).³

207. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. Abān Zayyāt who was of high status to Imam al-Riḍā: I told Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Pray for me and my family. He said, “Do I not?! By Allah! Your actions are presented to me every morning and evening.”

1 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 164, h. 274; *Irshād al-Qulūb*, p. 253.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 292, h. 43; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 70, h. 37.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 220, h. 6; *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 425, h. 7.

I said: This is too great to me [to believe]. The Imam (A.S.), “Do you not read the Book of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, ﴿And say, “Go on working: Allah will see your conduct, and His Apostle and the faithful [as well]﴾¹? I swear by Allah, it [what is meant by the faithful] is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalib (A.S.).”²

8/2

Exaggeration about the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

208. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever takes Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) above servitude [of Allah], will be regarded among the disfavored and the misguided.³

209. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Would say in his supplication: O Allah! I am [by myself] without move and power; because there is no power and no strength save from you. O Lord! I acquit myself to You of those who claim something about us that does not deserve us. O Lord! I acquit myself to You of those who claim something about us that we have not said about ourselves. O Lord! You are the Creator and You are the Commander. Only You do we worship and only from you do we seek help. O Lord! You are our Creator and the Creator of our forefathers from among those of old or those of later times. O Lord! Lordship is not befitting anyone but You alone, and Godhood is not deserved by anyone but You alone. Then, curse the Nazarenes who downgraded Your greatness and curse other people who believe in

1 Q. 9: 105.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 219, h. 4; *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 429, h. 2.

3 *Al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 453, h. 314; *al-Tafsīr*, Attributed to *Imam al-‘Askarī* (A.S.), p. 50, h. 23.

what they believe.

O Lord! We are Your slaves and sons of Your slaves. We neither possess any benefit and loss to ourselves or any option in our death and life. O Lord! We acquit ourselves to You of anyone who says we are Lords and we acquit ourselves to You of anyone who says that we create and provide livelihood, just as Jesus (A.S.) acquitted himself of the Nazarenes. O Lord! We did not call them to such beliefs. Then, do not take us to task for their beliefs and allegations and forgive us for what they say about us. ﴿And Noah said, “My Lord!” Do not leave on the earth any inhabitant from among the faithless. If You leave them, they will lead astray Your servants and will not beget except vicious ingrates.﴾

9/2

Assessment of the Traditions Related about the Excellences of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

210. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. Abī Maḥmūd: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O Son of the Apostle of Allah! There are traditions with us about the excellences of the Commander of the Faithful (A.S.) and the nobilities of you, the Ahl al-Bayt, which I do not observe in you. Should we believe in those traditions?

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “O Ibn Abī Maḥmūd! My father narrated that his father quoted on the authority of his grandfather that the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, ‘Whoever listens to someone’s speech is worshipping him. If the speaker is talking on behalf of Allah, then he has worshipped Allah. However, if the speaker is talking on behalf

of Satan, then he has worshipped Satan.”

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) then added, ‘O Ibn Abī Maḥmūd! Our opponents have faked three types of traditions regarding our excellences, which are of the following three types: one of them is boasting; the other one is belittling and the third one is emphasis on the wickedness of our enemies. When the people hear their traditions boastings about us, they will denounce our Shī‘as and accuse them of believing in our divinity; when they hear their traditions belittling us, they will believe them; and when they hear the traditions about the wickedness of our enemies and their being sworn at, they will swear at us, while the Glorious and Exalted Allah has said, ﴿Do not abuse those whom they invoke besides Allah, lest they should abuse Allah out of hostility, without any knowledge.﴾¹

O Ibn Abī Maḥmūd! Follow our way when the people deviate to the right or left. We will be with whoever follows us. We will separate from whoever separates himself from us. The least thing that might lead one to abandon faith is to say that a pebble is a seed, believe it and stay away from those who oppose him. O Ibn Abī Maḥmūd! Memorize what I have told you since I have given you what is best for you in this world and the Hereafter.”²

211. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority of Ḥusayn b. Khālid: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O Son of the Apostle of Allah! People relate from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) who said, “Allah created Adam in His

1 Q. 6: 108.

2 ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 304, h. 63; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 239, h. 1.

image.”

The Imam (A.S.) said, “May Allah kill them that they have omitted the first part of the ḥadīth! The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) was passing by two men who were swearing at each other and heard one of them saying to the other: may Allah uglify your face and the face of him who resembles you!

The he (S.A.W.A.) said, “O Servant of Allah! Do not say this to your brother; because Allah has created Adam (A.S.) in His image.”¹

10/2

Doing Injustice to the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

212. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Paradise is forbidden to the one who wrongs my Ahl al-Bayt, the one who fights against them, the one who assists [others] against them, and the one who swears at them. ﴿There shall be no share for them in the Hereafter and Allah will not speak to them nor will He [so much as] look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and there is a painful punishment for them.﴾²

213. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Allah’s wrath and the wrath of His Apostle will be harsh on the one who sheds my blood and hurts

1 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 153, h. 63; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 239, h. 1.

2 Q. 3: 77. *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 34, h. 65; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 164, h. 272.

me by hurting my progeny.¹

214. *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh* – On the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: I heard Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) saying, “By Allah! There is none of us who is not either killed or martyred.”

They asked: O Son of the Apostle of Allah! Who will kill you?

The Imam answered, “The worst of Allah’s creatures in my time. He will kill me with poison and then will bury me in a small house in the strange land.”²

215. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The worst of the *umma* will kill al-Ḥusayn and the one who denounces the children of al-Ḥusayn would disbelieve me.³

11/2

Remembering the Passions of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

116. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever remembers our passions and weeps and makes others weep, their eyes would not weep on the day when eyes weep. Whoever sits in a session, in which we are recalled and our names are mentioned, their hearts would not die on the day that hearts die.”⁴

217. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Rayyān b.

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 27, h. 11; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 155, h. 99.

2 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 585, h. 3192; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 256, h. 9.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 64, h. 277; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 44, p. 300, h. 5.

4 *Al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 131, h. 119; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 294, h. 48.

Shabīb: I entered the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) on the first day of Muḥarram. He said, "O Son of Shabīb! Are you fasting?"

I said: No.

He said, "This is the day when Zechariah (A.S.) supplicated to his Lord and said, ﴿My Lord! Grant me a good offspring from You! Indeed You hear all supplications.﴾¹

Then, Allah answered his supplication and ordered the angels to call out to Zechariah (A.S.), ﴿as he stood praying in the sanctuary: "Allah gives you the good news of John.﴾² So, everyone who fasts today and then supplicate to the Exalted and Glorious Allah, He would answer his supplication just as He answered Zechariah's (A.S.)."

Then, he said, "O Son of Shabīb! Muḥarram is a month in which the people of the pagan period regarded oppression and war as forbidden; but this *umma* did not observe its sanctity and did not venerate their Prophet. In this month, they killed his children, captivated his women, and plundered his provisions. May Allah never forgive them!"

O Son of Shabīb! If you wish to cry, then cry for Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.). He was slaughtered like a sheep, and was killed along with eighteen men of his household who had no equal on the earth. The seven heavens and the earths cried for his martyrdom. Four thousand angels descended to the earth to assist him; but they were not allowed. They will remain at his shrine with wrinkled hair until the

1 Q. 3: 38.

2 Q. 3: 39.

Riser [Imam al-Mahdi (A.S.)] rises. Then they will be among those who will assist him. Their slogan will be *Yā lithārāt al-Ḥusayn* (Revenge for al-Husayn's blood!)..."¹

12/2

Those who Belong to the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.) and Those Who Do not

218. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Salmān is from us, the Ahl al-Bayt.²

219. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): He is not from us whose neighbors are not secure from his vices.³

220. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): He is not from us who deceives a Muslim, inflicts damage, or plays a trick on him.⁴

221. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): The one who is a Muslim would neither play a trick nor practice deception, because I heard from Gabriel who said, "Verily, playing tricks and deceiving are in Fire."

Then he said, "He is not from us who deceives a Muslim and he is

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 299, h. 58; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 192, h. 202.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 64, h. 282; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 616, h. 139; *al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, vol. 5, p. 566.

3 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 24, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 74, p. 151, h. 7.

4 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 29, h. 26; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 86, h. 13.

not from us who betrays a Muslim.”¹

222. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Our Shī‘as are surrendered to our commands, follow our words, and oppose to our enemies. So, whoever is not so, is not from us.²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 50, h. 194; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 344, h. 413 and 414.

2 *Ṣifāt al-Shī‘a*, vol. 82, h. 2; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 68, p. 167, h. 24.

Chapter Three

The Imamate of Amīr al-Mu'minīn and some of his Excellences

1/3

Succession to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

A. The Prophet's (S.A.W.A.) Legatee, Successor, and the Imam after Him

223. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Prophet's (A.S.) compassion for his *umma* is like the compassion of a father for his children; and the noblest person from among his *umma* was 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) and after the Prophet (S.A.W.A.), the compassion of 'Alī (A.S.) for them is like that of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) because he is his legatee, successor, and the Imam after him. For this reason, the Prophet said, "I and 'Alī are the fathers to this *umma*."

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) climbed the pulpit and said, "Whoever leaves some debts or orphans behind, it [paying his debts and guardianship of his children] is upon me and should come to me, and whoever leaves some property behind, it belongs to his inheritors." Thus, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) was superior to their parents and also to

them than themselves. Similarly, after him, this superiority belonged to Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.) just as it belonged to the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.).¹

B. The Seal of the Legatees

224. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): O 'Alī! I asked nothing [for myself] from my Lord unless I asked the same for you too, except that which Allah said, "After you there is no prophethood. You are the seal of the prophets and 'Alī is the seal of the legatees."²

C. Guardian of the Umma after the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

225. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam 'Alī (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) – addressing 'Alī (A.S.): The exalted and Glorious Allah looked at the people of the earth and chose me. Again, He looked and chose you after me and made you the guardian to my *umma* after me; and there is no one like us after us.³

D. His Status to the Prophet (A.S.) is Like the Status of Aaron to Moses (A.S.)

226. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.)

1 *Ma'ānī al-Akhhbār*, p. 52, h. 3; *'Uyūn Akhhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 85, h. 29.

2 *'Uyūn Akhhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 73, h. 337; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 39, p. 36, h. 5.

3 *'Uyūn Akhhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 66, h. 299; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 107, h. 80.

from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) – In the battle of Tabūk, the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) left ‘Alī (A.S.) [in Medina]. ‘Alī (A.S.) said: O Apostle of Allah! Are you leaving me behind [and don’t you take me with you]?! The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “Are you not content to be to me as Aaron to Moses (A.S.) with the difference that there is no Prophet after me?”¹

H. His Guardianship is Allah’s Stronghold

227. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) – from Gabriel from Michael from Seraph (A.S.) from the Tablet from the Pen: The Exalted and Glorious Allah says, “The *Wilāya* of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is My fortress. Whoever enters My fortress will be secure from my punishment.”²

I. The Reason Why the Umma Turned Away from him after the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

228. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Faḍḍāl from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): I asked him about Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.): Why did people turn away from him and went to others while they were aware of his excellence, background in Islam, and his status with the Prophet (A.S.)?

He said, “Although they were aware of his excellence, they turned away from him and went to others only because ‘Alī (A.S.) had killed many of their fathers, grandfathers, brothers, paternal and maternal

1 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 342, h. 692; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 17, p. 353, h. 3.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 136; *Ma‘ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 371, h. 1.

uncles, and close relatives who were enemies to Allah and His Prophet.

That was why they hated 'Alī (A.S.) and did not like him to govern over them. This hatred was not in their heart from others, because they [the others] were not beside the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) in holy wars. That was why they turned away from him and joined the others.”¹

2/3

Superiority of the Day of al-Ghadīr

229. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “When the Resurrection Day comes, four days are taken toward Allah like the brides being taken to the bridal room on the consummation night.”

It was asked: What days?

He said, “ Eid al-Aḍḥā, Eid al-Fiṭr, Friday, and Eid al-Ghadīr. The Day of Ghadīr among al-Aḍḥā, al-Fiṭr, and Friday is like the moon among the stars; and that is the day when Abraham the Friend of Allah was rescued from the fire and fasted that day for gratitude to Allah. That is the day when Allah, by giving authority to 'Alī (A.S.) at the hands of the Prophet (A.S.) perfected the religion and revealed his excellences and successorship, and he fasted that day. That is the day of the perfection of religion and the day of the Satan's aversion; it is a day when the actions of the Shi'as and the lovers of the Household of Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) are accepted.”²

1 “*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 81, h. 15; *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, p. 146, h. 3.

2 *Al-Iqbāl*, vol. 2, p. 260 and 264; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 27, p. 262, h. 5.

3/3

His Traits and Excellences

A. He and the Prophet are from the Same Light

230. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): I and ‘Alī are created from the same light.¹

B. The Soul of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

231. Ṭarā’if al-Maqāl: Ma’mūn said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): What is the reason for the Caliphate of your forefather [‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.)]? He said, [the word] ﴿our souls﴾. Ma’mūn said, What if there were no [word of] ﴿our women﴾?

Imam al-Riḍā said, “Of course, if there were no [word of] ﴿our sons﴾!

Ma’mūn kept silence.^{2,3}

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 58, h. 219; *al-Khiṣāl*, p. 38, h. 108.

2 *Ṭarā’if al-Maqāl*, vol. 2, p. 302. Also see: *al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra*, p. 38.

3 In an explanation to this ḥadīth, ‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabā’ī has written: what the Imam (A.S.) means by attesting to *anfusanā* (our souls) is that Allah has made the soul of Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) like that of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) [and regarded him as Divine authority].

Ma’mūn, by referring to the word *nisā’unā* (our women) in the verse [3: 61] says: since *nisā* is posed verses *nafs*, what is meant by *anfus* is men and not the person of Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) answers, “*lawlā abnāunā*, meaning that the word *abna’unā* denotes that *anfusanā* does not mean men; because if it meant to be *rijāl*, then *abnā* were also a part of *rijāl* and there was no reason to mention them. Then, what is meant by *anfusanā* is the person of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (*al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’an*, vol. 3, p. 230).

C. The Prophet's Gate to Knowledge

232. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): I am the city of Knowledge and 'Alī is its gate. So, whoever intends to enter the city should enter it through this gate.¹

D. The Prophet's Key to Knowledge

233. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) from Jābir from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): I am the treasure of knowledge and 'Alī is its key. Then, whoever wishes [to reach] the treasure, should go to the key.²

E. The Prophet's Witness

234. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – About the words of Allah, ﷻ Say, "Allah suffices as a witness between me and you, and he who possesses the knowledge of the Book." ³ --: he is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.).

F. The First Believer

235. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): 'Alī was the first one who followed me and will be the first one after the Exalted Truth that will

1 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 233, h. 1; Shaykh al-Mufid, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 10, p. 42.

2 *'Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 74, h. 341; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 40, p. 201, h. 5.

3 Q. 13: 43. *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 42, p. 29, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 230, h. 6.).

shake hands with me [on the Resurrection].¹

G. The Commander of the Faithful

236. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.): Burayda told me: The Apostle of Allah ordered us to greet your father [‘Alī (A.S.)] as the Commander of the Faithful.²

H. The Imams’ Father

237. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Gabriel informed me on behalf of the Exalted and Glorious Allah saying, “‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib is My authority over My creation and the ruler of My religion. I will bring forth Imams from his loin, who will rise up by My order and I will invite to My path. For their sake, I would fend off calamities from My servants, men and women, and through them I would send down My Mercy upon them.”³

I. The Divider of Paradise and Hell

238. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): O ‘Alī! You are the divider of paradise and hell. You would knock on the door

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 59, h. 228; *al-Irshād*, vol. 1, p. 31.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 68, h. 312; *al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 331, h. 661.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 68, h. 208; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 637, h. 524.

of Paradise and enter it without reckoning.¹

4/3

His Greatest Excellence (A.S.)

239. *Al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra*: One day Ma'mūn said to Imam al-Riḍā: What is the greatest excellence of Amīr al-Mu'minīn [‘Alī – A.S.] that the Qur’an implicates?

Imam al-Riḍā told him, “His excellence of *mubāhila*. The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, ﴿Should anyone argue with you concerning him, after the knowledge that has come to you, say, “Come! Let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, our souls and your souls, then let us pray earnestly and call down Allah’s curse upon the liars.”² The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) called for al-Ḥasan (A.S.) and al-Ḥusayn (A.S.). So, these two are his sons; and called for Fāṭima, too. So, she here is what he means by his women. Then, he called for Amīr al-Mu'minīn (A.S.). So, by Allah’s ordainment, ‘Alī (A.S.) is the Prophet’s (S.A.W.A.) soul. Besides, we know that none of the creatures of the Exalted Allah are nobler than and superior to the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.). So, it is obliged that by Allah’s ordainment there should be no one superior to the soul of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.).”

Ma'mūn said: Is it not true that Allah mentioned the word “sons” in plural form and the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) specifically called

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 30, h. 9; *Kashf al-Yaqīn*, p. 412, h. 524.

2 Q. 3: 61.

for his two sons, and He mentioned “women” in plural, too, and the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) only called for his daughter? So, why is it not probable that this calling for concerns himself and he meant himself and not anybody else? Therefore, the excellence you mentioned does not concern Amīr al-Mu’minīn.

Imam al-Riḍā answered, “What you said is not true O commander of the faithful! Because the caller calls for someone other than himself just like the commander who commands someone other than himself and is not proper to call for himself just like the commander cannot command himself. Since the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) did not call for anyone except for Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.), it is proved that what is meant by “soul” mentioned in the Book of Allah is Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) and placed its ordainment in His Revelation.”

Ma’mūn answered: When the answer comes, the question is cancelled.¹

5/3

His Marriage

240. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): An angel came to me and said: O Muḥammad ! Allah sends you peace and says, “I married Fāṭima to ‘Alī. So, marry her to him. I ordered the Ṭūbā Tree to bear pearls, ruby, and coral and the inhabitants of the sky became happy at this. Soon, two sons will be born to these two (‘Alī and Fāṭima), who are

¹ *Al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra*, p. 38; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 10, p. 350, h. 10.

the masters of the youth of Paradise and adorns of the people of Paradise. So be happy – O Muḥammad – that you are the best of men, from the beginning to the end of the world of being.¹

6/3

Loving him and Despising him

241. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) addressing ‘Alī (A.S.): “Whoever loves you will be the same rank with the Prophet on the Resurrection Day. Whoever dies while he despises you, it is as if he has died as a Christian or a Jew [as a non-Muslim].”²

242. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): The Apostle Allah said to me, “Allah looked at the earth and chose me. He looked again and chose you. You are the father of my [grand-] children, settler of my debt, and fulfiller of my promises. Tomorrow [the Day of Resurrection], you are in charge of my [pond of] Kawthar. Blessed is he who loves you and woe upon him who hates you!”³

243. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.), while holding ‘Alī’s (A.S.) hand: “Whoever says he loves me and does not love him (‘Alī – A.S.), he is

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 26, h. 6; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 172, h. 108.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 26, h. 6; *al-Manāqib li al-Kūfī*, p. 220, h. 242.

3 *Bashārat al-Muṣṭafā*, p. 200; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 39, p. 216, h. 7.

lying [that he loves me].¹

7/3

His Shī'as

244. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam al-Husayn (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said to ‘Alī (A.S.), “Give the glad tidings to your Shī’as that I will be their interceder on the day that nothing will benefit them except for my intercession.”²

245. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): On the Resurrection Day, it is ‘Alī’s Shī’as who are salvaged.³

8/3

Prohibiting Exaggerating about him

246. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): O ‘Alī! You are like Jesus son of Mary (A.S.), whom a group loved and exaggerated in their loving him; thus, they perished thereby and a group incurred enmity toward him and went to extremes in their hating, and they were perished, too. Yet, another group took the middle way about him, and they were salvaged.⁴

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 60, h. 231; *al-Kaḥfī*, vol. 2, p. 239, h. 27.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 68, h. 313; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 68, p. 98, h. 2.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 52, h. 201; *al-Irshād*, vol. 1, p. 41.

4 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 345, h. 709; *Majma‘ al-Bayān*, vol. 9, p. 80.

Chapter Four

Fāṭima Daughter of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.)

1/4

Naming Her

247. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): I named my daughter Fāṭima because the Exalted and Glorious Allah has kept her and her devotees away from the Fire.¹

2/4

Her Marriage

248. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) addressing ‘Alī (A.S.): I did not marry Fāṭima off, unless when Allah commanded me to have her married.²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 46, h. 174; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 43, p. 12, h. 4.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 59, h. 226; *al-Hidāyat al-Kubrā*, p. 114.

3/4

Her Burial Place

249. *Qurb al-Asnād* – on the authority Bazantī: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) where Fāṭima daughter of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) was buried. He said, “A man asked the same question from Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) and ‘Īsā b. Mūsā was also present. ‘Īsā told her: she was buried in Baqī’. That man said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.): What do you say? He said, ‘He told you.’ I said to him: Allah bless you, what do I have to do with ‘Īsā b. Mūsā? You tell be from your forefathers. He said, ‘She was buried in her own house’.”¹

250. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): in reply to a question asked by Bazantī about the grave location of Fāṭima (A.S.): She was buried in her house and when the Umayyad expanded the mosque, it was situated in the mosque.²

4/4

Her Eminence on the Resurrection

251. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) addressing ‘Alī (A.S.): When the Resurrection comes, a herald would call out, “O People! Cast down your eyes so that Fāṭima daughter of Muḥammad passes by.”³

1 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 367, h. 1314; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 100, p. 192, h. 2.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 461, h. 9; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 3, p. 255, h. 705.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 32, h. 55; *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 130, h. 6.

5/4

Her Complaint on the Resurrection Day

252. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W): My daughter Fāṭima will be assembled on the Resurrection Day while blood-stained dress is with her and she will hold on to one of the Throne’s pillars and say, “O [absolute] Justice! Arbitrate between me and the murderers of my children.” By the Lord of Ka’ba, Allah will judge in favor of my daughter! The Exalted and Glorious Allah will be angry whenever Fāṭima gets angry, and gets pleased whenever Fāṭima is pleased.¹

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 26, h. 6; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 89, h. 21.

Chapter Five

Imam al-Ḥasan and Imam al-Ḥusayn (A.S.)

1/5

Two Fragrant Flowers of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.)

253. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Children are flowers and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are my two fragrant flowers.¹

2/5

A Short Account of their Excellences

254. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.): al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are *muḥaddath* (i.e., men who were talked to by the angels without them being prophets)

255. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.), from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): O ‘Alī! Allah created you from the tree, from which I am created. I am the root, and you are the trunk and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are its

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 27, h. 8; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 2, h. 1.

branches. Those who love us are the leaves. The Exalted and Glorious Allah will take to Paradise whoever holds on to any of the branches.¹

256. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): O ‘Alī! People have been created from different trees, but you and I have been created from the same tree.

I am its root and you are its trunk. Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the branches and the Shī‘as are the leaves. Allah will take to Paradise whoever holds on to any of the branches.²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 60, h. 233; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 611, h. 1263.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 26, h. 6; *Majma‘ al-Bayān*, p. 172, h. 108.

Chapter Six

Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā

1/6

Declaration of his Imamate

257. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. ‘Ammār: I said to Abū al-Ḥasan I (Imam al-Kāzīm – A.S.): Don’t you guide me to the one from whom I should take my religion?

He said, “This son of mine, ‘Alī! My father took my hand and took me to the Prophet’s (S.A.W.A.) grave and said: My dear son! The Exalted and Glorious Allah has said, ﴿Indeed I am going to set a vicegerent on the earth.﴾¹ And when the Exalted and Glorious Allah promises something, He would fulfill it.”²

258. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Makhzūmī, whose mother was one of Ja‘far b. Abī Ṭālib’s children: Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā (A.S.) sent for us and gathered all of us. Then, he told us, “Do you know why I gathered you?” We said we didn’t. He said, “Bear witness that this son

1 Q. 2: 30.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 312, h. 4; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 248.

of mine is my legatee, executor of my affairs, and my successor after me. Whoever has a claim on me, get it from this son of mine; whomever I have promised something, ask it from him, and [from now on] whoever needs to meet me, should meet me only through letters.”¹

259. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of ‘Abbās Najāshī Asadī: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Are you an Imam? He said, “Yes, by Allah! [I am the Imam of] The people and the jinn!”²

2/6

Declaration of his Father’s Death to Reject the Waqifites

260. *Ta’rīkh al-A’imma* – on the authority of Naṣr b. ‘Alī Jahḍamī from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.) died in 183 AH at the age of 54. He was born in 129 AH he lived nineteen years in his father’s lifetime and 35 years after his father.

261. *Kamāl al-Dīn* – on the authority of ‘Alī b. Rubāṭ: I said to ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.): There is someone with us who says your father is alive and you know it, too. The Imam (A.S.) said, Glory be to Allah! The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) died and Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.) did not die?! Yes, by Allah! I swear by Allah that he died, his properties were divided, and his female slaves were married off.³

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 312, h. 4; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 250.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 26, h. 10; *al-Imāma wa al-Tabṣira*, p. 77, h. 67.

3 *Tāj al-A’imma*, p. 11.

3/6

Those Who Gave up Belief in Waqifites after Ultimatum

262. *Al-Kāfī* – on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. Mughīra: I was one of the *Wāqifīs* and went on *Hajj* with this contention. When I arrived in Mecca, I wondered whether my contention was correct or not. I stuck myself to the *multazim*¹ and said: O Allah! You know my intention, so guide me to the best of religions.

Then it occurred to me to take audience with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). I went to Medina, stood at the door of his house and told his servant, ‘Go and tell your Master that a man from Iraq is waiting at the door.’ I heard Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) voice from inside the house saying, ‘O ‘Abd Allāh b. Mughīra! Come in!’ I entered. When he saw me, he said, ‘Allah accepted your prayer and guided you towards His Religion.’ I said, ‘I bear witness that you are the Proof of Allah and His Trustee for His creatures.’²

263. *Al-Kāfī* – on the authority of Washshā’: When I was a *Wāqifī*, I went to Khurāsān and I had some merchandise with me. There was a piece of broidered cloth in a wrapper among them that I was not informed about it and did not know its place. When I arrived in Marv and unloaded in one of the stations, all of a sudden a Medinan-born man whose parents were non-Medinans entered and told me: Abū al-Hasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Send me that broidered cloth that is with

1 A wall behind the Ka’ba’s door, which is called so because people stick their chests and bellies to it.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 355, h. 13; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 219, h. 31.

you.” I said: I just entered. Who informed my arrival to Abū al-Ḥasan? I do not have such broidered cloth!

That man left and returned and said: the Imam (A.S.) said, “Yes, you have. It is in such and such a place and the wrapper is so and so.” I searched into that wrapper and I found the cloth at its bottom and sent it to him.

4/6

Those who did not Give up Belief in Waqifites even after Ultimatum

264. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Abū Masrūq: A group of the *Wāqifīs*, including ‘Alī b. Abī Ḥamza Baṭā’inī, Muḥammad b. ‘Ammār, Ḥusayn b. Mihrān, and Ḥasan b. Abī Sa’īd Makārī entered the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). ‘Alī b. Abī Ḥamza said: may I be ransomed for you! What is new about your father? How is he doing? He said, “He has passed away.” He asked: Who did he make his bequest to? He said, “To me.” Ibn Abī Ḥamza said: You say something that none of your forefathers ever said, from ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib to the rest! The Imam (A.S.) said, “But the best and the most superior of my forefathers, the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) has said that.” Ibn Abī Ḥamza said: Do you have no fear of them (Banī ‘Abbās) for your life [to kill you upon hearing this]? He said, “If I had any fear of them, I would have helped them against me. Abū Lahab came to the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and threatened him. The Apostle of Allah said, ‘If you hurt me in the slightest, I would be a liar,’ and this was the first sign that the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) expressed. And this is also the first sign that I express to you (Waqifites): if Hārūn hurts

me in the slightest, I will be a liar [and I am not an Imam].

Ḥusayn b. Mihrān said: If you publicly announce this saying [that you are the successor and the Imam after your father] we will have achieved what we wanted.’ The Imam (A.S.) said, ‘So you want this! Do you want me to go to Hārūn in person and tell him that I am the Imam and he is nothing? Even the Apostle of Allah (S.W.A.) did not do this in the beginning of his call; rather, he first expressed his call to his near relatives, friends and trusted people, not to all the people. You have accepted the Imamate of my forefathers and think that ‘Alī b. Mūsā is denying his father being alive due to *taqiyya*. But I announce my Imamate to you without hiding it, and openly declare that I am the Imam. If my father was alive, how could I hide it from you [by *taqiyya*] and not to tell you that he is alive?’¹

5/6

He Has the Knowledge of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and the Knowledge of the Legatees

265. *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt* – on the authority of ‘Umar b. Yazīd²: I said to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.): I asked a question from your father and I want to ask it from you, too.

He asked, “What do you want to ask about?”

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 26, h. 6; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 172, h. 108.

2 It seems to be Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Yazīd; because ‘Umar b. Yazīd relates from Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) and Imam al-Kāzim (A.S.) and Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Yazīd from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.).

I said: Are the knowledge and books of the Apostle of Allah and those of the legatees with you?

He said, “Yes, and more than that; ask whatever you want.”¹

6/6

The Imam’s (A.S.) Sublime Morality and Conduct

266. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Ibrāhī b. ‘Abbās: I never saw Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) speak harshly to someone or interrupt someone until the speaker finished talking. He never rejected anyone who was in need of something that he could fulfill. He never stretched his legs out in front of anyone. He never leaned back in front of anyone. I never saw him reproach any of his servants or agents. I never saw him spit. I never saw him burst into loud laughter; rather, he would smile gently. When he was left alone and the tablecloth was spread out for him to dine, he called every one of his servants and agents – even the doorkeeper to dine with him.

He slept very little during the night. He was awake most of the time. He stayed up most of nights from the beginning of the night till the morning. He fasted a lot. He always fasted for at least three days each month. He used to say, “This fasting is like fasting all life long.” He most often did good deeds and gave alms in secret. He did most of this in the darkness of the night. If anyone claims that he has seen someone as noble as him, do not believe him.²

1 *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 511, h. 19; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 176, h. 54.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 26, h. 6; *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 172, h. 108.

267. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: I went to the house in Sarakhs in which Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was imprisoned and in a bind there. I asked the jailer for permission to visit. He said: There is no way for you to visit him. I asked him: Why? He said: It is because the Imam sometimes performs one thousand *rak‘as* of prayers in one day and night. He only stops praying for a short time early at daybreak, before the end of the day near the dusk, and at times of the paleness of the sun. Even at these times, he keeps sitting at the place where he prays and communes with his Lord.”¹

268. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Yāsir, the Imam’s attendant: Whenever Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) became unoccupied, he gathered all his servants – whether young or old – and talked with them and he was friendly to them and when he sat down to dine, he would invite them all, whether young or old, to sit down at the same tablecloth. He did not leave anyone out, even the stableman and the cupper.²

269. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṣalt a man from Balkh: I was in the company of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in his journey to Khurāsān. One day he ordered to spread the tablecloth for him and gathered all his servants, whether black or non-black, at the tablecloth. I said: May I be ransomed for you! It would be better if you spread a separate tablecloth for them!

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 183, h. 6; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 91, h. 5.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 159, h. 24; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 146, h. 5.

He said, “Silence! Allah the Exalted and Glorious is one, mother is one, father is one, and the reward is also for the actions.”¹

7/6

The Imam’s (A.S.) Awareness of the People’s Mind

270. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh Qummī: I was in the company of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) when I got really thirsty, but I did not want to ask for water. I saw the Imam (A.S.) himself asked for some water, sipped a little of it, handed it to me, and said, “O Muḥammad ! This is cool. Drink it!” Then I drank.²

271. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Hishām b. ‘Abbās: I entered the presence of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) and I wanted to ask him to pray for curing my headache and also to give me two of his garments, which I could put on as pilgrimage garb (*iḥrām*). After I went in and asked my questions and he answered them. I got up to leave. When I wanted to bid farewell, the Imam (A.S.) told me, “Sit down.” I sat down in front of him. The Imam (A.S.) put his hand over my head and prayed for me. Then he asked for two of his own robes, gave them to me, and said, “Wear them for *iḥrām*.”³

272. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Abū Ḥamza from Ibn Kathīr: Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.) When Mūsā [b. Ja‘far] died, the people were at a loss about his Imamate. I went on the

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 230, h. 296; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 101, h. 18.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 204, h. 3; *Baṣā‘ir al-Darajāt*, p. 239, h. 16.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 220, h. 36; *al-Thāqib fī al-Manāqib*, p. 478, h. 404.

Hajj pilgrimage where I saw Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). It came to my mind, ﴿Are we to follow a lone human from ourselves?!﴾¹ to the end of the verse. Then ‘Alī (b. Mūsā – A.S.) passed by me like a lightning jolt and said, “By Allah, I am the human whom you must obey.”

I said: I ask the Exalted Allah and you to forgive me. He said, “You are forgiven.”

8/6

Familiarity with Various Languages

273. *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb – about ‘Alī b. Mihrān: Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A. S.) ordered him to make a sandglass for him. ‘Alī b. Mihrān said: We loaded the clock and moved toward him. When we got near him, we were very thirsty. As soon as we sat down, one of the servants entered with several jugs of very cold water and we drank it. The Imam (A.S.) was sitting on a bed. One of the sands [of which one would apparently fall every one hour and thus the amount of time lapsed was calculated] dropped down. Masrūr (‘Alī b. Mihrān’s retainer) said: *Hasht* (eight).

Then the Imam (A.S.) said to Masrūr [in Persian], *Dar bibad* (Close the Door.)²

274. ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Abū Hāshim Dāwūd b. Qāsim Ja‘farī: I was having breakfast with Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A. S.) and he would call some of his retainers in

1 Q. 54: 24.

2 *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 333; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 89, h. 10.

Slavic and Persian. Many a time I send this retainer of mine with a message in Persian and the Imam would understand what I said. Sometimes the Persian word was difficult for the retainer to understand and the Imam would explain it to him!¹

9/6

Familiarity with the Language of Animals

275. *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*: on the authority of Sulaymān from Ja’far b. Abī Ṭālib’s children: I was with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in a garden belonging to him when all of a sudden a sparrow came to his holiness and began to chirp while it was trembling. The Imam (A.S.) said: ‘Do you know what it is saying?’ I said: ‘Allah and His messenger and his son know best.’

His holiness said: ‘It says a snake wants to eat its chicks. Take this stick, go to that house and kill the snake.’ He said: ‘I took the stick and entered the house. I saw a snake was moving around in the room and I killed it.’²

10/6

Curing the Sick with the Permission of Allah

276. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Ḥusayn b. ‘Umar b. Yazīd: One day, while I was a *Wāqifī*, I went to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.). My father had asked his father seven questions and he had answered six of them

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 228, h. 2; *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 336, h. 13 (similar to the former).

2 *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 349, h. 19; *Dalā’il al-Imāma*, p. 343, h. 301.

and had not answered the seventh one. I said to myself: I swear by Allah, I will ask him the same questions that my father asked his father; if he gave the same answers as his father, it is in itself a reason [for the Imamate of Imam al-Riḍā].

I asked him the questions and he gave exactly the same answers that his father had given, without leaving out a single word and left the seventh question unanswered.

My father had told his father: I will contend with Allah on the Resurrection Day that you said ‘Abd Allāh, your older brother, is not an Imam. And he had put his hand on his neck and said, “Alright. Contend with Allah on that. Let any sins he has committed be counted upon me.”

When I said farewell to him, he said, “None of our Shī‘as who is inflicted with a misfortune or a disease and forbears it, except that Allah would count for him the reward of a thousand martyrs.”

I said to myself: By Allah, these words don’t belong here! When I left, I came down with Guinea worm (*dracunculus medinensis*), which was too painful to stand. The next year I went on *Hajj* pilgrimage and went to visit the Imam, while there was still some pain left. I complained to him of the pain and said, “May I be ransomed for you! Pray for my foot; and stretched my foot toward him. He said, “This foot of yours has no problem; hold out your healthy foot.” I held it out and the Imam (A.S.) prayed at it. When I left, after a short while the worm came out and the pain relieved.¹

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 10; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 67, h. 88.

11/6

Foretelling the Future

277. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Muḥammad b. Sanān: In the time of Hārūn, I said to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.): You made public your Imamate and succeeded your father, whereas blood is dripping from Hārūn’s sword.

He said, “What encouraged me in this was the saying of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) that ‘If Abū Jahl hurts me in the slightest, know that I am not a Prophet.’ I say to you, too that if Hārūn could hurt me in the slightest, I am not an Imam.”¹

278. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Ja’far b. Yahyā: I heard ‘Isā b. Ja’far tell Hārūn when he was going from Raqqa to Mecca: remember what you have sworn to about the household of Abī Ṭālib.

You have sworn to chop off the head of anyone who claims to be an Imam after Mūsā b. Ja’far. Now his son ‘Alī is claiming to possess the Imamate and people are saying about him the same thing that they said about his father.’ Hārūn looked at him angrily and said, ‘So what? Do you think that I should kill them all?!’ Mūsā b. ‘Imrān added, “Once I heard this I went and informed the Imam (A.S.) about this. He said, “What do I have to do with them? They do not have the power to do anything to me.”²

279. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Mukhawwal

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 257, h. 371; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 339.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 225, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 113, h. 1.

Sajistānī: When the agent to take Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) to Khurāsān arrived, I was in Medina. The Imam (A.S.) entered the Mosque to say farewell to the Apostle of Allah. He said farewell several times. Each time he took a few steps back, but returned to the Shrine and cried and lamented out loud.

I went to him and greeted him. He greeted me back. I congratulated him. He said, “Come to visit me. I am leaving my grandfather and will die away from homeland. I will be buried beside Hārūn.”

I followed the Imam (A.S.) all the way until he reached Khurāsān. He died in Ṭūs and was buried beside Hārūn.”¹

280. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Mūsā b. Hārūn: I saw that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) looked at Harthama and said, “It is as if I see that he is taken to Marv and is beheaded.” That’s exactly what happened.²

281. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Ḥusayn b. Bashshār: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “‘Abd Allāh will kill Muḥammad.”

I said: Will ‘Abd Allāh b. Hārūn kill Muḥammad b. Hārūn?

He said, “Yes. ‘Abd Allāh who is in Khurāsān will kill Muḥammad b. Zubayda who is in Baghdad.” And he did kill him.³

282. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Sa‘īd b. Sa‘īd: Imam al-Riḍā looked at a man and said, “O Servant of Allah!

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 210, h. 14; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 117, h. 2.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 210, h. 14; *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, p. 207.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 209, h. 12; *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, p. 209.

Make your last will and testament and prepare yourself for that from which there is no escape.” Exactly what the Imam (A.S.) had said happened. Three days later the man died.”¹

12/6

Compulsory Accepting the Heir Apparency

283. *Al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq: on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt al-Haravī: “Ma’mūn told Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O son of the Apostle of Allah! I recognize your knowledge, nobility, asceticism, piety and servitude. I have realized that you deserve to be the Caliph more than I do.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told him, “I am proud of servitude to the Exalted and Glorious Allah. I seek protection against the evils of this world through asceticism. I hope to attain prosperity and Divine Profit by practicing piety regarding the forbidden things. I hope to attain a high rank before the Exalted and Glorious Allah by being humble in this world.”

Ma’mūn said: I am planning to dismiss myself from the Caliphate and assign you to that post and pledge allegiance to you.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told him, “If this Caliphate is yours, then Allah has established it for you and it is not proper for you to relieve yourself of it and place someone else in that position. But if it is not yours, you are not authorized to give what is not yours to me!”

Ma’mūn said: O son of the Apostle of Allah! You must accept this order.

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 223, h. 43; *I’lām al-Warā*, vol. 2, p. 65.

Imam (A.S.) said, “I will never accept this willingly.” Ma’mūn kept insisting on this issue day after day until he lost all hope. Then he said: Now that you do not accept the Caliphate and do not let me pledge allegiance to you as the Caliph, at least be my heir apparent to be the caliph after me.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told him, “I swear by Allah that my father (A.S.) narrated that his forefathers (A.S.) quoted on the authority of the Commander of the Faithful (A.S.), on the authority of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) that I will leave this world before you by being oppressively poisoned. The angels of the heavens and the Earth will cry for me. I will be buried in a strange land next to Hārūn.

Ma’mūn cried and then said: ‘O son of the Apostle of Allah! Who will dare to kill you? Who will be able to do you harm or hurt you as long as I live?

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “I can introduce my murderer if I want.”

Ma’mūn said: O son of the Apostle of Allah! You want to relieve yourself from accepting it with these words, so that the people say to themselves how greatly you abstain from the world.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “By Allah, I have never lied from the day the Exalted and Glorious Allah created me. I have not pretended piety to attain this world. I know very well what it is that you are after.”

Ma’mūn asked: What am I after?

The Imam (A.S.) replied, “Will you grant immunity for an honest answer?”

Ma’mūn said: You are immune.

The Imam (A.S.) said, “You wish for the people to say: ‘Alī b. Mūsā has not abstained from the world. Rather it was the world that had

turned its back on him. Don’t you see how he accepted the heir apparenacy in greed for the Caliphate?”

Ma’mūn became angry and said: You constantly treat me in the way that I do not like, and regard yourself immune from my anger. I swear by Allah that if you do not accept the heir apparenacy I will force you to do so. If you accept it yourself it is fine. However, if you do not, I will chop off your head.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Indeed the Exalted and Glorious Allah has admonished me against getting myself killed. If the situation is as you say, then do as you please. I will accept it under the condition that I do not interfere in dismissals or appointments, nor change any practices or traditions. I will just be a distant advisor.”

Ma’mūn accepted these conditions and established Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), against his will, as his heir apparent.¹

284. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Arafa: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): O son of the Apostle of Allah! What forced you to accept the heir apparenacy?”

The Imam (A.S.) said, “The same thing that forced my grandfather, the Commander of the Faithful (A.S.) to join the arbitration council.”²

13/6

The Quality of Allegiance to the Imam

285. *Al-Irshād*: on the ceremony for taking allegiance for Imam al-

1 Ṣadūq, *al-Amālī*, p. 125, h. 115; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 139, h. 3.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 141, h. 4; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 140, h. 14.

Riḍā (A.S.): Ma'mūn held an assembly and placed two large cushions for al-Riḍā (A.S.), he came to his seating place, and seated al-Riḍā (A.S.) who was wearing green garment, turban, and sword, on those two cushions. Then, he ordered his son, 'Abbās b. Ma'mūn to swear allegiance to him as the first person. Al-Riḍā (A.S.) raised his hand, holding its back on his face and its palm toward those present.

Ma'mūn told him: Stretch your hand for allegiance.

Al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, "The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) was sworn allegiance to like this."

Then, the people swore allegiance to him, while his hand was above their hands.¹

14/6

The Imam's (A.S.) Prayer when Forced to Accept Heir Apparency from the Despot of his Time

286. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): When he accepted heir apparency: O Allah! Verily you have admonished me against getting myself killed, and I am forced to accept the heir apparency of 'Abd Allāh Ma'mūn (his succession to his rule), otherwise he would kill me. Indeed, I am forced to do it, just as Joseph (A.S.) and Daniel (A.S.) were forced to when they each accepted the succession of the tyrant rulers of their time.

O Allah! There is no pledge for me except Your Pledge, and there is no *Wilāya* for me except what You may grant to me. Then, help me

1 *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 261; *Rawḍat al-Wā'izīn*, p. 248.

succeed in establishing Your Religion, and reviving the tradition of your Prophet Muḥammad since You are truly my Master and my Helper.¹

287. *Al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq – on the authority of Yāsir: When Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) appointed as heir apparent, he raised his hands to the sky and said, “O Allah! You know that I was compelled. Then, do not reproach me, as You did not reproach your servant and Prophet Joseph when he was forced to accept the rule of Egypt.”²

15/6

His Confrontation with his Brother, Zayd al-Nār

288. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Abī ‘Ubdūn: When Zayd b. Mūsā b Ja‘far revolted in Basra and set the homes of the Abbasids on fire, they took him to Ma’mūn. Ma’mūn forgave him on behalf of his brother ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said, “O Abū al-Ḥasan! If your brother has revolted and has done this and that, so did Zayd b. ‘Alī before and he got killed. If you did not possess the rank near me that you have now, I would have killed him. What he has done is not negligible.

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “O Commander of the Faithful! Do not compare my brother with Zayd b ‘Alī since he was one of the scholars from the Household of Muḥammad and got angry for the sake of the Exalted and Glorious Allah. He fought with the enemies of Allah until

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1; *Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā*, p. 218.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 757, h. 1022; *Manāqib Āl-i Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 364.

he got killed in His way. My father Mūsā b Ja‘ar (A.S.) narrated that he had heard his father Ja‘far b. Muḥammad (A.S.) say, “May Allah bless my uncle Zayd! He was inviting the people to the Riḍā (consent) of the Household of Muḥammad (not himself). He would have been loyal to what he said if he had become victorious. He consulted with me about his uprising and I told him, ‘O [my dear] uncle! Do this if you are pleased with being killed and your corpse being hung up from the gallows in the Kunasa neighborhood.’” After Zayd left, Ja‘far b. Muḥammad [al-Ṣādiq] (A.S.) said, “Woe be to those who hear his call but do not help him!”

Ma‘mūn said: O Abū al-Ḥasan! Have there not been traditions blaming those who unrightfully claim to be an Imam?

Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Zayd b. ‘Alī did not claim something he was not entitled to. He was much more pious than that. He said: I invite you to the Riḍā of the Household of Muḥammad. Those traditions are about one who claims that Exalted and Glorious Allah has appointed him as an Imam; but he invites the people to a religion other than Allah’s religion and misleads the people so as to deviate them from the way of Allah. I swear by Allah that Zayd was a man who was addressed by the following verse,

﴿And wage *jihād* for the sake of Allah, a *jihād* which is worthy of Him. He has chosen you.﴾¹

1 Q. 22: 78; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 248, h. 1; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 174, h. 27.

16/6

The Imam's (A.S.) Leaving for Eid Prayer and his Return before Performing it

289. *Al-Kāfi* on the authority of 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm from Yāsir, the Imam's attendant and Rayyān b. Ṣalt: When the time of the dismissed Caliph (Amīn, Ma'mūn's brother) was finished and Ma'mūn took over the Caliphate, he wrote a letter to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and invited him to Khurāsān. However, Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) refused for several reasons. But, Ma'mūn did not stop here and kept on writing until the Imam (A.S.) got convinced that he was not going to stop. Then Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) left Medina when his son Abu Ja'far (A.S.) was only seven years old. Ma'mūn wrote to the Imam (A.S.), "Do not come by way of Kūfa and Qum. Rather, come through Basra, Ahwaz and Fars." When he arrived in Marv, Ma'mūn told him to accept the Caliphate. Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) refused it. Ma'mūn said: Then, Accept heir apparenacy.

He said, "I will only accept this upon the conditions that I will state."

Ma'mūn said: State whatever conditions you wish.

Then, Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) wrote, "I will accept the heir apparenacy upon the conditions that I neither command, nor prohibit; neither judge, nor change anything; neither install nor dismiss; that I would be excused from all such affairs." Ma'mūn accepted all this.

Yāsir said: When the Eid al-Aḍḥā came, Ma'mūn sent a message to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and asked him to ride to the congregation, and deliver the Eid prayer and sermon. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) sent a message

back to him and said, “You are aware of the conditions set between you and I in accepting heir apparenacy.”

Ma’mūn sent a message: I only want the public to feel reassured about this affair and recognize your excellence.

Ma’mūn kept insisting and the Imam (A.S.) kept answering back and refusing. Then the Imam (A.S.) said, “O Commander of the Faithful! I prefer that you excuse me from doing this. However, if you insist, I must perform the prayer just like the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) and the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) did.”

Ma’mūn said: Do it as you wish. Then he ordered the commanders and the people to be at Abū al-Ḥasan residence in the morning.

All the people gathered around the house of Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.). All the lanes and the streets were filled with men, women and children. All the commanders and troops gathered around the door of Abū al-Ḥasan’s (A.S.) house. When the sun rose, the Imam (A.S.) made *ghusl* (major ablutions), put on a white cotton turban letting one side of it fall down upon his chest and the other side fall between his shoulders. He rolled up his shirt’s sleeves and trousers’ legs and told all those around him to do the same. Then he held a cane in his hand and left the house while his trousers’ legs were rolled up to half his foreleg and his sleeves were rolled up and we were in front of him. When he started off and we were walking ahead of him, he raised his head up to the sky and shouted four *takbīrs* (Allah is the Greatest) so that we all felt that the heavens and the buildings were all shouting the same with him. The commanders with their weapons and the people were all standing at the door in an orderly fashion. When we appeared to them

in this form (with bare feet and having wrapped up our outer robes), and then Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) appeared among them, he stopped at the door and said, “*Allāhu Akbar! Allāhu Akbar! Allāhu Akbar ‘Alā mā hadānā, Allāhu Akbar alā mā razaqanā min bahīmat al-an‘ām, wa al-ḥamdu li Allāh-i Ala ma Ablānā!*” We kept repeating the glorifications in a loud voice.

Yāsir said: Once people saw Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.), they broke into tears and cried out loud. When the commanders saw the Imam (A.S.) barefoot, they got off their horses, took off their boots, and threw them away. The Imam (A.S.) took ten steps, stopped and repeated the glorifications four times. It was just as if the heavens and all the buildings responded to him. Marv had become filled with [the sound of] weeping. Ma’mūn was informed about this. Faḍl b. Sahl Dhū al-Riyāsātayn told him: O Commander of the Faithful! Should Imam al-Riḍā reach the place for the prayer in this way, it will cause sedition among the people. Consider asking him to return.

Then Ma’mūn sent someone to the Imam (A.S.) and asked him (A.S.) to return. Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) asked for his shoes, mounted the horse, and returned home.¹

17/6

Some of the Imam’s (A.S.) Miraculous Acts

290. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: When ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) left

¹ *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 488, h. 1; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 149, h. 21.

for Ma'mūn, they reached a village called al-Ḥamrā (Dehsurkh). He was told: O son of the Apostle of Allah! It is noon. Will you pray?

He got off and said, "Bring me some water."

They said: We have no water with us. The Imam (A.S.) dug the ground with his hands and water started to flow out. He and those with him all made their ablutions with that water. The water is still there today.

When they entered Sanābād he faced the hill from which they make stone pots and said, "O Allah! Please grant benefits by this mountain. Bless whatever they place there and whatever they carve from it." Then he ordered a few stone pots to be carved from that hill for him and said, "Do not make any food for me unless you cook it in these pots." He used to eat very little. He also ate simple food. The people were thus guided towards that mountain and the blessing of his prayers became apparent about that hill.

Then the Imam (A.S.) went to the house of Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba Ṭā'ī. He went to the grave in which Hārūn al-Rashīd was buried. Then he drew a line next to it and said, "This is my grave. I will be buried here. Allah will establish this place to be the place where my followers and devotees will come and go. By Allah! Whoever visits me and sends greetings upon me will be certainly forgiven by Allah. He will benefit from Allah's Mercy due to our intercession, the intercession of the Members of the Holy Household."

Then he turned towards the *Qibla* and said prayers and recited some supplications. When it was finished, he prostrated for a long

time. I counted; he uttered *Subhān Allāh* (Glorious is Allah) for five hundred times, then stopped.¹

291. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Dāwūd b. Razīn: I had some money which belonged to Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā b. Ja‘ar (A.S.). He sent someone to take some of the money and left the rest with me saying, “Pay back the rest of the money to whoever comes after the money later. He will be your Imam.” After the Imam (A.S.) passed away, his son ‘Alī (al-Riḍā) sent someone after the money saying, “Send me back the such and such amount of money which is with you. I sent him all the money that was with me.”²

292. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Yahyā b. Bashshār: I went to see Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) after the demise of his father (A.S.), and asked for explanation of some of the words which he had told me. The Imam (A.S.) told me, “Yes, O Samā‘!” I said: May I be your ransom! I swear by Allah that this was my nickname when I attended school in my childhood. The Imam (A.S.) just smiled at me.³

293. *Al-Kāfī*: on the authority of Ḥasan b. Manṣūr from his brother: One night I entered the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), who was in the interior of his house. He raised his hand. It seemed as if ten lights were on in the room. Another man asked permission to enter. The Imam (A.S.) put down his hand and then permitted him to enter.⁴

294. *Al-Kāfī*: on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā: I demanded

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 136, h. 1; *al-Thāqib fī al-Manāqib*, p. 145, h. 137.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 219, h. 32; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 23, h. 30.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 214, h. 21; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 37, h. 19.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 487, h. 3; *al-Manāqib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb, vol. 4, p. 384.

something from Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) and insisted on it and he kept promising to me. One day when he went out to welcome the governor of Medina, I accompanied him. He went near the palace of such and such and dismounted somewhere under a tree and I dismounted, too. There was not anyone else with us. I said: May I be your ransom! Eid is near and by Allah I do not have even a single dirham!

The Imam (A.S.) hit the ground hard with his whip and then reached his hand down and took a bar of gold from the scratch made on the ground and said, "Use this and do not tell anyone what you saw."¹

18/6

What is Related from the Imam (A.S.) about the Imamate of his Son Imam al-Jawād (A.S.)

A. Declaration of the Imamate of Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) before his Birth

295. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Bazī': Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) was asked: Can Imamate be inherited by the paternal or maternal uncle?

The Imam said, "No." I said: By brother?

The Imam said, "No."

I said: Then, by whom is it inherited?

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 488, h. 3; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 257.

He said, “To my son.” Then, he did not have a son yet.¹

296. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Ḥusayn b. Bashshār: Ibn Qiyāmā [the *Wāqifi*] wrote a letter to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) and said in it: What kind of an Imam are you as you have no son [to succeed you]?! Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) answered him angrily, “How do you know that will not have a son? By Allah, He will grant me a son by whom He will make the truth distinct from falsehood.”²

B. Assertion of the Imamate of Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) after his Birth

297. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Ṣafwān b. Yaḥyā: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Before Allah grant you Abū Ja‘far (Jawād – A.S.) we would ask you [about your successor] and you would say, “Allah will grand me a son.” No, He granted him to you and made us delighted. Allah forbid, if something happens to you, whom should we turn to? He pointed to Abū Ja‘far (A.S.), who was standing before him. I said: May I be your ransom! He is only three years old!

The Imam (A.S.) said, “This will not do any harm; Jesus (A.S.) was three years old when he was given authority (*ḥujja*).”³

298. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Khayrānī from his father: I was standing near Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in Khurāsān when a man told him: O my master! If something happens to you, whom should we refer to? The Imam said, “To my son Abū Ja‘far.”

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 286, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 50, p. 35, h. 21.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 320, h. 4; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 277.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 321, h. 10; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 276.

That man seemed to have deemed Abū Ja‘far to be too young for this task. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “The Exalted and Glorious Allah made Jesus son of Mary as a prophet and authority for an independent religion, whereas he was younger than Abū Ja‘far (A.S.).”¹

299. *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*: on the authority of Ibn Qiyāmā: I entered the presence of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) and Abū Ja‘far (Jawād – A.S.) was already born. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Allah granted a son to me, who is my inheritor and the inheritor to the household of David.”²

C. The Most Blessed Child

300. *Al-Kāfī*: on the authority of Yaḥyā Ṣan‘ānī: I entered the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) I Mecca. I saw him peeling a banana and put in the mouth of Abū Ja‘far (Imam al-Jawād – A.S.). I said: May I be your ransom! Is this your blessed son?

He said, “Yes, Yaḥyā! This is a child that no other child has been born more blessed than him in Islam for the Shī‘as.”³

D. Allah will Generate a Large Progeny from Him

301. *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*: on the authority of Ḥannān b. Sadīr: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Would it be possible that an Imam has no child?

He said, “Know that only one son will be born to me; but Allah will generate a large progeny from him.”

Although young and adolescent, Abū Ja‘far managed Imam al-

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 322, h. 113; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 279.

2 *Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 158, h. 14; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 50, p. 18, h. 3.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 361, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 50, p. 35, h. 24.

Riḍā’s (A.S.) works in Medina and commanded and prohibited the servants and none of them would disobey him.¹

19/6

Imam al-Jawād’s (A.S.) Performing Funeral Prayer over his Father’s Dead Body

302. *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*: on the authority of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yaḥyā: One day during the time of the sickness due to which my master, al-Riḍā (A.S.) died, I was in his presence as he looked at me and said, “O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! Toward the end of today when mourners wail and lament, my son Muḥammad will come to you and summon you for performing *ghusl* on me. When you perform *ghusl* and prayed over me, tell the story to this despot, lest he would find fault with me, which, of course, he could not.”

I swear by Allah that I kept standing near him and he talked to me when evening set in. I looked and saw my master had departed from the world. A deep sorrow overtook me. I went near him; all of a sudden I heard someone from the behind saying, “Stop! O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! I turned back, saw the wall cracked, and my master Imam al-Jawād (A.S.) entered in a white robe and black turban and said, “O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! Stand up to perform *ghusl* on your master”. Then, he put the Imam’s body on the washing place and performed *ghusl* on his body while having his shirt on, as the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) was performed *ghusl* on. When it was over, he performed funeral prayer and I prayed with him too. Then he said, “O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! What

¹ *Ithbāt al-Waṣiyya*, p. 219; *Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 3, p. 409.

you saw tell this despot lest he would find fault with him, which, of course, he could not.”

I kept standing next to my master until the morning broke and Ma'mūn came with a large crowd. His appalling presence prevented me from beginning to talk. He said: O 'Abd al-Raḥmān Yaḥyā! What a liar you are!? Don't you say that an Imam would not leave the world unless his son, who is his successor, would do his funeral affairs [ablution and shrouding]? Now, 'Alī b. Mūsā is in Khorasasn and his son in Medina.

I said: O Commander of the Faithful! Now that you yourself brought it up, listen. Yesterday my master told me such and such and I swear by Allah that no sooner than the sunset, he departed from the world and I went near him. All of a sudden someone called from behind me, “Stop, O 'Abd al-Raḥmān!” And he told him the rest of the story.

Ma'mūn said: Describe him for me. I told him about the appearance and clothes of the Imam (A.S.) and showed him the wall that he entered through. Ma'mūn dropped himself on the ground and howled like a bull, saying: Woe to you O Ma'mūn! What did you do? Allah's curse upon such and such! I did this on their advice.¹

¹ *Ithbāt al-Wasīla*, p. 215.

Chapter Seven

Imam Mahdī (S.A.W.A.)

1/7

His Names and Nicknames

303. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): That pious successor is from among the children of Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī. He is Lord of the Time and he is Mahdī.¹

304. *Kamāl al-Dīn:* on the authority of Di‘bil Khuzā‘ī: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “O Di‘bil! The Imam after me is my son Muḥammad; and after Muḥammad is his son ‘Alī; and after ‘Alī is his son Ḥasan; and after Ḥasan is his son the uprising *Hujja*, who is being waited for in his occultation, and in his appearance all people are obedient to him.”²

305. *Al-Kāfi:* on the authority of Ḥasan b. Shādhān Wāsiṭī: I wrote a letter to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) and complained in it about the people of Wāsiṭ’s mistreating and attacking me. They were a group of ‘Uthmānī, who persecuted me.

1 *Ta’rikh Mawālīd al-A’imma wa Wafiyātihim*, p. 44; *Kashf al Ghumma*, vol. 4, p. 199.

2 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 372, h. 6; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 266, h. 35.

The Imam wrote back in his handwriting, “The Exalted and Glorious Allah has taken pledge from our devotees to show patience in a false state. Then, be patient by the order of your Lord; because when the Master of the creatures reappears, they [the opponents] will say, ﴿"Woe to us! Who raised us from our place of sleep? This is what the All-beneficent had promised, and the apostles had spoken the truth!﴾¹

2/7

Designation of Imamate

306. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “I am the chief of the creatures of the Exalted and Glorious Allah. I am better than the Gabriel, Michael, Seraph (Isrāfīl), bearers of the Throne, all the Archangels, and the Messengers of Allah. I am possessor of intercession and the noble Pond [of Kawthar].

I and ‘Alī are the fathers of this nation. Whoever knows us [and believes in us], has indeed known the Exalted and Glorious Allah [and believed in Him]; and whoever denies us has indeed denied the Exalted and Glorious Allah.

My two grandsons and the two masters of the youths of Paradise, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, will be born to ‘Alī, and for among the progeny of Ḥusayn, there will come nine Imams, whose obeying is like obeying me and whose disobeying is like disobeying me. The ninth of

¹ Q. 36: 52; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 247, h. 346; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 53, p. 89, h. 87.

them is their Riser and guide [Mahdī].”¹

307. *Kamāl al-Dīn*: on the authority of Rayyān b. Ṣalt: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Are you Possessor of the Command (*Ṣāhib al-Amr*)? He said, “I am the Possessor of the Command but not the one who will fill with justice the world that is filled with injustice. With this physical inability that you see in me how can I be that person? The Riser is the one who, when reappears, is in old in age but young in countenance; he has such a powerful body that if he reaches his hand to the largest tree on earth, he will uproot it and if he shouts in the mountains, the rocks will shatter. He has the Moses’ cane and the Solomon’s ring. He is the fourth of my progenies. Allah will keep him hidden for a while, then, he will make him appear and will fill the earth with justice and equity after it has been filled with injustice and tyranny.”²

3/7

His Traits

A. His Hidden Birth

308. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Ayyūb b. Nūḥ: I said to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.): I hope you are the Possessor of the Command (The Promised Rule) and Allah grant it to you without wielding a sword and without bloodshed; because you have been sworn allegiance

1 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 261, h. 7; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 36, p. 255, h. 71.

2 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 261, h. 7; *I’lām al-Warā*, p. 302.

to [through heir apparency] and coin has been minted in your name.

He said, “There is none of us about whom letters are exchanged, attention is drawn to, questions are asked from, and religious funds are brought to, unless he is killed or dies in bed, until Allah would send a youth from among us for this command (the promised universal rule), whose birth and growth is hidden, but his lineage is not hidden to anyone.”¹

B. Having Long Occultation

309. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers: The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, I swear to Him Who sent me rightfully as the bearer of good news that the Riser from among my children with the covenant that has reached him from me will have such a long occultation that most people would say, ‘Allah has no longer anything to do with household of Muḥammad,’ and some others would get suspicious of his being born. Then, everyone who gets to his time should strongly stick to his own faith and not let the Satan create doubt in him and therefore keep him away from my doctrine and expel him from my religion; because he has previously ousted his parents from the Paradise, too. The Exalted and Glorious Allah has made the Satan a friend of those who do not have faith.”²

310. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers, from Imam al-Ḥusayn from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): “O Ḥusayn! The ninth child of your progeny is the rightful Riser, the dominator of religion, and

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 341, h. 25; *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 370, h. 1.

2 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 51, h. 2; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 51, p. 33, h. 12.

spreader of justice.”

I told him: O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! Is it certain?

He said, “Yes, I swear by Him who sent forth Muḥammad as a Prophet and chose him over all people [it is certain]; but only after an occultation and bewilderment that only the sincere devotees, who have achieved certainty, would remain faithful, those from whom Allah has taken pledge for our *Wilāya* and has established faith in their hearts, and confirmed them with His spirit [breathed] in them.”¹

C. His Reappearance Would Happen Suddenly Like the Resurrection

311. *Kamāl al-Dīn*: on the authority of Di‘bil b. ‘Alī Khuzā‘ī from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): ... My father related to me from his father from his forefathers that the Apostle of Allah was asked: O Apostle of Allah! When will the Riser from among your progeny appear? The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “His story (Reappearance) is like that of the Resurrection, since, none except Him shall manifest it at its time. It will weigh heavy on the heavens and the earth. It will not overtake you but suddenly.”²

D. The Resurrection will not Come until he Reappears

312. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): “The Resurrection will not come unless the Rightful Riser from us will rise. That is when Allah grants him permission to do so. Whoever

1 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 261, h. 7; *I‘lām al-Warā*, vol. 2, p. 229.

2 Q. 7: 187; *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 372, h. 6; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 265, h. 35.

follows him will be saved, but whoever opposes him will be destroyed. Remember Allah! O servants of Allah! Go towards him even if he is on snow or ice as he is the vicegerent of the Exalted and Glorious Allah and my successor on Earth.”¹

E. Old in Age but Young in Countenance

313. *Kamāl al-Dīn*: on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt al-Haravī: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): What is the sign of your Riser when he reappears?

He said, “His sign is that he is old in age but young in countenance, so that anyone who looks at him would suppose him to be forty or younger.”²

4/7

The Wisdom behind His Occultation

314. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): What you are stretching your necks to see [waiting for] will not happen until you will be sieved and refined, so that none but a few will remain from you.” And then he recited this verse, ﴿Alif, Lām, Mīm. Do the people suppose that they will be let off because they say, “We have faith”, and they will not be tested?》³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 59, h. 230; *Dalā’il al-Imāma*, p. 452, h. 428.

2 *Dalā’il al-Imāma*, p. 625, h. 12; *al-Kharā’ij wa al-Jarā’ih*, vol. 1, p. 364.

3 Q. 29: 1, 2; *al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 375; *al-Kharā’ij wa al-Jarā’ih*, vol. 3, p. 1170.

5/7

Signs of his Reappearance

315. *Al-Ghayba*, Ṭūsī – on the authority of Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Willy-nilly, a blind and unbelievable sedition will happen, in which any kind of kinship and relation will disappear and it is the time when the Shī‘as will lose the third [Imam] of my progeny and those in the Heaven and on the Earth will cry for him and there are many believers who are sorrowful, thirsty, and sad when losing refreshing water; but it is as if I see them in the happiest time possible. All of a sudden, they will hear a call that whoever is far will hear it just like the one who is near. It is mercy for the believers and torment for the unbelievers.”

I said: What is that call?

He said, “In the month of Rajab, three voices will be heard from the sky: one voice will say, ﴿May Allah’s curse be on the wrongdoers!﴾; the second voice will say, ﴿The Imminent [Hour] is near at hand,﴾ O group of believers! And the third voice, during which people will see a visible body in the direction of the sun, will say, “This is Amīr al-Mu’minīn who has come to kill terminate the wrongdoers.”

It is also related in a ḥadīth form Ḥimyarī, “And the third voice is a voice that is seen across the sun and says: Allah sent such and such. So obey and listen to him.”

Both of them, Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb and Ḥimyarī have said, “At this time, *faraj* (second coming of Imam Mahdi – A.S.) will take place for people and they wish the believers were alive; and Allah would heal the

heart of the believers.”¹

6/7

Prayer for him, for his Companions, and for the Rulers after him

316. *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahajjid*: on the authority of Maqātil b. Maqātil: Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “What do you say at your Friday prayer’s *qunūt*?”

I said: What other people say.

The Imam (A.S.) said, “Do not say like what they say; rather say: ‘O Allah! Keep Your servant and vicegerent (The Lord of Time – A.S.) safe and sound, by what You kept Your messengers and prophets safe and sound; surround him by Your angles; empower him by Your Holy Spirit (Gabriel); set guardians in front and behind him to safeguard him of any harm; transform his fear to security so that he would worship only You and take no one as Your partner; do not make any of Your creatures dominate over him; give him permission to wage *jihād* against them – who are Your and his enemies – and make me one of his helpers. Verily, You have power over all things’.”³

1 *Al-Ghayba*, Ṭūsī, p. 439, h. 431; *Mukhtaṣar Baṣā’ir al-Darajāt*, p. 38.

2 A prayer said after the second *rak’a* with hands raised before bowing down.

3 *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutihajjid*, p. 366, h. 494; *Jamāl al-Uṣbū’*, p. 256.

7/7

The Excellence of Awaiting *Faraj*

317. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah said, “The best deed for my nation is awaiting *faraj* by Allah.”¹

318. *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Fuḍayl: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about awaiting *faraj*. he said, “Do you not know that awaiting *faraj* is itself part of *faraj*?!” And then said, “The Exalted and Glorious Allah said, ﴿So be on the watch; I too will be watching along with you.﴾²

1 *Kamāl al-Dīn*, p. 644, h. 3; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 36, h. 78.

2 *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī*, vol. 2, p. 322, h. 2049.

Chapter Eight

The Scholarly Authority of Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

1/8

The Value of Ahl al-Bayt's (A.S.) Traditions

319. *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār* – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: I heard from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) who said, “May Allah have mercy on the one who revives our directives.”

I said: How would they revive your directives?

He said, “They would learn our knowledge and teach it to people; because people would follow us if they learn about the merits of our teachings.”¹

2/8

Imparting the Principles to you is upon us

320. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “It is upon us to state the principles for

¹ *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 180, h. 1; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 307, h. 69.

you and it is upon you to extract branches from them.”¹

3/8

The Ambiguous and Unequivocal Traditions

321. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “There are unequivocal and ambiguous in our traditions, too. Then, check the ambiguous traditions against the unequivocal and do not follow the unequivocal without paying attention to the unequivocal lest you may go astray.”²

1 *Mustaṭrafāt al-Sarā’ir (Min Kitāb Jāmi‘ al-Bazanī)*: p. 58, h. 21; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 245, h. 53.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 290, h. 39; *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 383, h. 289.

Section Four

Devotional Teachings

Chapter One

Rationales behind Different Types of Devotional Acts

1/1

The Rational Obligatoriness of Devotional Acts

322. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Even if Allah had not admonished people regarding the Paradise and Hell, it was obligatory for people to obey Him and stay away from disobeying Him. It is because of the nobility and kindness that He has bestowed upon them without their deserving it!”¹

2/1

The Beginning of Devotional Act

323. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The beginning of worshipping Allah is to know Him and the root of knowing Allah is to profess His Oneness.”²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 180, h. 4; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 71, p. 174, h. 10.

2 *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 34, h. 2; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 150, h. 51.

3/1

The Best of Devotional Acts

324. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): A devotional act is not [merely] performing much prayer and fasting; rather, it is deliberating on the works of the Exalted and Glorious Allah.”¹

4/1

Sincere Devotion in Devotional Acts

325. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Blessed is he who makes his devotional acts and supplications pure for Allah, not he who makes his heart busy with what his eyes see, not to forget the remembrance of Allah for what his ears hear, and not to feel sorrow in the heart for what is given to others.”²

326. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said, “The world is all ignorance except for the positions of knowledge. All knowledge is considered to be a proof [against man], unless it is acted accordingly. All acts are out of hypocrisy, unless they are done sincerely. Sincerity is subject to danger unless the servant sees what his final ending will be.”³

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 55, h. 4; *Tanbīh al-Khwātir*, vol. 2, p. 183.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 16, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, p. 229, h. 5.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 149, h. 21; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 371, h. 10.

5/1

Popularity by Devotional Acts

327. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Whoever makes himself popular by devotional acts, be suspicious of his religiousness because the Exalted and Glorious Allah dislikes popularity with devotional acts and popularity with clothing.¹

¹ *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 342, h. 692; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, p. 229, h. 5.

Chapter Two

Adhān (Call to Prayer)

1/2

Legislation of *Adhān*

328. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) said, “When teaching *adhān* to the Prophet (A.S.) began, Gabriel (A.S.) brought the Burāq [for the Prophet – S.A.W.]. The Burāq resisted [to the Prophet – S.A.W.A.]. Gabriel told it: Calm down, O Burāq; because no one has ever ridden you who had been more respectful than him. The Burāq, calmed down.

The Prophet said, “I rode it and went up until I got to the veil near the compassionate Allah.

At this time an angel appeared from behind the veil and said: Allah is the greatest, Allah is the greatest.

I said: O Gabriel! Who is this noble angel?

Gabriel (A.S.) said: I swear by the One who honored you with prophethood, I had not seen this angel until this moment!

The angel said: *Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar* (Allah is the greatest).

It was called from behind the veil: My servant is right, *Ana Akbar, Ana Akbar* (I am the greatest).”

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “That angel said: *Ashhadu an lā ilāha ill Allāh, Ashhadu an lā ilāha ill Allāh* (I bear witness that There is no god but Allah)

It was called from behind the veil: My servant is right. I am Allah and there is no god but Me.”

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “The angel said: *Ashhadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūl Allāh. Ashhadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūl Allāh* (I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah).

It was called from behind the veil: My servant is right. I sent Muḥammad as a Messenger.”

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “The angel said: *ḥayya alā a-ṣalāt, ḥayya alā a-ṣalāt* (hasten to prayer).

It was called from behind the veil: My servant is right and is invited to worship Me.”

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “The angel said: *ḥayya alā khayr al-‘amal, ḥayya alā khayr al-‘amal* (hasten to the best of actions).

It was called from behind the veil: My servant is right and he invited to worship Me. Whoever persevered in my worship, achieved salvation.”

The Prophet said, “On that day the Almighty Allah perfected my superiority over the first and the last [of humans].”¹

1 *Ṣaḥīfāt al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 227, h. 115; *‘Awālī al-Li’ālī*, vol. 1, p. 26, h. 8.

2/2

The Excellence of *Adhān*

329. *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh* – on the authority of ‘Abbās b. Hilāl: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) Said, “Whoever recites the *adhān* and *iqāma*, two rows of angels would perform prayer behind him; whoever recites *iqāma* and does not recite *adhān*, only one angel would stand on his right and one on his left.” Then he said, “Take advantage of the two rows!”¹

3/2

The Excellence of *Muezzin*

330. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah said, “On the Day of Resurrection, the *muezzin* stands higher than all people.”²

4/2

The Blessing of Saying *Adhān* at Home

331. *Al-Kāfī* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. Rāshid: Hishām b. Ibrāhīm Quoted to me that he complained to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and his being infertile and the Imam (A.S.) told him to say *adhān* out loud in his house. Hishām said: I did so, and Allah cured my illness and granted me many children.

1 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 287; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 888, h. 2.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 61, h. 249; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 284, h. 1132.

I and the group of my servants and the members of my family were constantly suffering illness and it would not leave us. When I heard this from Hishām, I applied it and Allah freed me and my family from the illness.¹

5/2

Saying *Adhān* into the Infant's Ear

332. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.), from Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn: The day when al-Ḥasan (A.S.) was born, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) recited *adhān* into his ear.²

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 3, p. 308, h. 33 and vol. 6, p. 101, h. 9; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 59, h. 207.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 43, h. 147; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 274, h. 6.

Chapter Three

Prayer

1/3

The Wisdom of Performing Prayer

333. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The reason for prayer is confessing the Lordship of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, repudiating partnership from him, standing before the Exalted and Glorious Overpowering Allah, with humbleness, and asking for the forgiveness of the past sins; and putting one's forehead on the ground for glorifying the Exalted and Glorious Allah. Prayer causes man to remember Allah, not to forget Him, not to become ungrateful and rebellious, to be lowly and submissive, and not to be inclined toward and seeking the worldly gains. In addition, prayer causes man to avoid committing sin, to constantly remembering the Exalted and Glorious Allah night and day lest he would forget his Master, Director, and Creator and thereby turn to unruliness and disobedience. Man's remembering his Lord and standing at His Threshold would prevent him from sins and falling

into any kind of corruption.¹

2/3

The Merits of Prayer

334. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Prayer is a means for any God-wary for getting near [to Allah].²

335. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Whoever performs one obligatory prayer, one of his needs for which he prays will be fulfilled.”³

3/3

The Importance of Prayer

336. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “When the Resurrection Day comes, one will be called in and the first thing that he will be questioned about, is prayer. If he has performed it properly, [he will achieve salvation]. Otherwise, he will be thrown into the Fire.”⁴

1 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 214, h. 645; *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, p. 317, h. 2.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 121, h. 2; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 416, h. 5904.

3 *Al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 130, h. 6; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 32, h. 55.

4 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 31, h. 45; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 151, h. 90.

4/3

Presence of the Heart

337. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Indeed, hearts have happiness and unhappiness, liveliness and weariness. Then, whenever they are happy they are understanding and insightful and when they are unhappy, they are tired and bored. Therefore, when they are happy hold on to them [keep them busy worshipping] and when they are unhappy and weary, leave them alone. There is no good in the right (*ma'rūf*) that is underrated.¹

5/3

Observing the Due Time

338. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** O Such and Such! When the time [for prayer] is due, perform the prayer; because you do not know what would happen.²

6/3

Some Manners of Prayer

339. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** The prostration place of Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) was known by its sweet fragrance.³

340. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** In response to the question about the

1 *Al-'Udad al-Qawiyya*, p. 297, h. 28; *Nuzhat al-Nāzir*, p. 200, h. 435.

2 *Tahdhib al-Aḥkām*, vol. 3, p. 255, h. 705; *Muntaqā al-Jamān*, vol. 1, p. 422.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 511, h. 11; *Wasā'il al-Shī'a*, vol. 3, p. 316, h. 5635.

noble verse, ﴿Put on your adornment on every occasion of prayer,﴾¹
 One of those adornments is combing [the hair] before saying prayer.²

7/3

After-Prayer-Invocations

341. ‘*Ilal al-Sharāyī*’: on the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Faḍḍāl: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said: “Thanksgiving prostration after the obligatory prayer is for the success given by Allah to His servant to perform his obligation and the least that suffices to say is three times saying, “*shukran li Allah*” (Thanks to Allah).”³

342. *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh* – on the authority of Sulaymān b. Ḥafḍ Marwazī: Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā wrote to me, “In thanksgiving prostration, say *shukran shukran* (thanks, thanks [Allah])!, one hundred times; or if you wish, say: ‘*afwan, afwan*, forgive, forgive!”⁴

343. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): It behooves men to recite 50 verses of the Qur’an after *ta’qībāt* of the morning prayer.⁵

8/3

Midnight Prayer (*Ṣalāt al-Layl*)

344. ‘*Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abbās. I never saw Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) speak harshly to

1 Q. 7: 31.

2 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 128, h. 318; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 489, h. 7.

3 *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī*’, p. 360, h. 1; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 333, h. 978.

4 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 332, h. 970; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 3, p. 344, h. 20.

5 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 138, h. 537; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 86, p. 191, h. 53.

someone.... He would sleep little during the night and stay up most of the time.¹

9/3

The Excellence of Performing Prayer in *Masjid al-Ḥarām*

345. *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Mūsā b. Salām: Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.) performed the *ʿUmra* (minor *Hajj* pilgrimage). When he said farewell to the Kaʿba and went to the gate of al-Ḥannātīn to leave; he stood up in the Mosque behind the Kaʿba, raised up his hands to pray. Then he told us, “What a good place to ask Allah to fulfill one’s requests. Saying prayers here is worth praying for sixty months or sixty years elsewhere.” When he approached the gate he said, “I will leave with the belief that There is no god but Thee.”²

10/3

The Merits of Performing Prayer in *Masjid al-Rasūl*

346. *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām* – on the authority of Ḥasan b. Washshāʾ: I asked Abū al-Ḥasan al-Riḍā (A.S.): Is the merits of performing prayer in *Masjid al-Ḥarām* and *Masjid al-Rasūl* (S.A.W.A.) the same? He said, “Yes, and the prayer in both is equal to a thousand prayers.”³

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 184, h. 7; *Iʿlām al-Warā*, vol. 2, p. 63.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 17, h. 42; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 99, p. 370, h. 1.

3 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 3, p. 250, h. 686; *Muntaqī al-Jamān*, vol. 2, p. 166.

11/3

The Excellence of *Masjid al-Kūfa* and Performing Prayer in it

347. *Al-Ghārāt* – on the authority of Abū Shu‘ayb Khurāsānī: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Indeed, *Masjid al-Kūfa* is the house of Noah (A.S.). If a person enters it one hundred times, Allah would write for him one hundred consolations (forgiveness); because the Noah’s (A.S.) prayer for him has been answered, when he said, ﴿My Lord! Forgive me and my parents and him who entered my house believing.﴾¹

348. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Performing an individual prayer in *Masjid al-Kūfa* is better than performing seventy mass prayers in another place.²

12/3

Some Obstacles to the Acceptance of Prayer

349. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Exalted and Glorious Allah has ordered three things which are along with three other things. He has ordered prayer and paying the alms [together]. So, whoever performs prayer but does not pay the alms it is not accepted of him.³

13/3

Abandoning the Prayer and Ruining it

350. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.):

1 Q. 71: 28; *Al-Ghārāt*, vol. 2, p. 857; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 100, p. 262, h. 14.

2 *Thawāb al-A‘māl*, p. 50, h. 2; *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, p. 78, h. 72.

3 *Al-Khiṣāl*, vol. 156, h. 196; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 258, h. 13.

“The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “As long as a believer guards his prayers, Satan fears him. Once he gets negligent about saying his prayers, Satan would be emboldened over him and would lead him to commit sins.”¹

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 28, h. 21; *Ṣaḥīfāt al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 84, h. 9.

Chapter Four

Fasting

1/4

The Merits of the Month of Fasting

351. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Faḍḍāl from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.), from his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) Said, “Indeed, the month of Ramadan is a great month. During this month, Allah doubles one’s good deeds, eliminates the evil deeds, and raises the ranks. Allah forgives whoever gives charity during this month. Allah forgives whoever treats his slave with kindness during this month. Allah forgives whoever is good-tempered during this month. Allah forgives whoever quenches his wrath during this month. Allah forgives whoever visits his relatives during that month...”¹

352. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) Said, “On the first night of the month

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 293, h. 46; *Faḍā’il al-Ashhur al-Thalātha*, p. 73, h. 53.

of Ramadan, the rebellious devils are chained up and each night seventy thousand sinners are forgiven. When the night of *Qadr* arrives, Allah will forgive as many people as He has forgiven during the months of Rajab, Sha‘ban and Ramadan up until that day, except for any two men who have been enemies with each other. Then the Exalted and Glorious Allah will say, “Give them a chance to reconcile.”¹

2/4

The Angels’ Prayer for the Fasting

253. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “The Exalted and Glorious Allah has angels who oversee the fasting, stretch their wings over them, and cause their sins fall to pieces. The Exalted and Glorious Allah has angels, employed to ask forgiveness for the fasting men and women. No one but the Exalted Allah knows their number.”²

3/4

Preparation for Allah’s Feast

A. Giving Priority to Repentance

354. **‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – on the authority of Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī: I went to see Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) on the last Friday in the month of Sha‘ban. He

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 71, h. 331; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 188, h. 11.

2 *Faḍā’il al-Ashhur al-Thalātha*, p. 104, h. 92.

told me, “O Abā al-Ṣalt! Most of the Sha’ban has passed, and now this is its last Friday. Make up the good deeds that you neglected to do during all this month in the few remaining days. Do what is beneficial to you, and abandon doing what is of no use for you.

Increase the amount of supplications, asking for Allah’s forgiveness, reciting the Qur’an, making repentance to Allah for the sins you have committed so that Allah turns towards you in this month while you have been sincere with the Exalted and Glorious Allah. Do not let the responsibility for anything you have been entrusted with remain on your shoulders. Return them to their owners. Do not let any hate for any believers remain in your heart. Throw it away. Do not let any sins that you have committed remain. Get rid of them. Be wary of Allah and rely on Him regarding your private and public affairs. ﴿And whoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him. Indeed Allah carries through His command. Certainly Allah has set a measure for everything﴾.

You should often say the following in the remaining days of this month, ‘O Allah! If you have not forgiven us up until what has passed Sha’ban, I beg You to forgive us during the remaining period of this month’ as Allah the Exalted and Glorious frees many people from the Fire during this month out of respect for the month of Ramadan.”¹

B. Fasting during the Last three Days of Sha’ban

355. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Allah will record two consecutive months

¹ *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 51, h. 198; *al-Iqbāl*, vol. 1, p. 42.

of fasting for whoever fasts for last three days of Sha'ban and goes on fasting through the month of Ramadan.¹

4/4

Actions that are Emphatically Recommended in the Month of Ramadan

A. Asking for Forgiveness a Lot

356. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever wishes to repent from a sin, repent it in the month of Ramadan to the Divine Threshold; because this is a month of repentance, return, forgiveness and mercy and there is no night in it at which Allah does not have some freed from the Fire, all of whom deserve Fire for their sins.²

B. Performing Prayer a Lot

357. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “The Exalted and Glorious Allah will forgive whoever performs two *rak'as* of prayers in this month.”³

5/4

Dawn Supplication

358. *Al-Iqbāl* – on the authority of Ayyūb b. Yaqtīn: It is related

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 255, h. 6; *al-Khiṣāl*, p. 582, h. 6.

2 *Faḍā'il al-Ashhur al-Thalātha*, p. 106, h. 96.

3 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 293, h. 46; *Faḍā'il al-Ashhur al-Thalātha*, p. 73, h. 53.

that he wrote a letter to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) asked him to verify the correctness of this supplication.

The Imam wrote to him, “Yes, this is al-Bāqir’s (A.S.) supplication at dawns of the month of Ramadan. My father quoted al-Bāqir (A.S.) who said: if people were aware of the greatness of these requests to Allah and their quick fulfillments for the supplicant, they would fight for it with each other, even with sword; and Allah dedicates His mercy to whoever He wishes.”

And Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.) said, “It would be right to swear that the Great Name of Allah is in this supplication. So, whenever you supplicate, do it with strife because it is from hidden knowledge and keep it hidden except from the devoted ones. The hypocrites and deniers are not devoted to it and this is the supplication of *mubāhala*. (mutual invocation of cursing). You say it like this:

“O Allah! I ask You by the truth of Your most radiant manifestations, and all Your manifestations are radiant; O Allah! I ask You by the truth of all your manifestations...”¹

6/4

Things not Permissible for the Fasting

259. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said, “There are three things you should avoid while you fast: cupping, bath, and beautiful women.”²

1 *Al-Iqbāl*, vol. 1, p. 175; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 98, p. 94, h. 2.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 39, h. 115; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 233, h.

7/4

The Night of Ordainment

259. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)* – on the authority of Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Nawfilī: Sulaymān b. Marwazī said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Will you not tell me for what has the verse, ﴿Indeed We sent it down on the Night of Ordainment.﴾ been revealed?

The Imam (A.S.) said, “O Sulaymān! The Exalted and Glorious Allah will decide the destiny (of any individual) for one year including life or death, good or bad, and sustenance on the Night of Ordainment. Whatever Allah ordains on that night will be inevitable.” Sulaymān said: May I be your ransom, now I understand. Please tell me more.

The Imam (A.S.) said, “O Sulaymān! Some of the affairs are up to the Exalted and Glorious Allah and what He wills. He can expedite or procrastinate what He wills. He can eliminate what He wills.”¹

8/4

Rules of Manner for Eid al-Fiṭr

361. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) would not sleep for three nights: the night before 23rd of Ramadan, the night before Eid al-Fiṭr, and the night before mid-Sha’ban. At these nights, daily sustenance is distributed and the life length and whatever that is supposed to happen in that year would be determined.²

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 182, h. 1; *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 444, h. 1.

2 *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutihajjid*, p. 626, under h. 911; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 97, p. 88, h. 15.

362. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – When he paused a moment at the door while leaving for the Eid prayer: *Allāhu Akbar! Allāhu Akbar! Allāhu Akbar!* (Allah is the Greatest) for He guided us. *Allāhu Akbar* for He gave us sustenance with quadrupeds. *Allāhu Akbar* for He tried us. We raise our voice by this incantation.¹

9/4

Merits of Serving *Iffār* to the Fasting

363. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Your serving *iffār* to the fasting brothers is more meritorious than your fasting.²

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 489, h. 7; *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 151, h. 21.

2 *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutihajjid*, p. 626, under h. 704; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 68, h. 2.

Chapter Five

Hajj Pilgrimage

1/5

The Wisdom of *Hajj*

364. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On what Faḍl b. Shādhān has compiled from his sayings about the wisdom of obligations: If someone asks, “Why is performing *Hajj* ordained?” It is said, “It is for moving towards the Almighty and Glorious Allah and asking him for abundant rewards; departing from all sins that one has committed along with repentant for all that he has done in the past, to start what he will do in the future, to expend his wealth and to put himself to trouble, to experience separation from his spouse and children, to avoid lust and pleasure, to suffer from the troubles of the trip in the heat, cold, and fear for a long span of time along with humility, courtesy and humbleness. These are all besides benefits for the people in the East or the West of the Earth, whether they live in the deserts or at sea, partake in the *Hajj* pilgrimage or not, import goods, do business, sell or buy, are dealers or needy, rent riding animals or are too poor to rent any riding animals and results in fulfilling the needs of the residents living in the vicinity of Mecca who find the chance to gather in *Hajj*. It

also includes understanding the traditions of the Imams (A.S.) and transmitting them from one region over to another region as the Exalted Allah said, ﴿But why should not there go forth a group from each of their sections to become learned in religion, and to warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware?¹ And also, ﴿that they may witness the benefits for them,²﴾....³

2/5

The Merits of *Hajj* and *‘Umra*

365. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): *Hajj* and *‘Umra* remove poverty and sins, just as the furnace removes rust from iron.⁴

3/5

The Imam’s (A.S.) Supplication in Circumambulation

366. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Aḥmad b. Mūsā b. Sa’d: I was with Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) in circumambulations (*tawāf*). When we reached the Yemeni corner, the Imam (A.S.) stopped, raised his hands up and said, “O Allah! O Master of health! O Creator of health! O Grantor of health! O Donator of health! O Benefactor of health! O the One who gives me and all Your creatures health! O the Beneficent and Merciful in this world and the Hereafter! Please send Blessings to Muḥammad and his Holy Household and

1 Q. 9: 122.

2 Q. 22: 28.

3 ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 19, h. 1; *Ilal al-Sharāyī*, p. 279, h. 9.

4 *Tahdhib al-Aḥkām*, vol. 5, p. 22, h. 65; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 461, h. 9.

grant us health, the continuation of health, and the perfection of health. And grant us gratitude for health in this world and the Hereafter, O the most Merciful of the Merciful.”¹

4/5

The Manner of *Istilām* (Touching the Ḥajar al-Aswad) among the Crowd

367. *‘Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayd Allah: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): When there is a large crowd, should one struggle with them for touching the Ḥajar al-Aswad? He said, “In this case, point at it with your hand.”²

5/5

The Answer to Prayers in *‘Arafāt*

368. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Abū Ja‘far (Imam al-Bāqir - A.S.) would say, “No pious or evil would stand on the *‘Arafāt* mountains and pray unless Allah would answer his prayers; but the pious in the worldly and Hereafter affairs and the evil in the worldly affairs.”³

6/5

Farewell to the House of Allah

369. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Ibrāhīm b. Abī Maḥmūd: I saw

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 16, h. 37; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 99, p. 195, h. 4.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 405, h. 7; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 5, p. 103, h. 226.

3 *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 376, h. 1330; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 210, h. 2180.

Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.) bidding farewell to the House of Allah. When he wanted to leave through the gate of the Mosque, he fell on prostration. Then, he stood up and faced the Ka‘ba and said, “O Allah! I return, believing that there is no god but You.”¹

¹ *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 531, h. 2; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 5, p. 281, h. 958.

Chapter Six

Recitation of the Qur'an

1/6

The Preferability of Recitation of the Qur'an in the House

370. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, "Allocate a portion of the Qur'an for your houses; because once the Qur'an is recited in the house, it would become intimate with its household and its blessings would increase and the faithful jinn would settle in it; but when the Qur'an is not recited in it, the house would alienate from its residents, the blessings would decrease, and the faithless jinn would settle in it."¹

2/6

Recitation of the Qur'an in a Sweet Voice

371. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, "Make the Qur'an beautiful with your voice, because a beautiful voice would add up to the beauty of the

¹ *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 227, h. 115; *Uddat al-Dā'ir*, p. 269.

Qur'an” and he recited this verse, ﴿He (Allah) adds to the creation whatever He wishes.﴾¹

3/6

Indecent Recitation

372. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “I am afraid that you will underestimate the religion, accept bribery when you are about to judge on a case, cut off ties with relatives, recite the Qur'an with (musical) instruments, and establish someone as your prayer leader who is not the noblest among you in religion.”²

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 69, h. 322; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 79, p. 255, h. 4.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 42, h. 140; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 248, h. 162.

Chapter Seven

Supplication

1/7

The Merits of Supplication

373. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Ibn Faḍḍāl from one of the Shī‘as: It is related that Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) would always say to his companions, “Upon you is the weapon of the prophets.”

It was asked, “What is the weapon of the prophets?”

He said, “Supplication”.¹

2/7

Making Supplication in Hardship and Ease

374. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “The believer’s supplication when in hardship is to be the same as when at ease; rather than giving up [supplication] when bounty is bestowed upon him. Then, do not get tired of making supplication since supplication has a high status

¹ *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 468, h. 5; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 2, p. 11, h. 2004.

with Allah.”¹

3/7

Manners of Supplication

A. Sending Blessings upon Muḥammad and his Household

375. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Rajā’ b. Zahrāk: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) would start out his supplications by sending blessings upon Muḥammad and his Household. He did this many times whether in prayers or at other times.²

B. Submission and Imploring

376. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): On what Faḍl b. Shādhān has compiled from his sayings about the wisdom of obligations: If it is asked, “Why does the praying person raise his hands while saying *tabkīr* (i.e. *Allāhu akbar* = Allah is the greatest)?” It is answered, “Because raising the hands is a kind of imploring and request. So, the Exalted and Glorious Allah likes His servants to be in a state of imploring and beseeching while worshipping and remembering Him. Another reason is that in raising the hands, one’s heart is present and focusing on what it says and intends to do.”³

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 488, h. 1; *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 386, h. 1358.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 182, h. 5; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 94, h. 7.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 111, h. 1; *‘Ilal al-Sharāyī’*, p. 264, h. 9.

C. Appealing to the Ahl al-Bayt

377. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whenever a hardship befalls you, seek Allah’s help through us. It is what is Allah said, ﴿To Allah belong the Best Names, so supplicate Him by them.﴾¹ Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) said, “I swear by Allah that these Best Names are us as it [a supplication] is not accepted from anyone except through recognizing us. He said, ﴿so supplicate Him by them.﴾²

4/7

The Best Times for Supplication

A. The Night Before Mid-Sha’ban

378. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.) – on the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Fazzāl: I asked ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.) about the night before mid-Sha’ban. He said, “It is the night in which Allah releases His servant from the Fire and forgives major sins.”

I said, “Are there any additional prayers for that night?”

He said, “It does not have any especial prayers. However, if you like to do a recommendable act on that night, say the Ja’far b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (Ja’far al-Ṭayyār)’s Prayer and say the *dhikr* of the Exalted and Glorious Allah, ask for forgiveness and supplicate a lot. My father would say, ‘Supplications are accepted on this night.’

I said, “The people say this night is the night of *Ṣikāk*. The Imam

1 Q. 7: 180.

2 *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī*, vol. 2, p. 42 h. 119; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 143, h. 4.

(A.S.) said, “That is the Night of Power (*Laylat al-Qadr*) in the month of Ramadan.”¹

B. Friday

379. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Friday is the chief of the days. On this day, Allah doubles the good deeds, effaces the sins, uplifts the ranks, fulfills the supplications, removes the sorrows, and fulfills the great requirements. This is the day of abundance. On this day, Allah releases many for the Fire. None of the people supplicates on this day, provided that he recognizes its right and reverence, unless it is upon the Exalted and Glorious Allah to count him as among the ones released from the Fire...”²

5/7

Best Places for Supplication

A. ‘Arafāt on the Day of ‘Arafa

380. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Imam al-Bāqir said, “No one, either good or evil, stops on these mountains except that Allah would fulfill his supplication. The supplication of the good person would be fulfilled for his world and the Hereafter, and the supplication of the bad person for his world.”³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 293, h. 45; *Faḍā’il al-Ashhur al-Thalātha*, p. 45, h. 22.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 264, h. 38; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 3, p. 22, h. 2.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 461, h. 9; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 210, h. 2180.

B. The Holy Shrine of the Eighth Imam (A.S.)

381. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): No grave should one take a trip to visit except for visiting our graves. Indeed, I will be wrongfully poisoned to death and buried in a strange land. Then, whoever prepares for a pilgrimage to my grave, his supplication will be fulfilled and his sins forgiven.”¹

6/7

Conditions for Fulfillment of Supplication

A. Sincere Devotion

382. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – On the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Supplicate and make your intention sincere.”²

A. Avoiding Sins

383. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) – In supplication of prosperity: O Allah... I take refuge in You from the sins that prevent supplication to be fulfilled.³

7/7

The Wisdom behind Delay in Fulfillment of Supplication

384. *Al-Kāfī* – on the authority of Bazantī: I said to Abū al-Ḥasan

1 *Al-Khiṣāl*, p. 144, h. 167; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 255, h. 1.

2 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 225, h. 112; al-Qumī, *Jāmi' al-Aḥādīth*, p. 76.

3 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 3, p. 96, h. 257; *Mibāḥ al-Mutihajjid*, p. 844, h. 910.

(Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.): May I be your ransom! It is several years that I have made a request from Allah and there is a doubt in my heart for its delay.

He said, “O Aḥmad! Take care lest the Satan make you hopeless. Abū Ja‘far (Imam al-Bāqir) – May Allah’s blessings be upon him – said: The faithful asks the Exalted and Glorious Allah for something and He delays fulfilling it, because He like to hear his voice and his wailing.”

Then he said, “By Allah! It is better for the faithful that the Exalted and Glorious Allah put off fulfilling their request to a later time (Hereafter) than fulfilling it in this world. What is the worth of the world? The believer should pray to Allah when at peace and well-being just as when supplicates when he is in hardship and trouble, rather than when his prayer is answered he would slacken in his supplication. So, do not get tired of supplicating. Supplication has a high status to Allah. It is upon you to be patient and seek lawful livelihood, to uphold the ties of kinship, and to avoid enmity toward people, because we are a household that would connect to those who cut off from us and do good to those who do evil to us and I swear by Allah that we see a good ending in doing this. The one who is well off in this world [seems that] whenever he asks [from Allah] it is granted to him, he would further ask for something else and Allah’s blessing would seem small to him. Therefore, he would never be satisfied; and whenever the bounties become plenty, the Muslim is thereby exposed to danger, because there are certain rights upon him and there is the fear that he may neglect to pay them off. Let me know, will you trust me if I tell you something?”

I said: May I be your ransom! If I do not trust your words as the proof of Allah over His creature, whom should I trust?

He said, “Then, your Trust in Allah must be more; because He has promised you [to fulfill your prayer]. Is it not true that Exalted and Glorious Allah has said, “When My servants ask you about Me, [tell them that] I am indeed rearmost. I answer the supplicant's call when he calls Me.”¹ And He said, “do not despair of the mercy of Allah.”² And He said, “Allah promises you His forgiveness and grace.”³ Then, trust more in the Exalted and Glorious Allah than in others; and do not let but benevolence in your heart, for you are forgiven.”⁴

1 Q. 2: 186.

2 Q. 39: 53.

3 Q. 2: 268.

4 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 488, h. 1; *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 385, h. 1358.

Chapter Eight

Remembrance of Allah

1/8

Encouragement of Remembering Allah

385. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): Moses son of ‘Imrān (A.S.) said while he was in communion with his Lord: O my Lord! Are you far from me to call you out loud or near to whisper to you?

Allah inspired to him, “I sit with the one who remembers Me.”

Moses (A.S.) said: O my Lord! [Sometimes] I am in a state that I know you too glorious to remember you in that state!

Then He inspired to him, “O Moses! Remember Me in any state.”¹

2/8

Saying *Lā Ilāha illā Allāh*

386. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): “Whoever says, “There is no god but

¹ *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 182, h. 17; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 127, h. 22.

Allah, the Sovereign, the Manifest Truth' one hundred times a day, he would draw in wealth and drive away poverty, would close the door of Hell on him and opens the door of Paradise.”¹

3/8

Praising Allah

387. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): “Paradise is the price of Monotheism and saying “praise be to Allah” is the perfect thanksgiving for every blessing. Awe of Allah is the key to every wisdom, and sincere devotion is the pillar of every worship.”²

4/8

Saying “There is no Power and no Strength Save in Allah”

388. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): “Whoever the Exalted Allah granted a blessing to, should praise the Exalted Allah. Whoever feels his provision comes him slowly, should ask forgiveness from Allah. Whoever is afflicted with sadness, should say, ‘There is no power and no strength save in Allah’.”³

1 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 279, h. 534; *al-Muqni‘*, Ṣadūq, p. 294.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 570, h. 1178; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 3, p. 3, h. 3.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 46, h. 171; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 258, h. 192.

5/8

Taking Refuge in Allah

389. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever takes refuge in Allah from the Fire of the Hell, but he does not abandon lusts, has indeed ridiculed himself.¹

6/8

Asking for Forgiveness

390. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.): “Be perfumed by the fragrance of seeking forgiveness so that the stench of sins would not betray you.”²

391. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) asked Allah for forgiveness seventy times every morning and repented to Allah seventy times.³

392. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The parable of asking forgiveness [and thereupon the sins falling off] is that of the leaves of a tree that fall off by being shaken.⁴

3/8

Sending *Ṣalawāt* upon Muḥammad and his Household

393. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) said, “The best of

1 *Kanz al-Fawā'id*, vol. 1, p. 330; *Ma'dan al-Jawāhir*, p. 175.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 372, h. 801; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2, p. 154, h. 705.

3 *Uddat al-Dā'ir*, p. 250; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 505, h. 5.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 504, h. 3; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 93, p. 285, h. 32.

supplications is sending *Ṣalawāt* upon the Apostle of Allah.”¹

394. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Whoever ends his talk by sending *salawāt* upon me and ‘Alī, will enter Paradise.”²

395. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever cannot afford to make atonement for his sins, should sent *ṣalawāt* upon Muḥammad and his household a lot, because *ṣalawāt* effaces sins altogether.³

1 *Al-Qumī, Jāmi‘ al-Aḥādīth (al-Ghāyāt)*, p. 186; *Fiqh al-Riḍā*, p. 345.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 64, h. 273; *Wasā’il al-Shī’a*, vol. 4, p. 1216, h. 9110.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 294, h. 52; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 131, h. 123.

Chapter Nine

Visitation of the Tombs of the Prophets, their Spiritual Heirs, and the Pious

1/9

Pilgrimage to the Tombs of the Prophets, their Spiritual Heirs, and the Pious

396. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** When leaving for Eid prayer: Peace be upon my forefathers, Adam and Noah! Peace be upon my forefathers, Abraham and Ishmael! Peace be upon my forefathers, Muḥammad and ‘Alī! Peace be upon Allah’s righteous servants!¹

2/9

Pilgrimage to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

397. *Al-Tawḥīd* – on the authority Abū al-Ṣalt ‘Abd al-Salām b. Ṣāliḥ al-Haravī from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “Whoever visits me in my lifetime or after my death, has indeed visited Allah.” The Prophet’s (S.A.W.A.) rank in Paradise is the highest

¹ *Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 3, p. 55; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 49, p. 171.

rank. Whoever visits him at his rank in Paradise from his home, has visited the Exalted and Glorious Allah.¹

3/9

Pilgrimage to the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

398. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Every Imam has a covenant upon his friends and Shi‘as, the proper fulfillment of which is by means of pilgrimage to his tomb. Then, whoever makes a pilgrimage to them with interest while confirming what they have persuaded, their Imams will be their intercessors on the Day of Resurrection.

3/9

Pilgrimage to Imam ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (A.S.)

399. *Tahdhīb aal-Aḥkām* – on the authority of Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Fazzāl: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) said, “Verily, there is a spot in the land of Khurāsān that will someday become the frequenting place of the angels; a group of the angels descend from the heaven while another group ascend until the trumpet will be blown.”

He was told: O Son of the Apostle of Allah! What spot is that? He said, “The land of Tūs. By Allah, it is a garden of the gardens of Paradise. Whoever visits me in that land, is like the one who has visited the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.); and the Exalted and Glorious Allah will record for them the reward of a thousand of approved *Hajj* and a thousand of approved *‘Umra* and I and my forefathers will

¹ *Al-Tawḥīd*, p. 117, h. 21; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 115, h. 3.

intercede for them.”¹

5/9

Pilgrimage to Fāṭima Daughter of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.)

400. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – in response to Sa‘d b. Sa‘īd’s question about the [reward for visiting the] shrine of Fāṭima daughter of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (A.S.): “Whoever visits her [shrine] will be rewarded Paradise.”²

6/9

Pilgrimage to the Tombs of the Pious

401. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)**: Whoever is not able to give us a present, give it to our pious friends, as it will be recorded as giving us the present; and whoever is not able to come to visit us, go visit our pious friends, for which the same reward will be recorded for them.³

1 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 108, h. 190; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 585, h. 3193.

2 *Thawāb al-A‘māl*, p. 1124, h. 1; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 267, h. 1.

3 *Kāmil a-Ziyārāt*, p. 528, h. 807; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 104, h. 181.

Section Five

Moral and Practical Maxims

Chapter One

Good Traits and Good Deeds

1/1

Good-Temperedness

402. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “It is upon you to be good-tempered as a good-tempered person will undoubtedly go to Paradise.”¹

403. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “Those of you who have the most perfect faith have the best temper.”²

2/1

Enjoying Sincere Devotion

404. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.):

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 31, h. 41; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 10, p. 369, h. 19.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 31, h. 41; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 229, h.

The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “No servant of Allah spends forty days in sincere devotion, except that springs of wisdom will flow from of his heart to his tongue.”¹

3/1

Love of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.)

405. *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.) – on the authority of Ḥasan b. Jahm: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): May I be your ransom! I would like to know about my position with you.

He said, “Look and see what position I have with you [that is, your position with me is like that].”²

4/1

Good-Temperedness

406. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Whoever has nothing to pay for atonement of his sins, should send blessings upon Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and his Household a lot since that will efface sins.”³

5/1

Courtesy

407. *Al-Kāfī* – on the authority of Abū Hāshim Ja‘farī: We were at

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 69, h. 321; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 100, h. 1.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 50, h. 192; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 312, h. 360.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 194, h. 52; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 131, h. 123.

the presence of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) and talking about wisdom and courtesy. He said, “O Abū Hāshim! Wisdom is a Divine gift and courtesy something acquired. Then, whoever makes attempt in acquiring courtesy, will achieve it; and whoever tries to acquire wisdom, he will add up to his ignorance.”¹

6/1

Calling Oneself to Account

408. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever calls his self to account will benefit and whoever neglects it will be at a loss.²

7/1

Keeping Ties of Kinship

409. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) said: “Keep your ties of kinship, even if with a drink of water; and the best of keeping ties of kinship is not to bother them. Keeping ties of kinship will postpone death and cause popularity in the family.”³

410. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his father (A.S.): Imam al-Ṣādiq (A.S.) said: “Keeping ties of kinship and good-temperedness would increase faith.”⁴

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 23, h. 18; *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 448.

2 *Al-'Udad al-Qawiyya*, p. 298, h. 18; *Nahj al-Balāgha* 208.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 151, h. 9; *Muntaqā al-Jamān*, vol. 2, p. 457.

4 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 226, h. 184; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 74, p. 97, h. 31.

7/1

Doing Good to Parents

411. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** Obeying one's parents with kindness is obligatory, even though they are polytheists; however, you may not obey them by disobeying the Exalted the Glorious Allah.¹

9/1

Jihād in the Way of Allah

312. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** wrote in response to the questions by Muḥammad b. Sanān: Allah has forbidden escaping from the battlefield, because it would weaken religion and humiliate the just prophets and Imams (A.S.) and not helping them against their enemies and not punishing them for refusing what they have been invited to – that is confession to Oneness of Allah and fulfilling justice and abandoning injustice and destroying tyranny and criminality. Besides, such an act would embolden the enemy against the Muslims and consequently their captivity and massacre and destroying the religion of Allah and causing other corruptions.”²

10/1

Defending the Soul, Reputation, and Assets

413. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.):

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 122, h. 1; *al-Khiṣāl*, p. 608, h. 9.

2 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 565, h. 4934; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 92, h. 1.

The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Allah abominates the one whose house is invaded and he does not fight [in defense of his family].”¹

11/1

Martyrdom in the Way of Allah

414. *Al-Kāfi*: on the authority of Sa‘d b. Sa‘d: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about this saying of Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): “By Allah, getting killed by hundred strikes of swords is easier than dying in bed.”

He answered, “It means [being struck by swords] in the way of Allah.”²

12/1

Marriage

A. Encouraging Marriage

415. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): If there were not so many clear verses [from the Book of Allah] and practiced tradition [of the Prophet – S.A.W.A.] and abundant ḥadīths about marriage and marital relationship, still [outcomes and blessings such as:] doing good to the near of kin, bringing near the far ones, reconciliation of the hearts, networking of the rights, adding up the population, bringing up children for [confronting] hardships of the time and incidents of the

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 28, h. 24; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 86, h. 14.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 53, h. 1; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 123, h. 215.

age [that Allah has placed in marriage] were sufficient for the wise to be encouraged to this and the right-minded human being hasten toward it.¹

B. Preventing from Celibacy

416. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): A woman said to Imam al-Bāqir (A.S.): May Allah prosper you, I am a hermit woman.

He said, “What do you mean by hermit?”

She said: I do not want to get married.

He asked, “Why?”

She said: I am seeking excellence by avoiding marriage.

He said, “Come off it! If there was any excellence in this, Fāṭima (S.A.) was more deserving than you to it. There is no one to take a lead on her in excellence.”²

C. The Sunna of Marriage

417. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Indeed, Allah has ordained the night for peace and ordained women for peace; and it is a *sunna* to get married at night and give victuals.³

418. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): One of the *sunnas* of the prophet (S.A.W.A.) is giving victuals when getting married.⁴

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 373, h. 5; *Awālī al-Li’ālī*, vol. 3, p. 297, h. 77.

2 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 370, h. 795; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 509, h. 3.

3 *Tafsīr al-‘Ayyāshī*, vol. 2, p. 110, h. 1462; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 103, p. 278, h. 48.

4 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 367, h. 1; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 7, p. 409, h. 1633.

D. Man's Adornment for his Wife

419. *Makārim al-Akhlāq*: on the authority of Dharwān Madā'inī: I went to Abū al-Ḥasan II (Imam al-Riḍā –A.S.). I saw him dyed his beard. I said: May I be your ransom! You have dyed your beard!?

He said, "Yes. I dyed my beard, it is rewarded. Do you not know that having a tidy appearance would add to the women's chastity!? Do you wish when you go to your wife with an untidy appearance to see her like yourself?"

I said: No.

He said, "That is the same to her."¹

E. Bringing Welfare to the Family

417. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)**: A well-to-do person should bring welfare to his family."²

13/1

Asking for Righteous Children

421. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)**: on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: "The righteous child is a flower of the flowers of paradise."³

1 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 182, h. 537; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 567, h. 50.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 11, h. 5; *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 442.

3 *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 28, h. 19; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 34, h. 1.

14/1

Circumcision

422. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Circumcise your children on the seventh day [of their birth]; this is a source of more cleanliness and faster growth.”¹

15/1

‘Aqīqa

423. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.): “Fāṭima (S.A.) offered ‘*aqīqa*² for al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn (A.S.) and gave the leg of the mutton along with a dinar to the midwife.”³

16/1

Observing the Manner of Breast Feeding

424. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “For a baby, there is no milk better than its mother’s milk.”⁴

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 50, h. 192; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 312, h. 360.

2 Sacrifice offering on the seventh day of a newly-born child.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 46, h. 170; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 104, p. 112, h. 22.

4 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 34, h. 69; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 101, h. 42.

17/1

Removing a Believer's Sorrow

425. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: "Whoever removes sorrow from a believer, Allah would remove sorrow from his heart on the Day of Resurrection."¹

426. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Whoever removes a sorrow of the sorrows of the world from a believer's heart, Allah would remove a sorrow of the sorrows of the Hereafter from his heart.²

18/1

Joking

427. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of Mu'ammir b. Khallād: I said to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): May I be your ransom! Someone sits together with others and joke and laugh together.

He said, "If there is nothing, there is no problem."

I think what he meant by "nothing" was [using] foul language.

Then he said, "There was a Bedouin who used to come to visit the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and bring him gifts. He would right away say: give me the money for the gift! And the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would laugh. Whenever the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) became sad, he would say, "What does that Bedouin do? I wish he were here!"³

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 200, h. 4.

2 *Qaḍā' al-Ḥuqūq al-Mu'min*, p. 31, h. 45; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 199, h. 3.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 663, h. 1; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 16, p. 259, h. 45.

19/1

Give Away in Charity (*Infāq*)

428. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Ṣafwān b. Yaḥyā: “One of Imam al-Riḍā’s (A.S.) servants came to him. The Imam asked him, “Have you given anything in charity today?”

He said: No by Allah!

Abū al-Ḥasan (A.S.) told him, “Then, how would Allah reward us [in return]?! Do give away even if just one dirham.”¹

20/1

Moderation in Living Expenses

429. *Al-Khiṣāl* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Amr b. Sa‘īd from one of his companions: I heard ‘Ayyāshī saying: I asked permission from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) about living expenses of the family. He said: “Between two detestable things.” I said, May I be your ransom! I swear by Allah that I do not know what two detestable things are!

He said, “Yes, may Allah bless you! Do you not know that the Exalted and Glorious Allah deems as detestable both being wasteful and tightfisted and has said, ﴿Those who, when spending, are neither wasteful nor tightfisted, and moderation lies between these [extremes].﴾²

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 3, p. 44, h. 9; *Muntaqā al-Jamān*, vol. 2, p. 459.

2 *Al-Khiṣāl*, p. 54, h. 74; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 55, h. 2.

21/1

Repentance

430. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “The repentor from sins is like the one who has no sins.”¹

22/1

Modesty

431. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Modesty comes from faith.”²

23/1

Gratitude

432. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever does not thank people for their favor, has not thanked the Exalted and Glorious Allah, either.”³

433. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Treat the blessings well; because they are untamed and if they leave a folk, they would not return to them.”⁴

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 74, h. 747; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 435, h. 10.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 265, h. 23; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 106, h. 1.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 24, h. 2; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 380, h. 5815.

4 *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 448; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 38, h. 2.

24/1

Patience

434. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – When he was asked about the best of servants: “Those who ... are patient when a calamity befalls them.”¹

25/1

Silence

435. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)**: “How nice is the silence that is not out of helplessness [in talking]! And for the talkative it is slippage.”²

26/1

Forgiveness

436. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)** – about the verse, ﴿So forgive with a graceful forgiveness.﴾³ It means forgiveness without punishing and reproaching.⁴

27/1

Controlling Anger

437. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)**: on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Whoever controls his anger,

1 *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 445; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 240, h. 31.

2 *Al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*, p. 232; *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 306, h. 957.

3 Q. 15: 85.

4 *A'lām al-Dīn*, vol. 1, p. 307; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 78, p. 357, h. 12.

Allah would turn away His punishment from him.”¹

28/1

Contentment

438. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever is not content except with a lot of daily sustenance, nothing would suffice him except a lot of labor; and whoever is content with little sustenance, little labor would suffice him.”²

29/1

Purity of the Look

439. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “O ‘Alī! Do not keep on looking, because only the first look is yours [the next is the Satan’s].”³

30/1

Trust in Allah

440. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of Ḥasan b. Jahm: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): May I be your ransom! What is the definition of trust in Allah? He said, “That with Allah you are not afraid of anyone.”⁴

1 ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 71, h. 328; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 305.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 138, h. 138; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 73, p. 176, h. 17.

3 ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 65, h. 285; *Ma’ānī al-Akhbār*, Ṣadūq, p. 205, h. 1.

4 ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 50, h. 192; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 57, h. 1.

31/1

God-wariness

441. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “The most God-wary person is the one who tells the truth, whether it is to his benefit or to his loss.”¹

32/1

Respecting the Older Brother

442. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “The older brother is like one’s father.”²

1 *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 395, h. 5840.

2 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 7, p. 393, h. 1575; *Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl*, p. 442.

Chapter Two

Indecent Traits and Actions

1/2

Bad-Temperedness

343. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Beware of bad-temperedness; because bad-temperedness is definitely in the Fire.”¹

344. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said, “Bad temper would spoil a good deed just as vinegar spoils honey.”²

2/2

Bothering Muslims

445. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): Imam ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “No Muslim is permitted to frighten a Muslim.”³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 31, h. 41; *Musnad al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 62, h. 16.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 37, h. 96; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 322, h. 5.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 70, h. 327; *Tanbih al-Khawātir*, vol. 1, p. 98.

3/2

Slandering

446. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Allah will hold whoever slanders a faithful man or woman over a pile of fire until he drops this slander.”¹

4/2

Impatience

447. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): Imam al-Ṣādiq said to someone who showed extreme impatience for his son’s death: “O Man! Are you so upset about such a minor calamity and have you forgotten about the major calamity? If you had prepared yourself for the place where your child has gone, you would not have become so upset for him. The lack of preparedness for that is worse than the loss of your child.”²

5/2

Shamelessness

448. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The one who threw away the garment of shame, there is no problem to backbite him.”³

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 33, h. 63; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 357, h. 5.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 5, h. 10 and p. 5, h. 10; *al-Amālī*, Ṣadūq, p. 439, h. 581.

3 *Al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*, p. 242; *Tuḥaf al-Uqūl*, p. 45.

6/2

Jealousy

449. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “The disease of the early nations has spread among you: hatred and jealousy.”¹

7/2

Showing off

450. *Al-Kāfi* – on the authority of Muḥammad b. ‘Arafa: Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) told me: “Woe be to you O son of ‘Arafa! Do not act for showing off and fame-seeking; because whoever acts for other than Allah, Allah would leave him with his acts. Woe be to you! No one carried out an act unless Allah clothed it with a garment. If it was good, the garment was good, if it was bad, the garment was bad.”²

8/2

Backbiting

451. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (A.S.) said: “Beware of Backbiting, as it is the food of the Hell’s dogs.”³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 66, h. 296; *al-Amālī*, Mufid, p. 344, h. 8.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 294, h. 5; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 72, p. 284, h. 5.

3 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 2602, h. 195; *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 245.

9/2

Giving Wrong Consultation to Muslims

452. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “I despise whoever betrays Muslims in [giving them] consultation.”¹

10/2

Anger

453. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Anger is the key to every evil.”²

11/2

Exaggeration in Speech

454. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “There is no excessiveness save it prompts exaggeration in speech.”³

12/2

Telling Lies

455. ***Al-Maḥāsīn*** – on the authority of Mu‘ammar b. Jallād from Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah was asked: Can a believer be a coward?

He said: “Yes.”

He was asked: Can a believer be miser?

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 66, h. 296; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 99, h. 8.

2 *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 383, h. 1266; *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 303, h. 3.

3 *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 442; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 78, p. 335, h. 1.

He said: “Yes.”

He was asked: Can a believer tell lies.

He said, “No.”¹

13/2

Following Vain Desires

456. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Beware of a height that is difficult to climb up and hard to climb down, and beware of following the vain desires; because destruction of the soul is in vain desires.”²

14/2

Belittling the Believer

457. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Whoever degrades or belittles a believer for being poor, Allah would disgrace him over the Hell bridge on the Judgment Day.”³

15/2

Drinking Wine

458. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “No prophet was sent unless with an ordinance of forbidding drinking wine.”⁴

1 *Al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 1, p. 209, h. 371; *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, vol. 162, p. 415, h. 69.

2 *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, vol. 455, p. 1524.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 2, p. 70, h. 326; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 353, h. 9.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 148, h. 15; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 9, p. 102, h. 446.

16/2

Making the Creator Displeased by Pleasing the Created

459. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “There is no faith for one who disobeys the Creator by obeying the created.”¹

17/2

Spreading Sins about

460. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The spreader of sins will be abandoned on his own and the coverer of sins will be forgiven.”²

18/2

Committing Sins, Especially Major Sins

461. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “When the servant commits sins that they have not committed before, Allah would bring forth calamities for them that they have not known before.”³

462. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Minor sins are paths to the major sins and the one who does not fear Allah in the little will not fear him in the big.”⁴

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 43, h. 149; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 79, h. 171.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 428, h. 1; *Thawāb al-A‘māl*, vol. 72, p. 284, h. 5.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 275, h. 29; *Ilal al-Sharāyī‘*, vol. 2, p. 522, h. 7.

4 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 180, h. 4; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 353, p. 122, h. 55.

19/2

Theft

463. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The servant steals so much as it equals the amount of his hand’s blood money (*diyya*). Then, Allah would reveal his steals.”¹

20/2

Injustice

464. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Beware of doing injustice; because it will ruin your hearts just as it ruins the houses.”²

21/2

Helping the Oppressor

465. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever likes a sinner is himself a sinner. Whoever likes an obedient person is himself obedient. Whoever helps an oppressor is himself an oppressor. Whoever fails to help a just person is an oppressor.”³

22/2

Disobedience to the Parents

466. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The lowest level of being disobedient to

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 7, p. 261, h. 4; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 10, p. 148, h. 590.

2 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 97, h. 33; al-Qumī, *Jāmi‘ al-Aḥādith*, p. 60.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 235, h. 7; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 46, p. 177, h. 31.

parents is through saying fie to them and if Allah knew anything lower than this, He would have definitely admonished us against it.”¹

23/2

Homicide

467. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of Imam al-Kāzim (A.S.), about ‘Amr b. Ubayd’s question concerning major sins: “Allah has forbidden homicide, unless there is a lawful reason for it because Allah says, ﴿Should anyone kill a believer intentionally, his requital shall be hell, to remain in it [forever];﴾² to the end of the verse.”³

24/2

Turning down a Favor

468. ‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of ‘Alī b. Jahm: I heard from Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.) who said: “No one but a donkey would turn down a favor.”

I said: What is a favor?

He said, “Like perfume or something that a person offers another person.”⁴

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 44, h. 160; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 348, h. 1.

2 Q. 4: 93.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 286, h. 24; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 563, h. 4932.

4 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 311, h. 78; *Mā ‘ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 268, h. 2.

25/2

Too much Intimacy

469. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Too much intimacy would ruin dignity.”¹

¹ *Al-Udad al-Qawiyya*, p. 297, h. 26; *Nuzhat al-Nāzir*, p. 200, h. 431.

Chapter Three

Clothing and Adornment

1/3

Appearance Cleanliness

470. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Cleanliness is of the prophets’ morality.”¹

2/3

Taking Bath

471. ***Al-Kāfī*** – on the authority of Sulaymān b. Ja‘farī: Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.) said: “Taking bath every other day would increase one’s [body’s] meat and [if taken] every day, would burn off the kidneys’ fat.”²

1 *Tuḥaf al-‘Uqūl*, p. 442; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 5, p. 567, h. 50.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 496, h. 2; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 117, h. 247.

3/3

Having Haircuts

472. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Have haircuts because it beautifies.”¹

4/3

Cutting the Nails

473. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Cutting nails brings on sustenance.”²

5/3

Brushing Teeth

474. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Your mouths are one way of the ways to [communicate with] your Lord. So, keep them clean [by brushing].”³

475. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Brushing the teeth would improve vision; grow the hair; and treat watery eyes.”⁴

6/3

Hair Dyeing

476. ***Al-Kāfi*** – on the authority of Ḥasan b. Jahm: I took audience

1 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 146, h. 383; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 505, h. 5.

2 *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, vol. 1, p. 414, h. 1031; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 490, h. 1.

3 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, p. 109, h. 65; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 53, h. 112.

4 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 118, h. 279, and p. 108, h. 230; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 76, p. 137, h. 48.

with Abū al-Ḥasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.). I saw he had dyed his beard black. I said: I see you have dyed your beard black!

He said, “Dyeing beard is rewarded. Dyeing and being tidy are among the things that the Exalted and Glorious Allah would increase women’s chastity because of it. Some women have given up their chastity because their husbands do not adorn themselves for them.”

I heard putting on henna would increase white hair?

He said, “What increases the white hair?! The white hair increases everyday.”¹

7/3

Using Henna

477. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “Putting on henna after applying depilatory, would secure one from leprosy and vitiligo.”²

8/3

Wearing Perfume

478. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Wearing perfume is among the Prophet’s morality.”³

479. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah presented to me a red

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 480, h. 1; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 122, h. 276.

2 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 40, h. 128; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 246, h. 156.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 510, h. 1; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 14, p. 460, h. 22.

flower with his own hand. When I took it near my nose, he said, “This is the best flower in Paradise after the leaves of the myrtle.”¹

9/3

Wearing a Ring

480. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Put on agate ring because as long as any of you have such a ring on your fingers, no sadness would not come to you.”²

481 Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Agate would remove poverty and putting on agate ring would efface hypocrisy.”³

10/3

Large House

482. Al-Kāfī – on the authority of Bashīr: I heard from Abū al-Hasan (Imam al-Riḍā – A.S.) saying: “Happy life is in living in large houses and having many servants.”⁴

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 40, h. 128; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 243, h. 138.

2 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 47, h. 180; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 154, h. 98.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 470, h. 1; *Wasāʾil al-Shīʿa*, vol. 3, p. 399, h. 5992.

4 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 526, h. 4; *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 76, p. 153, h. 34.

Section Six

Medical and Sanitary Advice

Chapter One

Advice about Eating and Drinking

1/1

Healthcare

483. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The body is like a suitable uncultivated land that if properly cultivated and irrigated, in a way that it is neither waterlogged nor dried up for lack of water, it would always remain prosperous and fertile; and if it is ignored, it would be ruined and weedy. The body is also like this; feeding it properly would make it healthy and prosper healthily.”

And see what kind of food and drink fits your stomach, makes it healthy, and digests it well. Choose the same for yourself and make your food.¹

2/1

Overeating and Disease

484. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.):

¹ *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 13, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 310.

The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “There is nothing more detestable to Allah than a full stomach.”¹

3/1

Eating a Light Dinner

485. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever wants to be healthy and thin should eat a light dinner.”²

4/1

Warning against Skipping Dinner

486. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “There is a vein in the body called ‘*ashā*’ (dinner). If one does not eat dinner, that vein curses him till morning and says, ‘May Allah keep you hungry as you have kept me hungry! May Allah keep you thirsty as you have kept me thirsty.’ Then, none of you should skip dinner and eat at least a morsel or a drink of water if possible.”³

5/1

Diet

487. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Diet on something does not mean skipping it; rather, it means eating little of it.”⁴

1 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 36, h. 89; *Ṣaḥīfāt al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 109, h. 66.

2 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 39, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 324.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 289, h. 12; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 66, p. 347, h. 26.

4 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 1, p. 309, h. 72; *Mā’ānī al-Akhbār*, p. 238, h. 1.

6/1

Manners of Eating

A. Washing Hands

488. *Nathr al-Durr*. In memory of Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Someone in his presence did not wash his hands before eating. The Imam (A.S.) said, “Wash your hands! The first washing [before eating] is ours¹ and the second washing [after eating] is yours and you can skip it if you wish.”²

B. Starting with Light Foods

489. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Start your eating with the lightest foods that your body can take, as per your habit, your homeland, your activity, and your time.”³

C. Not Drinking while Eating

490. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever wishes not to get an upset stomach, should avoid drinking water until finishing eating, and whoever does so (drink water while eating), his body would tend to produce phlegm, his stomach becomes weak, and the veins would not absorb the food energy, because if water is repeatedly poured over

1 In those days, meals were served collectively, all eating from the same bowl. Thus, not washing the hands before eating would harm all those eating, but washing hands after eating was a personal matter.

2 *Nathr al-Durr*, vol. 1, p. 362; *Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 3, p. 97.

3 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 13, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 311.

food, that food would remain raw in the body (not properly digested).¹

D. Not Eating Hot Foods

491. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): Food was brought for the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). He dipped his finger in it and found it was hot. He said, “Let it get cool; because its [being] cool is more blessed and the Almighty Allah has not given us hot food as sustenance.”²

E. Stop Eating before getting full

492. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Stop eating when you still have a little appetite because this would, Allah-willing, keep your body healthier, your thought sharper, and your soul lighter.”³

7/1

Instructions for after Eating

493. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “After finishing his meal, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would say the following, “O Allah! Grant us blessings in this meal and make some better food our sustenance.” When he (S.A.W.A.) ate – or drank – milk he would say, O Allah! Grant us blessings in this meal

1 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 35, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 323.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 40, h. 124; *Ṣaḥīfāt al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 238, h. 142.

3 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 14, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 311.

and make it our sustenance.”¹

494. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “After you eat something, lie on your back and put your right leg on your right leg.”²

1 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 39, h. 114; *Ṣaḥīfāt al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 232, h. 129.

2 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 299, h. 21; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 9, p. 100, h. 435.

Chapter Two

Guidance for the Properties of some Foods and Drinks

1/2

Broad Beans

495. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Eating broad beans would strengthen bone marrow and produce fresh blood.”¹

496. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Eat broad beans with their skin, for it cleans the stomach.”²

2/2

Figs

497. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Figs remove the mouth’s bad smell, strengthen the bones, cause hair to grow, relieve pain, and make one needless of medicine.”³

1 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 344, h. 2; *al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 2, p. 328, h. 2026.

2 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 397, h. 1347; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 344, h. 3.

3 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 358, h. 1; *al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 2, p. 372, h. 2298.

3/2

Dates

498. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): Melon and fresh dates were brought to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). He ate from both and said, “These are the most delicious.”¹

499. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Eat dates on an empty stomach (the first thing in the morning), for they kill the intestinal parasites.”²

4/2

Apples

500. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Apples are useful for several reasons: for being spellbound, being poisoned, mild insanity, incidental diseases, and incidental phlegm. Nothing benefits faster than apples.”³

5/2

Garlics

501. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever wants to be free from intestinal gas should eat garlics once every seven days.”⁴

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 42, h. 143; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 250, h. 167.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 48, h. 185; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 103, h. 50.

3 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 375, h. 1249.

4 *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 41, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 325.

6/2

Bread

502. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Superiority of barley bread to wheat bread is like our superiority to people. There is no Prophet who has not prayed for the eater of barley [bread] and asked blessings for him. It will not enter the stomach except that it removes every pain there is.

Barley [bread] is the diet of the prophets and the food of the pious. Allah has not wanted to make other than barley the diet of the prophets.”¹

503. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Nothing more useful than rice bread has ever entered the stomach of the person inflicted with tuberculosis.”²

7/2

Pomegranate

504. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Eat pomegranates! There are no other seeds but pomegranate seeds which cleanse the heart and force Satan out of it for forty days once they enter the stomach.”³

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 304, h. 1; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 334, h. 1075.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 305, h. 1; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 335, h. 1077.

3 *ʿUyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 35, h. 80; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 106, h. 57.

8/2

Raisins

505. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “Whoever eats twenty-one red raisins on an empty stomach every morning, he will not find any ailments in his body.”¹

9/2

Quince

506. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): A quince was given to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) as a gift. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) cut it into pieces with his hand. He liked quince very much. He ate of it and gave some to his companions who were in his presence, too. Then he said, “You should eat quince as it clears up the heart and lightens the chest.”²

10/2

Grapes

507. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Eat grapes one by one, for it is more wholesome and easier.”³

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 41, h. 133; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 6, p. 352, h. 871.

2 *Al-Maḥāsīn*, vol. 2, p. 364; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 372, h. 1235.

3 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 35, h. 82; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 107, h. 59.

11/2

Honey

508. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Allah has put blessing in honey. The healing of pains is in it and seventy prophets have prayed for its blessing.”¹

12/2

Meat

509. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “Eat meat, as it grows meat. Whoever does not eat meat for forty days, will become bad-tempered.”²

510. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) said: “The chief of the foods of the people of the world and the Hereafter is meat and then rice.”³

1 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 359, h. 1173; *Musnad al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 65, p. 32.

2 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 243, h. 149; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 309, h. 1.

3 *Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 35, h. 79; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 308, h. 2.

Chapter Three

Medical Guidelines

1/3

Every Disease has a Cure

511. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The Exalted and Glorious Allah did not inflict any disease on the body except that He provided a medicine to cure it. There is a cure and a remedy and a prescription for any kind of disease.”¹

2/3

Things that Prolong Life

512. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): ‘Alī (A.S.) said: “Whoever wants to survive – even though no one will survive – should have breakfast early, wear comfortable shoes, lighten debts, and have the least intercourse with women.”²

1 *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 10, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 309.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 38, h. 112; *Man lā Yaḥḍuruḥu al-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 555, h. 4902.

3/3

What Increases Memory

513. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Whoever wants to increase his memory should eat seven *mithqāls* (about 35 gr) of black raisins on empty stomach in the morning.”¹

4/3

Things that May Cause Poor Eyesight and Brain Function

514. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Do not intercourse with women early in the evening either winter or summer, because at this time the stomach and the veins are full and this is not praiseworthy and there is fear that it may cause... poor eyesight and brain function.”²

5/3

What Causes Asthma

515. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Overeating boiled eggs causes asthma.”³

6/3

What is Harmful for the Teeth

516. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Drinking cold water after eating something hot and after eating something sweet spoils the teeth... and whoever wants his teeth not to spoil should eat a piece of bread

1 *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 36, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 324.

2 *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 646, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 327.

3 *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 28, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 321.

whenever he eats sweets.”¹

7/3

What Causes Gout

517. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Figs and date wine – which is had by people who habitually have it – if combined will cause gout and vitiligo.”²

8/3

What is Useful for Prevention of Bladder Diseases

518. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Whoever wants not to suffer from bladder pain and disease should not hold back his urine, even if he is riding his mount.”³

9/3

What Causes [Bladder] Stone and what Prevents it

519. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Intercourse without orgasm causes [bladder] stone... and whoever wants to be secure from stone and urination difficulty, should not hold back his semen when reaching orgasm; and also one should not pause too long over the woman.”⁴

1 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 29 and 40, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, pp. 309, 325.

2 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 35, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 323.

3 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 28, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 321.

4 *Tibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 27 and 35, *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 321 and 324.

10/3

What Causes Leprosy in One's Child

520. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Having intercourse with the menstruating woman causes leprosy in the child.”¹

11/3

What is Useful for Digesting Food

521. ***Makārim al-Akhlāq.*** “On the Authority of ‘Alī b. Muḥammad Ashīm: I complained to Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.) of my digestion problem. He said, “Eat egg yolk.” I did this and it worked.”²

1 *Ṭibb al-Imām al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 27, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 62, p. 321.

2 *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 1, p. 352, h. 1147, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 66, p. 48, 21.

Section Seven

Various Wise Sayings

1. The Satan's Embellishment and Plotting

522. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from ‘Alī (A.S.): “The Satan has a kohl, a powder, and a sucker. His kohl is sleep, his powder is anger, and his sucker is lie.”¹

2. Honoring those whose Names are Aḥmad or Muḥammad

523. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah: “Whenever there is a tablecloth spread and there is someone named Muḥammad or Aḥmad sitting around it, the house will be sanctified twice each day.”²

524. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah: “Whenever you name your son Muḥammad, honor him, make room for him in gatherings, and do not give him mean looks.”³

1 *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 261, h. 198; *Mā‘ānī al-Akḥbār*, p. 139, h. 198.

2 *‘Uyūn Akḥbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 29, h. 31; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 87, h. 16.

3 *‘Uyūn Akḥbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 29, h. 29; *Ṣaḥīfat al-Imam al-Riḍā* (A.S.), p. 87, h. 18.

3. Reproof of Yawning and Praise of Sneezing

525. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** “Yawning is of Satan and sneezing is of the Exalted and Glorious Allah.”¹

4. What Doubles Punishment

526. ***Al-Kāfi*:** on the authority of Bazantī: I asked Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): Are the deniers of your household the same as the deniers of others? He said, “There are two punishments for the deniers from among our household and two rewards for benevolent from among us.”²

5. The Wisdom behind the Creation of Man

527. **Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.):** In response to Ma’mūn’s question about the noble verse, ﴿It is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days and His Throne was [then] upon the waters that He may test you [to see] which of you is best in conduct.﴾ As for His words, ﴿that He may test you [to see] which of you is best in conduct.﴾ This means that the Exalted and Glorious Allah created them so that He tries them through their acts of obedience and worship, and not in the form of an examination and experimentation since He has always known everything.”³

1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 654, h. 5; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 2, p. 165, h. 2410.

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 378, h. 4; *Qurb al-Asnād*, p. 357, h. 1276.

3 *Al-Tawhīd*, p. 320, h. 2; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā (A.S.)*, vol. 1, p. 135, h. 33.

6. Manners of Asking

528. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Everyone who asks for something in the right way he will not slip and if he does slip, he would not fail to find a solution.”¹

7. The Meaning of *Ṣalawāt*

529. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): In response to the question about the meaning of pronouncing *ṣalawāt* (invocation) by Allah, *ṣalawāt* by His angels, and *ṣalawāt* by the faithful: “Allah’s *ṣalawāt* is blessings from Him. His angels’ *ṣalawāt* is confirmation of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.), and the *ṣalawāt* of the faithful is their praying for him.”²

8. The Preconditions of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (A.S.) for Accepting an Invitation

530. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.): Someone invited Amīr al-Mu’minīn. ‘Alī (A.S.) told him: “On the condition that you promise me three things.”

The man said, “What promise, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn?”

He said, “Do not procure anything from outside for us; do not spare us what is in the house; and do not put your family in trouble.”

The man said, “As you say.” Then, Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) accepted his invitation.”³

1 *Al-Durrat al-Bāhira*, p. 37; *al-‘Adad al-Qawiya*, p. 297, h. 26.

2 *Thawāb al-A’māl*, p. 187, h. 1; *Jāmi’ al-Akhbār*, p. 179, h. 381.

3 *Al-Khiṭāb*, p. 189, h. 260; *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 42, h. 138.

9. The Right of the Guest

531. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from Zayn al-‘Ābidīn from Imam ‘Alī from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): “One of the rights of a guest is that you see him off until he leaves the area of your house near the door.”¹

10. Prevention from Being Defrauded

532. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers (A.S.) from the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.): “The one who is cheated is neither praised nor rewarded.”²

11. Taking Advantage of Chances

533. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): on the authority of his forefathers from Imam ‘Alī (A.S.): “An opportunity is a game of hunt.”³

12. The Best Wealth

534. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “The best wealth is that with which one’s honor is preserved.”⁴

13. Sickness is Purifying for the Believer and Punishing for the Disbeliever

535. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): “Sickness is purifying and mercy for the

1 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 70, h. 323; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 75, p. 451, h. 1.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 48, h. 184; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 496, h. 3.

3 *Al-Amālī*, Ṭūsī, p. 625, h. 1290; *Kashf al-Ghumma*, vol. 3, p. 137.

4 *Al-Uḍad al-Qawīyya*, p. 292, h. 17 and p. 300, h. 36; *Nuzhat al-Nāzīr*, p. 68, h. 136.

Believer and punishment and curse for the disbeliever. Sickness remains with the believer until there is no sin left in him.”¹

14. Ending

536. Imam al-Riḍā (A.S.): In his sermon after the rainfall with his prayer: The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) was told, “So and so was ruined since he had committed such and such a sin.” The Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) replied, “No. He was saved. Allah will end his deeds up with a good ending, forgive all his sins and convert them all to good deeds, because once he was going somewhere and noticed that a believer’s private part was visible, but he did not realize it himself. He covered him up in such a way that the man himself did not notice that, fearing that he might get shy if he noticed it. Along the way the man realized what his companion had done for him and told him, “May Allah grant you a plentiful reward! May Allah make you end up in honor. May He not hold a serious Reckoning for you!” And Allah fulfilled his prayer. That is how Allah granted that servant a good ending due to the prayers of the above-mentioned believer.

These words of the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) reached that person. He repented and returned to the obedience of Allah. Not even seven days had passed, when some people attacked the camel herd of Medina Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.A.) sent a group of people to pursue them. This person was a member of the group who was martyred.”²

1 *Thawāb al-A'māl*, p. 229, h. 1; *Makārim al-Akhlāq*, vol. 2, p. 171, h. 2425.

2 *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā* (A.S.), vol. 2, p. 169, h. 1; *Dalā'il al-Imāma*, vol. 1, p. 376, h. 340.

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