

PLANNING FOR THE PRESENT GENERATION

By: The Patron of S. I. Education Society

An aged person was planting a tree. A passer-by asked him, 'You are too old to get and eat its fruits. Why are you planting it?' The old fellow replied, 'My father planted a tree and I enjoyed the fruits. Now I am planting one and my children will enjoy its fruits'.

Here is a chain of duties. The idea 'Mind your own business' is not correct. We live for each other. While erecting a building you cannot leave a gap. Every brick receives and gives its support to the building. Similarly, every individual from us must act and teach Islamic ethics to be a practical Muslim.

In Islam, 124,000 messengers came to guide people, one

after the other. Every messenger rendered his duties in the same direction of Islam to teach as constitution for human beings. It was completed and finally known as a comprehensive constitution of Islam for all people.



Now, being new settlers in Western countries, without preplanning we cannot survive religiously. It is obligatory and incumbent upon us to teach our present younger generation and to speak the language in our daily conversation which is nearer to the Islamic language and culture.

It is a fact, that learning or speaking any language encourages us to adopt its culture and ritual way of life.

The languages which are in the similar script of the Islamic language, such as Arabic, will lead and help us to be nearer to Islam. Try to think regarding the next generation. We do not hate any language and to be linguistic itself is a credit to the person who knows. Our holy Imams (a.s.) used to speak in every language. So, it is my suggestion to everyone of you to speak in your own language in your

families to preserve the Islamic way of life and make a covenant to speak in our own language when we meet in our own gatherings.

Parents should plan conversations with their children in their families in their own previous language then, Inshallah, they and their children will enjoy the Islamic atmosphere which will provide a circle from which to select their spouse.



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BE APPRECIATIVE

By: Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini

If a person is generous and charitable with the wealth that he has acquired from hard work, the appreciation and notice given in response to such acts will warm that person's inner feelings and give him a feeling of accomplishment.

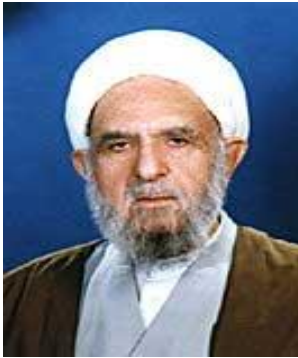
Acts of goodwill may then become second nature to the person whereby it becomes a habit to spend and share one's wealth for those in need.

However, if the acts of goodwill are taken for granted and unappreciated, the person may lose the desire and drive to do good. It would be natural for a person to conclude that it was a waste to give away his hard earned money when it was unappreciated.

Gratitude and appreciation are admirable characteristics in a person and it is the secret by

which one may attract charitable acts.

Even Allah has mentioned that gratitude for His blessings are conditional on the continual perpetuation of his grace upon mankind:



"And when your Lord made it known: If you are grate full would certainly give to you more, and if you are ungrateful. My chastisement is fully severe (14:7)."

Dear madam! your husband is also human. Like everyone else, he enjoys being appreciated. He is willing to support his family and regards it as a moral and lawful obligation. When he is thanked and appreciated for doing his duty, those duties no longer seem to be a burden.

Whenever he buys home appliances or something like clothes and shoes for you and

the children, be happy and thank him. Show your gratitude for the trivial things he does such as buying groceries, taking the family on trips and gives you your allowance. By showing your appreciation, you will make your husband feel good and rewarded for the trouble he has taken.

Be careful that you do not take his duties for granted and become indifferent towards his contributions to the family. He may become disheartened about the welfare of the family. He may prefer to spend his money elsewhere or on himself.

If a friend or relative presented you with a pair of stockings or a bunch of flowers, you would thank them repeatedly. So it is only natural and fair to show appreciation to your husband for his consideration and thoughtfulness. Do not think that you would be belittling yourself by demonstrating your appreciation. On the contrary, you would be loved

and cared for more because you appreciate the efforts of your husband whereas snobbism and selfishness can only lead towards great misfortunes.

The following are some Traditions referring to the characteristics of gratitude:

*"Imam Sadiq (AS) stated:
'The best women among your women are those who show appreciation when their husbands bring home something and are not discontented if nothing is brought home'."*

*"Imam Sadiq (AS) also stated:
'Any woman who says to her husband that she has not seen any good things from him then she has fallen in her credibility and has voided her acts of worship'."*

*"The Messenger (SA) of Allah stated:
'Whoever does not thank the people who help him is, in fact, not showing his gratitude to Allah for His Blessings'."*

ZIYARAT OF HAZRAT FATIMA ZEHRA (A.S)

O Allah send blessings on the truthful Fatimah,
the pure, the dearest darling of Thy most beloved friend,
Thy Prophet,
the mother of Thy friends and close supporters,
whom Thou chose, favoured and gave preference
over all the women of the worlds.

O Allah call to account those who wronged her
and made light of her rights,
and take revenge from those who killed her children,

O Allah, in the same manner as Thou chose her
to be the mother of the Imams of guidance,
the associate of the standard-bearer on the Day of Judgement,
and gave her the loftiest position in the highest heaven,

so, send blessings on her and on her mother,
blessings that brighten the face of her father, Muhammad,
blessings of Allah be on him and on his children,
which give joy and delight to her children,

and convey my heartfelt salutations
and greetings to them just now.

SHIA POLITICAL THOUGHT

By: Dr. Ahmed Vaezi

Wilayat al-Faqih and other Ideas of Guardianship

Perhaps Plato was the first political theorist who presented a comprehensive guardianship model of government. In the 'Republic', he states that political knowledge is a supreme art that aims to realize the good of the community. Attaining that knowledge requires serious training. Thus, men and women must be carefully selected and rigorously trained in order to achieve excellence in the art and science of politics. This serious training renders a few of them a class of 'true philosophers'~, who deserve to rule the society. Therefore,

the ideal Republic will come into existence if a class of

guardians (Philosopher Kings) rules over it.



In the history of political thought, various interpretations of the guardianship model of the State have been suggested, Marxist-Leninism and all the political ideologies which believe in an organized group of revolutionaries, a vanguard, who possess the sufficient knowledge and commitment to overcome capitalism and to lead the working class to establish a socialist and non-class society are samples of the guardianship political theory.

Obviously, Shia political doctrine should be categorized as a guardianship model of government because it believes that only those who have specific qualifications

(infallible ones or their deputies) have a right to govern the community. For Imamism the problem of leadership is not the question of people's elections. People have to accept and believe in divinely designated leadership just like the Prophecy in order for it to be practical. Since the fuqaha are generally designated as guardians, the role of the people within the period of occultation increases. They have a duty to acknowledge their governor among the fuqaha directly or through a selected group of fuqaha. Nevertheless, this participation of people does not render wilayat al-faqih a purely democratic and non-guardianship theory of State. Robert Dahl is quite right when he states that:

No single interpretation can do justice to the variations among the many different visions of guardianship. 45

However, what he mentions at the beginning of his discussion could be recognized as the

central point of the vision of guardianship:

The assumption by democrats that ordinary people are qualified, they, (advocates of guardianship) say ought to be replaced by the opposing proposition that rulership should be entrusted to a minority of persons who are specially qualified to govern by reason of their superior knowledge and virtue. 46

Indeed, the theory of 'wilayat al-faqih', which is embodied in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the first actual experience of Shia political ideology, is mixed between guardianship and democracy. While the authority of the faqih and the supervision of Islamic laws and values over all political and social functions of the government emphasise the guardianship dimension of this political system, the approval of representative democracy and the participation of people in electing members of the Assembly of Experts (who

choose and can remove the wilayat al-faqih'), parliament, president and many parts and local councils, show the democratic aspect of this political ideology. Article 56 of the constitution emphasizes people's sovereignty:

Absolute sovereignty over the word and man belongs to God, and it is He who has made man master of his own social destiny. No one can deprive man of this Divine right, nor subordinate it to the vested

interests of a particular individual or group. The people are to exercise this Divine right in the manner specified in the following Article.

This chapter aimed to clarify the conception of wilayat al-faqih and its historical background amongst Imami jurists. The next chapter will concentrate on the problem of justification and examine how the advocates of this political theory legitimize it.

REQUEST

Without your financial assistance and moral support this society cannot continue its selfless activities.

S. I. Education Society is a victim of recession in every respect and difficulties.

Please do donate generously. I am authorized to utilize Khums and other charity money in this sacred work of Tabligh.

With thanks and dua.....The Patron

JURSIPRUDENTIAL REASONING (ABLUTION: WUDU)

By: Ayatullah Ja'far Sobhani

We are all aware that the ablution (wudu') is one of the pre-requisites of performing the salat prayer.

We read in the Sura al-Ma'ida (v:7):

'O ye who believe, when ye rise up for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet up to the ankles.



In the first sentence, 'wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, ' the word *aydiy* used here is the plural of *yad*, meaning 'hand'. Now, in the first place, this word in the Arabic language is used in different ways: sometimes it refers only to the Fingers of the hand, sometimes it means the fingers up to the wrists, sometimes it means the fingers up to the elbow, and finally, sometimes it means the whole arm, from the fingertips right

up to the shoulder. Secondly, the part of the hands that must be washed for the ablution extends from the fingers to the

elbow, as the Qur'an says, clarifying the precise region to be washed, up to the elbows. Thus, the word *ila*, in the phrase '*ila'l-marafiq'* ('up to the elbows'), clarifies the part of the arms to be washed, not how the arms are to be washed (for example, from the elbow downwards or from the hand downwards). Rather, the manner of washing is to be connected with the customs and traditions of the people; now, the most common way of cleaning something is to do so from the top downwards. For instance, if a doctor were to order that the leg of a sick person be washed from the knee, it would be washed from the knee downwards, not

inversely, from the foot to the knee. Thus, the Imami Shi'a believe that in the ablution, the face and the arms should be washed from up down, and not the other way around.

Another contested issue is that of wetting the feet in the ablution. According to Shi'i fiqh, the feet are to be wiped with water and not washed; the reason for this, in brief, is that the verse quoted indicates that the one wishing to pray has to perform two duties in respect of the ablution: the first is to wash (ghusl) the face and the arms; and the second is to wipe {mash) the head and the feet. This becomes clear upon comparing the two sentences of the verse:

"Wash your faces, and your hands upto the elbows' and. 'wipe your heads, and your feet up to the ankles... ."

Were we to present these two sentences to an Arabic-speaker, who was not aware of any particular juristic opinions on the matter, he would say without hesitation that, according to this verse, our

duty is to wash our face and arms, and to wipe our heads and our feet.

As regards grammatical principles, the word *arjulakum* ('your feet') must follow the word *ru 'usikum* both of which are to be wiped; one cannot refer the word *arjulakum* back to the act of washing by making it follow the word



aydiyakum ('your hands').

Thus, it is necessary to conclude that as between the word *arjulakum* and *aydiyakum* there is the obstructing sentence, 'so wipe your heads', so there can be no conjunction between the two in terms of the principles of Arabic language; any attempt to make such a conjunction will lead to an erroneous

meaning being attached to the verse.

It might also be noted in passing that whether we adopt one or the other of the two possible readings of the verse, the reading of *jarr* or that of *nasb*, the meaning remains the same, the word *arjulakum* still being ruled over by the property pertaining to *ru'usikum*

Verified narrations from the Imams of the *ahlal-bayt* indicate that the ablution is made up of two parts: *two*

'washings' and two 'wipings'. Imam Baqir a.s., in the course of describing the ablution performed by the Prophet relates that he wiped his feet.

It is worth noting that it is not just the Imams of the *ahlal-bayt* who performed this act of wiping of the feet; a group of companions and Muslims of the second generation also did the same. But for various reasons that are detailed and commented upon in books of *fiqh*, a number of Muslims among the Sunnis replaced the act of wiping with that of washing the feet.

HOW TO BE HAPPY

Keep your heart free from hate, your mind from worry.

Live simply, expect little, give much, pray always.

Fill your life with love, scatter sunshine, forget self, think of others.

Do as you would be done by!

LIVES OF THE 12 IMAMS

The Second Imam

By: Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai

Imam Hasan Mujtaba upon whom be peace was the second Imam. He and his brother Imam Husayn were the two sons of Amir al-mu'minin Ali and Hadrat Fatimah a.s. the daughter of the Prophet. Many times the Prophet had said, "*Hasan and Husayn ar(? my children.*" Because of these same words Ali would say to his other children. "*You are my children and Hasan and Husayn are the children of the Prophet.*"

Imam Hasan was born in the year 3 A.H. in Medina and shared in the life of the Prophet for somewhat over seven years, growing up during that time under his loving care. After the death of the Prophet which was no more than three, .or according to some, six months earlier



than the death of Hadrat Fatimah, Hasan was placed directly under the care of his noble father. After the death of his father, through Divine Command and according to the will of his father, Imam Hasan became Imam; he also occupied the outward function of caliph for about six months, during which time he administered the affairs of the Muslims. During that time Mu'awiyah, who was a bitter enemy of All and his family and had fought for years with the ambition of capturing the caliphate, first on the pretext of avenging the death of the third caliph and finally with an open claim to the caliphate, marched his army into Iraq. the seat of Imam Hasan's caliphate. War ensued during which

Mu'awiyah gradually subverted the generals and commanders of Imam Hasan's army with large sums of money and deceiving promises until the army rebelled against Imam Hasan. Finally, the Imam was forced to make peace and to yield the caliphate to Mu'awiyah, provided it would again return to Imam Hasan after Mu'awiyah's death and the Imam's household and partisans would be protected in every way."

In this way Mu'awiyah captured the Islamic caliphate and entered Iraq. In a public speech he officially made null and void all the peace conditions and in every way possible placed the severest pressure upon the members of the Household of the Prophet and the Shi'ah.

During all the ten years of his imamate, Imam Hasan lived in conditions of extreme hardship and under persecution, with no security even in his own house. In the year 50 A.H. he

was poisoned and martyred by one of his own household who, as has been accounted by historians, had been motivated by Mu'awiyah.

In human perfection Imam Hasan was reminiscent of his father and a perfect example of his noble grandfather. In fact, as long as the Prophet was alive, he and his brother were always in the company of the Prophet who even sometimes would carry them on his shoulders. Both Sunni and Shi'ite sources have transmitted this saying of the Holy Prophet concerning Hasan and Husayn:

"These two children of mine are Imams whether they stand up or sit down" (allusion to whether they occupy the external function of caliphate or not)."

Also there are many traditions of the Holy Prophet and Ali concerning the fact that Imam Hasan would gain the function of imamate after his noble father.

IMPORTANT DATES OF THIS MONTH

MAY 2010

JAMADI AL AWWAL / JAMADI AL THANI

1431

| | |
|--|--|
| 1st May 2010/ | 16th Jamadi Al Awwal 1431 |
| 15th May 2010 | 1st Jamadi Al Thani 1431 |
| 17th May 2010/ 3rd Jamadi Al Thani | Sad demise of Hazrat Fatima Zehra (a.s) |
| 25th May 2010/ 11 th Jamadi Al Thani | Moon Confronting Scorpio |
| 26th May 2010/ 12 th Jamadi Al Thani | Moon Confronting Scorpio |
| 27th May 2010/ 13 th Jamadi Al Thani | Moon Confronting Scorpio |

(Islamic dates are subject to the sighting of the moon)

ALL IN A STATE OF MIND

By: Rosemary (Al-Attar)

IF you think
you are beaten,
you are, If you
think you dare,
not you don't,
If you'd like to
win, but think
you can't, It's
almost sure
that you won't.



Think big and
your deeds will
grow,

Think small and
you'll fall behind:
Think that you
can, and you will,
It's all in the state
of mind.

IF you think you'll lose -
you've lost, For out in the
world you'll find Success
begins with a fellow's will: It's
all in the state of mind.

For many a race is lost Before
a step is run; And many a
coward fails Before his work's
begun.

IF you think you're outclassed,
you are; You've got to think
high to rise:

You've got to be sure of
yourself Before you can win a
prize.

Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or fastest man;

But sooner - or later- the man who wins Is the fellow who
THINKS HE CAN...

SELF DEVELOPMENT

By: Dr. Mohammad Ali Shomali

Knowing one's self:

After becoming awake, we should try to find out what resources,

opportunities and options are available to us. Now that we are awake, we want to do something. It is like someone who has no work or business and so has no source of income. Everyone tells him to

be responsible and do something. He agrees that he should do something but does not know what to do. He cannot start from nothing. First of all he should discover what kind of abilities and skills he has. He should know what options are available. For example, he should try to learn about the state of the business market. He should find out who has been successful so that he can take them as role models. He should also see who has become bankrupt so

that he can learn lessons from their situation and avoid

becoming like them. This is what is called 'self-knowledge' (ma'rifat al-nafs) and is considered to be "the most beneficial knowledge". Why

do we always tend to forget about ourselves and know about other things instead? For example, there are some people who may spend all their life studying a rare species of insects but will not spend even one hour sitting down, trying to find out what God has placed inside them.

Muslim mystics say that there are two worlds: an external one consisting of the beautiful natural world of humans, animals, plants and non-living beings created by God and



also an internal world inside our very selves. And they say that this world inside us is the greater world. What God has placed inside us is far greater than the whole physical world outside ourselves. This is why we read in a beautiful divine saying (hadith-e qudsi):

*"Neither my heaven nor my earth could contain Me, it is only the heart of a believing person that has contained Me."**

From this hadith, we can understand that our heart must be even greater than all these stars and planets, than this whole creation that we can see.

So, we need to know ourselves properly. We often underestimate the potential that we have for perfection. There is an endless possibility for perfection before us. Even the most holy people can still advance. There is always further for them to go because the distance between man and God is infinite and so there is

always a possibility to go still higher. This is why we pray after tashahhud, "O God! Please accept the intercession of the Holy Prophet for us and also elevate his level". This means that the Prophet can go higher.

Many of us are too easily satisfied with our achievements. We need to be more determined and have greater expectations. If we are satisfied with small things, then we will lose out and maybe we will not even achieve those small things. It is said that once there was a religious scholar ('dlim) whose son had become a student of religion. The father asked his son what he wanted to become in the future. The son answered that he wanted to become like his father. The father replied that he felt very sorry for his son because he himself had wanted to become as much as possible like Imam Ja'far Sadiq, who was his role model, and yet his present situation was all that he had achieved. He told his son that



if he only wanted to become like his father then he would not achieve anything. So, we should always have great ambitions and indeed God has created us with such a potentiality inside us. So, we need to know ourselves, we should believe in our potential and be aware of the different things that can benefit or harm us.

Taking care of one's self:

After wakefulness and self knowledge, we need self-care. It is not enough simply to know things; knowledge should serve us by being put into practice. For example, if you know that smoking kills but have no concern for your health and so continue to smoke, there is no benefit in that knowledge. In fact it just

makes you more responsible and accountable because you know. Of course, this does not mean that we should avoid learning. To say we did not know is not a good enough excuse; we must learn and then put what we learn into practice. So we need to have self-care. The Qur'an states: *"O believers, look after yourselves, if you are on the right path, you will not be banned". (5:105)*

To look after oneself implies practicing one's social responsibilities as well, since Islam is a religion that asks us to be actively engaged in social life: all with the spirit of wakefulness and consciousness, and knowing what can benefit and harm us. However, there is something that often happens to people in

this state. When they become conscious and sensitive to spiritual issues, then unfortunately instead of being concerned with their own piety, instead of being mostly busy with their own problems, they become judgmental about other people. For example, they start thinking that this person is useless, that one is careless and another one is not really a believer. This is very dangerous. First of all and most of all a true believer should be busy with his own problems. We understand from hadiths that it is much better for us if we are busy sorting out our own problems and illnesses rather than thinking about others and being judgmental. For example, the Prophet Mohammad is quoted as saying:

'Blessed is the one who is so busy thinking about his own deficiencies that he has no time to think about the deficiencies of others.'

Thus, we must start with criticising and assessing

ourselves before looking at others. Sometimes we have an enormous problem within ourselves but we are not aware of it and yet we notice a tiny amount of that same problem when it is in someone else. For example, we may have eaten something like garlic and do not realise that our mouth smells and yet when we meet someone who smells in some way, we are so quick to think or say something about them.

There is a story in Mathnawi by Rumi that four people had an appointment with a king immediately after midday prayers. They were very concerned not to lose this opportunity to meet the king and did not want to be late. So they decided to say their prayers quickly and then go to meet the king. They started praying as soon as they reached the mosque. However while they were saying their prayers, the one who calls for prayer (mu'adhin) came into the mosque to climb the minaret. They were now unsure and began to wonder

whether they had started their prayers too early or whether that day the mu'adhin had arrived late.

So, whilst praying, one of them asked the mu'adhin whether the time for prayers had already arrived or not. The second person asked the first why he had spoken whilst praying because whether the time had arrived or not he had now made his prayers void by speaking. The third person pointed out that the second person had now also spoken by asking the first one why he had spoken. However the fourth person considered himself to be "very clever". He said: Thanks to God that I did not speak!

So, in this story we see that four people shared the same problem but each could only see it in the other people and not in themselves. In fact they repeated the very same mistake for which they were criticizing the others.



Therefore it is so much better to be very concerned about ourselves rather than about other people. Sometimes people think that this means they should be indifferent to what is happening around them, in their community or in society. This is not the case. But if we want to be more useful to our community and to society then we should first start with ourselves and then we can help others. For example, we see that when giving instructions on a plane regarding the use of emergency oxygen masks, they always advise us to attend to ourselves first and then help those next to us. Otherwise,

whilst we are trying to help the other person with their mask, we ourselves may collapse. So, we should have self-care. But how should we care for ourselves? Should we only pray and recite the Qur'an? Should we just serve society by doing community work?

Continued in next issue...

IS GOD DEAD?

By: Allama Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Razavi

"Creation of God, the pattern on which He has made mankind; there is no change in the work of God. That is the standard religion, but most among mankind do not understand."

(Qur'an 30:30).

They claim that 'God' is dead. They should have said that 'gods' are dead. The confusion arises when false 'gods' are identified as GOD.

An atheist astronaut once gleefully joked that he went high above in the space but could not see the god. So, here is the confusion: the poor soul did not know that God is not a 'body' to be seen or found in a 'place. His joke just confirmed the belief of those who have emphasized from the very beginning that God could not be seen.

Belief in God is as much natural as any natural instinct

can be. This eternal truth has been explained in the verse of the Holy Qur'an mentioned above.



An atheist asked Imam ja'far as-Sadiq how could he convince him about the existence of God. Coming to know that the man had gone several times on sea voyages, the Imam asked him, "Have

you ever been caught in a fierce storm in middle of nowhere, your rudder gone, your sails torn away, trying desperately to keep your boat afloat". The answer was 'Yes'. Then the Imam asked, "And sometimes, perhaps, even that leaking boat went down leaving you exhausted and helpless on the mercy of raging waves? The answer was again "Yes'. Then the Imam asked:

Was not there, in all that black despair, a faint glimmer of hope in your heart that some

*unnamed and unknown power
could still save you".*

When he agreed, Imam said:
"That power is God".

How a senseless and lifeless
'idea' (because nature is no
more than an abstract idea)
could create a universe of such
magnitude with such a



That atheist was intelligent.
He knew the truth when he
saw it. Today's atheists give
that plac to 'Nature". The only
snag is that poor. 'Nature "is
senseless and lifeless.

systematic perfection, uniting
millions and millions of
galaxies in a well-knit system?
How could nature give life and
sense to creatures when itself
it has none?

THANKS TO ALLAH (S.W.T)

**Distribution of 'The Minister' has been increased by the grace
of Allah (S.W.T).**

**May Allah accept our selfless efforts and bestow our
benevolent and generous donor's long life with
prosperity.....Ameen**

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE 'WHITE HAND' OF PROPHET MUSA as

By: Ayatullah Syed Mujtaba Musavi Lari

And enter your hand into the opening of your bosom (collar), it shall come forth white without evil; among nine signs to Fir'awn and his people, surely they are a transgressing people. (al-NamI, 27/12)

Amongst all the Prophets of God, Musa (A) was the one who displayed the most miracles, perhaps because the Banu Israil the Jews - were the most perverse amongst the nations in their outlook and conduct. One can say that from the aspect of their intransigence and stubborn habit of clinging to their own ideas, they are a unique nation in history. Due to their warped logic, they were never truly receptive to the truth, and repeatedly



demanded that their Prophets display miracles according to their individual proclivities, their idle curiosity and their baseless whims;

some of them even demanded miracles that were logically impossible. They did not understand that the path of seeking conviction, searching for the truth and acquiring guidance - which is

the only course for salvation requires the heart and mind to be free of the tendency towards stubbornness.

Additionally, miracles only come about through God's will, and according to the necessity and circumstances at the time, and not for the amusement and vagaries of an ignorant people.

To complete His favour, God sent most of His Messengers to this nation, and they presented many wondrous and clear miracles to their people so that the face of Truth would not be covered by the veils of deception and corruption. However, the Jews were ungrateful for these blessings, and killed several of the Prophets of God. Despite their atrocious behaviour, God patiently presented His proofs by continually sending Prophets to them.

The greatest Prophet appointed as a messenger to this nation, was Musa (A); he was sent to a nation who, under the yoke of slavery, had lost all its virtues and excellences. In their practice, lies masqueraded as the truth, and merits were based on false criteria. Musa (A) began his mission by preaching to a limited and closed circle in an environment which was bereft of Divine values and knowledge, until he made the nascent community stronger

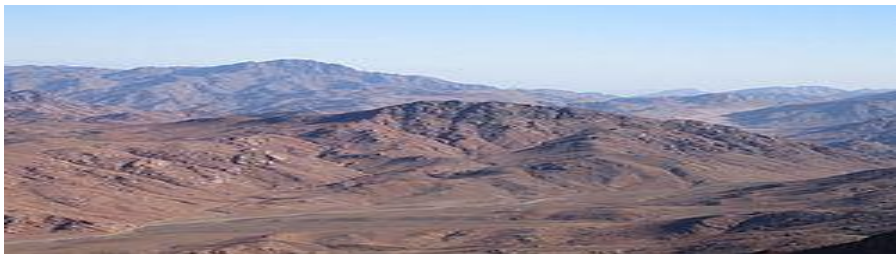
and increased their inner realization. Like the Prophets before him, he tried to bring an end to their narrow and ossified thinking by inculcating in them the preference for the life in the next world.

The verse above mentions only one of the wondrous miracles of this Godly man and contains several novel and elegant points, the exposition of which follows below:

According to the scholars who have commented on this verse, the phrase,

"white without evil" refers to the whiteness of the hand of Prophet Musa (A), which he presented to the people as a proof of his claim of prophethood. The use of the phrase, "without evil", negates the notion that his hand was stricken or afflicted by any disease. In fact, the Qur'an asserts that this whiteness was distinct from a kind of known illness.

This explanation is weak in several respects:



Jebel-e-Musa Koh-e-Toor

1. The whiteness of the hand of this Prophet of God must have resembled the whiteness of a kind of sickness (vitiligo or leukoderma) for the verse to allay the concerns of the observers and reassure them that there was no affliction present.

2. At the time of Prophet Musa (A) magicians performed wondrous acts, and even though the deeds of the magicians and charlatans were the result of their limited human abilities and were based only on sleight-of-hand, training and practice, they nevertheless had a great effect on the minds of the common people.

However, a miracle of this type (a white hand) was not of the same level as the other

miracles displayed by Musa (A), each of which was amazing and unique in its own right. Furthermore, the miracle of the white hand (as currently described) would not convince the masses that an extraordinary act was taking place, or weaken the position of the magicians and convince them to come out to the arena of confrontation.

3. This miracle was only visible to the group who had gathered around Prophet Musa (A) and it was difficult for those who were even a few metres away from him to see it clearly.

To support our claim that the arguments above are weak, we can refer to another verse:

So he cast down his rod, and lo! it was an obvious serpent; And he drew forth his hand,

and lo! it appeared white to the onlookers, (alShu'ara, 26/31-32)

The verse above describes how Prophet Musa (A) first cast down his staff in front of a large crowd of Fir'awn's people and others that had been assembled to watch him. The staff turned into a large dragon and caused consternation in the assembly; it was then that that he displayed his second miracle, which was his radiant hand.

If we assume that that the hand of the Prophet (A) became white only to the extent that it resembled someone with a skin related illness, it would not be visible except to a small group of the crowd who had gathered, and would not have qualified as a miracle that heralded his Divinely-appointed mission and that served as the main proof of his claim. It would not be enough to bring about popular acceptance in his Prophethood or cause the wonderment that would bring about a deep and positive

transformation in the hearts and minds of the people and broaden the horizons of their thinking.

About the specific time when the miracle took place, the Qur'an states: (Musa) said:

Your appointment is the day of the Festival and let the people be gathered together in the early forenoon. (Ta Ha, 20/59)

It is possible that Prophet Musa (A) chose this special time for the display of his miracle because by then the sun was at its highest point and the day was at its brightest so that nobody would be able to deny the occurrence and nature of the miracle and everyone would see it clearly.

How can we imagine that at this time of the day in the bright sunlight, his miracle merely resembled the hand of a sick person, so that people confused the whiteness of the hand of Prophet Musa (A) for leprosy, while God informed them that what they were witnessing was the miracle of their Prophet and not a type of affliction of the skin!

With this interpretation we cannot expect that this display of the whiteness of his hand, which is devoid of any brilliance or radiance, to transform the audience or be effective in convincing them to abandon their erroneous beliefs and submit to the claims of the Messenger of God.

This is because a miracle demonstrates its relation to the Creator and the Knower of revelation, and its nature is such that it cannot be challenged by people who are unaware of the supernatural world and those who witness it feel that have been allowed a new chance to discover the truth

ACTIVITIES OF S.I.E.S

English Monthly Magazine “The Minister”.

Urdu Monthly Magazine “Al-Moballigh”.

Islamic Library (a collection of manuscripts and printed books in Arabic, Persian, English and Urdu languages).

Weekly Religious Gatherings:

Wednesday 11:00 am Elderly Group Meeting

Thursday 8:00 pm Dua-e-Kumayl

Friday 8:00 pm Dinner, Lectures (English & Urdu), followed by questions and answers.

Everyday 6:30 pm Religious Madressa

Sunday 11:00 am First Sunday of every month
Medical Lecture by a Doctor.

INVOCATION OF GOD

The only way to human salvation and Prosperity

By: Ayatullah Muhsin Araki

Concerning values, it can be said that according to this mode of thought, all human beings are equal before God and no mode of thought, all human beings are equal before God and no human being has any superiority or preference over another except in piety and obedience of God. Thus, those who have taken precedence in piety and obedience to God are more honoured than others. In other words, the person who is nearer to God and who has precedence over the others in justice and virtue and who guards (himself) against evil is the one who is more honoured in the eyes of God.

If piety and virtue are to be taken as the criteria for social eminence, people will surely compete to gain supreme

values, and will not act according to their own personal or group interests. If individuals in a society compete with one another to attain more piety and supreme virtue, love, humility, compassion, self sacrifice and other similar values, then these values will prevail in that society and people will work hard to

attain supreme values instead of pursuing inferior interests that bring about nothing but opposition and disputes. Evidently, those who have precedence over others in humility, compassion and selfsacrifice and try to serve others will always be happy and delighted.

Human character:

The individual and social aspects of human entity are



denoted by the term 'human character'. According to this concept, 'servitude of God' represents the real nature of human beings. Servitude of God implies the negation or refutation of the domination of any power other than God's power over human personality on the one hand, and utter obedience to God the Almighty, who is All-Just and All-Powerful, on the other.

Anyone who has this quality of servitude to God seeks nothing but God's pleasure and stands against the temptation of any transient pleasures, ephemeral pursuits, material interests, lower desires and aspirations that drive man to be in opposition with justice, piety and virtue.

It is quite evident that all oppression, discrimination, inequality, disastrous wars, bloody massacres, transgression, gross violations of human rights, robberies and all sorts of major or minor crimes originate from the selfishness and arrogance of

those people who seek only to satisfy their own ephemeral material interests, pleasures and lower desires. The Glorious Qur'an introduces those who forget to invoke God and turn away from the Qur'an and other divine Reminders as those who have lost their genuine nature and their real self, which is indeed the only capital or resource in the battlefield of this worldly life: "... Indeed they have lost their souls, and what they forged has gone away from them. " (7:53)

Life-style:

When one's personality is formed on the basis of the divine worldview, values and character mentioned above, one's lifestyle, whether in connection with himself or with others, will originate from virtue and piety and will be based on justice and righteousness.

In a sermon addressed to someone known as Hammarn, Irtam Ali (A.S) gives a general but comprehensive picture of the pious people

who live on the invocation of God and describes their characteristics on the basis of their worldview, values, character and life-style:

"The pious in this world are the people of distinction. Their speech is to the point, their dress is moderate and their gait is humble. They submit to Allah with obedience. They keep their eyes close before what Allah has made unlawful for them, and they put their ears to knowledge. They remain in the time of trials as though they remain in comfort due to their satisfaction with the act of

Allah. If there had not been fixed periods of life ordained for each, their spirits would not have remained in their bodies even for the twinkling of an eye because of the eagerness for the reward and the fear of chastisement. The greatness of the Creator is seated in their heart, and so, everything else appears small in their eyes. Thus, to them, Paradise is as though they see

it and are enjoying its favours. To them. Hell is also as if they see it and are suffering punishment in it.

...The peculiarity of anyone of them is that you will see that he has strength in religion, determination along with leniency, faith with conviction, eagerness in seeking knowledge, courtesy in lenience, clemency in almsgiving, understanding in awareness, knowledge in forbearance, moderation in riches, devotion in worship, gracefulness in starvation, endurance in hardship, mercy for the exhausted, fulfilment of the right, leniency in earning, desire for the lawful, pleasure in guidance, hatred from greed, piety in straightforwardness, and abstinence in appetite. The approval of him who ignores him does not deceive him. He does not stop judging his deeds. He performs virtuous deeds but still feels afraid. In the evening he is anxious to offer thanks to Allah. In the morning his anxiety is to

remember Allah. He passes the night in fear and rises in the morning in joy- fear lest night is passed is passed in forgetfulness and joy over the favour and mercy received by him. If his self refuses to endure a thing, which it does not like, he does not grant its request towards what it likes. The coolness of his eye lies in what is to last forever, while from the things of this world that will not last he keeps aloof. He transfuses knowledge with forbearance, and speech with action.

You will see his laziness aloof, his activity uninterrupted, his hopes simple, his shortcomings few, his heart fearing, his spirit contented, his ignorance absent, his affairs simple, his religion safe, his desires dead, his anger suppressed, his mannerism pure. He does not mention what is kept secret with him. He does not conceal the testimony against his enemies. He does not do any practice ostentatiously. He does not leave anything shyly.

Good alone is expected from him. Evil from him is not to be feared. Even if he is found among those who forget Allah he is counted among those who remember him. He forgives him who is unjust to him, and he gives to him who deprives him. He behaves well with him who behaves ill with him.

His forbearance is not absent; he does not neglect what adorns him. Indecent speech is far from him, his utterance is lenient. His evils are non-existent. His virtues are ever present, his good is ahead, and mischief has turned its face from him. He is dignified during calamities, patient in distress, and thankful during ease. He does not commit excess over him whom he hates, and does not commit sin for the sake of him whom who loves. He does not claim the possession of things that are not his. He does not deny others' rights that are obligatory upon him. He admits truth before evidence is brought against him. He does

not misappropriate what is placed in custody. He does not call others bad names. He does not oppress or threaten others. He does not cause harm to his neighbour, he does not feel happy at others misfortunes. He hurries to the right. He fulfils the trusts. He is slow in ill deeds. He enjoins good and forbids evil. He does not enter into the wrong and does not go out of right.

If he is silent his silence does not grieve him. If he laughs he does not raise his voice. He is satisfied with what is his. Malice does not agitate him. Whims do not overcome him. Stinginess does not prevail upon him. He does not desire what is not his. He associates with people so as to learn. He keeps silent so as to be safe. He asks so as to understand. He does not listen to the good word so that others will not find themselves neglectful in comparison with him. He does not speak of his good actions so as to avoid talking pride in it before others.

If he is wronged he endures till Allah takes revenge of his behalf. His own self is in distress because of him while the people are at ease from him. He puts himself in hardship for the sake of his next life and makes people feel safe from himself. His keeping away from others is by way of asceticism and purification, and his nearness to those to whom he is near is by way of leniency and mercifulness. His keeping away is not by way of vanity or a feeling of greatness, nor is his nearness by way of deceit or cheating. He follows the examples of the past men of virtue and he is the example of the coming people of virtue." (Nuhj al-Balaghah, Sermon 191)

The society in which such people are brought up and which models itself on the characters and lifestyles of such pious people will never suffer from dangerous social calamities, moral deviations and bloody struggles over private or group or class interests.

Continued in next issue...

COMMANDMENTS OF ISLAM

Compiled by: The Patron of S. I. Education Society

Hujatt-ul Islam S.S. Rizvi

THE FOLLOWING (Taqlid)

DECREE 1

It is obligatory for every person to strive to be a mujtahid; that is he should have the ability to understand and apply decree from the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith, and wisdom, or to follow the opinion and interpretation of a particular *alem* (highly learned person); such a scholar is called a mujtahid. or a moqallad, while the person who follows his interpretations is called a moqallid. A scholar who is not of the highest learning is permitted, with considerable study and caution, to follow his own ijtehad (reasoning); he is called a *mohtat*.

DECREE 2

The intent to follow the decrees of a mujtahid based on his determinations, is called taqleed.

DECREE 3

A mujtahid must have the following qualifications: He must—

- (a) have reached the age of puberty.
- (b) be wise and sane.
- (c) be Shia Ithna Ashari by faith.
- (d) be just.
- (e) be born through legal wedlock.
- (f) be living.
- (g) be a male person.

DECREE 4

A mujtahid can be recognized through the following way*:

- (a) through personal certainty of the individual's character as a mujtahid.
- (b) by the evidence of two honest learned men.
- (c) through a testimony of several scholars which satisfies the person seeking taqleed.

MUTAHERAT (Purifying Agents)

These are fifteen.

DECREE 5

1-Water :

2-Earth :

The sole of the shoe or foot can be cleansed by walking on a dry tahir (pure) ground, until a najasat (unclean thing) which was stepped on, is removed.

DECREE 6

3-Sun:

If the Sun shines directly upon and dries a wet immovable substance such as earth, door, etc. tainted with najasat, makes tahir if najasat does not remain there.

DECREE 7

4-Change of State:

A substance tainted with najasat can become tahir by changing state; for example, najis (unclean) wood burnt into ashes becomes tahir.

DECREE 8

5-Evaporation :

If juice of grapes is boiled so that two-thirds of it is evaporated it becomes tahir.

DECREE 9

6-Organic transfer :

Human or animal blood which is najis, transferred by a mosquito bite into its body, becomes tahir by this process. It is also considered tahir, if a najis substance becomes organically absorbed into the body of a tahir creature.

DECREE 10

7-Embracing of Islam :

(a) When a non-believer in Islam embraces Islam, every part of his body becomes tahir.

DECREE 11

(b) However, if the clothes of the convert were wet on his body before conversion, they are considered najis.

DECREE 12

8-Subordination :

When the parent of infants and young children embrace islam, their offspring are considered tahir.

RULES

DECREE 13

By the said principle, *subordination* when wine turns to vinegar, its container (and other Things it touches) are considered tahir.

DECREE 14

Also after the bathing (Ghusl) of a dead body, everything used in washing is considered tahir.

DECREE 15

9-Removal of najasat:

If the body of a living animal or an internal part of the human body (for example, the inside of the nose or an ear becomes najis) and the najasat removes itself, the affected body or portion thereof is considered tahir and does not need wishing.

DECREE 16

10-Out of Sight:

When you notice the belongings of a Muslim have become najis, and have

remained out of sight over a considerable period of time, the belongings are considered tahir under the following conditions:

(a) The owner of said belonging is a mature adult.

(b) The belonging are used in circumstances where taharat is compulsory, as with clothes for praying or utensils for cooking and eating food.

(c) The belongings have not been neglected out of carelessness on the part of the owner.

DECREE 17

11-Lavatory cleanliness:

A clod of earth, a stone, or a rag used for lavatory purpose must be tahir.

DECREE 18

The organ of urination can be made tahir only by the pouring of water on it at least twice:

The organ of bowel excretion can be made tahir by the use of three stones, three pieces of

rag or the equivalent thereof, in the place of water. These substances can be used only if the anus is not more than normally soiled. If the soiling is spread, water must be used to ensure that the area is made tahir, even it is not spread more, better to clean anus with water.

DECREE 19

12- Istabra (Draining the penis of residue) :

If the penis is cleared by istabra after urination or discharge, and an emission still appears, it is considered Tahir.

DECREE 20

13-Gusala (Drained wash water);

If a najis object is washed in less than kur of water (Qalil), the water which drains off during the washing is called gusala and is considered najis, while the water remaining on the object washed or the wash cloth is considered tahir.

DECREE 21

14-Bleeding of a slaughtered animal :

When a halal animal is slaughtered in the proper Islamic way, in which the blood flows until it stops, the residue of blood in the carcass is considered tahir.

DECREE 22

15-Purification of animal

If a halal animal comes to feed on offal, its body and all the parts thereof become najis, until the said animal is confined to be supervised feeding on tahir food for a designated period of time.

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| Camel | for 40 days |
| Cow | for 20 days |
| Sheep | for 10 days |
| Water fowl | for 7 days |
| Wild Duck | for 7 days |
| Hen | for 3 days |

After feeding tahir food to animals for the above-mentioned period, the animals are themselves considered tahir.