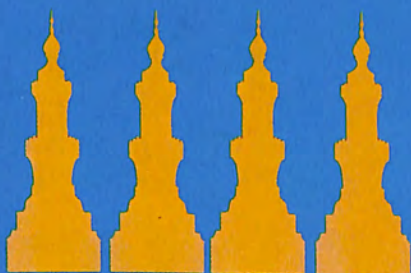


BY
AYATOLLAH MIRZA HASAN
ALHAERI ALEHGHAGHI ALOSKOOEE

Letter From the Shi'ites



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In this major contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the Muslim world, a renowned Islamic religious leader, the Ayatollah Mirza Hasan Haeri Alehghaghi Aloskooee, explains the tenets and practices of Shi'a, one of the two main branches of Islam. Shi'a is the religion that inspired the Iranian revolution led by the Ayatollah Khomeini, and it commands 106 million followers in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Pakistan, India, Thailand, and numerous other countries throughout the world.

The basic tenet of Shi'a is that upon the death of the Prophet Muhammad his cousin and son-in-law, Ali Ebn Abitaleb, was divinely ordained as Imam, or leader of Islam. Shi'ites belonging to the predominant Djafari (Twelvers) sect also believe that Ali was succeeded in the Imamate by eleven descendents, the last of whom withdrew from the world in his youth, becoming invisible. This twelfth Imam will reappear one day and bring justice and equality to the world. Shi'a is characterized by a pious expectation of the Imam's return.

Although *Letter from the Shi'ites* was written in reply to a new school of historical thought, its recounting of Shi'a doctrines and lucid exposition of their meaning provide a wealth of information about one of the world's most dynamic religions. For those seeking spiritual insight, it is a profound source of inspiration. The first English translation of a major work by the Ayatollah Alehghaghi, *Letter from the Shi'ites* affords the English-speaking world the opportunity to become acquainted with one of Islam's greatest religious thinkers.



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BY
AYATOLLAH
MIRZA HASAN ALHAERI
ALEHGHAGHI ALOSKOOEE

Islamic Foundation
San Rafael, California

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Printed in the United States of America.
ISBN 0-9610614-0-5

Islamic Foundation
1601 Second Street
San Rafael, California 94901
First Printing of Translation, February 1983
Translated from the Persian *Naameh Shiayan*.

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FOREWORD

Ayatollah Alehghaghi graciously consented to answer a list of questions sent to him by the translator of *Letter from the Shi'ites*. The questions and the Ayatollah's replies are printed below.

Q— Please give us a brief account of your childhood, youth, and studies before you became a religious leader.

A— I was born in Karbala on the second day of Moharram Alharam in 1897. At the age of four, my grandmother and brother Mirza Hasan taught me the alphabet and the last part of the Koran, which is composed of short verses. Then my father (may God elate him) selected a room in the house for use by one of his pious students, Moala Ali Fakhr Aleslam Khosro Shahi, to teach and train my brother and me. At six years of age I learned to read the Koran correctly and received a nice prize for doing so. When I was seven I read Sadi's *Golestaan* and learned Arabic grammar. At eight I was sent by my father to my brother Mirza Ali in Nadjaf. He was sixteen years older than I, and was teaching at that time. From my knowledgeable brother I learned Arabic grammar.

There was no modern school in Karbala. The children of the Shi'ite mullas, who were scholars, founded a school for Shi'ites called the Houssaini School. They asked every modj-tahed* to send one of his children to the school so that the

* One who is able to render religious judgments. Trans.

public, who thought that forbidden things were being taught there, would not be frightened. My father picked me. I was ten years old and started in the third grade. At the end of the year I was promoted to the fifth grade, and the following year I passed the sixth grade with superior grades, winning a silver medal. At the request of the principal I was kept in the school for two more years. His reason was that when the Turkish and Iranian representatives and ministers came on pilgrimage to Karbala, they had to be shown what lessons were being taught, and I was the only student who could make a speech to the Turks in Turkish. (Actually, I was the pick of the crop.) When I was fourteen I was privileged to accompany my father to the eighth Imam's tomb. After returning, I continued my education in logic, poetry, religion, divine philosophy, and mythology. My best teacher was that great source of Shi'ite learning, His Majesty my brother, one of the ten great scholars of the Arab and non-Arab world, who was an ocean of knowledge for me. Before I was thirty I reached the position of Edjthead.*

Q— Before embarking on the great responsibilities of Shi'ite leadership, where and how did you live and what were your religious and social activities?

A— Oskoo is located in the south of Tabriz and is famous for its beautiful gardens and various fruits. It is the birthplace of my grandfather, who was one of the great sources of knowledge about Shi'a. The inhabitants of Oskoo and the villages close to it were his followers, and after his death they acted on his writings. They also followed my brother, and now follow me.

Some of the religious people in Oskoo were complaining about the materialism of the mullas and weakness of the faith of the inhabitants. They asked my kind father to send one of his children to supervise the territory. He picked me. After reaching Oskoo, I realized that the complaints were justified. I saw that out of hundreds of thousands of people not one obeyed the commandments about Khoms and Zakat, I spent one year in mental and moral agony, preaching day and night. After a year an incredible change could be seen. Everybody became familiar

* *The condition of being a modjtahed.* Trans.

with paying Khoms and Zakat, which are the most obvious signs of faith. Giving and kindness reigned in the area, and religion manifested itself like a ray of light.

For six years I lived among my true friends. While there, an order came from Reza Shah to open a few schools for lectures and preaching at Sepahsalar University, a religious university. Mullas and preachers who were interested in retaining their positions were required to take classes for two years. The courses consisted of interpretation of the Koran, Islamic theology, the history of the world, physics, chemistry, mathematics, geometry, and so on. Books were distributed to the students by the local department of education. Twenty-eight people enrolled from Azerbaijan, but no one showed up for the examinations. I came in first, receiving 294 out of a possible 300 points.

So I started my activities, and until the beginning of World War II no one else had permission to preach among the five million people of Azerbaijan. After the Allies entered Iran and the Russians began to rule Azerbaijan and the events involving the Tudeh Party occurred, I left Oskoo and went to Holy Meshed. For five years I was active in that great religious city, and founded a glorious gathering every Friday evening. At that time, a group of pious Azerbaijani merchants and intellectuals came to Meshed, and with sound reasoning talked me into moving to Tabriz to teach the followers of my father. So I moved to Tabriz. I did two things immediately. First, I renovated and reopened the large and beautiful mosque of Hodjat Aleslam Mameghani Tabrizi, which had been closed for fifteen years. Second, I renovated the Saheb Alamr School, which had been turned into a warehouse for groceries, and began to prepare noble and pious youngsters for religious education and I started to teach. In 1910, with my brother Mirza Ali, I went to Ehsaa to train and reform the Shi'ites there. Ehsaa is one of the most beautiful and receptive regions of Saudi Arabia. I left a good heritage there, and also in other areas. As soon as my child Jadj Mirza Abdulasoul was mature, I left Azerbaijan to him—he is a skillful manager—and I went to stay in Tehran. I was about to found a mosque and school there, when a private plane was sent

for me from Kuwait with news of my brother's death. I went to Kuwait to pray over his holy and pure corpse. A procession of a thousand cars took his body to Karbala. After the burial ceremony, I returned to the school that my departed brother had founded.

Q— How many other religious centers in the world are under your supervision, and how many Muslims do you lead? How are these extensive organizations managed?

A— I supervise Shi'ites in Iran, Iraq, India, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and some parts of Turkey and Africa and some states in America and Australia, especially Melbourne, where my representative is Seid Mahmoud Moradjah Fatemi from Syria. But the number of friends who act in accordance with my teachings is not estimated correctly. We cannot make an accurate estimate in Iran, Iraq, the Gulf area, and Saudia Arabia, because their populations are so dispersed. There are at least ten million followers. In India, Australia, Turkey, and Africa, there are more than one million. But in Pakistan there are between twenty-two and twenty-four million among the country's Shi'ites. In Syria there are two million. Joined by many religious scholars who follow my judgment in those centers, we have founded schools and mosques to the best of our ability. I have built mosques and schools and boarding houses in India, Pakistan, Syria, and other countries. In Pakistan alone we have two schools for boys and one for girls, and are supervising four other schools. Five magazines and other publications are published to combat malevolent people and enemies of the pure family of Muhammad. The salaries and expenses of the teachers and students are paid from Kuwait. I also send wages for the mullas and preachers of twenty mosques in Syria. Where there is no mosque in a village or town, we build one and manage many charitable organizations. We also send material to and provide moral support for some Shi'ite organizations in other countries, especially in North and South America. In recent years, we have accomplished so much with the help of the Good Lord that we have amazed people. Of course, success comes from God and the attention of the Zaman Imam and the days and nights of planning and work by

me. But, as I mentioned, the talents and obedience of Kuwaiti friends contributes to the success. One of my important services is to unite the Shi'ites in a city or country. With the help of the Sole God, I have accomplished this, especially in Kuwait. Among the Ehsaii brothers and others, who were duplicitous, I have been given the title of Imam Al Mosleh (the Imam of Peace and Unity).

Q— As we understand it from a footnote about Kuwait's history in *Letter from the Shi'ites*, you became religious leader in Kuwait about seventeen years ago. Were you appointed by your predecessor, or is the great leader of the Shi'ites chosen by consensus?

A— My leadership is exactly the same as the leadership by the scholars in Nadjaf and Qum. There is no succession. There is Edjtehad and talent. When one achieves Edjtehad, people follow and act on one's judgment. Incidentally, in my family my grandfather, father, and brother achieved Edjtehad and obtained permission to be a modjtahed from the scholars of Nadjaf and Karbala. I mounted the podium in Kuwait after burying my brother at the end of the holy month of Ramadan in 1965. It was the day of festivities. The listeners came from all parts of the Gulf, Iraq, and Ehsaa. At the end of the sermon I encouraged my friends to follow the Nadjaf and Qum Modjtaheds, and they had two modjtaheds of their own from Ehsaa. They all said, "The Shi'ite Ulama are special to us, but we will not follow anyone but you. We have watched your moral behavior and knowledge for fifty years, and especially like you." I insisted that they want their leader to live in Kuwait, but my whole life was in Iran and I did not want to carry this heavy responsibility on my weak shoulders. They cried and made me cry, and said that if I did not accept their offer they would be left with no lead and would complain to the generous Prophet on the Day of Resurrection. I then accepted and bore a heavy load. With the burden of ever-increasing service and extraordinary troubles, I still do not know whether I have performed my duty or not. But the Lord is kind, and I hope that this service will be accepted in His Court (God willing).

Q— Why did you choose Kuwait as the center of your activities as a Shi'ite leader?

A— Having Kuwait as the center has always—and especially in recent years—given us freedom and ease of propaganda and communications with the rest of the world. The majority of my Shi'ite followers can gather there. Also there are the willingness of the people to act in accordance with the commandments and orders, and the obedience of my friends in Kuwait. My Ehsaai friends have not fallen short in spending their lives and wealth on religious matters and in helping other centers.

Q— As you mentioned in *Letter from the Shi'ites*, the book was written in logical and understandable language for the guidance of the young and those interested in research about Islam and the Shi'a religion. There is no doubt that after the publication of the English translation, various questions will be asked by the public about the Djafari religion. Do you intend to answer these questions, or will other books you've written be published and made available to your followers and those who are interested?

A— In regard to answering questions about the Djafari religion and beliefs after publication of *Letter from the Shi'ites*, if the questions are numerous we will publish the book *Shi'ite Commandments* and will send it to the people who ask questions. If there are not a lot of questions, we will answer them one by one (God willing).

Q— What other plans do you have for the millions of your Shi'ite Muslim followers in the future?

A— I have no plans for my friends and respected followers, except the plans of the Koran and the tradition of the Prophet (praise be upon him), with the interpretations that have come down to us from our innocent Imams and are famous as the Djafari religion.

Q— How do you see the future of Islam and its coexistence with other religions?

A— The future of Islam in regard to other religions has been explained by the Sole God in the Koran:

(a) God is the Lord Who sent the true religion with the Prophet so that it would overcome all other religions. The pagans do not want this.

(b) We want the oppressed to be victorious over all others and want them to be heirs to the earth.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العالمين . الرحمن الرحيم . مالك يوم الدين . إياك نعبد
وإياك نستعين . اهدنا الصراط المستقيم . صراط الذين أنعمت
عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين .

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; Most Gracious, Most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek. Show us the straight way, the way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.

1

INTRODUCTION

Everyone knows the importance of propaganda. Its influence is so evident that no explanation is needed. Propaganda enlivens the spirit of society in the same way that Jesus breathed life into dead souls. It is a necessity in the promotion of every worldly material and idea, a tool so effective on the body and soul that a ghoul or devil can be turned into a human being or angel and vice versa. In disseminating truth it is magical; in spreading sedition and falseness it is also an able magician. Any party or religion without a propaganda machine is doomed to be destroyed. Although religions, faiths, and good morals are like the sun and moon and stars, creating the life and permanence of a nation or country, and ornamenting the sky of society, nothing is left of them but their name because of a lack of missionaries. As a result of the neglect of statesmen, they are hidden behind the tumultuous clouds of naturalists and foreigners.

Propaganda in Djafari Society

Truth in the propaganda of Djafari* society is rare and perhaps altogether nonexistent. Introductions to religion and religious basics and law are taught in religious centers, the wheels of which are turned by the powerful hands of religious authorities. But those teachings are only the necessities of

* *Twelvers, the predominant sect of the Shi'ite religion.* Trans.

religion and duties required by religious law. They cannot be called propaganda. And there are those who are called preachers and storytellers, and who are scattered in cities and villages—not only are they ignorant of propaganda, but they also lack the basics of scientific and practical knowledge. They are counted among the poor and indigent, and truly are the blind leading the blind. At the same time, in the midst of these poor preachers, one can find a group of magnanimous missionaries who have very solid knowledge and whose doings are as lustrous and good as their sayings. But these alchemists are so very few that they have been subdued by their countless rivals and the strong libertines.

Propaganda is a tool of holy war and defense of the faith, and like defensive and offensive weapons the methods of propaganda change from era to era. There is no need to demonstrate that no matter how strong a nation may be it cannot fight today with the weapons used centuries ago. It was because they lacked modern weapons that most of the Eastern nations lost their supremacy and independence, and a large portion of their land—indeed, most of the Orient—passed into the possession of Westerners. The story of our spirituality at the present time is more or less the same. The naturalists and others with new ideas that are agreeable to the taste and understanding of youngsters have attacked our religion and beliefs. They have destroyed the faith and certainty of the people of our society, and against them the warriors of religion, with their out-of-date weapons, could accomplish nothing. That is why every day tens of thousands—maybe hundreds of thousands—of crude and unsupervised youths deviate from the path of truth and join the enemies of Islam.

The Duty of Our Propagandists

At the present time our propagandists must adopt two objectives as their religious duties. One is defense against outside attack (by materialists and various religions). The second is to secure the thoughts of our own common people and strengthen their beliefs. Therefore, in addition to the ordinary sciences of Islam, they must arm themselves with new sciences and learn

the latest psychological techniques. They must put on the garment of virtue and continence. All of this must be done, of course, in the major centers of the world. They must organize important classes in monotheism and morality, as well as in common Islamic laws. The distinguished religious authorities and the eminent clergymen who have invented the holy words¹ and truly are the spiritual rulers of society and responsible for morality, must first take hold of the banner of propaganda and then scientifically and practically, start to train others. They must prepare a group of conscientious nobles and scholars with good morals to defend against the enemy and protect the pillars of our Islamic faith.

Publications

There are two columns in the glorious tabernacle of propaganda. One is based on preaching and lectures, and the other is based on writings and publications. However, the writer and publisher who carry the banner of faith hand-in-hand with the preacher and lecturer are, like their weak comrades, very few and limited. A large number of publishers in our country (Iran) distribute a great many novels or histories by outstanding foreigners, and usually after the books are read they become covers for the shelves of city dwellers and windows for the people who live in the villages. Actually, the work these publishers do is to transmit the contagious virus of mental illness of Western countries to our countrymen. Day by day the foundation of health, religion, and faith becomes weaker. These publishers, knowingly or unknowingly, have committed a great crime that cannot be forgiven or tolerated. Every page of these Western writings is an axe that strikes the roots of truth and integrity, modesty and honesty, sentiment and virtue, and the ignorant minds are pulled to the bottom of the valley of dreadful adversity. The publishers also become propagandists by spreading the ideas and morals of foreigners. As soon as we remove from Shi'ite publications those parts that have no value

¹ *From the sayings of Muhammad (praise be upon him) meaning "I was appointed to perfect good morals."*

in propagandizing truth, nothing will be left. That is why in recent times one can hear only a few voices from only a few places in the country crying Islam, why only a few pages about the triumph of truth, written by a few zealots, have circulated among the Shi'ites. Pit that cry against the screams of the materialists and the roar of the deceitful. It is very weak and inaudible and does not have the help it should. Although prayer and pilgrimage books and practical writings are necessary in their own place, they are not part of propaganda. It is now essential that entirely clear and beneficial publications about monotheism and morality fill every part of the country and perhaps circulate from hand to hand among the peoples of the world.

Perfect Monotheism and Correct Godliness

The wicked soul of materialism, which arose in the West and quick as lightning took over the East, hoisted its banner of independence among the masses of humanity, perhaps staying permanently in the human mold. Perfect monotheism and correct godliness, which are the roots of the tree of scholarly morals and of ideals in humanity, became hidden in the corners of a very few houses.

This cloud of falsehood, which arose in the West and appeared from the European horizon, made our world's sky so dark and blurred that now the sun of truth is altogether hidden and eclipsed. Materialism has appeared in every country and city according to the susceptibility of the region, and weaknesses observed among humans are colored totally by manifestations of materialism. It seems that the spirit of ignorance and nature worship has become a model for humanity, and perhaps in all the eras of mankind there has never been a day so amenable to and an environment so favorable for nourishment of this destructive virus. Yes, never before have violence and ignorance been so hypocritical that they assume the guise of civilization and knowledge. Polytheism and selfishness have never become so familiar with methods of dissimulation that they would falsely put on the hat of monotheism and godliness. It is in today's world that these new phenomena pour fire on the head of mankind, or put the axe to the root of humanity, or discredit humanity's

honor and reputation, or tear away the fame and chastity of humans, and every great crime it commits is under the name of civilization, science, and knowledge. Murder, selfishness, oppression, lavishness, and deception, self-indulgence, sexuality, discord, and double-dealing, wickedness and cheating, deceit and trickery, and other ugly qualities have now become ordinary behavior for people. Perhaps portions of these qualities are causes for pride among some people. This oppression, excused by modernity, has destroyed the foundation of religion and faith. This ostentatiousness and coquettishness that uproots reputations and brings shame is called civilization. This selfishness that destroys the independence of weak and oppressed countries is called politics. We also have to confess that some ruinous crimes have been committed in the name of religion, and countless oppressors have and will continue to attack truly religious people under the guise of love for religion. To be brief, in this golden age absolute brutality and voluptuousness have taken over humanity, and in beautiful cities of the world herds of tigers and leopards, wolves and foxes, pigs and bears and monkeys are wearing human masks on their faces. The ineffectual rulers who govern these animals are surely the manifestations of evil. The danger of this shameful behavior threatens the sweetness of human life, and pulls the infamous caravan of humanity to the valley of dreadful adversity. Whoever wants eternal life and has the hope of eternal prosperity in his heart must get on the move and stay away from contamination by these blameworthy forces, and must not be defeated by the majority and encumbered by pretense, and must with all his might follow scholarly behavior and good morals. He must enter the lofty college of God and read the books of humanity.

From Whom Do We Learn Ethics?

The amazing human machine, which was invented by the only God of the mortals—this beautiful portrait that is a mirrored image of His glorious Self and reflects His strength and ability—has many precious elements and delicate tools, which no one knows the secrets of but His Lordship the Inventor. This

rare handicraft cannot be made to function in accordance with the sayings of this or that person and to violate its secrets and precision in accordance with the imagination of such and such. Because of the importance of humanity, His Majesty the Sage, has taught, with affection and kindness to inferiors, a few outstanding creators the lessons of self and has sent them to train and teach the children of Adam how to reach the ideal and become familiar with their own temperament and achieve eternal prosperity.

وان من أمة الا خلا فيها نذير.

*And there never was a people, without a warner
having lived among them (in the past).*

Those holy individuals and valuable beings stepped into human society with a special discipline and morals, and they performed their weighty duties as prophets with a world of devotion and joy, slowly inducing the people to loftiness.

And finally, the great king of all prophets and ablest teacher of mortals, Muhammad (praise be upon him) explained to them in most eloquent words and appealing tones the ultimate monotheism and

هو الذي بعث في الاميين رسولا منهم يتلوا عليهم آياته ويزكيهم
ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وان كانوا من قبل لفي ضلال مبين.

*It is He Who has sent amongst the unlettered an
apostle from among themselves, to rehearse to
them His signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct
them in Scripture and Wisdom—although they
had been, before, in manifest error.*

Those Godly teachings and divine words, which are the precise lessons for humanity and holy book of humanity and complete temperament of the body and soul, material and spiritual, apparent and inwardly, invisible and visible—this nobility has been written under the name Koran to supply all human needs

until the Judgment Day has done away with them. Present scientific and technical research and accurate experiment throughout history have proven and make clear for the world that the teachings of Muhammad (praise be upon him) and his rules of distinction between truth and falsehood for mortals in any age are the most able guides for reaching the ideal by the nearest and easiest road.

Is Not Arab Civilization and Its Eternal Independence Enough to Prove Our Platform?

The Arabs before Islam generally lacked any tools for greatness and supremacy, and they had the most wicked qualities. Arabs lived in poverty and indigence, in ignorance, in violence and absence of faith, in the oppression of subordinates, in cruelty, in calumny and revilement, no less than the savages of former Africa. They had no science, had no wealth, were strangers to the society of art and trade, and they were uninformed about the truths of greatness and society. Out of need, they were always reaching to the courts of the kings of Yemen and Damascus, and their outstanding individuals made a living by flattery and poetry or thievery and robbery. Although a bravery and freedom of soul existed in their culture, and it emerged in some of them, it was not enough for progress. Therefore, long centuries went by, and not the slightest movement toward any accomplishment was observed. Over a period of two or three thousand years, neither the voice of Persian and Roman civilization, nor the shouts of the technical and scientific advances of the Egyptians and Chaldeans (their close neighbors), awakened these sleeping ignoramuses. Even if the likes of Cyrus or Darius or other infamous leaders had arisen among them, it would have been impossible to initiate the slightest movement because of their irremediable situation, the unfriendly geographic location of Arabia, and the prejudice of unworthy individuals with their ignorant hearts.

Then, what happened that the stories of their conquest and domination of the world came to be told even by a stranger as the only prodigy of human history? In less than half a century, these Arabs, in glory and greatness, reached such stature that

they scorned to lean on the throne of any foreign king or put the crown of the emperor of Rome on their heads. These tribes, dispersed in the sand dunes of Arabia, wove in the shortest time a strong and long chain that extended from these unconnected rings of tribes and joined the masters of civilization, from China to the remotest regions of Africa. What soul was it that brought to life the dead of the seventh century? And who was it that blew soul into their dead bodies? And how did it happen so quickly and influentially?

His Majesty the Last of All Prophets (Praise Be Upon Him)

It was because of the very same book that is so perfect that the pen of creation has never written more perfectly on the pages of existence. It was the same water of life that descended from the skies of invention to revive the soul of humanity. It was the unique sun that the God of the world created to nourish the molecules of existence. The miracles of past prophets have been told and reported successively by masters of travel and historians, from healing the sick to reviving the dead and making animals speak, and above these the influence of the Prophet's commands in different levels of existence, however earthly or heavenly. And there is no denying these facts. All of them are clear evidence of this logical Prophet's superior knowledge. But the low-minded materialists do not believe this. To prove our platform it is simply enough to point out the greatness of the fact that sleeping people like the Arabs were awakened by him and that he revived the dead of the age of ignorance. Perhaps he blew such spirit into them that from its rays the world of the human being became habitable. Is this not amazing? He gave such strength to crowds of indigent shepherds, or impatient thieves, or ignorant pessimists that in the shortest amount of time they immediately became leaders of great armies and they worried the best-trained armies of the two civilized countries of Persia and Rome. And finally they ruled the world for long centuries, although after the death of the popular Prophet they lost hundreds of his heavenly teachings. Prophets and reformers like their excellencies Abraham and Moses and Jesus, Zoroaster and Buddha and Confucius

appeared, and each, in his own corner of the world, was able to reform a limited number of people or limited section of the earth. But which one of these had families and people so savage and indigent? Which one had enemies, like their orphan Prophet's, so powerful and skilled, and what traces of monotheism and civilization did they leave among their people? Could they, as did the Last Prophet, transform the ignoramuses and blood-thirsty and make them masters of mankind and trainers of mortals, so that in less than a century they conquered most of the populous areas of the world with their religion and science and so that the banner of piety still flies in their hands?

Where did the Jews develop? What monotheism do the Christians have? Where is Zoroastrian civilization; where are traces of their worship of Ormuzd? Why cannot Buddhism or Brahmanism cross the waters of the Indus and the Great Wall of China and put foot beyond? In the case of Islam, wings of Aileron have been covering the heads of commoners and the privileged, and with unlimited strength have opened universities in Eastern or Western countries and are reading the book of mankind to the people of India and China and Easterners and Westerners and are teaching the lessons of humanity.

Now his holy book is the legacy of his great soul and represents his glorious person and his limitless command of knowledge.

ان هذا لقرآن يهدي للتي هي أقوم .

Verily this Koran doth guide to that which is most right (or stable).

The Koran

When the Koran arose, like the sun, from the horizon of the great Prophet of Islam's lips and made luminous and bright the dark skies of the age of ignorance, the most articulate Arabs, who excelled in eloquency and rhetoric, lowered their heads in shame and hid in the corners of their houses. The

manifestation of that great heavenly soul conquered and defeated the champions of literature, to the extent that they confessed to their impotence without any argument. Although we have not accurately observed their amazed looks, and have not seen their pale faces with our own eyes, in order to be able to guess the cause of this triumph accurately, I imagine that the victory of this holy book and defeat of these proud, eloquent men was not only because of the syntax and special methods of the Koran, but also due to the fact that there is higher meaning in the story, and that one must confess to its unlimited omnipotence and extraordinary influence. Actually, the generous Koran was the greatest soul that ascended from the center of the world of order and was the shiniest star that showed itself in the sky.

وكذلك اوحينا اليك روحا من امرنا.

And thus have We, by Our command, sent inspiration to thee.

Therefore most of it subdued the almighty Arabs and eroded their natural strength. When they became frightened of its stupendous sayings, they called it magic. You who have doubts about the miracles or the terrifying influence of this holy book, think a bit when you are sitting at your radio and listening to chants from the glorious Koran. This soulful song in Arabic, which by long or short waves, with the speed of lightning, travels and comes out of this amazing industry and vibrates the tympanum of the ear of most human beings in all parts of the planet earth—in what country is it not being read? Is it not unbelievable and a miracle? In the twentieth century, which is the greatest age in the power of the Europeans, the distinction made between falsehood and truth by Muhammad (praise be upon him) stands heads and shoulders above the Bible and Torah in the most important centers of Christianity, with an audible voice that is reading the noble verse,

ان الدين عند الله الاسلام.

The religion before God is Islam.

and is shaking the foundations of Christianity with all its strength. And it shakes their cruel hearts very hard. The center for spreading these waves, which the Christians have taken over for the advancement of their own religion, is in the glorious Eastern countries. Now, how has it come to pass that the East, the home of Islam and the Arab Muslim, is prevailing over the Christians because of the advancement of Islam and publication of its holy book? What happened that millions of prejudiced preachers of Christianity and bearers of the faith have not been able to prevent our Koran from entering?

This book of monotheism, without any friend or advocate—what strength has enabled it to conquer the countries of the trinity? Its narrow-minded enemies must tell us, who among the masses of humanity are its defenders and benefactors? Which Easterner has placed it in the shelves of the best libraries of the West? Why have the Torah and Bible, with all the help they've received from Catholics and Protestants and with all the billions in gold and silver that have been spent—why have they not been able to prove their innocence even in a tiny gathering of Muslims? But our potent Koran has been able to demonstrate itself within the multitude of Christian leaders and has proven its supremacy over the other books sent from the heavens. Is it not a miracle? Now, despite the weakness and impotence of the Muslims, the only expressive book in human society is the Koran, and other books, with their powerful and joyous advocates, are silent and mute. The other books are sitting in astonishment and are struck dumb by the bravery of the oral Koran and its flaunting of their champions.

The Eloquent Koran

It is this most expressive book in the world, than which no creature that has opened its mouth is more rhetorically eloquent—it is that able speechmaker of the tribe of humanity, than which no lecturer has stepped on the platform of leadership with more eloquence. The unique champions of knowledge

and of the accomplishments of the plane of existence, and the only brave fighter for the population of monotheism, is His Majesty Ali (grace be upon him), the embodiment of divine science and education and the originator of divine scholarly behavior, the associate of the Koran and explainer of the difficulties in differences between falsehood and truth. Following his magnanimous cousin, this great scholar of the mortals knew and had control over every detail of the Koran, the visible and invisible, the explanation and interpretation, the imperative and indefinite, the obvious and concealed, and without his soulful statement it is impossible for any creature to understand the contents of the great spirit of the world of existence. As God says,

وما يعلم تأويله الا الله والراسخون في العلم .

*And no one knows its hidden meanings except
God and those who are firmly grounded.*

And His Majesty the Prophet (praise be to him) told the Muslims repeatedly in the last days of his life to resort to God's Book and the family.² When Omar was being defeated in the battle of Saffin Shamian, he had his men put the Koran on the tips of their spears, and, deceitfully and in accordance with his policy, invited the people of Kufic to arbitrate the dispute on the basis of the book. His Majesty the Emir (grace be upon him)

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- 2 *His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) gave orders to the Muslims that after his death they should resort to the book of God and descendants of the Prophet and accept his family as the associates of the Koran. If the mute Koran by itself, without an oral Koran, could have interpreted and explained itself, and could have become guardian of Islam people would not need the will of His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) and to resort to descendants of the Prophet. Therefore the existence of an Imam is a necessity of the religion of truth. And we, with the help of God, will write in the contents of this book the correct proofs of this hadith at length.*

shouted: "O people, that which you see is the mute Koran. But the talking Koran is I." He was saying, "Listen to the commandments of god and the Prophet from me, and learn the religion and its laws from my behavior."

Any ruling—whether primary or secondary—or interpretation and explanation of the generous Koran that emanates from the immediate successor of His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him) is doubtful, and any teaching about the Koran's rules and judgments that does not rely on Ali and the family of Ali (grace be upon him) is to be rejected. Of course, the family of Ali (grace be upon him), which is Muhammad's family, is the same as Ali in these matters, and each family member is an associate of the Koran and, in the period in which he lived, the only talking Imam of Islam. And therefore, anyone who rejects the pure Imams of the Djafari has rejected God and the Prophet and the honorable Koran, and any unlucky person who steps onto the field of battle against these skillful warriors of Islam will be destroyed and obliterated.

One of the unfortunates of the twentieth century, who is skeptical about all that is sacred in this world and has a special hatred of Ali's family (grace be upon them) is Ahmad Kasravi. It seems that he envies their greatness and their sacred position, and that is why he has written against them with his despotic pen as much as possible. Truthfully, the tyranny of this unjust man against these truly oppressed people is no less than oppression and persecution of the Umayyads and Abbasids, but as has been said, "Whoever has fought with Ali's family, has been defeated." Finally, like the oppressors of past periods, he was caught in God's anger, and was punished in this world, before the Judgment Day, for his disgraceful acts.

انا نحن نزلنا الذكر وانا له لحافظون.

We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption).

Since the death of His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him), anyone who has claimed to be a prophet has been disgraced, and henceforth any unfortunate who falsely claims it will also be disgraced. Therefore, Kasravi's shame and hopelessness was inevitable. His destitute comrades, who were yearning for chieftainship in this unlawful way, were finally condemned to be destroyed, and the clear-sighted society of Islam rejected them.

The Prophet or the book, which has truly been sent by God to guide mankind, is the preserver and guardian of mankind everywhere. His sayings are protected from lies and ignorance and slander, and his actions are protected from evil and ugliness.

انا نحن نزلنا الذكر وانا له لحافظون .

We have, without doubt, sent down the Message, and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption).

And the prime evidence of that honest Prophet's truthfulness is his modesty and chastity. Someone like Kasravi, whose letters are full of accusations and ignorance and cheating and hooliganism, is obviously a liar, and God does not support him. Therefore, his disgrace is certain, his destruction inevitable. The likes of Mosilmeh-E-Kazab, Asuad-Ebn-Kaebn-E-Issa, Zolkhammar Saheb-E-Sanaa, Sadjah daughter of Hareth-Ebn-E-Savid, and Talhat-Ebn-E-Khovaylad in the Bani Asad tribe, who lyingly boasted of prophecy, were more powerful than Kasravi. Now not even a smell of their names and platform is reaching the nose of the living.

After all, there have been tools for the destruction of each falsehood, and fighters to obliterate it. And a Just God rouses a group of zealots and send them to the battlefield and reveals false claims.

ولولا رفع الله الناس بعضهم ببعض لفسدت الارض ولكن الله ذو فضل على العالمين .

By means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief: But God is full of bounty to all the worlds.

Otherwise no poisonous virus would be defeated; it would not destroy itself. Yes, eloquent speakers and able writers are the champions of the present battle to uproot this type of riotous and adventurous and ridiculous pretender.

Kasravi

Who is Kasravi? In what part of Tabriz, and amongst what kind of family, has he been raised? His abusiveness and unreasonableness are similar to what group's? What is the history of his past life? What does Kasravi say? What does he mean by publishing and circulating writings that do not have a leg to stand on? Does he work for himself or others? Has it been to accumulate money and acquire fame, or are there hidden secret reasons? Is someone else hiding behind the curtain of his utterances? Has he taken up his work only because of jealousy and enmity against the liberal man of religion, or has the hand of foreigners been involved? In an age when Shi'ites and Sunnis are forgetting their former excessive ways and are reaching out their hands from far-away countries to be united, why has Kasravi renewed the war between the Sunnis and Shi'ites? He has talked about matters that are sensitive for these two tribes, and his letters are full of inflammatory remarks. This sort of talk has been abandoned by these two tribes. Why has he translated his book *Shiegary* into Arabic and sent it as a present to the Kuwaitis and Arabs? If his aim is to lead the Sunnis, why doesn't he send the book *Dar Piramoun Eslam*? These questions have made perceptive people doubtful. They say Kasravi has made a shameful pact with foreigners, and he has raised the shameful banner of internal disputes. As a result of this pact and banner, he has conveyed the platform of foreigners to the simpleminded. In addition to answering what Kasravi says, his rejectors keep track of those two matters, and justifiably so, because Kasravi claimed to have been chosen and he wrote as a leader of a prophetic mission. It has been said that the

messenger of God must be honorable as a person and in what he does. He should not be contaminated and impure, and any time his impurities are proven, as in those matters, his leadership and calling are invalidated at their roots.

Regarding ourselves and these two subjects, we will not write excessively about them. I do not like to dirty my pen with words of that sort, and naturally I don't like such words from the point of view of good manners, even though Kasravi has not neglected, as far as his character has allowed him, to be insulting and vilifying and impudent in regard to the holy authorities, religious saints, and great men. Yes, what comes out of a vase is what's in it. Other rejectors of Kasravi have acted in accordance with "the reward of a clod thrower is a stone."

فمن اعتدى عليكم فاعتدوا عليه بمثل ما اعتدى عليكم.

*If then anyone transgresses the prohibition
against you, transgress ye likewise against him.*

They have spoken and written, and will continue to speak and write after this, and will certainly add more clear proofs and evidence.

After Kasravi's Murder

After Kasravi was punished for what he said and for his impure behavior, his shameful platform was destroyed and obliterated. For some people, publicizing his name and letters seems to be uncalled for. But this is not the case. Rather, it is a duty to everyone at any time to answer what he has said and reveal his deceit. He has sown the seeds of cheating and dishonesty among the oppressed society of the Shi'ites, and in the minds of some uninformed, wandering people his objectives have not been answered. Although the copper bowl of his disgrace has fallen off the roof, and most youths have become aware of his lies and hypocrisy, the invalidity of his platform in every respect is not as clear as it should be. Yes, even some of the scholars and wise men of the Djafari have taken notice of

details of that deceitful person's statements, and whatever they have written and published is worthy of appreciation. Every Muslim has a duty that he inevitably has to perform, and every fighter has a weapon and a plan that perhaps is more effective against the enemy. All are responsible in the presence of God and truthfulness for neglect and lack of will. On the other hand, every lecturer and writer has friends and acquaintances that attribute importance to his statements and writings and consider it a duty to read and study his books. Therefore, it is essential for every Muslim lecturer and writer, especially if he is a Djafari, to try to prove the truthfulness of Shi'a, and tell and write about and defend God and truth.

For the most part, Kasravi's criticisms are the same as the statements by malevolent people against the religion or the writings of some opponents in the past. The criticisms are repeated in every age and period by a group of adventurers for some reason or other to confuse the thinking of society. This is why a group of fighters is required to hurry to the assistance of the weak and to warn uninformed youngsters about the accusations and lies. We also in our turn, must rise to our religious duties in defense of the pure and holy religion of the Djafari, and present to the population *Letter from the Shi'ites*, which was compiled about three years ago, but the publication and circulation of which was delayed because of my subsequent travels.³ I hope that it will be accepted in the court of His Majesty the Glorious God.

Six or seven years ago, one of my respectable friends brought me a copy of the magazine *Peyman* and asked me to read it and state orally or in writing any criticisms I might have. He later sent me the sixth and seventh issues. In reading *Peyman*, I saw, without exaggeration, the vanity and ignorance and duplicity dominant in his character. I wanted very much to

3 *Letter from the Shi'ites was compiled in the Muslim year 1363 (1942), and was published in 1366 (1945) in Holy Meshed, Khorasan. The second printing was in 1369 (1948), and the third was in 1397 (1976). A.E.*

publicize his mistakes and blunders, using the form of questions and answers in simple and everyday language, so that uninformed youngsters could find out the truth. Kasravi himself had wanted challenges, and had even invited respectful clergy to challenge and debate with him. I posed a few questions to him and wrote a few things to him, requesting that he publish my exact questions and answer them. But without mentioning my questions, and without any connection to them and from a different direction, he began to write in opposition. I wrote again, insisting that my exact questions and the answers to them be inserted in *Peyman*. I would not permit even one word of what I wrote to be omitted, so that readers could see it all and judge for themselves. Nevertheless, the veteran leader embezzled my words, and without doing what I asked blackened a few pages with his words and sent them to me. I wrote a third time: "You are not worthy of conversation and do not have a steady foot on the battlefield." So after that, I closed the doors of correspondence and sat waiting for an opportunity.

I was in search of someone among his followers to do what I intended through him. One of my associates, among his friends, agreed to do this so the exact conversation would be published and circulated and put to the readers for judgment. But this libertine, like his worldly spiritual leader, fled the battlefield and disavowed the agreement he had signed in front of a few respectable witnesses. Finally, after having been disappointed by Kasravi's side and his followers, I was forced to write this book as a conversation between myself and my dear child Hadj Mirsa Abdulrasul Ehghaghi, and most of the questions were discussed between us.

Although Kasravi has been killed, those few who joined him out of greed for chieftainship are still here, and his accomplices in his criticisms from different religions will read *Letter from the Shi'ites*, and God willing we have prepared ourselves to fight them until the last breath. At this point we beg help from our uniquely potent God, and begin to state our case.

2

ON MONOTHEISM

A*— Sir, my first question is, what makes a religion true?

H— Son, only piety makes a religion true, and unless there is piety, a religion is not true.

A— What are our clearest proofs of the existence of a creator? Materialists say that the universe, as it is now, developed gradually by itself, and Kasravi says also that no one except himself has answered the materialists.

H— First of all, Kasravi should explain why he has written his letters for people to see and read despite the fact that the proofs he has given for monotheism are merely exudations from the pens of theists of the past. He makes his statements for the sake of making them. Secondly, the existence of the creature is in itself enough to prove the existence of the creator, and there is no need to shout out the demonstrations and reasons. When one observes the various earthly and heavenly manifestations of creation, and the equilibrium and perfect balance in them, no doubt remains of the existence of a single creator, and we need no other proof. As the Koran says,

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكُّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ .

* A is the first initial of the name of the writer's son, *Abdulrasoul*, and H is the initial of the writer's name. Trans.

*Is there a doubt about God, the Creator of the
heavens and the earth?*

Anyone who ignores conscience and seeks some form of logic is imprudent and impoverished. Moreover, the great similarity of such different species, as mosquitos and microscopic animals and elephants and the huge animals of the sea, or the quality of construction of the earth and sky, and the amazing organization of the universe, and the union of matter on earth and in the universe, and the unity of their methods of living and surviving—all this proves that everything has been created by one creator, that one able and skillful master has planned it all. Monotheists have obeyed an indestructable law of conscience and have believed in the existence of a sole God, because they have seen that the existence of a creature without a creator is impossible. Of necessity, they have believed in an inventor of this wonderful factory of the universe, and they do not have to struggle over it. It is the duty of the materialists to provide proof for their claim. Can materialists prove that a window has had no carpenter or that a building has had no builder or that a sewing machine, for example, has no inventor? If they can ever prove one of these even with quasi-reasons, we promise that pious men will cease believing piously. Lastly, my dear, if a mule, which is famous for being the most stupid animal, is lashed by a whip, he would turn around and look back and believe that the blow has been struck by a flogger—from the effect he would realize that there is an effector. These materialists knowingly and comprehendingly want to remain below the level of a mule.

A (smiling slightly)— No argument could be clearer than this, and any intelligent human being would be satisfied with it. Now, I ask you to explain briefly and usefully the monotheism of the Djafaris. Because Kasravi had pointed out difficulties in Shi'ite monotheism, I would like you to answer his criticisms.

H— We Djafaris, who are like saplings in our beliefs, drink water only from the pure and clean fountain of Islam. We pray to the only God through our personalities and actions.

The Uniqueness of God

This means that there is a holy person who is always present, and that the existence and survival of all creatures derive from His life-giving effects. The rotation of the wheel of the universe is part of the order he has established, and all mortal action ends up being an expression of His divine will and His acts. He is one and has no associates. Of necessity, He is free and needs no assistants. From nothingness He was born, and from His holy being nothing has been born. His being in every place and at every time is beyond the perception of man, and He is above thinking and reflection.

The Uniqueness of Character

Moreover, knowledge and power and life, hearing and seeing and the like, are the registered characteristics of His special being, and He has no associates in these characteristics. No scholar or inspirer, no one who hears or sees, can be found in the circle of existence, except Him. Only his unique power dominates every detail and truth of the universe, everything that has happened in the past and will in the future, the condition of the earth and sky. Whatever an angel or prophet or heir of a prophet knows about these things is learned only from His teaching. Except for God's inspiration and revelations, there is no knowledge and could not be. Whatever they have comes from their God. They have not brought anything with them from anywhere, and in this world they cannot acquire anything but the gifts of His Majesty the Creator. Those who are ordinary creatures use their natural gifts, and those who are chosen have been sent out to teach the world and they obtain their profession from their sender. And finally, the absolutely powerful and learned is He whose knowledge and ability have no limit.

The Uniqueness of Deeds

Creation and providing, revival and death, are acts that are special to Him, and no one has the right to meddle and no one has the power to be His partner. Fathers and mothers, clouds and wind and the moon and sun and firmament, the

earth and sky, fixed stars and the planets, are all among the instruments the Lord has placed on the tray of wisdom to unify His creation machinery, and whenever we see an angel or human being who is a prophet, or his descendants who perform such acts, it is either by order of the creator, a miracle, or an extraordinary show of power as proof of the truth of Himself, as His Majesty Jesus created the butterfly or revived the dead, which God attributed in the Koran to Jesus. Or our Lord the Creator has included some of these acts among the instruments of existence, and they count among the instruments of existence. As He says in the Koran,

قل يتوفيكم ملك الموت الذي وكل بكم.

Say: "The Angel of Death, put in charge of you, will (duly) take your souls."

Certainly, the angel of death has no independence in seizing souls but is only God's appointee and His instrument.

Uniqueness in Worship

We do not allow worship of anyone but His Majesty the Worshipful. No one except His Majesty deserves praise and sanctification. Genuflection and prostration and whatever are signs of obedience and worship and humility and modesty are fitting for that Great Being and none other. Angels prostrate themselves to men to show respect. For us Shi'ites any worship and obedience that has any minute amount of doubt, or lacks the closeness and pleasure of His Majesty the Worshipful, either in praise of God or as petitioner, will be rejected. This is the belief of the Djafaris in worshipping the God of the mortals.

A— Kasravi says the Shi'ites are polytheistic and worship the dead and admire domes, and those who go as pilgrims to the places of holy martyrdom are running to worship their Imams. This interpretation among some youngsters is almost indisputable. I ask you to tell me how to argue against this position as clearly as possible.

H— My dear, this is not Kasravi's fault, but Kasravi's teachers—that is, the tribe of the Vahabis—and Kasravi has

followed them blindly and has made this topic his cause. Anyway, it is not necessary to beat around the bush or bring in external reasons or logic. I only set forth a part of the pilgrimage procedure and some passages from the prayers that are at the beginning and close of this religious ceremony, until the falseness of Kasravi's accusations and his contempt for Shi'a and its monotheism becomes clear.

After the Djafari pilgrims perform ablutions, or wash themselves for the pilgrimage, according to the teachings of the honorable Prophet (praise be upon him), he stands at the porch of the first door and says the first prayer in the pilgrimage ceremony. When he first opens his mouth, the pilgrim glorifies, praises, and eulogizes the Creator of mankind, saying, "Praise and appreciation belong to the Lord that has guided me to His religion and has succeeded in the way He has invited me. Oh Lord, You are the most generous purpose and the most esteemed of future mankind. Oh Lord, do not frighten me and do not cut off my hope for your knowledge. Oh Lord, I have come to get closer to Your court through the child of the daughter of Your Prophet Muhammad (praise be upon him). And in this world and the future world, accept me and make me one of the confidants of Your court." The passage, "Oh Lord, You are the best and highest purpose of and direction for the future of mankind," especially proves that the Djafari pilgrim has stepped into this paradise only to worship his sole, adored God and no one else. Two more prayers are required in the ceremony of pilgrimage to the mosque of the Iman Houssein (praise be upon him). One says, "Oh Lord, I prayed and genuflected and prostrated myself before you, without placing an associate with you, because prayer and prostration and genuflection are not justified, except to You. Oh Lord, bless Muhammad and his family and send them my best greetings and praises." Now, my dear, is that not clear evidence that the pilgrim affirms the uniqueness and oneness of the Creator of the universe and knows all his prayers to be special to the Sole Deity?

Will Kasravi's criticisms and calumny influence a wise and free person after all this affirming and submission and entreaty

and supplication of a Djafari at the court of His Majesty God? After seeing these prayers and studying piety, will noble youngsters still agree with Kasravi? I am suprised that Kasravi is not at all afraid of the disgrace and shame and the consequences of lying and accusation, and does not fear the revenge of the avenger of the earth and sky. He has made animosity toward a group of oppressed truth seekers his occupation and his art. He has chosen misleading questions and hooliganism as his guide. And he makes more confused the confused thoughts of this oppressed nation.

Anyhow, in addition to what has been said, the word Allah-O-Akbar, which means God is greater, prevents the pilgrim from paying attention to the grandeur of superficial places and the external glory and power of the high domes and jewel-studded tomb and plentiful gold and silver and splendor of possessions and swarm of people and large crowds of pilgrims. He is reminded of the almightiness and greatness of the Great Creator. One of the special rules of Muslim society is the recital one hundred times of "Allah-O-Akbar," because in this prayer the authorities and acknowledgement of the pure Imams are mentioned more often than God is, the honorable pilgrims therefore must pay more attention to the greatness of God. Thus is pilgrimage by the Shi'ites, and these are their prayers. Look, read, judge.

These Djafari lovers of God and monotheism say: "Oh Lord, even my coming to this blessed sanctuary is for Your pleasure, and all acts are for Your sake, and for me there is no purpose or goal but You." Again, that embodiment of untruthfulness writes, "Shi'ites worship their Imams." I do not know what kind of hatred he has for Shi'ites that he cannot avoid committing any crime or offense because of it. Lying and calumny are mankind's disgraceful crimes. I am amazed how he supposes that there is strength in appeals that are based on such a feeble foundation.

This criticism is like other Vahabi criticisms. They see Hous-sain's dust at the place where the Shi'ites prostrate themselves, and say Shi'ites are idol worshippers and that in prayer they

prostrate themselves before their idols. These uninformed people do not want to know that in the Djafari religion it is not permissible during prayer to prostrate oneself upon anything that is edible or wearable or is a mineral. Therefore a Djafari always has a clean clod of soil with him, and when necessary puts it down on the place where he will prostrate himself. The soil of Karbala has been chosen because of its superiority and it is the dirt that lies next to the unique martyr of Islam and the dear child of His Majesty Muhammad (praise be upon him). In case of a lack of dirt or clean earth, they prostrate themselves on wood or a skin or leaves of trees. The fairy tale that the masters of malice and the uninformed have told have no relation to reality. Kasravi's criticism is the same as this criticism.¹

A— Everything you've said on this subject is correct and faultless. But Kasravi says your answer to his criticism is, God forbid, the same as the reply of the idol worshippers to the opposition of the Prophet of Islam (praise be upon him).

H— Now that it has been proven that Shi'ites do not worship Imams (greetings to them) and do not include them in the worship of His Majesty the Sole Deity, and that whatever acts they perform are only for the pleasure of the Creator of the universe, and that the direction of their worship is justified only for Him, we say our answer to Kasravi is not comparable to the answer given by the Prophet to the idol worshippers. There is no comparison at all. It is a misleading question and confusing to the simple-minded. Listen, my dear, the Arabs have said: "We will not worship idols unless they bring us closer to God." Therefore, our belief is different from the assertions of the polytheists in two respects. One regards worship. The Arabs confess to worshipping idols, whereas the Shi'ites say that any

1 *When His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) remonstrated with the Arabs and forbade them to worship stone and inanimate objects, they replied,*

وما نعبدهم الا ليقربونا الى الله زلفى .

We serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to God.

worship except of the Sole Deity is polytheism and wrong. No one but He deserves to be worshipped. The other is that the Arabs are talking about a lifeless stone, which they have installed as an instrument for intercession.² In the case of the Shi'ites, they know that the noble Imams were made intercessors by God out of the purest truth. Therefore, the obscenity of both assertions of the idol worshippers is clear and plain. They worship other than God, and we denounce worship other than God. They imagine as their intercessor something they have made with their own hands, while for us the intercessors are the chosen of God. Kasravi's understanding is not balanced and logical so that he could make a correct comparison. Can the idol that the Arab has carved from stone with his own hand, and which lacks any achievement or talent, be placed on the same scale as the totally intelligent friend of God and glorious chosen one and His honest messenger, whose dignity has been exalted by the blessed words "I swear to you life?"³ Then, should not one find a wise word in the writings of a person who claims intelligence and thoughtfulness? Are these his precious statements? I do not know this impoverished and thoughtless youngster who is moved by this kind of dishonest and lusterless statement.

2 *As God also says about the Arabs,*

ويعبدون من دون الله ما لا يضرهم ولا ينفعهم ويقولون هؤلاء
شفعاؤنا عند الله .

*They serve, besides God, things that hurt them
not nor profit them, and they say: "These are
our intercessors with God."*

- 3 *The Great Lord said to His Prophet, "I swear on your life," by which He meant, Oh Muhammad, I swear on your soul and your, life. Now, is it just to equate the friend of God, who swears to his life, with a lifeless stone? Kasravi does not imagine that the noble man who is the instrument of prosperity for mankind and the intercessor against ignorance could also be the intercessor for crime and sin.*

A (smiling out of joy and mirth)— As the Great God is my witness, my soul has been freshened by the influence of what you have said. I feel a great joy in myself. But if you allow me, I will finish Kasravi's criticism in this respect.

H— I have allowed you from the beginning, and I say repeatedly, tell me whatever criticisms you find in Kasravi's book and ask for answers. My purpose is to publish this conversation, and I do not want there to be any criticisms in his letters that have not been answered.

A— Kasravi fundamentally denies intercession and attacks the belief with a very ugly tone, saying, "God is not a king or ruler for whom intercession in His presence would be correct. Moreover, in no court in any country is a mediator allowed for a criminal or guilty party, much less in the court of God's justice. Mediation is totally rejected and impossible there."

H— In the glorious Koran there are many passages about intercession, and the Kind God has mentioned the existence of mediators and the acceptance of mediation in this and the other world.

A— Sir, you quote passages in the Koran for Kasravi and perhaps he will not accept them. Provide him with other arguments and logical reasons, so that he has no way to escape.

H— Had Kasravi objected to Koran or sayings of the Prophet of Islam, we would have been content with rational and logical explanations. But Kasravi's criticism concerns Shi'ite beliefs and the sayings of the Djafaris. Also he confronts the Djafaris on these subjects with similar passages, and with his own statements, and he rejects Shi'a with sayings from the Koran. That's why when he replies we must first read the verses in the Koran that may not be interpreted allegorically, and show him the blunt statements of the book of God and prove that the Djafari religion is the truth of Islam and in accordance with the laws of His Majesty God. Then we proceed to intellectual arguments, until the truth of our beliefs and his ignorance and duplicity become more obvious, God willing.

A— That is right. Now, recite the passages you have in mind.

H— First, the honorable verse:

الذين يحملون العرش ومن حوله يسبحون بحمد ربهم ويؤمنون به
ويستغفرون للذين آمنوا ربنا وسعت كل شيء رحمة وعلما فاغفر
للذين تابوا واتبعوا سبيلك وقهم عذاب الجحيم ربنا وادخلهم جنات
عدن التي وعدتهم ومن صلح من آبائهم وأزواجهم وذرياتهم انك
انت العزيز الحكيم.

Those who sustain the Throne (of God) and those around it sing Glory and Praise to their Lord; believe in Him; and implore forgiveness for those who believe: "Our Lord! Thy reach is over all things in Mercy and Knowledge. Forgive, then, those who turn in repentance, and follow Thy Path; and preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire"

Second,

والملائكة يسبحون بحمد ربهم ويستغفرون لمن في الارض الا ان
الله هو الغفور الرحيم.

And the angels celebrate the Praises of their Lord and pray for forgiveness for (all) beings on earth: Behold! Verily God is He, the Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

In these two honorable verses, the Sole God bluntly declares the existence at all times of a mediator who asks God's court for the remission of mankind's sins.

Third,

يومئذ لا تنفع الشفاعة الا من اذن له الرحمن ورضي له قولا.

On that Day shall no intercession avail except for those for whom permission has been granted by (God) Most Gracious and whose word is acceptable to Him.

This means that on the day of resurrection, in the presence of God, intercession in behalf of a sinner would be beneficial and if it is accepted God would issue an appropriate order.

Fourth,

ولا يشفعون الا لمن ارتضى .

And they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable.

Fifth,

من ذا الذي يشفع عنده الا بإذنه .

He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) Before or After or Behind them.

Sixth,

ولا تنفع الشفاعة عنده الا لمن أذن له .

No intercession can avail in His Presence except for those for whom He has granted permission.

Seventh,

وكم من ملك في السموات لا تغنى شفاعتهم شيئا الا من بعد أن يأذن الله لمن يشاء ويرضى .

How many-so-ever the angels in the heavens, their intercession will avail nothing except after God has given leave for whom He pleases and that he is acceptable to Him.

Briefly, in these seven verses, the Kind God has given proof of the existence of an intercessor on the day of resurrection, if God gives his permission, and that a sinner could be forgiven.

Eighth,

ولو انهم اذ ظلموا انفسهم جاءوك فاستغفروا الله واستغفر لهم الرسول
لوجدوا الله توابا رحيما .

If they had only, when they were unjust to themselves, come unto thee and asked God's forgiveness for them, they would have found God indeed Oft-returning, Most Merciful.

The honorable verse makes it clear that the intercession of His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) is accepted and would not be rejected.

Ninth,

واذا قيل لهم تعالوا يستغفر لكم رسول الله لووا رؤوسهم .

And when it is said to them, "Come, the Apostle of God will pray for your forgiveness," they turn aside their heads.

In these two honorable verses, the Kind God especially directs major criminals to the court of the Prophet, so that they would be able to use the intercession and prayers of His friend.

Tenth,

وما كان الله ليعذبهم وانت فيهم .

But God was not going to send them a Penalty whilst thou wast amongst them.

The Sole God, in this honorable verse, has put the value and esteem of the Prophet's rights above what the narrow-minded imagine. The position, it seems, is loftier than intercession. He says, "Because you are among the Arabs who deserve punishment, I will not bring torment down on them, and I will not punish them for what they have done or said." Deniers of intercession observe, His Majesty the Messenger has not yet

mediated for them and has not opened his mouth to intercede. But only his noble presence among this group has prevented descent into torment, and out of respect for his blessed being the Kind God does not punish the sinner. Now, if a sinner or person with faults regrets his acts and faces them before God, and the friend of God asks absolution for him, is it not intelligent to conclude that his sins would be forgiven and that he would enter the ocean of the Lord's mercy? We do not know what Kasravi does when he is confronted with these verses. It seems that he is uninformed about the Koran and these clear and obvious statements. Lying and deceitfulness have their limits. Does this unfortunate person suppose that his readers are blind or deaf, or goats or sheep? For one day the uninformed follower will read one of these verses or hear it from a reader, and he will think about it a few minutes and discover the deceit of the artificial leader. Then, what am I going to say!

A— In truth, these honorable verses, are clear and obvious in proving the existence of intercession and that there is intercessor for this world and the next, and it is apparent that the support of the Shi'a belief is strong. But along with these verses are others that negate intercession, especially on the day of resurrection, and Kasravi holds fast to these. That's why there is contradiction between the two groups of verses. Compared to other truths and interpretations, they seem to be contradictory verses, which have caused disputes in belief among the Islamic groups, Kasravi especially has insulted the glorious Koran in regard to this topic.

H— My dear, there is absolutely no contradiction in the glorious Koran. There is no conflict whatever between its verses. What Kasravi and others imagine to be contradiction derives from their ignorance and their inexpressiveness of thought and knowledge. For example, in regard to this problem of intercession, the verses that prove the existence of intercessors and accept intercession before the court of God are about those who believe their sins and faults are pardonable. And because they themselves have pure belief and correct faith, they are pardonable. That is why intercession by one of God's

favorites tips the scale in favor of good acts and beliefs, enabling the believer to enter heaven.

And where the Just God does deny intercession, it is for the polytheist and impious who constantly raises the banner of opposition and animosity in face of the truth, or for the dissembler who has concluded a treaty with the enemies of God. This kind of black-hearted person has failed in the court of this world and not only the next one. In the glorious Koran, the Sole God says,

ما كان للنبي والذين آمنوا ان يستغفروا للمشركين •

It is not fitting, for the Prophet and those who believe, that they should pray for forgiveness for Pagans.

He also says,

استغفر لهم او لا تستغفر لهم ان تستغفر لهم سبعين مرة فلن يغفر الله لهم بانهم كفروا بالله ورسوله •

Whether thou ask for their forgiveness, or not, (their sin is unforgiveable): If thou ask seventy times for their forgiveness, God will not forgive them: Because they have rejected God and His Apostle.

A similar verse appears in the Monafeghin Surah, and passages with like meaning exist in other parts of the Koran, all of them pointing to the fact that they are not pardonable and that their sin of polytheism, or blasphemy, is not forgivable or tolerable and that intercession would not be influential. Therefore, there is no contradiction between the honorable verses, and each one of these heavenly sayings in its place is correct and clear.

Also do not forget the point in the honorable verse,

ما كان للنبي والذين امنوا ان يستغفروا للمشركين •

It is not fitting, for the Prophet and those who believe, that they should pray for forgiveness for Pagans.

It purposely transmits the mediation of pious men, let alone the Prophet and Amir Almomenin,* chief of the faithful. Thus a pure and pious man can also intercede for sinners who are pardonable.

Furthermore, there are numerous verses in the glorious Koran that are directed to pious men. God says: "For yourselves and your father and mother and pious men and women ask forgiveness." But in the Sunni tradition there are more hadiths and stories than we can count.

A (after thinking a bit)— Are intercession and prayer one? Whenever this is true, Kasravi seems to be very ignorant and unintelligent. It is a very simple and extensive practice. I suppose even Kasravi himself prays and curses with his pen and tongue. And if he knows God, he certainly seeks prosperity and well-being. I do not know how much this unfortunate person is misled and confused. His statements are not like an intelligent person's at all. Are, in truth the meaning of prayer and intercession the same?

H— My dear, are you surprised? As I have said, the very meaning of prayer and of intercession makes them the same. Prayer is a request. Intercession is a request in behalf of a person. Intercession of prophets and Imams and pious men in the glorious presence of His Majesty the Creator of the Universe is the same as seeking absolution. Prayer is the asking of forgiveness. It is not a command or order. Simple youngsters read Kasravi's hooliganism and the word mediation, and they imagine that intercession is some kind of commandment that is an insult and act of boldness in the court of God.

A— Among our beliefs that are similar to intercession, there is one that the likes of Kasravi staunchly deny.

H— What is the belief? State it clearly.

A— We say that the kindness of the family of the Prophet is by itself an intercession for sinners, and the kindness of their

* *Ali*. Trans.

Majesties the Fourteen Innocent Ones (grace be upon them)* makes every fault and sin disappear. As the poet of the Shi'ites says,

حبه الا كسير لودر على سينات الخلق صارت حسنات

The kindness of Ali is an alchemist. If it is poured on the sins of people, they become virtuous.

H— Child, this belief is also not that frightening, and it is very easy to solve this problem intellectually and in accordance with Scripture. We have hundreds of predicates about this subject from the Shi'ites and Sunnis, and they will not be useful for Kasravi's purpose. But I will tell you a few hadiths from the Sunnis and the Sunni religious authorities, so that it will become easier to prove the belief against the deniers. After telling these hadiths we will also pay attention to the judgments of intellect and thought, and moreover these predicates strengthen the argument for intercession.

His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) said: "Take the friendship of our family, then whoever finds the countenance of God and at the same loves us will enter heaven because of our intercession. I swear to God that my soul is in the hands of God. No act of worship will yield any benefit without admission to our truth." Tabarani has presented this hadith in the book *Osat*, and Sayouty in the book *Ehya Almeyet*, and Bonhani in *Arbaeen* and Ebn-E-Hadjar in *Savaegh*, and many religious authorities have quoted from these books. And His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) said: "Acquaintance with the family of Muhammad" (praise be upon him) "is acquittal from the fire of Hell, and love for the family of Muhammad is crossing the bridge to paradise and guardianship of the family the Muhammad is security from torment." This hadith has been presented by Qazi Ayaz in the book *Alshafa* at the beginning of the fortieth page in the second chapter, which

* *The twelve Imams, plus Muhammad and Fatima.* Trans.

was printed at the start of the year 1328.*

His Majesty has also said, "On the day of resurrection no worshipper will take a step unless he is asked four questions: Of his life, how did he spend it? Of his corpse, in what soil did it decompose? Of his wealth, how did he use it? And of his love for our family." This hadith has been told by Tabarani, who took it from Ebn Abbas, and by Sayouty in *Ehya Almeyet* and Bonhani in *Arbaeen*, and by many other noble men.

His Majesty has also said: "Whenever a man stands among pillars, then prays and fasts at the same time he is an enemy of the family of Muhammad, he will enter Hell." This hadith has been told by Tabarani and Hakem, also in Bonhani's *Arbaeen* and *Ehya Sayouty's* and in other books.

His Majesty has also said "Whoever dies for love of Muhammad's family has died a martyr. And know this, whoever dies for love of Muhammad's family has died a forgiven man. And know this, whoever dies for love of Muhammad's family has died a pious man and his faith is fulfilled. And know this, whoever dies for love of Muhammad's family, the angel of death will take him to heaven and Nakir and Monker** will give him glad tidings. And know this, whoever dies for love of Muhammad's family will be taken to heaven as a bride is taken to the groom's bridal chamber. And know this, whoever dies for love of Muhammad's family, God will make his grave a sacred place that will be visited by angels of mercy. And know this, whoever dies in enmity toward Muhammad's family, when the day of resurrection comes there will be writing on his forehead which says that he is deprived of the mercy of God." Thus ends His Majesty's sermon, which is as famous as the Sama sermon. This hadith has been told by Imam Thalabi in his interpretation of the honorable verse,

قل لا اسألكم عليه اجرا الا المودة في القربى .

* 1907. Trans.

** *The two angels who interrogate the dead in the grave.* Trans.

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin."

In the great commentary by Jarir Ebn Abdullah on the Messenger of God (praise be upon him), and Zamkhashri in his book *Kashaaf*, the same interpretation has been given of this verse.

His Majesty has also said: "One does not like us unless he is a virtuous, pious man, and one is not our enemy unless he is a vicious hypocrite." This hadith was told in *Molla*. As is mentioned in the second Maghiad of the fourteenth Maghsad in Chapter Two of the book *Savaagh*, six hadiths were relayed from pages 22-24 of the book *Moradjeeat*. The author of *Moradjeeat* addresses Ghazi Djame Azhar, saying: "That God gives the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him) precedence over all other families is sufficient for us Shi'ites to give the family precedence." God even considers praise for them to be a duty for all worshippers, and it is contained in all the essential prayers. Therefore without a prayer to Muhammad's family, no one's prayer is correct, even if the person praying is a Sadigh or Farough or Anvar.⁴ Whoever worships God with established prayers, must, during the prayer, worship God with a greeting to Muhammad's family. He worships by testifying to monotheism and prophecy. And this position is of such high rank that notables have humbled themselves before it. Imam Shafiee⁵ says,

يا اهل بيت رسول الله حبكم فرض من الله في القرآن انزله
كفاكم من عظيم الفضل انكم من لم يصل عليكم لا صلوة له

4 Sadigh means Abu-Bakr, Farough means Omar, and Zanourin means Othman. It is said that even the three caliphs must praise the family of Muhammad in their prayers or the prayer is void.

5 Imam Shafiee is one of the four Imams of the Sunnis.

*Oh members of the family of God's Messenger,
your love has been made essential by God, and
it is stated in the Koran that whoever does not
send you greetings, his prayer will not be
accepted.*

These two verses are from Shafiee's famous euologies, and it is very famous and widely known that many of the Sunnis consider them to be undoubtful, as does Ebn-Hadjar in interpreting the honored verse,

ان الله وملائكته يصلون على النبي

*God and His Angels send blessings on the
Prophet.*

It appears on page 28 of his book *Savaegh*, on page 99 of Bonhani's *Ashraf-al-Mobadat*, in Imam Abi-Bakr-Shahabetdin's *Rashghataalsadi*, and other places.

A— These hadiths cannot be denied, especially since they have been told by the Sunni people or scholars of the Sunni persuasion, and it is impossible that they would mention a superior Shi'ite virtue untruthfully or write about it without correct proof. But why must the kindness and love or malice and enmity of a person result in his going to Heaven or Hell, and what is the intellectual argument for this?

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- 6 *The book Moradjeeat is a collection of conversations that took place in Egypt between the great scholar His Excellency Agha-y-Said Abdul Houssain Sharaf-al-Din Mosau Ameli and the great scholar of Cairo Ghazi Djame-al-Azhar. With absolute candor, His Excellency Ghazi has confessed to the truth of the Shi'ite creed and to the correctness of the proof given by Said. This conversation took place in the center of Sunni learning and in an important Sunni society, and has also been published there. I will take my proofs from this book so that our opponents have no room for criticism.*

H— Because the divine religion is indebted to them. They have sacrificed their lives and wealth and their entire being for the divine creed and have protected it against robbery by strangers and the malevolent. Each one of the Imams (grace be upon them) has been the unique knower and embracer of the laws of the book and Sunna and the most steadfast fighter and the most devoted to God's faith. The Only God is the sender of religion, and the Prophet and Deliverer of Islam is its protector.

That's why the Imamate is one of the principal laws of religion for the Shi'ites, and the truth is with them, as you heard from Sunni scholars in the hadiths about prophecy. Imam Shafiee also has confessed that on the resurrection day you will be asked about guardianship and love for Ali and the family of Ali, as well as about monotheism and prophecy. I will present you with a verse more clear and a narrative more obvious in the interpretation of the honorable verse,

وقفوهم انهم مسئولون.

But stop them for they must be asked.

In addition to the Shi'ite scholars, the Sunni men of distinction have confessed that the question will be about guardianship of Ali and the children of Ali (grace be upon them). In the book *Moradjeaat*, on page 30, the Imam writes: "As the book *Savaegh* has said in interpreting this verse, and Daylami also has said from Abi Saiid Khadri, His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) in interpreting the honorable verse has said, "It means the guardianship of Ali (grace be upon him)." And Vahedi has also said, in interpreting the honorable verse,

وقفوهم انهم مسئولون.

But stop them for they must be asked.

that on the resurrection day they will ask about the guardianship of Ali and his family (grace be upon them). Vahedi says that the Sole God ordered his Prophet to make people under-

stand that for the prophetic mission He wants no wages from them other than love for the family that is the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him). This means that on the resurrection day they will be asked, have they treated the family of the Prophet as their duty requires? Have they acted as the honorable Prophet has willed them to, or have they spoiled and neglected their rights? Vahedi's statement is finished.

The author of *Moradjeaat*, Mr. Said Ameli, says "It is enough for you that Ebn-E-Hadjar in Chapter Eleven of *Savaegh* has attributed this verse, from the exalted verses, to the family."

Second, His Majesty the Glorious Messenger (praise be upon him) said: "On the doors of heaven is written, 'There is no God but the Only God. Muhammad is the Messenger of God. Ali is the brother of the Messenger of God.' " This hadith was told by Tabarani in the book *Alausat* and by Khatib in the book *Almottafegh* and by Almotefaregh, and the author of *Kanzalem* in his selection has relayed it in the margin of page 35 of Section Five from the book *Masnad Ahmad* and also in the margin of page 48 by Ebn-E-Asaker.

Kasravi says that Shi'ites insert into the religion some human beings and make their names and love part of the religion. If Kasravi had true faith he would have read the hadiths told by the Sunni religious authorities and the nobles of Sunna and he would have considered the Shi'ites to be just. This holy belief is not only Shi'ite, but Muslim in general.

The honorable verse,

قل لا استلکم علیہ اجرا الا المودة فی القربی .

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin."

in which God says, "Oh my messenger, tell people that I do not want any wages or reward except friendship for and cordiality toward the family of the prophet," is sufficient by itself to prove our belief. And there is no hesitation or doubt about the meaning of it. Indeed, it is a verse that admits of no allegorical inter-

pretation and with an audible voice shouts: Oh Muslims, love of the family of Muhammad is incumbent in you and essential.

A— In truth, as a result of Kasravi's monstrous hooliganism and repeated statements, people have imagined the problem of intercession to be very difficult and it would appear to be insoluble, whereas it is easy to do so and his criticism is obliterated. Now, tell me whether all sins are pardonable, or where there are distinctions among them.

H— There are various sins: sins of error and sins that can be divided into those that are major and those that are minor. But there is no use in our delving into the details. Overall, there are two types of sin. First is injustice to one's self, which in the terminology is called the "right of God" and consists of abandonment of prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage to Mecca, or getting drunk and eating pork and so on—acts that harm and damage the self. Second are the sins in which injustice is done to others, and these are called "sins against mankind," such as thievery, robbery, abusiveness, false accusations, and obviously committing lude acts in public and encroachment on people's wives and daughters, and one of the greatest is murder, and even greater than that is sedition.

According to verses in the Koran and the interpretations of them in hadiths and predicates, sins in the first category are pardonable and the punishment is remissible under prescribed conditions, if there is repentance and forgiveness is asked. He says in the honorable verse,

ومن يعمل سوءا او يظلم نفسه ثم يستغفر الله يجد الله غفورا رحيما .

If any one does evil or wrongs his own soul but afterwards seeks God's forgiveness, he will find God oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

But in the second category, not only are repentance and pleas for forgiveness required, but it is also necessary to give satisfaction to the wronged, and whenever the wronged person is not satisfied the sinner is punished condignly by God's justice. Detailed accounts of these matters from the variety of sin and

intercession and satisfaction of the wronged—to the satisfaction given by God or through intercession—are mentioned in the book of morality and religion and all of them are intellectually acceptable and conform to the rules of logic.

The Divine Courts and Courts of the Judicial System

We do not want to leave this point unsaid. As you mentioned a few questions back, Kasravi knows that the divine will and verdict are the same as the verdict of a judge in a judicial court, because he says that no one can intercede on behalf of someone whose crime has been proven in court. A criminal, a murderer, must be punished for his acts. Likewise, intercession and mediation are rejected in the system of divine justice.

We reply that in the courts of the judicial system the repentance and petition for forgiveness by a criminal are not accepted and should not be. No matter how much a person who has committed an offense entreats and weeps and expresses remorse it will have no consequence, and must not, because everyone in the court is subject to and humble before the law. But in the divine court of God, the Proclaimer of justice shouts,

قل يا ايها الذين اسرفوا على انفسهم لا تقنطوا من رحمة الله ان الله
يعفو الذنوب جميعا.

*Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed
against their souls! Despair not of the mercy of
God: for God forgives all sins.*

Oh Kasravi, one cannot compare the divine court with the court of humans. The judge has no authority but to obey the law. The judge of human justice cannot relinquish to the criminal a nation's or country's codified rights. But the Great God can reward the wronged, and He can forgive the remorseful oppressor who has approached the doorsteps of the great. Is not conceding one's rights and satisfying the oppressed with kindness, instead of punishing the aggressor, contrary to reason? I do not understand where this jealous man gets the power and courage to shut the doors of repentance and

forgiveness, which all heaven-sent books have clearly declared to be open. The God whom the prophets of the past have presented to be kinder than a father and mother is characterized by this oppressor as a bloodthirsty executioner of human beings. In Kasravi's mind, therefore, no sinner should repent in the court of God, because he has no hope of forgiveness. Let his impure religion and tyrannical faith be destroyed! Now, I am amazed that this unjust man has released the collar of all religions that justify intercession and has grabbed hold only of the garment of the Shi'ites. Where does this malice and enmity toward the Shi'ites of Ali come from, and what is the purpose of it?

Notice of Us by the Prophet and Imam after His Death

A— The question of intercession has become entirely clear and obvious, and there is absolutely no argument against it. But in the same area Kasravi has another criticism. He says that this Prophet or Imam who was killed, or in any event died, has been cut off from this world. He does not hear our voices, and he cannot understand our goals. Therefore pilgrimage and greetings to him, and asking him to intercede, are all without effect and are null.

H— On the contrary, in the opinion of the Shi'ites, all Muslims—all righteous people, and especially the fighters and martyrs for God—are alive and free, and their superficial death does not prevent them from noticing or paying attention to this world. As the God of both worlds has said in His true book,

ولا تحسبن الذين قتلوا في سبيل الله امواتا بل احياء عند ربهم
يرزقون*

Think not of those who are slain in God's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the Presence of their Lord.

He also has specified exactly the same thing, with very little difference in Surah Boghra, verse 155. Thus they hear our greetings and respond to them and they also intercede. There is no argument against this.

A— Perhaps the Koran does mention that their souls are alive and that their spirits survive, but it is not related to their paying attention to us and seeing and hearing us.

H— Child, if the point of this honorable verse is vitality of the soul, then why has it specified the martyrs? Perhaps the souls of all the dead are alive and never die. This specificness proves that the soul of the sinner and person who does not fight for the faith is bound and imprisoned and is unaware of anything. But the sanctified spirit of martyrs and fighters for religion and freedom is free. They see and hear, and the properties of life remain in them, and perhaps because of the destruction of various veils their existence has become stronger.

A— Kasravi says that whatever is intellectually unacceptable should not be believed, and that these beliefs are outside the sphere of intellect.

H— One of Kasravi's mistakes is that he does not distinguish the duty of intellect and duty of knowledge. His lacking of reasoning in these subjects is not the result of intelligence and wisdom, but perhaps from ignorance of and inarticulateness about the sciences. This is not a problem of denying the Creator.

A— Kasravi says we must raise our thinking to the level achieved by the sciences, and our ideas must progress with science, and that without technical proofs we must believe nothing.

H— Therefore, he must not display obduracy and partisanship in these matters and call the believers ignorant and foolish. Perhaps he should say that because science has not clarified these questions for us, we should not believe in them. He says that believers do not have proof based on scientific method. We say that there also is no scientific proof for his denial. Indeed, it is denial for the sake of denial. Believers at least have some reason for their faith because of the statements made by honest prophets and in Heaven-sent books, and in the name of religion they have accepted the statements. Some of them have achieved martyrdom. But Kasravi's proof is his ignorant foolishness.

Fortunately, scholars at the present time, including famous people from Europe and America, have discovered and proved with technical and scientific methods the association between the two worlds and the survival of spirit and soul and the ability to observe us. Therefore, there remains no objection to pilgrimage and greeting and conversation with the Imam. Yet Kasravi holds to his denial.

A (smiling subtly)—Kasravi believes that the discoveries of the professors are entirely obsolete, and that they are all lies and deceit—that they have no basis or truth.

H—Why doesn't this proofless leader deny the research of astronomers and bacteriologists? He believes them all, believes that such and such a star has been discovered and such and such a planet found. Has he looked through their telescopes and seen the newly discovered star and newly found planets with his own eyes? Or has he taken their microscopes in his hand and researched whatever they say? No. Then what is the difference between these two groups and these two discoveries?

He has seen none of them. Then why does he accept one and reject the other? It is obvious therefore that Kasravi's rejection and acceptance, his denial and confirmation, depend on his carnal desire. There you are. Otherwise, he would break his unfair pen and raze the phoney apparatus of his appeal and not deny the truthful prophets.

My dear, hundreds of journals and newspapers have written about the discoveries of those professors in America and Europe, and thousands of first class scholars of the West have participated in them, and they have come to understand the meaning of

ولا تقولوا لمن يقتل في سبيل الله امواتا بل احياء.

And say not of those who are slain in the way of God: "They are dead." Nay, they are living.

They have agreed to it, and at this point Kasravi has no option but to be quiet.

To complete the subject, I shall add another word. Kasravi does not know that the eyes and ears and souls of noble men of God are clear-sighted and hear, and in his mindlessness and impatience he hates to accept the truth. Our clear reasoning has no effect on his blurred and dark brains. He should come over and agree to this simple and incontrovertible belief. In the blessing after the pilgrimage, as has been mentioned, the pilgrim says: "Oh God, send greetings to Muhammad and the family of Muhammad and communicate the best greetings and praise to them and send me their greetings, too. We beg the kind God to take our greetings and praise and petitions to our great leaders, and beg that whenever we ask for intercession He grant it to us." No opponent has been able to speak in this regard. Even Vahabis have been able to cooperate with us up to this point.

In 1323,* when I had the privilege of making a pilgrimage to Mecca with five or six thousand Iranians from Kuwait (Ibn Sabah),⁷ I remember reading in one of the current issues of the

* 1944. Trans.

7. *Kuwait (Ebn Sabah) is one of the very important ports on the northwestern shores of the Persian Gulf. Unlike the southern ports, it has a good, very healthy climate. Various acute and chronic diseases are very rare, despite the fact that there is a lack of hygienic facilities and attention to hygiene by the natives. Death occurs rarely, even among children and infants. The people are earnest and joyous and generous and kind. The founder of their government was Sheik Sabah, grandfather of the present sheiks, and because of this the sheiks and governors of Kuwait are called Olad-E-Sabah (children of Sabah). Kuwait was separated from the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Alshiekh Mobarak Al Sabah and has retained its independence.*

Alsheidh Ahmad Ben Djaber Ebn Mobarak Alsabah was ruler of Kuwait until 1369 (1948), the same year Ghamari passed away. His majesty Alsheikh Abdullah Alsalem Alsabah is the present ruler. The regime is Sunni. To the peasants the rulers are very kind and affectionate. Shi'ites and

magazine *Omalgharbi* that King Nadj (Abdulaziz Ebn Soude) had made a speech before the Hadjis. I was reading it until I reached a sentence that said: "We believe that our Prophet, in accordance with God's orders, will intercede for sinners, and whoever does not believe this is a polytheist." If Kasravi agrees with us to this extent, it is sufficient to prove to him the correctness of pilgrimage and prayer.

A— Excuse me, but because you mentioned the name of the Prophet, I should like to say the Prophet has a higher position than the Imam. How does intercession by the Prophet prove the mediation and intercession of the Imam?

Sunnis are the same to them and have equal rights. Shi'ites, both Arab and non-Arab, live in the shadow of their Majesties the Sheiks with complete well-being and freedom. By order of His Excellency Ayatollah Ehghaghi Alhadj Mirza Ali Agha Oskooee, and with the approval and special attention of their Majesties, a tall and glorious minaret was recently built on the Ehsaian mosque in Kuwait. The muezzin, praise be to God, witness to guardianship in an audible voice during prayers on top of the historic minaret. Until recently the privilege did not exist for the Shi'ites of Kuwait. Although the Sunnis in Kuwait are in the majority and have enormous wealth, they are very humble and good-natured, and between them and the Shi'ites communication and association prevail.

At the time of Alsheikh Salem Ben Mobarak Alsabah, great father of the present ruler, Douish Zaim and the Vahabis unexpectedly attacked Kuwait with a few thousand armed men and fighters in the hope of conquering the country. But because of the determination and perseverance of Sheik Salem and other brave youths of Al-E-Sabah, they were signally defeated, and as a result of their dastardliness most of their celebrated warriors were lost. After a great many Vahabis were surrounded and forced to return to their own land, this bloody event ended to the benefit and glory of Al-E-Sabah and imparted value and importance to the history of this commercial port.

H— Child, Shi'ite and Sunni interpreters agree that in the honorable Arabic verse,

وانفسنا وانفسكم •

Ourselves and yourselves.

Ali (praise be upon him) is like the soul of the Prophet, the soul of Muhammad applies to Ali Ebn Abitaleb. Another part of the verse makes clear the instrumentality of Ali and Fatima and Hassan and Houssain (glory be upon them). God says,

قل تعالوا ندع ابناءنا وابناءكم ونساءنا ونساءكم وانفسنا وانفسكم •

Say: "Come! let us gather together—our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: Then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse.

According to Islamic historians and narrators, the Glorious Prophet (praise be upon him) had taken Ali (praise be upon him) and Fatima and Hassan and Houssain with him to curse⁸ the Christians, and there was no sixth person with them. Therefore, "man" refers to Ali (grace be upon him) and "woman" refers to Fatima Zahra and "sons" to Hassan and Houssain (glory be upon them). His Majesty the Messenger

8 *Mobaheleh means cursing and damning each other. Among the ancients it was customary for two groups to curse each other in order to stop debate and clarify the truth when argument and debate would last too long and neither group would accept the claim of the other. They would arrange between themselves to face the Lord and curse and damn each other, and the Just God would damn and torment the false party. This was actually a religious and spiritual duel. The above honorable verse refers to one that occurred between the Glorious Messenger (praise be upon him) and the Nadjran Christians. A.I.*

(praise be upon him), by order of God, brought these four dear members of his family in front of the Nadjranis, and as soon as they started to curse the Christians saw the signs of the divine anger and repented for confronting those holy five, and they made peace and submitted to paying tribute.* Here is proved the effect on the Creator of mediation by the family. By their cursing of the Christians, God's anger was aroused against the Christians. Now take note, a prayer and merely a request to the court of the Generous produced anger and a curse. Certainly the Kind God will accept their mediation and intercession to bestow mercy. This has been proved. Know that all Djafari Imams are equal in these matters by order of Muhammad's family, and there is no difference among them.

A— In truth, Kasravi has nothing left to say. But allow me to ask one more question. Intercession and greetings, as you say, are possible everywhere. Shi'ites can even greet and intercede in their own cities and houses. Why, then, is there such advocacy and acceptance of the trouble of traveling and many hardships and expenditure of so much money for pilgrimage and to go to holy places?

The Philosophy and Secrets of Pilgrimage to Holy Places

H— There are many maxims and secrets concerning pilgrimage. First, religious struggles and devotion in a way pleasing to God certainly deserve appreciation and sanctification.

Second, for the sake of the Imams, their names and memories are kept alive by strengthening centers of attraction and through loving self-sacrifice.

Third, through proclamation and publication, holy beliefs and educated morals survive and declare holy war. The main thing is to keep the name of the Shi'ites alive and protect the gem of Islam. To be brief, no matter how much the honorable Mecca and the law of Hajj has served to advance Islam and spread the laws of monotheism, pilgrimage of Shi'ites to these holy places has contributed equally to the truthfulness of the Djafari religion and survival of the Shi'ites.

* *A poll tax paid in lieu of conversion to Islam. Trans.*

A— Kasravi says it would be better to give the money to the poor and deserving of the nation and country than spend it in these ways. He writes in his letters: "In the year of famine after World War I, the poor died from hunger while the rich went to Karbala to bring back the Draft of Liberty, whereas the true Draft of Liberty is in helping the poor."

H— Is it not possible to put the two together? Is it not possible for a Muslim to feed the poor and also make a pilgrimage as his religious duty and spend his money wherever he sees fit?

A— Kasravi says that these Hajjis and Karabalais and Meshedis did not give money to the helpless, but took their share and spent it in useless ways.

H— Kasravi lies. He calumniates the very Hajjis and Karabalais and Meshedis that contributed thousands and millions to help the hungry. But the officials in charge of distribution and allotment, like the critic, used 70 percent of the money for opium and drinks and hundreds of other debaucheries and left the hungry crying and groaning. Now, let's forget the past famine, which none of us remembers. In the last famine, after the attack of the allies, in which our dear country was caught up in a storm of misfortune and a tornado of hunger, let us see which group took up the effort to help the helpless.

They were these same Hajjis and Karabalais and Meshedis who aspire to protect the reputation of Iran. Some of them even sold their belongings and gave them to the fallen for the pleasure of God. But this time they were not inexperienced and did not hand the bridle to those lying libertines. They spent the money and supervised how it was spent, and also went to Karabala and Meshed and tried to advance the religion and the faith, and as a result no one was left hungry in this country and no helpless person died of hunger.

My dear, famine came and went. Have you ever heard of anyone except a Hajji or Karabali or Meshedi make an effort to combat poverty and help the hungry of this country? On those nights that the Shi'ites in the cities and villages of Iran, full of joy, were losing sleep and cooking soup and rice and distributing them to the shacks of the needy or putting them out on the streets and alleys and were selling them to the middle class at a very

reasonable price, or were giving away the provisions of respectable people without anyone's knowing about it, it was not certain where Kasravi and the luxuriating hooligans were—in the corner of which cafe, or in the saloon of what theater or at the table of—, living in pleasure and committing what kind of acts? God knows, and everyone knows, also. Yes, instead of thanking these pious gentlemen for their good deeds, he has picked up the poisonous pen and writes against truthfulness and honesty and piety, and religiousness and charitable acts, and with a world of shamelessness steps on truth and persists in adversity toward this noble nation.

A— There is no choice but to agree with him. What you have said is all true. But you mentioned holy places and pilgrimage, and that they have the nature of progress and exaltation and have also been for the benefit of the Shi'ites. I would like you to explain this more clearly.

H— Most of the orientalists from the West agree with what the scholars of Islam write about the benefits of the honorable Mecca and secrets of Hajj. The majority of the inhabitants of Northern Africa, for example, have become Muslims because of the traffic back and forth of the Hajjis, who were passing the cities of the blacks and polytheists of the region during their travels and took upon themselves an important role in propaganda. They were extremely influential in black society, and every year a number of blacks entered the circle of Islam and were honored to visit Mecca. Now this black Hajji who recently turned Muslim has tremendous influence in his city and country. He fills his head and heart with thoughts and faith, and after he chants public prayers in Masdjed Alharam for days and nights with hundreds of thousands of people all at the same time in one place and in a setting of Egyptians and Hajjis who read the verses of the Koran with an animating chant, he becomes illuminated and full of wisdom. He also memorizes a few subjects and stories learned from preachers and narrators, and upon returning to his country and city he speaks highly, with a world of joy and enthusiasm, in assemblies and groups about what he has seen and heard. Before the following year's season for the Hajji, each one has made ten or twenty of his fellow citizens willing to see that unique spectacle.

As a result, their conversion to Islam is certain. Thus the religion of Islam progresses in the region every year, and the propaganda spread by Christians from America and Europe in the area is aborted.

The story of the holy places and pilgrimage of the Shi'ites is similar. Most of the Sunni villages and cities that are located far from Shi'a center have become Djafari as a result of the traffic of pilgrims and their practical and oral teaching. Now, the prejudiced Kurds of Iraq and Sunnis of Syria and Palestine participate with Shi'ites in the pilgrimage to Arbreen. A large number of them are honored to visit Karbala as pilgrims and see the miracle play *Muhammad and His Family at Karbala*. This fiery ceremony is very effective in destroying the influence of hypocrites and oppressors of Islam and proving the truthfulness of Islam, and it increases daily in power and joy.

A— In his book *Shiegary*, Kasravi writes that the King of Safavieh forced people to convert to Shi'a.

H— Kasravi has always written contrary to the truth, and with this unjustified statement he wants to deny the spirituality of Shi'a and its truthfulness. We admit to having been assisted by kings of Safavieh, and anyway they served the religion worthily. But their regime lacked force. All nations and religions, whether different tribes of Islam or non-Muslims lived under their powerful reign in security and peace and confidence.

Yes, up until then Djafaris were moaning under the weight of bigoted oppressors, and except in a few small cities and for short periods of time, they were always condemned and bound and did not enjoy the privileges of freedom. Their national and religious rights had always been violated. Because of the Safauids, they were set free and were able to write and speak their ideas freely. The kings of Safavieh made an effort to spread knowledge of the virtues of Muhammad's family and strengthen allegiance to the holy domes and holy places. These true descendants of the Prophet were faultless in exalting the words of God and in respect for the authority of pure descent and in advancement of the Djafari creed. They acted to the full extent of their ability, and expanded the circle of propaganda by the believers.

For example, the pilgrimage on foot of Shah Abbas Kabir from Isfahan to holy Meshed to the King of Korasan, His Majesty Ali Ebn Mosalreza (grace by upon him), is counted among the great acts of propaganda and promotion, and it greatly influenced the hearts of the peasants.

As soon as the Shi'ite preachers and writers were liberated and were able to disseminate the merits and truths of Shi'a to the society of that time, Djafaris conquered with the speed of light and throughout the country proved to their fellow countrymen the virtue of the principles of the Imamate. The raised banner of this propaganda was carried through the cities and villages, especially by the pilgrims of the sacred tombs and leaders of caravans. Thus the cities and regions along their paths have all become Shi'ite or remained only half Sunni.

Kasravi says that the Iranians have chosen the Shi'a religion as a result of the sword of the Safavids. In reply we say, which tribes have forced the Indians to become Imamates and Djafaris? Which king is responsible for the fact that 20 million famous Indian men and nobles and high-ranking Rajahs have become Shi'ite? The blow struck by which Shi'ite's hand forces them to mourn the popular Shi'ite Imam during the days of Moharram? And the sound of their cry, "Oh Houssain," echos in the cities and winds through the lush jungles of that territory. Why have two-thirds of the Ottomans of Iraq, which moaned under the weight of the Sunni Osmanians, become Djafari?

Kasravi is quite unaware and does not know how effective the propaganda of the pilgrims and professional narrators of the tragedies of the Koran was in eliminating obstacles and overcoming psychological domination by the opposition.

If the Shi'ites had a place of pilgrimage in the east of Afghanistan, the Afghanis would also be Shi'ite and proud of the principles of the Imamate. Blind be the eyes of one who cannot see the glory and power of God and truth. The Djihad and service of the Safavid kings is undeniable, but at the same time some of their harsh acts aroused the anger and enmity of the Sunnis. If they and the kings of Albouxe had not acted harshly and had not touched on people's sensitive areas, the Djafaris would have ad-

vanced further and perhaps Djafari would have become the legal religion of the Muslims.

A— Everything you've said is correct and not open to criticism, and obviously none of Kasravi's statements is sound or rooted in truth, whereas the statements and actions of the Shi'ites are clear and plain. But what do you say about the following problem? What does kissing the doors and walls of sanctuaries and rubbing the head and face against the tombs and graves of Imam mean? Civilized people object to these customs.

H— One must ask these questions of masters of love and kindness and hear an overwhelming answer from them. The Arab poet says,

امر على الديار ديار ليلي اقبل ذا الاحدار وذا الجدارا •
فما حب الديار شعفن قلبي ولكن حب من سكن الديارا •

I pass the land of Layli and kiss this wall and that wall. My heart has not been attracted by love of the land, but love of one who resides in it.

My dear, this is an obvious and simple subject, and there is no argument against it. A lover who cannot reach the garment of the beloved would kiss her doors and windows. This is the judgment of the law of love and affection, and no one has the right to object or meddle in it. Shi'ites liken the loved ones of God and their children to the frontiers of love, and know that love of them is their religious duty and obligation. In truth, this religious kindness and divine love have produced unnatural love that before Ali and his family manifests itself as a unique sense of guardianship, which is so popular that people become mesmerized and uncontrollable like a frenzied lover. Shi'ites used to kiss the honorable hands of Muhammad and his family (praise be upon them) when they were alive, because they are the same as God's hand, as it says in the honorable verse,

يد الله فوق ايديهم •

The Hand of God is over their hands.

The Shi'ites rubbed their eyes and faces with the family's pure garments after the deaths of Muhammad and the members of his family. They feel compelled to kiss the doors and walls of their pure sanctuaries and rub their hands and faces against the tombs and sepulchers. No one has the right to object.

In addition, all families are the same in their customs. This ceremony is not exclusive to the Shi'ites. But the group of wandering materialists have no popularity and know no customs and know no work but futile talk.

Most Muslims kiss the glorious Koran and place it on their heads, and all Christians carry their cross. Truly, this act is not voluntary and is not in opposition to religious law. If reason were to intrude into this field, it would be convicted by the judgment of holy love.

I remember one day in Medina, when the Muslims had lined up for the noon prayers in the great Mosque, a watchman of the sanctuary had a small pigeon in his hand and wanted to send it to its nest. A person from Damascus came forward and kissed the animal's head and face. I saw others running uncontrollably toward it, and they kissed its wings and feathers and were rubbing it against their heads and faces. The watchman did not stop them, and no servant of the sanctuary denounced the kissing of the pigeon as blasphemy or polytheism. On the contrary, they were smiling and joyous. But I could not restrain myself. I objected to the watchman, saying: "With curses and sticks of bamboo, you prevent the Shi'ites from kissing the holy tombs and call it polytheism, but now you hold this animal forward to be kissed by these Muslims and do not object." He answered, "This is a pigeon from the sanctuary, and because of its closeness to the Messenger's mosque they are kissing it. What harm will it do?" I said, "This also is the tomb of the Prophet and it is next to the holy body of the Prophet. What is wrong if the Shi'ites embrace it and kiss it? Why do you call them blasphemists and polytheists?" Upon hearing my objection and reply, the watchman became embarrassed. He lowered his head and went about his work.

As a result of our conversation, it has become clear that the Shi'ites are pure monotheists and correct pious men, and that in their ideas and acts there is not a speck of polytheism and

creature-worship, whatever anyone says out of ignorance and foolishness, or contumacy and hatred. Some people have been misinformed about the principles of the Shi'ites, and they do injustice to and are impudent about them. But Kasravi's attack on the religion of the Imamate is from all three sides, and the failure of his platform especially has made him angrier and forced him to commit this criminal offense.

3

ON PROPHECY

A— We who already believe that there is only one God, why do we need all the dogmas and rituals of other religions? And what is the reason for the missions of all those prophets?

H— The prophets exist to teach people the divine purpose and the duties of mankind.

A— Divine purpose? Duties of mankind? Please explain.

H— This amazing piece of handicraft has been created by a most able Creator and a powerful Sage. Let us put all other creatures aside and talk only about man. Dear child this great Creator Who created human beings has favored man by providing him with an ear that hears, an eye that sees, a tongue that speaks, an able hand, and searching feet. He has formed the body out of nerves, muscles, arteries, blood and glands, flesh and bone. Each one of these elements performs its duty by means of millions of microscopic creatures. He has filled the mouth with teeth and a stomach and bowels, with hundreds of chemical compositions, including different salivas and various juices and vitamins, so that foreign substances and foods entering the body become familiar with the interior assembly. And meat and food from plants can be absorbed and dissolved inside. At the center of the body He has placed a strong heart, which causes and sustains life. That is to say, it absorbs oxygen from the lungs with its orderly contractions and expansion. And by means of fast laborers, the red corpuscles, which are always floating in the river of blood, the oxygen reaches the farthest

points in the body. At the borders and centers of this country, he has placed brave soldiers and zealous watchmen, the white corpuscles, who are constantly fighting with poisonous microbes, which are the enemies of freedom and tranquility and the rivals of the life of society. Until the last moment of life, the white corpuscles do not desist from their defense of and self-sacrifice for their popular country: freedom or death, the alternative being fear and alarm, flight and entrenchment, bribery and embezzlement. They have learned no shameful lessons. Above all, he has assigned to the medulla oblongata and spinal cord responsibility for the orderliness of general affairs and liaison between the organs and members of the body, to make them aware of each other, and for transmitting the orders of the commander and assuring the obedience of the subjects. If you imagine the amazing actions of the liver's cells, you will be truly astonished and bewildered. These amazing matters have astonished skilled chemists and even the great professors of the West.

And the most eminent is the cerebellum of the brain. It is the center of memory and thoughts, intellect and reflection. All the astounding inventions and initiatives and sciences that know about the depths of the earth and sky and have conquered the air and the seas and realized their possibilities are the effects of the waves of the cerebellum.

And the strangest of all is the soul and spirit, which distinguishes the human being from other creatures. It is the source of benevolence and giving and sentiment and generosity, and it is the unique attribute which, if there is an effort to train it, reveals the future and depths and secrets of the heart and invisible world.

Can you say that this fountain of wonders is without consequence or effect, and that His Majesty the Creator had no purpose in creating the rhetorical ability of this creature? Does He not have a function for this intellectual and wise human being, one that is appropriate for his position as God's chosen creature, who has been placed on his own as a wanderer?

A— Certainly the Creator of the universe has not been

without a purpose. We who are his creatures do nothing without a purpose, and we want obedience from even the smallest of creatures. But perhaps every animal has a will, much less this distinguished creature, and certainly the Great Creator would not leave it without a duty.

H— Now that you have perceived the subject properly, take note of this point: a human being cannot familiarize himself with his duties on his own and become aware of God's wishes unless God teaches him and informs him.

A— Why can't he? It happens, we see it. A human being farms and cultivates and creates handicrafts. He produces the means of his own comfort. Everyday he makes great strides toward the comfort of his species. Navigation, aviation, electrical and radio apparatuses, and thousands of other amazing products are the results of human acts and have been invented by his own direction. He has even devised correct methods for eating and sleeping and walking and breathing and building a shelter. Today, in the sciences of medicine and anatomy and surgery and geometry and the composition of jewels and metals, he has achieved significant heights. He has even gone beyond the earth and reached into the sky. He has discovered the laws of creation. He has stepped onto the moon and the planet Mars. What, then, are the duties of human beings?

H— My dear, what you described are merely in the nature of existence. Any creature tries to obtain comfort and tranquility. Everything included among the creations and acts of human beings are for the sake of eating or sleeping and pleasure and filling their coffers with gold and silver. Do you not see that at the same time he is in the process of these precious and valuable acts of creation, he is also inventing cannons and rifles and bombs that can destroy the world? And do you not see that he has nothing in mind but his personal advancement, and knows nothing except how to provide a five-day-long life in this mortal world? Each animal, along with the human species—perhaps every living thing—has a bit of sense and endeavors for his own benefit. The only difference is that the artfulness, flexibility, sense of order, and discipline of human

beings are stonger than theirs. The truth is that the achievements are all the result of self-love and the struggle for survival.

Compare the human activities you talk about with what the ants do to obtain food during the summer and fall and how they store it in underground structures for use in the winter and spring and their strength in conquering their own kind, or compare the story of the termites. We will find nothing that makes human beings spiritually superior, except the extent of their activity and variety of instruments they use and their excess of trickery and cunning and planning. Putting aside their inventions and creations and science and industry, the fact is that human beings do not obtain the proper results from their acts and do not reach the true goal.

A— What should the result and effect of human actions be? I'm sorry, but I do not understand your meaning as well as I should.

H— Let us assume that in a cloth-weaving factory, for example, the machines and wheels are oiled every day and night, and the dust and dirt are removed every hour, and they are always kept clean and shiny, but they are never used, no weaving is done, they are never in operation. Can you say that this factory has done its duty?

A— No, we cannot. It certainly would not be fulfilling its function unless some cloth were woven every day. It was created for the use of man, and the purpose of the creator in establishing it has not been fulfilled.

H— Aha, my dear, we are saying the same thing. To provide the means of eating and sleeping and walking and keeping clean and hygienic has no meaning for man except the oiling and cleaning of the machine. As we said, a factory is expected to weave cloth, and likewise certain truths and duties are required by the existence of a human being.

A— What are the truths and duties?

H— They are knowing certain things and performing certain tasks that produce the peace and tranquility of the universe and peace and happiness in the other world. Man is like a divine

machine. He must function in accordance with the will of God. Acts must be performed for the pleasure of God in order to live in the shadow of his satisfaction in both worlds, forever happy and cheerful. Otherwise the methods of achieving well-being and the instruments for conquest of the earth are for man's own sake not for God's.

A— How should man work for God? How can he obtain the requisite knowledge and learn what to do?

H— This is why we say that His Majesty the Creator has to teach us himself and inform people of his wishes. The machine cannot operate by itself, but only in accordance with the wishes of the inventor. A manager is needed to administer it.

A (smiling very subtly)— Therefore, the existence of prophets and their teachings are necessities of existence and essentials of life.

H— Yes, my dear, the most able Sage has chosen them to inform us of His purpose and teach us truths and our spiritual duties and how to produce in ourselves the means of flourishing in this world and the next. To provide for our prosperity and eternal life, it was necessary for him to select a distinguished person among mankind, inform him about the essentials of existence and keys to life, and endow him with material and spiritual learning and science and elevate him into a great leader for the guidance and training of man. We call this perfect and philanthropic messenger prophet, and those heavenly laws and human duties religion and faith. Therefore, wise men see that the existence of prophets is necessary and essential in every age, and they manifest themselves in human society by means of a world of divine teachings.

A— What is the reason for God's dispatching a new prophet in every period and sending a new book? Was not Adam, who was appointed to prophecy and brought pages full of divine laws for his children, sufficient until the Resurrection Day. What is the philosophy of this renewal and dispatch of countless prophets?

H— The duties that prophets convey to people from God are of two kinds. One consists of the primary beliefs, which in

the vocabulary of Shi'a are called Osoulaldin, or principles, and the other consists of the laws about practical matters, which are called Froaldin, or secondary rules. The latter includes exercises, individual and social duties, and material and spiritual transactions. Because man has a unique apptitude and worthiness to effect progress and improvement of peoples, it is necessary to change, up to a point. Consequently, further laws and another prophet are required to teach and train men in accordance with their talents.

But the primary beliefs are immutable. Belief in monotheism and the prophetic mission and similar matters is obligatory for all men in all times, and their meaning is always the same. However, in regard to these principal beliefs there is a calamity around the corner. After a prophet passes away, people become increasingly remote from the pure commander and his successors as a result of various events, such as the intrusion of strangers or meddlers or hypocrites or consideration of personalities or foreign rule. Sometimes the divine book is tampered with or the book is destroyed. In addition, the primary beliefs, the Osoulaldin, are lost. The secondary beliefs also suffer the effects of this vermin, and the pure religion changes totally and takes on the color of polytheism and blasphemy. And finally people forget everything about that religion. Therefore, another book and another prophet are needed. That is why the Kind God in every period selects a competent being from mankind and appoints him to guide humans and sends primary beliefs that are identical to those of the past, along with modified secondary beliefs.

A— Kasravi says the same thing and he calls himself the guide of the new age. He claims that the religion of Islam has changed and that its glorious structure has collapsed, and his assertion is that he has placed the foundation of his faith on top of the foundation of the old one.

H— I have to answer your objection in two ways. First, has the foundation of Islam been destroyed in the same way that the primary and secondary beliefs of Judaism and Christianity have collapsed? Has its holy book been tampered with? And

truly, does mankind need a new prophet and a new book? Or has none of these happened, but the Muslim has become unaware of and unable to use his religion and religious laws?

Second, Kasravi claims that he is the appointed guide and calls himself exalted. Is he worthy of prophecy? Can he become a leader of people? Or are his statements for the sake of making claims and lying? They are untrue. After we talk about Kasravi and prove his unworthiness, we will take up the first point.

A— In what way, and how can Kasravi's lies and unworthiness be proven?

H— Listen, my dear, a guide who knows that he has been exalted by the Great God—and he claims he has been exalted for the sake of training and happiness of mankind—must be wise and truthful and pure and honest. But whatever Kasravi has conveyed from the hadiths and predicates and most of his translations of verses from the Koran are lies. On every front that he has attacked the Muslims and especially the Shi'ites, it is all deceit and trickery. None of what he has said is correct or contains any truth. God willing, we shall prove his deceitfulness later on. But for now I will give you two examples of plain and obvious lies, which some people who reject his ideas have noticed and written in their books.

To cover up his past sins and cheating, he wants to prove failures by and ignorance of the pure Prophet, especially before the manifestation of prophecy. Because Kasravi has no proof at hand from anywhere (neither scriptural nor rational), he relies falsely on two verses from the glorious Koran and imagines them to be clear reasons for and demonstrations of his statements. One is the honorable verse,¹

فكشفنا عنك غطاءك فنعبدك اليوم حديد •

And sharp is thy sight this Day.

¹ Exactly the same spurious objections were raised by the Vahabis and their followers.

and the other is the dignified verse,

ووجدك ضالا فهدى .

And He found thee wandering, and He gave thee guidance.

He translates the first one this way: "Oh Muhammad, we open the curtain in front of your eyes and now your eyes are iron," which means that before the manifestation of prophecy there was a curtain in front of his eyes and he could not understand the truth, but once the curtain had been opened under (divine guidance) his observations became stronger and the obstacles before him became plain and clear. Kasravi translates the second verse this way: "God saw that you had gone astray, then He guided you." In both verses Kasravi has obviously committed treachery and lied, and he has undermined the dignity of the revelation referred to in the verses, and he has used such ignorant deceit and made such childish accusations that whoever is slightly familiar with the Arabic language and has studied the nuances of these verses will be clearly aware of his lies and deceit. My dear, look at the verses yourself and you will see their interpretation and the case for revelation in them, because the subject is plain and clear.

A— It is better that you say it yourself, so that meanwhile other statements will be published.

H— In the verse, .

لقد كنت في غفلة من هذا فكشفنا عنك غطاءك .

Now have We removed thy veil, and sharp is thy spirit this Day!

the remarks are aimed at other people, not the Prophet, and refer to the day of resurrection, not to this world. About the resurrection and promised day, the Sole God says, "Oh humans, your eye of intelligence was blind and you were ignorant of the character of the next world, and it appears that you thought all of this was baseless, but now We have opened

the curtain in front of your eyes and truths have been revealed to you. Now all My promises and threats were true, although you did not believe them in this world." Now, you study the older verses and see the truth of what I have said. In the interpretation of the verse,

ووجدك ضالا فهدى •

And He found thee wandering, and He gave thee guidance.

Halimeh Sadieh, the Great Messenger's (praise be upon him) nurse, was taking His Majesty from the Bani Saad tribe to glorious Mecca so that she could deliver the Prophet to his great grandfather. Outside of Mecca she went a short distance away to relieve herself, and when she returned she did not see her Muhammad. The story of her losing and then finding his holy self is famous in books of predicates and history. His God places him in His debt by telling the story, and comments,

الم يجدك يتيمًا فآوى ووجدك ضالا فهدى ووجدك عائلا
فاغنى •

Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter (and care)? And He found thee wandering, and He gave thee guidance. And He found thee in need, and made thee independent.

"Oh my beloved, you were an orphan and your God took care of you through your great grandfather Abdulmottaled and your generous cousin Abutaleb. You were poor and had nothing and We made you rich by means of Khadidjeh's wealth and property." And the story of His Majesty's loss had distressed and frightened the Banihashem, because they were cautious of the tribe of Jews that was the Prophet's great enemy, lest harm come to his precious self. That's why his God says: "After Halimeh Sadieh lost you, We protected you and found you sound and

healthy." Dear child, a person who with a world of boldness changes the great Godly verses that are clear and obvious to 400 million Muslims, commits a sin and shameless crime. Is he deserving of leadership for deceiving a few of the credulous? Can he be exalted or the God of the mortals?

A— Perhaps Kasravi has been deficient in his understanding of Arabic, and has become involved in this mistake through lack of knowledge.

H— I do not believe that Kasravi could be so illiterate and shallow and would be unable to translate the patent meanings of the Koran. Let's assume a favorable opinion, that he is unable. If a person is so illiterate that he cannot translate two simple Arabic sentences and so uninformed about the meanings of the Koran, how can he transmit divine revelation and inspiration to people and become the leader of the religious authorities and scholars?

A— Sir, perhaps it is not one thing or the other—that is to say, he did not lie and did not lack knowledge but made a mistake.

H— Well, if there is a simple item of nonsense among 70,000 one can assume that it is due to negligence and a mistake, although neglect so great and a mistake so obvious are very rare. But after all such reversal and acceptance would also imply a defect and great fault in God's guidance. When a person makes mistakes in such self-evident matters, how can people have confidence in his statements about divine inspiration and revelation? Maybe he makes mistakes in these also.

My child, is it because our Most Able God could not send to the civilized world a competent scholar in this age of science and art that He had to content Himself with this faulty and incoherent man? Child, liar and deceitful, or impoverished and foolish, or memoryless and mistaken—whatever the case, he is certainly incapable and unqualified. My dear, listen carefully, a representative of anyone must be a mirror of his strength and logic and quality. A prophet or guide of mankind is the representative of His Majesty the Creator of the universe and therefore must not have a single fault or deficiency. Once we

have seen even a small and natural fault in this claimant, such as ignorance and error and forgetfulness—not to mention a great moral fault like telling lies, false accusation, and deceit—our intelligence dictates that this person is not a prophet and messenger but is lying and pretending to be a prophet, because the All-Knowing Sage and Omnipotent God would never appoint such an impoverished person as His representative. As He says,

وما كنت متخذ الما ضاين عضا .

*Nor is it for me to take as helpers such as lead
(men) astray.*

Our Great Creator would never entrust the prosperity of the world to misled people. A person who is himself lost cannot be a guide. The wise men of the world agree that the representative of the all-knowing and most able Holy Being must be knowledgeable and able so that he assures and gains the confidence of people. Does not His Majesty the Sage have the authority to exalt a person to protect His inspiration and revelations and have His commands translated correctly and communicated to the worshippers? The person would not be forgetful and stupid. I am amazed how this Kasravi talks about intelligence and wisdom and insists that intelligence and wisdom are the bases of his statements, whereas according to the judgment of intellectual masters, his statements and actions are ignorant. A hundred pities on the group of simple and uninformed youngsters who do not weigh his statements on the scale of intelligence and do not say to Kasravi, "Oh guide of the golden age, you who have placed wisdom as the foundation of the belief of the followers of Kasravi, which wise man accepts that the guide of mankind and exalted of the Great Creator can be a liar or misinformed or forgetful or negligent?"

The Prophet Makes No Errors and Does Not Forget

A— Sir, the Sunnis allow error and forgetfulness in the prophets.

H— Some of the Sunnis approve errors and mistakes by

the prophets only in ordinary judgments and personal actions, not in prophetic duties and divine commitments. But the group that believes them to be permissible have no proof or argument for it. The Shi'ites reject this belief for religious reasons and on the basis of intellectual demonstrations and have proved its invalidity. And as I have said, the representative of the Great God must be perfect in every respect so that he assures people and gains their confidence and so that his statements and actions would have great effect. Error and forgetfulness and mistakes are enormous deficiencies in any great man, especially in the case of the representative of God. They cause ridicule and mockery by rivals and lack of confidence of friends. In any event, Kasravi has made this great mistake in his discussion of the truths of religion. He has been disgraced, and in the opinion of the masses is impudent. He has misbehaved and been deceitful, and has drawn a red line with his own hands on the charter of prophecy and his flimsy prophetic mission.

A— The conclusion of this conversation, then, is that Kasravi does not believe in prophecy in the way monotheist nations believe and does not understand inspiration as we do. As a result, Kasravi says that the prophet is an exalted person among the wise men of humanity who has risen to the position of guide because of divine inspiration. Whatever judgment this person reaches, it is divine revelation, and if he commits an error and is forgetful before he becomes a guide, no harm is done. Kasravi totally denies the conditions we believe to be valid for prophecy and the relationship and friendship we believe exists between God and his pure representatives. He imagines that Gabriel and the Holy Spirit and divine messages and the fervent prayer of the prophets and the appearance to us of angels and the hearing of oracular songs are all superstitions.

H— This is where his hand falls open and he is disgraced before the world. First of all, prophecy without chastity and strong love between the Great Dispatcher and Great Messenger does not exist in the belief of any nation, and this exaltation and guidance he talks about is more like the leadership of a party and party platforms than prophetic mission and divine representation. In Kasravi's opinion, therefore, the leaders of

parties who write constitutions based merely on intellect and know that the rules they develop cause progress and create capital for prosperity are great prophets. Why then are so many of them found in Europe and America and India and China—spokesmen for hundreds of millions? And some of them are also monotheists and pious, in which case this vagrant guide who's placed himself before them is all the more contemptible. Second, because Kasravi has confessed to the truthfulness of the Koran and its great transmitter, his claims in this field have all gone with the wind.

A— How is it that Kasravi's have gone with the wind before the Koran?

H— Because the Koran says,

وما ينطق عن الهوى ان هو الا وحي يوحى .

Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him.

If we agree with this verse, then it is proven that God's words flow from the Prophet's tongue, and there can be no mistakes, the Messenger of God does not make errors and is not forgetful, and the existence of angels and Gabriel and the Holy Spirit is true. I do not know then what part of the Koran Kasravi agrees with. The unfortunate man has been trapped between two opposites. If he denies the existence of prophets, prophecy is basically nullified, and he who wants to lean hungrily on the throne of prophecy becomes deprived. And once he has agreed to this, all the prophets and the divine book negate Kasravi and do not accept him as a prophet.

A— Give me examples of how our Koran negates Kasravi and his letters.

Methods of the Divine Book

H— Listen, child, when we look closely at this holy book, we see that it is very different from Kasravi's letters. The Koran is a collection of addresses by the God of mortals to his honorable envoy, and every reader understands them and with

perfect clarity takes note of what is said.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
اقرأ بسم ربك الذي خلق .

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Proclaim! (or Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created.

يا ايها المدثر قم فانذر .

O thou wrapped up (in a mantle)! Arise and deliver thy warning.

يس - والقرآن الحكيم - انك لمن المرسلين .

Ya-Sin. By the Koran, full of wisdom—thou art indeed one of the apostles.

طه - ما انزلنا عليك القرآن لتشقى .

Ta Ha. We have not sent down the Koran to thee to be (an occasion) for thy distress.

يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك وان لم تفعل فما بلغت رسالته والله يعصمك من الناس .

O Apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission, and God will defend thee from men (who mean mischief).

يا ايها النبي جاهد الكفار والمنافقين .

O Apostle, fight with hypocrites and pagans.

Whoever reads the Koran and understands its meaning knows for sure that a Great Leader has taught the duties of representation to his favorite representative, and sends him to guide and

train mankind. It seems that His Majesty God addresses him and the glorious Prophet hears what He says, or the Koran is a holy letter that the angel Gabriel brings from the Lord of Hosts to God's beloved so that he can act in accordance with its contents and God's regulations.

Can errors and mistakes find their way into divine letters or addresses by the Omnipotent Creator? God forbid. It is impossible. Can it be that His Majesty the Most Able Creator and the painter of the surface of the earth and the sky, Who in adorning the world has not even forgotten something as minute as an atom or molecule, has made a mistake in letter-writing or committed an error or been forgetful?

The Holy Being Who has bestowed order on the world and mortals and the sun and the moon and the stars—is he not able to place clear regulations in the hands of the leaders of the caravan of humanity, so that they would not make mistakes or commit errors or be forgetful? It goes without saying that He is consummately able and powerful.

Study Kasravi's letters thoroughly. Can you find even one sentence similar to the verses in the Koran? You will never find it. Then, what is the difference between Kasravi's letters and ordinary books? The difference is that his letters are nothing but a bunch of incoherent words. And fortunately he describes all of them to himself.

And in the same way we can prove that the bibles now in the hands of the Christians are phony, that except for the history of His Majesty Jesus (grace be upon him) nothing is imparted in them. Now do you understand how our Koran negates Kasravi and his letters, and why one needs not pay any attention to him?

If the Koran of Muhammad (praise be upon him), who is the protector of monotheism and religion, was not at hand, Kasravi could have defrauded the faith and prophecy. But because of the existence of this holy book, which threatens every liar and deceiver, it is impossible for him to accomplish anything, as his brothers Moslemieh Kazzab and Sadja, who claimed prophecy, could not.

My dear, Kasravi is ambitious and a worshipper of fame.

No matter how much he struggled in the government departments, he could not acquire an important seat or even occupy an interesting desk. Of necessity, he looked to the nation and grabbed hold of its garment, and in the hope of becoming a member of the Majlis he took a lot of pains and sacrificed himself considerably, but that also availed nothing. Finally, because he became disappointed and despaired of any help or friendship from both sides, he concluded a treaty with the enemies and raised the flag of opposition to the government and nation, and assumed the title of leaders, and exalted himself, and in the name of religion stepped onto the battlefield. By means of promises and lies, he made a few people like him collaborate with him, and he attacked the simple-minded youngsters and the ignorant illiterates. He imagined that with this group of impoverished he would turn the country upside down and make the system fall and overturn religion. As a result of sacrificing Iran out of avidity and greed, he believed he would step on the throne of world rule and fulfil the wish that sparked him. Pick up his letters and study them carefully. Notice his lies and false accusations and abuse and deceit, and observe the statue of a bloodthirsty oppressor who in every respect is the malevolent enemy of the country and religion.

The Nation is Unfamiliar with Its Duty

A— I confess that no problems or difficulties remain in regard to this subject. The amazing inefficiency and lack of ability of this misleading man has been made clear and plain. How could the handful of wise students not understand such an obvious falseness? Having joined Kasravi, they could attest to his lies.

H— Do not be surprised, and expect much more from his followers. Most of the youngsters who run behind him are aware of nothing, even though they are among the country's students. Kasravi recites verses from the Koran and translates them and writes about their dignity and employs predicates and hadiths against Islam and the Shi'ites, adding or deleting from them according to his objectives. Do not believe that any of these literate youngsters do any research on his writings. They

should refer to the originals that he has interpreted—to the histories and books of predicates and hadiths—so that Kasravi's truthfulness or mendacity will become clear to them and they will no longer be judged guilty by the religion and their consciences. But the contrary is the case with youngsters, all of whom blindly agree with and unknowledgeably believe what he says. They are like the illiterate class of most religions and nations, and this is the great fault of most societies.

If readers and listeners perceive this point, it is the duty of every conscientious and faithful one of them to do research into these matters and investigate them. If they would act on this holy duty, no liar and deceitful person could be a spokesman for even five people. Instead, leadership and ruling would always be limited to those who are truthful. Most of the conflicts and opposition parties that are seen arise from ignorance and a lack in people of a sense of duty.

A— These youngsters I was mentioning know everything and are aware of every place.

H— It is true that the youngsters you are talking about know everything and have studied every lesson, except the lessons of religion and duty. For many years the lessons of enlightenment and responsibility have been taken out of the curriculum, and most of the teachers, with the approval of their superiors or on their own, have confused the innocent youngsters and have deprived them of enlightenment as much as they could. Now this handful of helpless youngsters neither have any information about religion and its laws nor are they aware of their necessary and vital duties. That is why they run after every noise and follow anyone. Now the environment is ready for the advancement of the enemies of religion and the nation, the shrewd and facile, in all parts of the country. Their brains and chests are ready for nurturing poisonous and deadly viruses. As you see, whoever says whatever against religion, the vain youngsters believe it all the more readily. My dear, this chronic disease exists even in other people, including perhaps people involved in science and literature and excellence. For example, in a religious group or sect—whether Shi'ite or Sunni and their branches—whatever is disseminated about the beliefs

and actions of other tribes is for the most part 90 percent baseless and has been produced in effect by self-interested hooligans. Not one person has undertaken research into this matter, and as a result of their carelessness and irresponsibility oppressed people have encountered adversity and truth-seeking teachers have been overcome with trouble. Enmity and conflict seem to be stronger among Muslims than against polytheists and dualists or pagans. A Djafari, for example, may acquaint himself with a pagan and associate with him, but usually does not associate or mix with someone from another Djafari tribe—he might not even respond to his greetings. The cause of all this vagrancy and adversity is the neglect and ignorance and irresponsibility of people of this nation.

Weakness of Propaganda in Shi'ite Society

A— Since these youngsters are so credulous, why do they not believe the truth and accept the sound and correct statements of the masters of truth?

H— My dear, where do these youngsters hear the truth and where do they see the writings of the masters of truth, so that they can read and understand? In past years, the publication of religious teaching and the truths of religion was virtually prohibited in our country. Most of the spokesmen of Shi'a and lecturers and writers of the Djafari faith were imprisoned and put into the chains of submission, and they moaned under the cruel pressure of the anti-religion fanatics. But it has been a long time since then, and today the nightmare of oppression has been removed from their chests, and they can take vengeance for those past eras and bring a few drops of water to the thirsty mouth and broken heart of truth and the religion. With a world of pity, I say: instead of making the most of the opportunity and starting to work with a more orderly structure and taking hold of each other's hands with knowledge and scholarly morals to attack the ranks of the enemies of religion and the malevolents of the faith—instead of this, they are content merely to wear their clerical cloths and to be restored to their former image. Instead of developing semantics and truths and mental and spiritual weapons, they have adopted lifeless images

and meaningless faces, unaware that pointing the face of Rostam and Esphandiar and Sohrab and Afrasiab* on the doors and walls of public baths accomplishes nothing and does not cure the pain. In addition, the facile and deceitful, instead of us, have filled all the cities and villages with their new publications and are exploiting this guardianless people.

Kasravi is only one person, and he has raised a banner against religion and faith and the truths of Shi'a and spreads his views everywhere. But despite the great number of Shi'ite writers, they have not been able to publish writings equal in quality to his letters. In one hour Kasravi fabricates an assembly of lies and truths about pilgrimages or the narration of the tragedies of Karbela or the sneezing of the Shi'ites and on the same day places it in the reach of the people. But our respected writers take five years to publish a thick scientific book that no one except a few scholars have the patience to read. The result is, my dear, that the simple-minded still are unaware of our beliefs and the lies of Kasravi, but if they were to be informed they certainly would turn against the writer of *Parcham* and *Peyman*.

A— It certainly is as you say. The youngsters of the country are unaware of these teachings. If it is the duty of the great spiritual leaders to be the protectors of the faith and religion, why do they not write and publish answers to what these malevolent people say?

H— They say, "The void dies from getting no attention and failure to mention His name."

A— What is your Excellency's opinion?

H— This conversation and writing and deciding to publish clarifies my mind. My dear, the saying "The wrongful man disappears when he receives no attention and no one mentions his name," is intellectually acceptable in an environment in which all the people, or at least some of them, are knowledgeable and familiar with their religious and other duties and in which, also, the void is not so persistent. But in view of

* *Fictional characters.* Trans.

the persistence and fearlessness of the opposition and the calmness and indifference of the leaders and ignorance and simpleness of youngsters, the future of the religion and faith of our country is in danger. In this age and present circumstance of an excess of satanic temptations, sitting and contemplating the spokesmen of religion is reckoned a mortal sin. For the clergyman whose enthusiasm for holy war and defense is not in his heart, the mouthful that he eats from the vocation of religion is illegitimate. It is like a soldier who eats the bread of a nation but would not defend the country and would not concern himself about the attacks of the enemy.

The clerical vocation has two aspects. One is training individuals about laws and morals, and the other is fighting against the opposition by writing and speaking. The main duties of the clergy, the purpose of all their lengthy study, is to train friends and combat enemies. Praise and prostration alone do not fulfil duty. My dear, we have deviated from the main subject a great deal. Let us return to it.

Now that it has been proven with clear arguments that Kasravi is not a messenger and prophet, it is also obvious that he cannot be a guide and divinely inspired. Let us return to the original subject—that is, your question about the second subject, whether the holy religion of Islam has been obliterated as have other religions. Has it disappeared and been destroyed? Has its basis been destroyed? And is there or is there not a need in our time for a new prophet?

A— This problem is very important. And most of Kasravi's dexterous statements are effective in regard to this subject. He claims it is proven that the basis of Islam is outdated and the foundations of the religion have collapsed, and he therefore knows that the world needs a new guide.

H— The principles and basis of the Islamic religion are firm in every way, and its foundations are steady and established. Not a word has been taken away from its principles, nor has anything fallen from its foundations. But because of the excess of superfluities and additions placed on its exterior by dif-

ferent hands, the truths have been hidden to most people. On one side the inexperienced, crude Muslims, and on the other side the hypocrites and opponents and impoverished people, have added so many marginal notes that all but a very few scholars can be expected to be unaware of the text of religion and faith. Therefore, the religion of Islam and faith of the Shi'ites need distinguished men who can make corrections and get rid of extraneous words and superfluities and again make the visible rays of light clear.

For example, Hajj and pilgrimage, community prayer and the passion plays that are favorites of the Muslims, especially the Shi'ites, are all supporters of scholarly morals, nobility, improvement, behavioral and spiritual elevation, and thousands of other wise goals. But the Muslims and Djafari see nothing of this pure and sincere structure except the face and know nothing about it but the appearance. Perhaps, in fact, the prayer that prohibits fornication and sins of commission has now assumed the shape of fornication and sin. One sees that community prayer, particularly in mosques and sanctuaries where a few community prayers go on simultaneously under one roof, gives rise to competition, divisive behavior, and one hundred uglinesses. The lamentation assemblies, which have been a main source of unity among Shi'ites and instrumental for the triumph of the oppressed and defeat of oppressors, now mostly cause the advancement of sedition and rioting, and because of the competition they have become instruments for creating discord and enmity in the cities and villages and other impious acts. Therefore, we need reformers, with unlimited aspirations and worthy modesty, who will start to correct these conditions and make the people aware of the truths and real secrets of these forms of worship ceremonies.

A— For example, what is the difference between Islam and Christianity? Why, after almost six hundred years, do most Christians need the prophet of Islam, and why has the Bible become obsolete and been abrogated, requiring the appearance of a new divine book, whereas the Muslim after fourteen centuries still do not need a new prophet?

H— Like some of the uninformed, you do not understand the basic point of this matter. Child, His Majesty Jesus Christ (grace be upon him) came from God and brought with him a theist religion to get rid of the fire-worshipping of the Iranians and calf-worshipping of the Jews and star-worshipping and cow-worshipping and idol-worshipping of other nations. He brought a book for the people, which in truth was a holy, divine scripture named the Bible. Very few people believed in him in his own time, and in the shadow of the serious propaganda of the disciples the Christians little by little grew in number until finally, as a result of the extraordinary power of the Roman Emperor Constantine and the sharp blow struck by his sword, most Europeans became Christians, and from Europe the propagandists went to other countries.

But in a short time that piety turned into polytheism and Messiah worship, the heavenly Bible turned into various books of the Bible, and the rules of Christ's religion were sacrificed to the personal motivations of the priests. Now a few collections of stories about the life of His Majesty Jesus Christ, instead of the Christian's heavenly book, prevail among the masses of Christianity. Therefore, from that religion there remained neither monotheism nor a book that one can refer to. So a new prophet and legislator and new holy book were needed so that the truths of religion and divine laws would be presented to mankind and the banner of monotheism would be raised over human society.

There was nothing at hand from Christ's religion and book to make reform possible and turn people to correct Christianity, and even if there were the present organization of society would not have been provided for.

But the story of Islam and Muslims is not thus. The glorious Koran is a great proof in the hands of Muslims, which enables distinguished reformers and true scholars to change beliefs and acts in accordance with this holy book and correct erroneous copies of the original.

Muhammad's (praise be upon him) distinction between truth and falsehood is that great heavenly guide that in every time and every place always directs those who have deviated to

the correct path and highway of prosperity and happiness. Which person can say that this present Koran is not the same heavenly book and divine scripture that arose from the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him)? In addition, we have commandments and rules that the Sunnis and Shi'ites agree on and which have come forth from the honorable lips of His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), and tampering hands have not fallen on them. Therefore, the claim of prophecy after His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him) is wrong and devilish. Now, if one asks about the principle of Christianity, the responsible person is stultified in attempting to answer and has no answer, except for the beliefs of the cruel people and their writings, which are subject to thousands of doubts and hesitations. But if one asks about the principles and minor points of Islam, the answers can be enumerated because the glorious Koran has protected the roots of the Great God's words in total eloquence. Thus there can be no doubt or hesitancy that this is the same divine word that was revealed fourteen centuries ago for the prosperity of mankind and is still responsible for the felicity and progress of all men.

A— Kasravi says that in this age of science the commandments of Islam are not useful to man, and people need new precepts and as a result a new guide is needed.

H— By this one claim his lying and false prophecy is proved.

A— How does this single statement prove the falseness of Kasravi?

H— The glorious Koran, which without doubt is God's word and the divine book—even Kasravi has confessed to its truthfulness—says in the verse Ahzab,

ما كان محمد ابا احد من رجالكم ولكن رسول الله وخاتم النبيين
وكان الله بكل شيء عليا.

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the prophets; and God has knowledge of all things.

Now that the prophecy and finality of His Majesty has been proved in this verse, the correctness of the commandment and ideas of Islam and permanence and perpetuity of the religion is necessarily proved. Therefore, if people want to agree with Kasravi's statements and believe in a prophet and a book other than Islam's Prophet and the Koran, or want to await another faith, they must negate this honorable verse, which is the exact word of God. But if they have confirmed the glorious Koran and have believed in the correctness of its verses, they must know Kasravi to be a liar who should be doubted, and they should not call him a leader and guide. He is a robber and pervert, who has no purpose other than the persuasion of the simple-minded and destruction of Iran.

A— The lying and falsehood of Kasravi have been proved all the more. Because of the reasons given before and now, we will have nothing to do with this person. But how do we answer his statement that this age is the age of intelligence and science, and there is a need for rules other than fourteen-centuries-old commandments? This opinion is not only Kasravi's but also that of many of those stricken with love for the West.

The Commandments of the Koran and the Rules of Islam Are Applicable in Every Age

H— We know the commandments and sayings of the Koran to be perfect and correct in every way and for all of mankind, including the savages and civilized, ignorant and knowledgeable, and that they have been sufficient since the beginning of the world as long as it exists. We are certain that after Islam's Prophet no other prophet will come and that after the Koran of Muhammad (praise be upon him) there will be no other book, and that no rules will replace his holy commandments. Now, this Kasravi does not believe that these Islamic primary and secondary principles are sufficient for and worthy of the people of this age. He must write with intellect and prove through reason, scholars must read and judge, which of the fine principles that the Shi'ites believe are extraneous and meaningless—Monotheism? Justice? Prophecy? The Imamate? Resur-

rection? He must state and prove the faults in the ten minor principles: prayer, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, holy war, the Zakat,* Khoms,** forcing people to do good deeds in accordance with religious law, preventing people from doing bad deeds that violate the rules of the Holy Religion, loving and obeying the Prophet and Imams, and considering pagans and enemies of Islam as one's own enemies. Then he must write and show the reasons why these do not conform to the intelligence of our time and science, so that we can see and read the reasons. And the moral teachings of Islam—generosity and bravery, truth and honesty, justice and equality, patience and fortitude, thanksgiving and kindness, sentiment and humility, firmness and perseverance, resolution and determination—Kasravi must say which of these should not exist in the present age or disturbs the tranquility and life of mankind, and other critics should assist him, so that moral scholars can hear and judge what they say.

We say that the glorious Koran has guaranteed all of the intellectual and spiritual necessities of mankind that can be reckoned under the title of religion as far as imagination can conceive. The true and permanent prosperity of mankind, both in the past and future of this world and in the other world depends on complying with or negating Islam. The practical wisdom this holy religion has brought to the wanderer status of religion certainly cannot be changed. Each of the ten secondary principles of the Shi'ites contains a word of wisdom, and even Kasravi himself, when he was a believer, wrote a short philosophy regarding this. And the principles of our religion are also among the requisites of all religions and intellectual systems.

A— Kasravi now denies the Imamate as a principle of religion and has acknowledged only the superficial succession

* *Obligatory alms for the Poor.* Trans.

** *Obligatory contribution to the Imam of one-fifth of one's income.* Trans.

and government of the caliph. He has also changed the meanings of the other primary principles, since he writes that prophecy and resurrection are also contrary to the ideas of Islam.

H— In subjects we discussed earlier, we proved that monotheism and prophecy are in accordance with the ideas of Islam and the Imamate. The deficiencies in what he said about monotheism and prophecy also became obvious. God willing, we will also explain the Imamate and resurrection in a later section and make the truth clear.

A— Kasravi has written criticisms of the Khoms and the Zakat, and has blackened a lot of pages.

H— In proving the necessity of Khoms and Zakat and their essentialness, no arguments are required. For the faithful, the income derived from these religious laws must be spent to protect the religion and progress the faith, and the Koran and oral tradition have also ordained it. What is the intellectual difficulty? What does Kasravi say?

A— Kasravi says that if there are to be Khoms and Zakat in Islam, they should be for bettering the condition of Muslims. Now, why do the Djafari religious authorities attract the payments to the cities Qum and Nadjaf and Karbela and Holy Meshed from all over Muslim countries and spend it on personal matters?

Allocation of Khoms and Zakat

H— Child, this is also one of Kasravi's lusterless lies and colorful tricks, and he wants to make the nation cynical about the clergy. Not even one penny of the Zakat is sent to the centers of religious teachings. The Zakat of every village and city is divided amongst the poor. The jurists and clergymen do not allow the Zakat to be taken out of their own locality unless there is no needy person there, in which case it is taken to nearby villages and cities. Kasravi's lies are clear and obvious to the villagers and city dwellers who are aware of this problem.

But in accordance with the dictates of the glorious Koran, half of the Khoms is given to orphans and the poor and the sons of Hashemi parentage or descendents of the Prophet (and in regard to this there is not enough space here to mention the ex-

planations). The other half, also in accordance with the text of the honorable verse, belongs to God and the Prophet and his relatives. After His Majesty the Last Prophet (praise be upon him) passed away, the wealth of God and the prophet, in accordance with reason and logic, belongs to the executor and successor of the prophet, who in the opinion of the Imams is, at the present time, the hidden Imam (praise be upon him). Their excellencies the jurists and clergy who are honored with the title of Imam (praise be upon them) attract to the centers of teaching only one-half of what is called the Imam's share and spend it on the special requirements of religion and might grant half of this to the weak and deserving of their localities.²

A— Kasravi says that the funds derived from religious laws must be spent on public concerns or improvement of the country. The clergy has no right to possess them.

H— How strange it is that, considering the fact the Great God and the Messenger of the religion have designated its use, others have the right to meddle inappropriately and intervene in the commandments of Islam. The Koran has explained one by one where the Khoms and Zakat are to be used. Can it be changed according to Kasravi's appetite? And secondly, is not bettering the situation of the poor and needy, and promoting science and religion, not a service to the country and a mending of society?

A— Kasravi says that the mullas have no right to possess and spend these funds. What service have the mullas performed for society that they are entitled to spend the money and income of the nation?

2 *Khoms is divided into two shares, the Imam's (praise be upon him) and that of the Prophet's descendents. Each share is divided into three parts. The deserving of the share of the Prophet's descendents are orphans and the poor. The possessors of the Imam's share are God, the Prophet, and the Imam (praise be upon him). And because the share of the Prophet (praise be upon him) passes to the Imam, it is called the Imam's share.*

H— My dear, regarding the share of the Imam (grace be upon him), there have been different opinions. But now among scholars the best ideas are being acted upon, which are that spending the religious royalties on religious apparatuses and centers has become the most important duty of the Shi'ite society.

Child, listen carefully. The Imam's (grace be upon him) share is a religious and legal right, which the Muslim must take out of the profit from his profession or job, in accordance with the books of jurisprudence and the obvious service of religion and the lessons of the religious commandments and specialists in religious science in order to teach the people and train the nation. Therefore, the most deserving individuals in society for possessing the share of the Imam (grace be upon him) are the jurists and orators and scholars in religious education. Of course, protecting religion and the laws of Islam, and training Muslims from a moral point of view are the greatest services to religion and the country.

We now assume that the Imams (grace be upon him) share in an income that should be spent in behalf of the masses of the country. A teacher who teaches arithmetic and geometry or astronomy or geography to students in elementary school or high school has, according to you, the right to spend from these dues. But the jurists and preachers who teach the lesson of humanity to the people of the nation, have they no right to at least a small livelihood for themselves and their spouses? Such unfairness! What happens if we assume a jurist or preacher to be a teacher?

How strange it is that one wise person cannot be found amongst the Kasravis and materialists who is wise enough to accept the reasoning or the religious verses. Do not the jurists and preachers who are religious fighters for Islam and spiritual and moral trainers of the society, have the right to live? But those individuals who are after their own personal aggrandizement and leisure, and the construction of skyscraper palaces night and day and their pleasure and feasts and immoral assemblies, and who as a result of their lavish living and dissipation are splendid and populous, do they have the right to possess everything of

the religion and nation? If the likes of the noble clergy did not now exist, irreligiosity and materialism, and consequently the nourishment of poisonous microbes and attacks by dangerous elements, would have eliminated the whole universe. Child, if the Djafari scholars were not around, how would the lies and false accusations and deceit of people like Kasravi have been revealed? It happened under the auspices and due to the service of these scholars and the Shi'ite ulama and because of the nature of the pulpit.

They say that the ulama must be scholars and merchants, scholars and industrialists, scholars and laborers or farmers. Is the heavy burden of being a cleric not enough for the clergyman? The clergyman who spends all day and night and every minute of his life in the service of religion and the nation, can he also busy himself with another occupation and job? Those unjust people have lost their minds and equanimity of speech, and whatever carnal desire teaches them they repeat.

We know that the most important people in the country are the military men. In their entire lives they face an army only once and might not go to the battlefield once, yet we grant them more rights. But these religious military men who spend all of their lives in war and battle and are always defending the religion against its enemies, should they not receive a salary for their daily livelihood? I do not understand what this bunch of ignorant drunks are saying.

A— Excuse me, but maybe Kasravi means that the scholars and mullas are not familiar with their duties or do not act on them or because of them, and that they do not appear to be performing any service for the country and religion.

H— This is another subject. Of course every official who does not perform his duty does not deserve a salary. But Kasravi and his collaborators are basically malevolent toward Islam and the faith and are enemies of the jurists and preachers. In their opinion, they have the right to be, because until they eliminate clergy, they cannot damage the religion and faith. Listen, my dear, we know the clergy deserve respect and that all of their actions are for the sake of society and getting closer to

God. And we consider the use of these funds to be lawful because they enable the clergy to do their religious duties. Even if an individual clergyman were to defend Islam and the Koran with all his might and trained the nation night and day, but had personal motives and thought about fame and power, then not one penny of the Imam's (praise be upon him) share would be lawful for him, let alone for the lazy and self-indulgent clergymen. In Shi'ite law, sincerity and faith are the bases for action. Action is not merely for the sake of acting. The essence of a religious duty is justice and truth. Of course, we're not discussing the self-indulgent or ambitious mullas. We hold their existence to be more harmful for the religious society than foreigners are. Whenever we say clergymen, we are talking about a monotheist and responsible individual. The cleric who is not committed to national sentiment and scholarly morals and protecting the borders of religious law and serving mankind and following the Prophet and Imam is not a clergyman but a wolf in the guise of a sheep.

A— Regarding this point, some of the pious men have objections, too. They say that all of this commendation you bestow on the clergy, and your assertions about their exalted position and the importance of their duties, must be demonstrated more clearly by the effects of their acts and service. When we study the book of spirituality, in truth it seems to be a valuable and holy book. But when we observe its practical applications, most of them do not conform to the concepts. We do not see anything from our ulama, teachers and scholars, and propagandists, except feigned semblances of virtue and some centers that have been established in the name of teaching or lecturing and preaching. They gather together a few times during the day and night, then disperse, and we do not see a clear result. They have not raised a flag in the face of the foreigners and have not put a tent over the heads of Muslims. They do not protect the monotheists and cannot attack the polytheists. If they are followers of the Prophet and successors of the Imam, then why have the vagrant and wandering Djafaris remained in the stage of astonishment and disputatiousness, like a shepherdless herd that is dispersed and

scattered? Where are those lecturers who with a pure heart and warm breath could blow a soul into the lifeless body of the nation? If there were a more orderly organization among the Shi'ites, people would never listen to the harrowing voice of malevolent people, and then statements by the likes of Kasravi would have no effect on the youngsters.

H— My dear, although, our clergy's progress also has other internal and external obstacles, and it is not only due to their lack of effort, I agree with the critics in this case up to a point. Despite all their usefulness, these assemblies and centers of scholarly teaching have not achieved the results or reached the goal they should have, and we can not reach it in the present situation. This is why I say, we need distinguished reformers—jurists and able clergy who are determined and strong-willed and that act for God's sake. The do-nothing preachers and lecturers first of all, and secondly the immoral and gluttonous scholars and mullas, who are a disgrace to the society of clergymen, must be expelled from these holy centers, and a great number of truth-loving students and fervently pious men must be trained to correct the nation and instruct people in the use of the weapons of technology against foreigners. As much as possible, we must eliminate distinctions among people and try to unite individuals and unify the masses.

Yes, when we put competition aside and stop individuality, then our society will head toward prosperity and will progress with long steps, and as a result the likes of Kasravi will get lost and become discouraged in their efforts to tempt the orphans of the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him). But we have now digressed from the subject.

Our conversation was about the amazing machinery of man, the astonishing human machine that His Majesty the Creator has made to last forever, and about how He has granted man eternal life. If the machine is made to work according to the pleasure of people and operates by order of carnal desire, it will certainly incur progressive damage and its humanity will dissipate and be destroyed and the capital of perpetual life and prosperity will be lost. Therefore, it must always be run under the management of outstanding individuals who have learned

the lesson of knowledge in the university of the Unique Master and have become specialized in the science of understanding human beings. It must work on their orders and ultimately provide eternal happiness and life in the other world. The purpose of the All-Knowing Creator would thus be realized. Therefore, prophetic mission is one of the necessities of the world, and to act in accordance with the commandments and laws of the prophets is essential for mankind. Lack of restraint makes the human machine defective and shortens a man's life and will drag him to the dreadful valley of adversity.

4

ON THE IMAMATE

A— On what arguments do we Shi'ites base our proof of the Imamate? How do we know it is derived from principles of the religion?

H— In truth, the Imamate is derived from religious principles, but because the Sunnites do not believe in it, it is considered to be derived only from Shi'ite religious principles. In our terminology Imam means the successor of the Prophet.

A— What is the reason for the Imamate and succession?

H— It is so that after the passing away of the Prophet, the Prophet's religion and the divine laws and the gem of religion would be safe from larceny by strangers and alteration by the ignorant.

A— Why does protection of the divine commandments require the existence of an Imam? In the same way the people learned the divine laws from the Prophet, they pass these laws on to their children and grandchildren until such time as another prophet appears.

H— Child, if people were so simple and honest, there would be no need for the existence of Imams.¹ But in no era

1 *One of the precepts of the Djafari religion is that the Imam is the axis of the world of possibility, and his existence without any restriction is as essential as a heart in a man's body. (The purpose of this explanation is only to answer criticisms by foreigners.)*

have people been that honest and simple. His Majesty Moses (grace be upon him) disappeared from amongst the children of Israel for forty days, and all but a very few of the Israelites were led astray by the Samaritans and turned away from monotheism and became calf-worshippers. Had it not been for his brother Harun, those few would have followed the majority and the gem of Judaism would have been destroyed. Perhaps you assume that the people who follow prophets are perfect angels and innocent?

Child, it was the same with His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him) who were chosen for prophecy. The people who with sincerity and correct faith became Muslims comprised a small group, and the rest of the Arabs, especially the Arabs of the desert, both the great and the insignificant ones, professed Islam either out of greed for wealth or out of fear. In this large group there certainly was a majority who obeyed the religious commandments but had no love for the holy laws of Islam and were looking for an opportunity to destroy and abolish it. Now we come to the very few, the pious group. They did not have much power, of course, nor sufficient memory and intelligence to be able to memorize the interpretations of all those exalted verses and divine rules and bring to the dispersed Muslims or their children and grandchildren demonstrations of and proof against the obstinate oppressors. Therefore, the existence of the innocent Imam and the knowledgeable and able Caliph to protect and support the gem of religion is one of the religious precepts.

In addition, a group of the pure and devoted was needed so that the Prophet's immediate successor could carry the banner of the Imamate and protect the divine inspiration and science, and water the sapling of religion and religious law, and combat and make war against an ignorant society and the enemies of the divine religion as much as possible, until it is impossible for the malevolent to destroy the divine faith. Regarding the point that Ali (grace be upon him) and Ali's family are the protectors of the gem of religion and preservers of monotheism, numerous hadiths have emanated from the Shi'ites and Sunnis. We are content to refer to one Sunni hadith

in which His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) says, "For all times, whoever of my family remains will convert the apostates, and ignorant, and know that your Imams are your representatives to God, and watch whom you are choosing."

One of the Sunni scholars, Mullah, had related this hadith about the character of Muhammad and Ebn-Hadjar's character on page 90 of the book *Savaegh Moharagheh* (quoted from page 21 of *Moradjeat*), when interpreting the honorable verse,

وقفوهم انهم مسئولون •

But stop them for they must be asked.

A— If the Imam, or successor of the Prophet, as you said, is the protector of the gem of religion and the commandments of Islam, then who has the duty to protect the borders of Islam and defend it against external enemies?

H— It is the duty of this same Imam.

A— Then who were the Bani Umayyad and Bani Abbasid Caliphs?

H— They were oppressors and transgressors. Their reigns and rule certainly were cruel. What do you think, can you call such oppressive despots as Muawiyah and Yazid and Marvan and Avalid and Mansour Abbassi and Motevakkel the Prophet's Caliphs? Never! You cannot even call these blood-thirsty libertines Muslims. Child, the Imam that is appointed by God and the Prophet to the Imamate and executorship has two aspects. One, obviously, is ruling and protecting the borders of Islamic countries, and the other is spiritual directorship and protection of the truths and defense of the soul of religion, in which truly he is the associate of the Koran and interpreter of this holy book.

A— Please talk about these two aspects of caliphate more clearly.

H— His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) had two duties in his time. One was describing—that is, making people familiar with the divine wishes and transmitting the divine com-

mandments to them. This was his main holy duty. The second duty was incidental. It was to protect the Muslims from attack by the polytheists. In regard to this duty of defense or holy war, he was ordered by God to consult with the Muslims,² as it says in the Koran

وأمرهم شورى بينهم

Their affairs by mutual consultation.

Actually the duty of prophecy and the messenger is that first spiritual aspect, the leading of the human soul and training in human truths and fulfilment of moral precepts.

Now, his successor, the Caliph and Imam of the Muslims, also naturally had these two aspects. He was a religious spokesman and also a worldly leader. In both he had to be knowledgeable and able and, like the Prophet Himself, must be strong-minded and strong in faith. He must be able to answer any question and must not turn his back on any catastrophe, and must be extremely powerful, especially in protecting the gem of the religion, so that the ignorant and malevolent, as I have said, do not change the divine religion according to their own desires. And this is the most important and weightiest of the caliph's tasks. If it had not been for both the religious and defensive aspects of the Shi'ite Imams at the beginning of Islam during the reign of the Umayyads, the pure commandments of and training by His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him) would have been destroyed by the tribe of apostates and malevolent opponents of the religion and enemies of God. Perhaps they would have tampered with the glorious Koran and exalted the rule of ignorance.

Each one of the Imams (grace be upon them), employing a special plan and with great ability, was policing the religion and shepherding the followers of His Majesty the Prophet. Some

2 *There is a world of wisdom and secrecy and attraction for the hearts of Muslims in this consultation. Otherwise the Prophet did not need the favorable opinions of others.*

through forbearance and patience, some through war and martyrdom, some through training and teaching, they fought the enemies of God and truth with all their might and ability to protect the holy legacy of His Popular Majesty from robbery by devilish men. Even during the reigns of the three caliphs, if it hadn't been for Ali (praise be upon him) the commandments of religion would have changed somewhat and taken on another color.

A— Why during the reign of the three caliphs?

H— I have nothing to do with the different opinions and statements about them. I do not want to publish one seditious word, and I only say that the three caliphs were somewhat ignorant of the problems of religious law and that judging by religious laws their information was deficient. As I have said, if it were not for His Majesty the King of Pious Men, Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him), in most of their difficulties they would have necessarily made a judgment on the basis of their own opinions, and because of this Islam would have changed.

A— Do only the Shi'ites say this, or do the Sunnis also confess to their ignorance and deficiency?

H— Not only the Sunnites and the famous Sunnite scholars, but Kasravi, who is the most bloodthirsty enemy of the Shi'ites, also has confessed to this fact.

A— In the magazine *Parcham* or *Peyman*?

H— I have not seen it in *Parcham* or in *Peyman*. I have read it in his book *Altashayo Vaalshiie*, which apparently is the translation of the book *Shiigari*. On page 10, 4th line, he writes, "Omar, respected Ali (grace be upon him) and bowed to him and in his affairs consulted him. In a famous statement he said that if it had not been for Ali (grace be upon him), Omar would have perished." Look, my dear, Kasravi says it from the mouth of the second caliph, Omar, and he confesses that it is correct: "If it were not for Ali, Omar would have perished." That is, in the rules of judgment and problems of religious law, if it were not for Ali, and had he not helped the second caliph, Omar would have been disgraced and would have perished as the result of ignorance.

A— In what circumstance was it that the second caliph said that? Was it in regard to political affairs or the judgment of religious law? Did the first and third caliphs also act on the decisions and pronouncements of the King of Pious Men (grace be upon him)? Or was it only Omar who acted on them?

H— Because Othman was in front of his lewd and wordly relatives and other people and was defeated and subdued, he did not want to, or could not, act on the judgment of Ali (grace be upon him), except perhaps, at times when Othman was very ashamed because of difficulties and Ali would induce him to listen to the divine commandments and judgments about religious law and would make him execute a divine commandment.³

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3. *One day, in the morning, Valid, who was the governor-general of Kufeh under Othman, came to the mosque drunk and he performed the morning prayer in four parts when he sent greetings. He began to worry about his mistake and looking at Abdullal Ben Massoud said to him, "I was in a good mood today and performed the morning prayer with two extra parts." Ebn Massoud said, "Because of you we always have an excess of abundance," to sum up Valid's abnormal behavior, which was more than anyone could cover up. Out of necessity the Kufis went to his house one day, and he was in a drunken sleep. The doorkeeper was not there and they took the ring off Valid's finger. A group went to Medina and reported that he committed sins and neglected religious affairs and the peasants. It was incumbent on Othman to dispose of Valid, and necessarily he sent for Abo Moze and Abu Zainab, who had brought the ring with them when they came to Medina. He said to Abu Moze and Abu Zainab, "Do you have evidence that Valid has drunk wine? Did you see it?" They said, "We did not see him, but he was vomiting and his beard was soaked with wine." Because Othman did not want to disgrace him and stop him from ruling Kuffeh and wanted to send him back to Kuffeh, he flogged the people who had witnessed the drinking of wine and performance of extra prayer. They reported this to Ali (grace be upon*

But whenever the first caliph and all of the learned men would be unable to reach a verdict on the basis of the religious laws he would refer without pride to the Heir of the Prophet (grace be upon him) for wisdom, and that Great Messenger's honorable cousin would execute Ali's verdict on the matter. The second caliph resorted immediately to the door of the city of knowledge of the Messenger (praise be upon him)—that is, the Prince of Virtue Ali (grace be upon him), and his refuge and reliance for political affairs, as well as verdicts in religious law, always was Ali (grace be upon him). His statement, "If it were not for Ali, Omar would have perished," heard from him many times in regard to the difficulty of reaching verdicts and passing judgment. His statement, "I do not settle any matter about which Ali is silent, is quoted in Sunni and Shi'ite books, and the story of these statements has been published in detail in the works of Shi'ite and Sunni scholars. There is no time to explain now. My child, the most important duty of the caliphate and Imamate is to protect prophecy and the prophetic mission and be keeper of the divine gem of religion. My dear, in regard to prophecy and guidance, even if there had not been military expeditions and conquest of forts, incidents would naturally have occurred during propagation of the word and His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) would have been forced into defense and the declaration of holy war. Prophecy otherwise is indeed the spreading of divine inspiration and cultivation of religious training of humanity in morality, and the successor of the Prophet also bears that duty. He must be wise about

him). Ali immediately went to Othman and said "Oh Othman, you transgress the boundaries of God and flog the witness instead of the lewd one. It is essential that you impose god's restrictions on Valid and remove him from Kufeh." This time Othman did not have the power to go against his orders. Therefore he punished Valid for drinking wine and dismissed him from the governor-generalship of Kufeh. (From the second volume of the second book of Othman's Nasekh Altavarikh, page 490. The author's exact words are quoted.)

divine inspiration and religious laws, and must train people, as the Prophet did, to protect the truths of religious law. And among the learned men this concept is the holy essence of Ali (grace be upon him).

Only Ali (Grace Be Upon Him) Was Heir to the Knowledge of the Prophet (Praise Be Upon Him)

A— Besides the testimony of the second caliph, do we have another argument in respect to this subject?

H— Child, we have countless reasons for believing that Ali (grace be upon him) was the only heir to the knowledge of the Prophet. On this the greatest scholars and writers of Shi'ites and Sunnis are united. At this point I will relate the clear and outstanding hadiths from the Sunnis:

1. His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) has said, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the door to the city of knowledge." Therefore, whoever is looking for knowledge should pass through the door and take refuge inside the door. Tabarani has related this hadith, taking it from the great book by Ebn Abbas. It is also mentioned on page 107 of *Djame Saghir* by Sayouti, and Hakem, in the third part of book *Almostadrak*, page 226, has narrated it with two correct proofs of the virtues of Ali (grace be upon him), one taken from Ebn Abbas and the other from Djaber Ebn Abdollah Ansari. He has also provided firm reasons for the correctness of these proofs. Imam Ahmad Ebn Muhammad Ebn Alsadigh Almaghrabi, a resident of Cairo, has written a book about the correctness of this hadith. It is named *Fatholmolk Alali Bessehate Hadith Baabe Madinatolelm Ali*, and was published in 1354* by the Islamic printing house of Azhar in Egypt. (See *Moradjeaat*, page 151.)

2. His Majesty The Prophet (praise be upon him) said, "I am the house of knowledge and Ali is the door of that house." Tormozi and Ebn Djarir have narrated this hadith in their book, and many scholars have also relayed it. (*Moradjeaat*, page 152.)

* 1933. Trans.

3. The Great Messenger (praise be upon him) said, "Ali is the door of my knowledge and after my death the transmitter of whatever has been sent to me." Love of Ali is faith, spite against him is hypocrisy. Daylami has narrated this hadith from Abi Zar on page 156 in the sixth section of *Kanzalamal*.

4. His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) said, "Oh Ali, after me you will instruct my people whenever they have disagreements." Hakem, on page 122 of the third section of *Mostradak*, and Daylami, on page 156 of the sixth section of *Kanzalamal*, have narrated this hadith found in Ons hadith. The writer of *Moradjeaat* comments: "I say that whoever thinks about this hadith and ones like it knows that Ali (grace be upon him) is to God's Messenger (praise be upon him) what His Majesty the Messenger is to the only God." "His Majesty the Lord (glory to him) says to the Prophet (praise be upon him),

وما انزلنا عليك الكتاب الا لتبين لهم الذي اختلفوا فيه وهدى
ورحمة لقوم يؤمنون .

And We sent down the Book to thee for the express purpose, that thou shouldst clear to them those things in which they differ, and that it should be a guide and a mercy to those who believe.

And the Messenger of God also says to Ali (grace be upon him), "After me you will instruct my people about, and make clear for them, whatever they have disagreed on." (*Moradjeaat*, page 152). Therefore, Ali's direct succession is clear and obvious.

5. The Great Messenger (praise be upon him) said, "Ali, compared with me, is the same as I am to my God." Ebn Samakeh has narrated this hadith by Abu Bakr, and Ebn Hadjar has related it in *Maghsad Khames*, taking it from the fourteenth verse in Chapter 11 of Maghased's *Savaagh*. These five hadiths are sufficient to prove that Ali (praise be upon him) was the only heir of His Majesty the Prophet's (praise be upon him)

knowledge, and that no one except him has the right to claim this lofty position. (*Moradjeaat*, page 152.)

6. The Great Messenger says in the Abu Bakr hadith, "My hand is the same as Ali's in administrating justice." This is hadith 2539 on page 153 of the sixth section of *Kanzalamal*. (*Moradjeaat*, page 156.)

7. God's Messenger (praise be upon him) says, "I am the terrifier and Ali is the guide, and through you, oh Ali, the guidable will be guided after my death." Daylami has presented this Hadith, which is hadith 2631, on page 157 of the sixth section of *Kanzalamal*. (*Moradjeat*, page 157.)

8. The Great Messenger (praise be upon him) says, "whoever wants to look at Noah for his determination and at Adam for his knowledge and at Moses for his intelligence and at Jesus for his asceticism, must look at Ali Ebn Abitaleb (praise be upon him)." This statement was presented by Bayhaghi in his book and by Imam Ahmad Ebn Hanbal in his text and by Ebn Abi Alhadid in the fourth of the predicates that are on page 449 of the second volume of *Nahdj Albalagheh*. And Imam Razi has repeated it in his interpretation of the Mobahleh verse on page 288 of second section of his great commentary and concluded that it is indisputable. Because this hadith is accepted by Ali's supporters and opponents alike, Ebn Bateh has relayed this hadith from the hadith of Ebn Abbas. It is mentioned on page 34 of the book *Fatholmolk Alali Bessehate Hadith Baabe Madinatolaleme Ali*. And one of the people who has confessed to the fact that Ali is totally informed about all of the Prophet's secrets is Mohayeldin Arabi, as Aref Shoarani has conveyed in Chapter 32 page 172, of his book *Alivaghiat Va Aldjavaheer*.

9. On page 127, at the end of Zeyed Ebn Abi Oufi's hadiths, His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), says to Ali (grace be upon him), "You are my brother and my heir." When asked, "What do I inherit from you?", he said, "Whatever former prophets have bequeathed from the book of God and the prophetic traditions." Imam Ahmad Ebn Hanbal has narrated this hadith in the book *Managheb Ali* (praise be upon him), as have Askar in his history and Baghavi and Tabarani in their two letters and Baroudi in *Almarafat* and Ebn

Adi and others. It is a lengthy hadith.

10. On page 199 of Zeyed Ebn Abi Oufi's hadiths, the Prophet (praise be upon him) is reported to have said, "Every prophet has an heir and an executor, my heir and executor is Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him)." The writer of the book *Moradjeaat* says that Zahabi has narrated this hadith about Ahval Sharik from Mizan Aletedal, and has negated it and said that Muhammad Ebn Hamid Razi is not trustworthy. His answer is that Imam Ahmadebn Hanbal and Imam Abolghasem Baghavi and Imam Ben Djarir Tabari and others of their stature have confidence in Muhammad Ebn Hamid and have called him reliable and have quoted him, and that Muhammad Ebn Hamid is their chieftain and trustworthy. Similarly, in his translation of the book *Almizan*, it has confessed that Muhammad Ebn Hamid is one of the individuals who has not been accused of heresy and of professing to be Shi'ite. He is one of the Zahabi ancestors. Consequently, there is no justification for accusations about this hadith.

Actually, these ten hadiths have been relayed from the nobles of Sunni. They would be sufficient to prove our platform, if ignorant obstinate people did not insist on denying them.

Now, listen to another word that makes the matter more clear. After the death of the Great Prophet (praise be upon him), His Majesty Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) always in his judgments and decrees would object to the three caliphs, and they would accept this without hesitation. Indeed, when in difficulty they always welcomed Ali's presence, whether they wanted to or not. Even Othman, who was forced to oppose him, could not avoid the decisions and judgments of Ali (grace be upon him). But during his reign and at other times, his highness would act only on the basis of his own knowledge and clarity of mind in passing judgment and issuing decrees. Nor did he want assistance from anyone or give anyone the right to meddle in judgments and decrees. With this clear argument we do not need another proof. Thus, according to the testimony of the three caliphs and the confession of Kasravi, the true successor of His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon

him) and the heir to that Great One's knowledge is Ali. Now, my dear child, study the truth carefully.

A— Some say that Abu Bakr was older and better than Ali (grace be upon him) and was more worthy for leadership and the caliphate.

Old Age Is Not a Prerequisite for the Caliphate

H— The fact that Abu Bakr was older than Ali (grace be upon him) is correct, but the response to this distinction was given by Abu Bakr's father, Abu Ghahafeh, when Abu Bakr wrote his father that the Muslims had chosen him for the caliphate because of his age. Abu Ghahafen wrote in answer that if old age is the condition for calphate, then why haven't the Muslims chosen him for caliphate since he was Abu Bakr's father and older than Abu Bakr? Even if Abu Ghagafeh had not said this, all wise men could bear witness that old age does not establish priority and is not a precondition of the caliphate.

Despite the fact that they say he was more worthy of leadership and the caliphate during the life of His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him), no special qualification was observed by Abu Bakr, which would have provided proof. Many times he headed the army and was nominated as leader of the Muslim state for conquering Khaybar and fighting against the pagans. But he could not accomplish anything. He would always come back defeated and a fugitive. But Ali (praise be upon him) was always a winner and conqueror and powerful victor in all the Muhammadan wars and jobs given him by God or the Prophet (praise be upon him). In no war was lack of planning or worthiness observed, thus Ali's worthiness and good planning and reasonability are proved by circumstantial evidence. Yes, one day a few verses from the beginning of the Braat Surrah descended against the polytheists, and it was necessary that those verses be read at the center of Qurish. His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) assigned this lofty duty to Abu Bakr. The first caliph, leading a group of Muslims, set out towards the honorable Mecca. If Abu Bakr had performed this important mission well he would have gained great

credibility and it would have been a clear proof of his qualifications for the caliphate. But God did not want it. He sent Gabriel, with the respectable old man's discharge order saying, "Oh my friend, you either have to communicate these verses to the idol worshippers yourself, or through a member of your family. Others have no right to meddle. The Great Prophet (praise be upon him) nominated his honorable cousin Ali (grace be upon him) for the job. Amir Almomenin reached Abu Bakr midway and took the copy of the divine verses from him. He performed the holy mission among the great Arab assemblies, with absolute bravery and worthiness, then returned to Medina. This story has been documented in all Islamic histories, and with little difference in meaning has been reported by both Sunnis and Shi'ites.⁴ Child, by making the communication of these verses to the faithful so important the wise God shows how important a matter the caliphate is. Ali (grace be upon him) clearly succeeded God's Prophet (praise be upon him) and

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- 4 *Following are some of the sources of this story: (1) It is mentioned by the Sunnis in the seventh chapter of the second Maghsad, Qayat Almaram, page 461, twenty-three ways. (2) It is also in the 221st narrative in the chapter on the virtues of Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him) in the book Alfazael written by Ahmad Ebn Hanbal, where the story was related as follows. The Great Messenger (praise be upon him) sent Abu Bakr with the Braat verse to the Meccans, but when Abu Bakr reached Zalhalifeh, the Great Messenger sent Ali (grace be upon him), saying, "Send Abu Bakr back and take the Braat verse to the people yourself. His Majesty Amir Almomenin did as he was told. Upon returning to Mecca, Abu Bakr went to see the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), he cried, "Oh, Messenger of God, did I do anything wrong?" His Majesty said, "No, but I was appointed by the only God to either take this verse myself or have it taken by someone of my blood." (3) Haskani, also has narrated this hadith twenty ways in his interpretation of the fifty-first verse in the book Shavahed Altanzil (page 57). Eight of the ways are from Ans Ebn Malek.*

has performed the duty that had been required of the Prophet (praise be upon him). Certainly he would succeed the Great One in the caliphate.

My dear, be precise and see the truths. About his being better, there are signs and indications of his wisdom and meekness and asceticism and piety and faith and generosity and bravery and sentiment and prayerfulness and other virtuous qualities. I do not know if Abu Bakr had any of these characteristics. If he did, in which of them did he excel Ali (grace be upon him)? It was proven that Ali was the heir to the Prophet's (praise be upon him) knowledge, and whoever has the divine knowledge manifests the divine quality. On this point Shi'ites are united without hesitation about the superiority of Ali (grace be upon him). But I remember a hadith from the Sunnis that puts an end to the quarrel and explicitly proves the superiority of Ali (grace be upon him). In the Koran, the Only God says,

ان الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات اولئك هم خير البرية .

*Those who have faith and do righteous deeds,
they are the best of creatures.*

Ebn Hadjar has confessed that this honorable verse has been created about Ali and Ali's family (grace be upon him) and reckoned it to be one of the verses about his merit. He says this is the eleventh of the verses on his merits, which are included in the first section of Chapter Eleven of *Savaegh*.⁵

5 Regarding the merits of Moala Amir Almomenin (praise be upon him), who was above all the companions of Muhammad, even the Sheiks, there are such a limitless number of correct hadiths, one after the other, by learned Sunni men, even Sheiks, that his excellency the great writer, keeping brevity in mind, has contented himself with mentioning only one hadith. Because he has given me permission to further substantiate the point, if I think it necessary, I will relate a few other hadiths, mentioning their origin:

(1) *Mir Seyyed Ali in the seventh Mavadat from Mavadat Algharbi, and Khatib Kharazmi in the book Managheb, and Imam Thalabi in his interpretation, and Ebn Asaker on page 364 of the second volume of Tardjomat Al Imam Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him), all basing their proofs on Omar Ebn Khattab, have said, "If you put seven heavens and earths on one pan of a scale, and Ali's faith on the other pan, Ali's faith would be superior and have greater weight."*

(2) *Djalaladdin Sayouty in Laali's first volume, page 170, and Khateeb in his history of Baghdad, Volume Three, page 194, and Muhammad Ebn Kathir in Tahzib Altahzib, Volume Nine, page 419, and the thirtieth chapter of the 127th hadith, taken from Fraed Al Samtin—all with proof—have related that The Great Messenger (praise be upon him) said, "Ali is the best of people, and whoever denies it is pagan, "whoever does not say that Ali is the best of people is a pagan."*

(3) *Djalaladin Sayouty in the first volume of Laali, page 170, and Ebn Asaker in Chapter 62 of the book Kafayat Altaieb, page 244, and in Chapter 31, page 128, of the book Faraed Alsamtin, and in hadith 1049, on page 95 of the book Shavahed Altanzil, and Sheik Tousi in hadith 36 of the ninth section of Amali, page 257, and other Shi'ites and Sunnis have related, with proof, that Djaber Ebn Abdullah Ansari said, "We were in the Great Messenger's presence when Ali Ebn Abitaleb came and His Majesty told us that his brother Ali had come. Then he looked to the Kaba and touched it, saying, 'I swear to God, who has my life is in His hands, that Ali Ebn Abitaleb and his Shi'ites will be saved on the resurrection day.' Then he said, 'Ali is the first one of you that has believed in me, and he is the most faithful individual to his promise before the divine commandment, and the most just of people and the best apportioner of things in an equitable manner, and the most exalted in the opinion of God.' "* Djaber says that this verse about Ali was then sanctified,

ان الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات اولئك هم خير البرية .

Now, practicing religious jurisprudence contrary to the text is wrong. Logic and hadith both shout with an audible voice that in respect to virtue and generosity and knowledge and faith and of the moral virtues, do not compare anyone with Ali (grace be upon him). In all ways he is the master and the lord, and others are followers and subjects. There is nothing else to say.

A— (After having been sunk deep into thought and then raising his head with utter cheerfulness)—It is finished; there is no place for a formal caliphate. As moral and religious worthiness is proved in someone and all confess that Ali is the heir to the Prophet's knowledge and the protector of religion and divine laws, then the formal caliphate directorship that Sunnis talk about is inferior to the Imamate and true caliphate. It is obvious that in regard to a person whose commandments and judgments and decrees are obeyed and indisputable when it comes to cultivation of the soul and training people in morality and about formal statesmanship, the answer is very easy. Like the Prophet himself, he will also protect the borders with the help of the fighters of Islam and defend Islam from its enemies. The crux of the matter is full knowledge of the divine commandments and protection of religious truths. Therefore, the war between the Shi'ites and Sunnis ends there. By the same token, all of the actions brought against the Shi'ites are answered and in

*Those who have faith and do righteous deeds,
they are the best of creatures.*

and after that when the Great Messenger's (praise be upon him) learned men would see Ali they would say, "The best of people is coming."

(4) In the history of Damascus, by Ebn Asaker, page 489, with proofs from Ebn Vael of Hazifeh, the author quotes the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) as saying to Ali Ebn Abitaleb, "Oh Ali, I place you between myself and my people as the reminder of myself, so that whoever does not follow you is a pagan." A.E.

fact the house of the oppressors' criticisms is destroyed with this one blow.

Conditions for Appointment to Statesmanship and Kingship by the Only God.

H— Now that you are aware of the gem of Shi'a and know the truth of the matter, the roots or problems will eradicate themselves. Now I will relate to you one more word from the Koran and an intellectual conclusion that confirm and assist each other, so that you will know whether the caliphate was only the formal caliphate and whether Ali (grace be upon him) should be the caliph and have the right of succession, and whether the right to leadership of Islam was Amir Almomenin's (grace be upon him). Listen, my dear, when the sons of Israel saw their own abjectness and decadence and were moaning under the power and sovereignty of other nations, they took refuge with the prophet of their time so that he would ask the Great God for freedom and independence and to grant them kingship. That prophet prayed to God and received the answer,

ان الله قد بعث لكم طالوت ملكا.

God hath appointed Talut as King over you.

As was their habit, the Israelites protested that Talout had no right to be king, since he had no wealth and was not from the royal family. The Prophet (praise be upon him) of God answered them,

ان الله اصطفاه عليكم وزاده بسطة في العلم والجسم.

God hath chosen him above you, and hath gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily prowess.

This means that prerequisite of leadership and statesmanship is knowledge and bravery. Talout is more knowledgeable and braver than all of you, and the existence of these two qualities in a person is sufficient for governorship.

Now, oh child, you know about Ali's (grace be upon him) knowledge and control. According to the statements of Kasravi and others, his superiority in knowledge and politics and training of the army is proved. But his bravery and the ability of the lion of God, praise be to God, need no proof. All the incidents of the Islamic wars, and all the writers, and Islamic and pagan historians have borne witness to this. Friends and enemies know His Majesty Ali (grace be upon him) to be the champion of the Muhammadan wars and the knight of the battlefield, and in truth His Majesty's bravery was more well known and obvious to the masses than all of his God-given merits and natural gifts. Whenever all of the Muslims, even the three caliphs, would run away for fear of their lives, this uniquely brave man, his pure heart full of faith in God and the Prophet, would remain steady as a mountain in front of the enemy's regiments, and like a burst of fire would attack them, and powerfully and with unlimited perseverance would shake the foundation of the attacking army. In all the wars, Amir Almomenin defeated and vanquished the enemy, and the Arab champions would disperse before his sword Zolphaghar and would flee.

كانهم حمير مستنفرة - فرة من قسورة *

As if they were affrighted asses, fleeing from a lion.

When the Muslims were weak in their faith as a result of having to protect their lives, they would take refuge in a house or on top of a high mountain, and this man of God would get busy in accordance with the dictates of God's Prophet and God's religion and would prepare to sacrifice his life. Weren't Muslims after the death of the Great Prophet (praise be upon him) in need of such a caliph? Can old age and excess of life be a requisite of the caliphate? What wise man would choose someone other than this brave and knowledgeable man? Now let us assume that the wise God has placed the authority for deciding who would be caliph in the hands of the Muslims and said,

وامرهم شوری بینهم

Their affairs by mutual consultation.

We say, either the Muslims have made a mistake or knowingly have usurped the right of Ali (grace be upon him). This honorable verse has no connection with the caliphate. On the contrary, in all matters, especially important ones, we are supposed to consult with wise and learned men and use the intellect and prudence of others. In addition, the story of the three caliphs has not been one of consultation, but rather one of force and constraint and a thousand other concerns. Abu Bakr's caliphate came about because of the uniting and enthusiasm of only eight people. Most Muslims from the noble and other classes were not informed about their deliberations. Omar, obviously, sat on the throne of the caliphate by order of Abu Bakr. Othman also occupied the seat of the caliphate as a result of an agreement with Abdul Rahman Ebn Ouf, who had been appointed to a committee of six by Omar. Now ask yourself this: Which one of these committees was correctly formed? Not one of them! One cannot call the caliphate of the Umayyads and Abbasids anything except a monarchy and imposition. It would surprise me very much if God's Prophet did not have the right to choose an heir and successor and instead a committee of Muslims was required. But Omar was chosen caliph by order of Abu Bakr, and no one at the time said all we need is God's book.

A— Here Kasravi has an important criticism. He says that the apostasy of thousands of Muslims all at one time is not possible, and the intellect resists acceptance of such a story. These Muslims believed in God's Prophet and would not hesitate to sacrifice their wealth and lives for him. How is it possible that they would turn their backs on their popular leader and pay no attention to his commands. Had the Prophet (praise be upon him) written a decree naming Ali (grace be upon him), they certainly would not have been disobedient and would not have chosen Abu Bakr instead of Ali (grace be upon him).

The Scene at Ohod and the Refugees After the Death of God's Messenger (Praise Be Upon Him)

H— Oh Kasravi, the Creator of light and darkness has not created a bit of brightness in your understanding. The group that did not heed the will of the Prophet (praise be upon him) after his death and the divine text were without exception the same who put God's Prophet (praise be upon him) into the hands of his bloodsucking enemies and the idol-worshippers in the battle of Ohod and who took refuge in the mountains of Medina. In the battle not one defender and friend of Muhammad and Muhammad's God and Muhammad's religion could be seen, except Ali Ebn Abitaleb. Those Muslims who were watching the pitiful scene on the battlefield from the top of the mountain in complete security saw how the Quraish wolves had surrounded the Prophet of Islam and Amir Almomenin and were advancing with their swords and spears and knew that the murder of those two noble men would be followed immediately by the collapse of the foundation of monotheism. They made no effort to help. They did not take a step for the victory of God. It was only because of the valiant strokes and army-shattering attacks by His Majesty Ali (grace be upon him) that a calamity for piety was averted. And every friend and enemy of the Muslims heard the acclaim that no one is more clever than Ali and no sword is like his Zolfaghar. Again, in the Hanin War those same Muslims fled before the sudden attack of the Havazon tribe, and the Prophet was left alone, surrounded by the enemy throng, and again His Majesty Ali Ebn Abitaleb killed the banner carrier of the invaders with the famous stroke of his sword and saved the Muslims from danger.

Tell him, oh malicious one, how after the death of the Prophet (praise be upon him) that scene at Ohod was repeated with another color and meaning. Ali was left alone with the corpse of his dear cousin in the corner of the House of Inspiration for the ablution of his pure body, but the leader of the fugitives of Ohod entered the gathering of the Saghifeh council in order to promote their own platform.

A just eye and fair look is necessary to see the truth. The

grudge and jealousy in Kasravi's heart regarding the Shi'ites has blinded his insight, and it is impossible for him to tell and write the truth. Kasravi himself writes about Muawiyah and other opponents of Ali (grace be upon him), and rejects the ones that call Ali imprudent. Ali was not imprudent or void of diplomacy. Rather, it was jealousy of Badr and Hanin that led people not to obey Ali.⁶

I am amazed. This is exactly why the Shi'ites say the rights of Ali and Fatima and their pure children were usurped. From the moment of the death of His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) and for a long time afterwards—indeed even before the death of His Majesty—most of the Quraish great men were nurturing enmity against Ali (grace be upon him) in their chests and were silent because of the fear of disgrace and scandal. But they were looking for an opportune moment. Now Kasravi, in front of Shamian and the companions of Nahravan Djamal clutches at our arguments. But in other matters he rejects them with an ugly tone and without any reason makes distinctions about the usurpers of the rights of Muhammad's family (praise be upon him). All Muslims know that most of the Quraish considered Ali (grace be upon him) their debtor. That is to say, among the Quraish or in most other Arab tribes, who did not have a father or son or brother or one of their close or distant family who had been killed by His Majesty Amir (grace be upon him) in the Muhammad wars for the sake of God? As His Majesty himself says.⁷

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- 6 Kasravi wrote in his book *Altashayo Valshieh*: "It has been said that Ali was undiplomatic and imprudent. But I say that affairs were difficult for Ali because he formerly had fought against the pagans and had killed the leaders of the Bani Umayyads. When he became caliph, jealousy boiled in the hearts of the Bani Omayeh and their opposition in Badr was motivated by a grudge.
- 7 "Every grudge that the group of Quraish manifested to the Messenger of God (praise be upon him), they manifested to me, and it may be too soon yet but they will manifest to my

Therefore, it is not amazing that Ali's (grace be upon him) caliphate was usurped when the committee met and consulted. The surprise is that after the discovery of the truth and the advance of Shi'ite ideas, Kasravi repeats the fight between the Shi'ite and Sunnis and awakens sleeping grudges. We do not know what incited him. An Iranian and Easterner of good parentage, with a grain of zeal and ardor, would not take on the job that Kasravi was pursuing, even if foreigners for their own political gains presented him with millions or bestowed on him the leadership of a country.

Tell him, oh Kasravi, that ancient disastrous dispute is sufficient to create adversity for Iran, Islam, and all of the East. Then let go of the collar of this oppressed tribe, and do not start the fire of division in Iran and Islam in the name of false unity and alliance.

A— Why haven't Muslims disobeyed the order of God and the Prophet in any matter, and have only disagreed about Ali (grace be upon him).

Exegesis on Religious Jurisprudence Contrary to the Divine Text

H— In the first place, as we have said, it was because of the grudges of Badr and Hanin against Ali (grace be upon him) and his sword that all the Quraish have scars on their hearts, and the effects of ignorance were firm in their hearts. Even some of the Muslims who had a favorable opinion of the companions of His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) say that because Abu Bakr and Omar and a group of scholars saw that if by decree or merit they humble themselves before Ali's caliphate, there would be a possibility of instability in the foundations of Islamic civilization and the scared Quraish and the

children after me. I have nothing to do with the Quraish. I have killed them by the order of God and command of the Messenger of God. Is this the reward from Muslims for one who obeys God and the Prophet of God?" Nahdjal Balagheh.

Arab leaders would seek the route of apostasy because of grudges and enmity against Amir Almomenin and the civil war would start again and Islam would regress or decline. Then they chose Abu Bakr, who everyone was satisfied with. He was old and had not shed anyone's blood. Even Omar admits to Abdullah Ebn Abbass that this was the reason he was made caliph. Secondly, the opposition was not only about Ali (grace be upon him). Most Muslims would reject the orders of God and the Prophet if they were not profitable, and would practice jurisprudence contrary to the divine text and would put a religious hat on the head of this opposition.

They delayed the mobilization and equipping of the Assameh armies which His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) insisted on. Using the excuse of His Majesty's illness, they put it off for so long that His Majesty passed away in the meantime, and thus they achieved their purpose.

In the Assameh Emirate, they protested to His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) that he was too inexperienced and young and had no right to the emirate. After the Prophet's death, they insisted that Abu Bakr dissolve the army of Assameh and take down the banner that the Messenger of God had raised. In the last hours of his life, on his sick bed, the Prophet asked for a pen and paper so that he could give written proof to his followers about the succession to the caliphate or some other important matter. Omar objected, saying the Prophet of God was delirious and raving, and a group agreed with him. In the negotiation of the Hadibieh peace treaty, Omar was obviously opposed to God's Messenger. In respect to the Hanin spoils, most of the Prophet's companions were totally opposed, and they acted contrary to the Prophet's opinion about taking ransom from the Badr prisoners. In the Ohod War, most of those from a group who were appointed to guard and protect sections to the rear left their posts and ran after spoils and thus caused the defeat of the Islamic army. In addition, Muslims opposed the Kind God's word and will of the Prophet (praise be upon him) not only in the matter of the caliphate, but also in regard to the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him). Indeed, they

also raised the banner of opposition against them in other circumstances involving divine commandments.

The Only God says in the glorious Koran,

قل لا اسألكم عليه اجرا الا المودة في القربى .

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin."

The reference is to love of the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him).⁸ Despite this clear text and the Koran instructions, they took Fadak from Fatima (grace be upon him) and for a thousand months they cursed Ali on podiums and in prayers, instead of treating them with friendship and favor. They poisoned Imam Hassan (grace be upon him). They martyred Imam Houssain, with the faultless members of his family and innocent children and his holy friends in that sad way. They brought down so much oppression and injustice on the heads of the family of chastity that until the resurrection day blood instead of tears will flow from the eye of history.

A— Kasravi says that Ali, like other Muslims, welcomed Abu Bakr's caliphate with total satisfaction and swore allegiance to him, and what the Shi'ites say has no basis.

Ali (Grace Be Upon Him) Always Knew the Caliphate to Be His Right

H— I wish it were so. If it were, we would not have read

8 *The book Yanabai Almodat, on page 106, and Tabarani in Modjam Kabir, and Ebn Abi Hatam in his interpretation, and Hakem in Managheb, and Vahedi in Vasisit, and Abu Naiim Hafez in Halilat Alolia, and Thalabi in his interpretation, and Hamvini in Fraed Alsamtin, and Ahmad in his predicate, all with proofs from Saiid Ebn Djabir and Ebn Abbass, relate that when this verse was indited his companions asked, "Oh Messenger of God who are the ones whose love is essential to us?" His Majesty replied, "They are Ali and Fatima and Houssain" (grace be upon them).*

about so many disgraceful events. But unfortunately the pages of history are full of the tragic events of that time. Ebn Abadrabeh, one of the famous Sunni scholars, in his book *Aghdalfarid*, Volume Three, page 77, writes the following: "Among the people who abstained from swearing allegiance to Abu Bakr were Ali Ebn Abitaleb and Abbass Ebn Abdulmotaleb and Zabir Ebn Avam. They gathered at Ali's (grace be upon him) house. When Omar Ebn Khattab came to the door of the house, Ali did not answer him. Omar said to his entourage, 'Bring fire.' Fatima said, 'Oh, Omar, are you setting my house on fire?' " The book *Tashrin Mohakemeh Dar Tarikh All Muhammad (praise be upon him)*, page 97, and Muhammad Vadjdi in the caliphate article in the third volume of *Daerat Almaaref*, page 757, have reported the refusal of Ali to swearing allegiance to Abu Bakr and his continued refusal when Abu Bakr tried to force him to. Ali Eb Ebitaled (grace be upon him) and a group abstained from swearing allegiance to Abu Bakr. Omar went towards them with a group, and Asid Ebn Hazir and Salmat Ebn Ebrahim and others were in that group. Zabir attacked them with a sword. Salmeh jumped and grabbed the blade. Ali (grace be upon him) was taken to Abu Bakr to swear allegiance. Then Ali (grace be upon him) pleaded, Abu Bakr said, "I don't force you to swear under duress." Omar said, "I will not leave you alone until you swear allegiance." Ali said, "You are asking for something that will make your future secure and will reward you tommorrow."

Ebn Abdarbeh in the third volume of the book *Aghdalfarid* relates that the first caliph said in his last breath, "I did certain things I wish I had left them undone. I left some things undone, I wish I had done them. First of all I did not ask the Messenger of God who deserved the caliphate; I wish I had asked. Secondly and thirdly, I left undone the disposal of (so and so); I wish I had acted on it. Fourthly, I wish I had not sent officials to Fatima's house to force the swearing of allegiance. And fifthly, I wish I had given Fadak to Fatima and had not confiscated it." Child, the narrators of these hadiths are among the great men of the Sunnis, and I am not narrating predicates of the Shi'ites. At this time, I do not want to say anything that

would annoy the Sunnis and be responsible for words of hate again becoming the soul of the Shi'ites and Sunni assemblies. These few predicates that I conveyed from superior scholars were to reject Kasravi, so that his lies would be proven to uninformed youngsters. In truth, my purpose is not to write history or oppose the Sunnis, but to defend the Djafaris and prove the shameful acts of Kasravi and his followers.

A— You said that the second caliph said that the Messenger of God, was delirious and raving, and Kasravi says that it is possible for one who is sick to be delirious and he agrees with Omar about this.

The Prophet Did Not Rave and Was Not Delirious

H— God's Prophet says in the Koran,

وما ينطق عن الهوى . ان هو الا وحي يوحى .

Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) Desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him.

As long as a prophet remains a prophet whatever he says is the word of God. It comes from God, and his God protects him from delirium and raving. Was the Messenger of God relieved of his prophetic mission and cut off from the divine chastity, and therefore able to speak unwisely? My dear, attributing delirium to the Prophet (praise be upon him) is ignorance and unawareness.

A— Actually, they both made a mistake and have insulted the position of prophecy. But about the paper and pen that the Prophet wanted, the second caliph says, "God's book is enough for us, we do not need the writings of God's Prophet (praise be upon him). Kasravi has confessed to the correctness of this statement. What do you say? Is the Koran not enough for Muslims?

H— The divine book is, of course, enough for Muslims and it has mentioned everything that is necessary for people to know. We must obey all of its commandments. One of the

commandments and statements of the glorious Koran is the honorable verse,

ما آتاكم الرسول فخذوه وما نهىكم عنه فانتهوا.

So take what the Apostle assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you.

Certainly it is talking here about commandments and prohibitions outside the Koranic verses. The reference is to prohibitions and commandments that cannot be learned from outward meanings and are not explicit in the Koran.⁹

⁹ In regard to this honorable verse, some of our opponents and followers of the Vahabins have objected that the sense of the verse is about dividing the spoils of war, that God is saying that in dividing spoils, whatever the Messenger of God granted you, take them and whatever he forbade to you, abandon it. Therefore, the great verse does not deal with orders and commandments and prohibitions in other areas. In reply to this objection I say that first of all it does not conform to sound judgment, because how is it possible to accept the orders and prohibitions of the Great Messenger in some cases and reject them in others? Secondly, most credible scholars, both Sunni and Shi'ite, who have interpreted this blessed verse have said the following: Although this blessed verse is about dividing the spoils of war, the sense of it, in respect to all commands and prohibitions issued by the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), is general. For example, I will quote from two credible Shi'ite and Sunni interpretations to confirm what I said: (1) In *Madjma Al Bayan*, Section Nine, page 261, the lofty deceased scholar, Sheik Tabarsi says, "This order applies generally to all orders and prohibitions, of the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), although it has been placed after the war-spoils verse." (2) In the *Kashaf* interpretation, Section Four, page 82, the Great Sunni interpreter Djar Allah Zamkharshi says, "It is better

Child, the commandments inspired by the Great Prophet (praise be upon him) sometimes were divine words, in which the word and the meaning are the same and which were indited in the glorious Koran as the exact inspired words, nothing being more or less than that and were codified. But most to God's purpose was the interpretation of the meaning, and His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) would translate that inspiration and revelation for Muslims. And this secondary aspect has been the interpretation and explanation of the Koran. For example, God says in the Koran,

واقموا الصلاة وآتوا الزكاة.

And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity.

His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) would teach the people interpretation of prayer, preliminaries and connections and conditions, basics and appropriate times, essentials and invalidations, commandments, doubts, and errors, and forgetfulness, and he taught them the interpretation of Zakat and camel and cow and sheep and cash, with their conditions for the Muslims, and also about other commandments about fasting and hajj, Khmos and holy war, etc. Thus according to the text of the honorable verse whatever His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) has ordered and prohibited in regard to the details and interpretation of these commandments we must accept without hesitation. Now we come to guardianship and the caliphate. In Qadir Khom, Gabriel brought an order from His

for this verse to have a general application to all orders and prohibitions of the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) and the matter of dividing war spoils would be among the general applications of this verse. Djalaledin Sayouti in his interpretation Darmanthour, sixth section, page 194, has narrated numerous hadiths in agreement with the above statements, and together with other credible interpretations they have proven and agree to this meaning. There is no room left for denial by the opponents.

Majesty the Glorious that,

يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك .

*O apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath
been sent to thee from thy Lord.*

And it was such a firm order and important matter that with a threatening tone he said,

وان لم تفعل فما بلغت رسالته .

*If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled
and proclaimed His Mission.*

That is to say, all of your past propaganda is ineffective and inconsequential. And again what a frightening thing and dangerous commandment it was that the only God, to calm the tender heart of the messenger, says,

والله يعصمك من الناس .

*And God will defend thee from men (who mean
mischief).*

That is, do not be afraid and fear that the Omnipotent God will not protect you from the evil of competitors and jealous people. Of course, we see that this verse appears to have an ambiguous meaning and needs interpretation.

That's why His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) spread the word in that land of Qadir Khom about Ali's (grace be upon him) guardianship and caliphate,¹⁰ and on

¹⁰ *Although the accuracy of the Qadir Khom hadith and this very important event has been acknowledged by the Shi'ites and most of the Sunni Scholars, and there has been no room for objection and denial, and from the Sunni Ulama alone more than three hundred researchers have confessed its accuracy, to prove the point I will mention the following credi-*

numerous occasions emphasized it. But because his Majesty Amir Almomenin had many rivals and the caliphate had many lovers, they could deny or change oral propaganda. That is why God's Prophet, in his sick bed during the last hours of his life, asked for paper and pen to introduce his caliph in writing and spread the important divine commandment. I am astonished. Is this the time to say that God's book is sufficient for us? Then why did they not say this in their interpretation or prayer and fasting, hajj and holy war, Khoms and Zakat, and did not throw God's book at the face of God's Prophet (praise be upon him)? The Qadir Khom hadith is a correct hadith, and there is no doubt in its correctness. And a group like Tormozi and Nasaii and Ahmad have related this hadith and there are many ways to narrate it.

A— Kasravi says: It is true that His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) asked for paper and pen. But how is it evident that he wanted to write something about the caliphate. Who knows? Maybe he had another aim?

H— His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) said, "Bring me pen and paper, and I will write something for you Muslims so that after my death you will not go astray." And the

ble proofs from great Sunni scholars, all of whom have related this great religious event. (1) Imam Hadith, Sunni by Ahmad Ebn Hanbal, Chief of Hanabeieh, on page 281 and 371, in the fourth volume of his book. (2) Muhammad Ebn Talheh Shafei on page 16 of Mataleb Alosool. (3) Muhammad Ebn Esmail Bokhari on page 375, first volume of his history. (4) Muslim Ebn Hadjaj Neyshabouri, second volume, page 325, of his book. (5) Nouredin Ebn Sabagh Maleki on page 24 of Fosoul Almohemeh. (6) Youseph Sabt Ebn Djozi on page 17 of his biography of Khauas Alomat. (7) Ebn Hadjar Maky on page 25, first chapter, of Savaegh. This person, with all of his fanaticism, has again bowed before the truth and has said, "The Qadir Khom hadith is a correct hadith, and there is no doubt in its correctness." And a group like Tormozi and Nasaii and Ahmad have related this hadith and there are many ways to narrate it.

Shi'ite and Sunni narrators have kept the hadith this way,¹¹ always relating the words, "So that after me you will not go astray." This makes it clear the Prophet of God's intention was to write about the important matter of leadership and the caliphate, which keeps everyone on the highway of truth and prevents deviation. The Shi'ite-Sunni war, oppressions of Bani Umayyad and Bani Abbasid, events at Basra and Nahravan, and all other deviations occurred because of problems involving the caliphate. Although each one paraphrased the statement in accordance with his point of view, all agree that if there had been a firm written order about the caliphate at hand and if a charter for the caliphate from God had been signed by the Last of the Prophets and had been kept secure in Ali's (grace be upon him) house, rivalry and distortion would have been dissolved. This is the truth of the matter. Otherwise, a commandment about common religious matters would not have so much importance and the Muslims would have no object in registering it on parchment and paper. It was the guardianship of the document by Ali that his rivals would not allow.

وانها لكبيرة الا على الخاشعين.

11 Bokhari on page 118, second volume, correctly and definitively at the end of the book Vasiat and in Imam Ahmad Ebn Hanbal's Masnad, on page 222, first volume. Ebn Abialhadid on page 563 of Volume two of Sharh Nahdjal Balagheh. Imam Muhammad Ghazali in the fourth essay on Seralalamin. Sabtebn Djozi on page 36 of his autobiography. And many other Sunni dignitaries have reported that the Great Messenger said, "Bring ink and a white sheet of paper, so that I can remove the difficulty of the matter for you and mention to you who is more deserved in the matter (of the caliphate) after I die." But the second caliph, in answer to the order of God's Messenger, said to people, "Leave this man (the Great Messenger (praise be upon him)), because he is raving. God's book is sufficient for us. A.E.

*And prayer: It is indeed hard, except to those
who bring a lowly spirit.*

A— Actually, this problem also became clear as day for us youngsters. Now I submit another point. Kasravi does not know the rights Her Majesty Fatima (grace be upon her) in the problem of Fadak,¹² and he says her claim was pretentious.

12 Fadak is the name of a place between the illuminated Medina and Khaibar, where gardens and farmable land had been developed. It was conquered in the Muhammadan war, and as spoils it passed into the possession and ownership of His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him). Later His Majesty indited the honorable verse,

وَأْتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ •

And render to the kindred their rights.

By order of the Only God, he granted Fadak to Her Majesty Sadigheh Tahereh Fatima Zahra (grace be upon her) and told that chaste woman, "Your mother, Khadidjah, had a right to it because of your father's obligation for her marriage portion. Therefore I will give you Fadak, which is solely mine, as an equivalent." Besides the consensus about this matter among Shi'ite Mullas, the story has been related and accepted as authentic by many Sunni scholars. Some of the sources are: (1) Djalaledin Sayouti in the fourth volume of his interpretation, Manthour, page 177. (2) Sheik Soleyman Balkhi Hanaphi in the book Yanabial Modat, Section 39, page 119. (3) Yaghout Hamvi in the book Fotouh Albaldan, sixth volume, page 343. (4) Ebn Abi Alhadi Motazeli in Sharh Nahdjolbalagheh, fourth volume, page 87 (printed in Egypt). (5) Imam Almofserin Ahmad Thalbi in his interpretation of Kashfalbian in the appendix to the honorable verse, taken from Abi Saiid Khadari. All of these nobles and scholars, and other famous interpreters, have stated that while the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) was alive, he

Confirmation of Her Majesty Fatima (Grace Be Upon Her) Is Confirmation of the Koran

H— Child, denying Fatima Zahra (grace be upon her) is not an easy task. I will refrain totally from discussing this matter, and will stop attacking the Sunnis over it, and will not say anything about the circumstances of this story. This event, which is one of the biggest sources of opposition between the two tribes of Islam, has been mentioned in detail in books by Shi'ite and Sunni scholars. Ebn Abi Alhadid in his explanation of Nahdjolbalagheh has written comprehensively about it and has condemned the caliphs. If you want shorter and more useful discussion, refer to the book *Tashrih Va Mohakemeh Dar Tarikh Al Muhammad* (praise be upon him) written by Bohlol Behdjat Afandi Ghazi Zanganeh Zouri Hanafi.

As I have said before, Kasravi's purpose in his statements and criticisms about this question is renewal of the wars between the Shi'ites and Sunni and restoring adversities of the past. Otherwise, statements like those have no place in this age. Attacks over the event were made by scholars for centuries, as they should have. This same Ghazi Zanganeh Hanafi Zouri published his book almost twenty years ago, and as a result of having inserted old hadiths and reports of trials, has made the truth clear. The book has been distributed to all cities and most libraries. More important and comprehensive is a conversation in Egypt between the great scholar Sayed Abdalhossain Sharafaldin Mousavi Ameli and Ghazi Djame Alazhar in a book called *Almoradjeat*, which has been distributed in most Islamic countries. It made the truth clear in a most effective way. Both, indeed, performed an important duty in regard to Islam and truth, and have stopped just Muslims from arguing.

So as not to pass Kasravi by without rejecting him, and to nullify his statement, I will say this: Our God, in His book says:

gave Fadak to his lovely daughter, Her Majesty Zahra (grace be upon her), and that after His Majesty's death it was taken from the oppressed woman by force. A.E.

انما يريد الله ليذهب عنكم المرجل اهل البيت وليطهركم
تطهيرا.

*And God only wishes to remove all abomination
from you, ye Members of the family, and to make
you pure and spotless.*

Consensus among Islamic scholars, both Shi'ite and Sunni, is that the person and arbitrator of the family in this honorable verse is Her Majesty Fatima Zahra (praise be upon her) and that her god has cleansed her of all crimes and uglinesses, including filth and lying and greed and passion. An improper claim would stem from one of these ugly and unclean qualities. Now, anyone who attributes one of these qualities to the pure daughter of Islam's Prophet and denies Her Majesty Khatoonmahshar in his argument, denies the Great God. And whoever denies God is an atheist and a pagan. Kasravi has no fear of paganism and fornication and discord but this lack of fear will finally disgrace him.

In addition, if Fatima did not possess rights in this matter, if His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) did not give Fadak to his dear daughter, why then did the first caliph, as was mentioned in the Ebn Badr hadith, bemoan his mistake and express regret, saying, "I wish I had given Fadak to Fatima and had not confiscated it." The second caliph also, during his caliphate, returned Fadak to His Majesty Amir (grace be upon him) but His Majesty rejected it and said that "Because the rightful heir [meaning her Majesty Fatima Zahra, grace be upon her] has been deprived of her proven rights, and because she is absent, I do not accept Fadak." The story of this incident is relayed from *Mohakemeh Va Tashrih Dar Tarikh Al Muhammad* (praise be upon him), page 113.

Omar Ebn Abulaziz, that devout king of the Umayyads, accompanied by historians, gave Fadak back to the children of Fatima (grace be upon her), and as long as he was alive the children of Zahra-Y-Athar (grace be upon her) used it. In precepts forbidding the cursing Ali (grace be upon him), the returning of Fadak by that Umayyad king has been narrated in

detail. And a few Abassid kings also returned Fadak to the children of Fatima (grace be upon her).¹³ Therefore, the honesty of her majesty Zahra and the truth of this pure being is proven and the second action of caliphs makes the dispute easy.

A— Although the matter of caliphate is clear and obvious and we need no other explanations, another objection comes to my mind, for which I apologize. In view of the fact that the caliphs believed in the spiritual and theoretical inheritance of Ali (grace be upon him), what harm would there have been if he had also been caliph? Now that His Majesty Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) was able to maintain the gem of the religion and the caliphs obeyed his judgments and decisions, then where is there a place for quarrels and what harm would it do to the religion?

The Caliphs' Victories Also Damaged Islam

H— My dear, their external caliphates also ended up in severely damaging Islam. The caliphs were also deficient not only in their knowledge of the commandments, but also in the science of political truths and rights. In following the commandments they were not as careful and accurate as they should have been. They did not bind themselves by the opinions and planning of Ali (grace be upon him) so that deficiency would not penetrate the religion—especially the third caliph, who sometimes had differences with Ali (grace be upon him) about some religious judgments and policies of religion, which ended up in quarrels and arguments. He was despotic, and most of the time his reign was in the hands of the likes of Marvan and Moghireh.

13 Omar Ebn Abdulaziz returned Fadak to the children of her Majesty Fatima (grace be upon her), but afterwards Yaziden Abdulmalek took back their right. Then Abulabbas Safah returned it, and afterwards Mansour Davanayghi took it back. Then Hadi returned it, and afterwards Mehdi took it back. Then Mamoun returned it, and afterwards Motevakel usurped it. After that Motazed returned it, and Moktafi usurped it again. A.E.

In the first year of Abu Bakr's caliphate, Khaled Ebn Valid, motivated by a grudge and inordinate desire, through an accusation of apostasy cowardly killed Malek Ebn Navireh, a Muslim man, along with a group from his tribe, and that same night slept with Omtamin Malek's wife. Thus in one night he committed both murder and adultery. But with total indifference, Abu Bakr faced the claimants over the spilling of Malek's blood and those who wanted punishment for the killers, and he ignored the great crime. In the second year of his caliphate also, Khaled seized a million derhams which belonged by right to Muslims who had obtained the money in the peace agreement with Yamameh, and he used it to pay a marriage portion for the daughter of Modjaee. In spite of the bad condition of the Islamic army, he was feasting and drinking.¹⁴ During Omar's caliphate, Moghayerat Ebn Shobeh committed adultery in Basreh, and innocent witnesses were flogged instead of that lewd adulterer. Ali's objections did not find an ear that listened.¹⁵ Also it was during the caliphate of Omar that the worldly Muawiyah became governor of Shaam and started to prepare for his usurpation-like rule. After the murder of Omar, Abdullah, his eldest son, accused without religious proof, the dear guest of Islam, Firouzan Irani, of killing the caliph and then

14 *Khaled Ebn Valid, who deviated from the text of God and orders of the Prophet, opposed Amir Almomenin, siding with Abu Bakr, and forced people to swear allegiance to him. That is why he started to graze in the land of Islam as he pleased and became like a despot, free and without obstacles.*

15 *How could Moghayereh and Khaled and their like be punished and lashed, in view of the fact that the foundation of caliphates of these caliphs had been poured by those same people and the basis of directorship had been firmed up by them. Ali was worthy of the caliphate because in following a divine commandment he would fear no one and for the sake of justice would put a hot iron on the hand of his dear brother.*

killed him. The third caliph did not punish him, and no matter how much Ali insisted on the punishment of that oppressor, it was not done¹⁶. But Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) personally threatened Abdullah, who therefore led from justice to Shaam when Ali became caliph. Yes, for these reasons men who were hypocrites in regard to Islam scattered from around Ali (grace be upon him) and took sides with the oppressive caliphs.

Not twenty years, perhaps not even fifteen years, had passed since the death of His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) when the same lewd people and idolators of the pagan state who had become Muslim out of fear and remained in impurity and discord, used Othman's weakness to become the rulers of Islam and wardens of affairs in place of abstemious believers. The Muslims' treasury became a resource for their luxury, instead of improving matters of religion. Finally Muawiyah obtained the caliphate. Muawiyah, and after him lewd Yazid who got drunk openly, gambled, and made love, were picked as caliphs. They introduced new laws, killed two innocent children of the Prophet, Ali, two beloveds of Fatima (grace be upon her)—His Majesty Imam Hassan (grace be upon him) and Imam Houssain (grace be upon him)—their children and friends, and thousands of innocent people because of their friendship for Ali (grace be upon him).

Yazid's army committed a general massacre in Medina, ravished hundreds of chaste women friends of Ali, and destroyed the Kaaba. The religion of the caliphate reached such a point during that period that Caliph Valid openly threatened the glorious Koran.

The Bani Abbasids, who also usurped the caliphate after the Bani Umayyads, sunk like them in the marshland of fornication and debauchery, and poisoned and killed, and imprisoned and put to plight the family of Muhammad and Ali, including the children of Fatima (grace be upon her), who were the light

16 *The story of Firouzan of Hormouzan, who was one of the great men of Iran and had become a Muslim, has been written, and a comprehensive version appears in Nasekh Altavarikh (Othman's book).*

and enlightenment of the society of Islam. All of these tragic events were the result of the Saghifeh Council.

If this council had not been formed and judgment had not been passed against the divine commandments and the text of the Prophet (praise be upon him), and had Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) been accepted as the guardians of the people and had the caliphate been put in the hands of the Shi'ite's Imam, none of these scandalous crimes would have happened and the Muslims would not have been engulfed by these adversities.

Child, instead of training the morals of the faithful and sould of the nation and instead of correcting the immature Muslims, the caliphs after the Prophet started to conquer and destroy the world. The color of the faith had not yet stabilized in the hearts of Arabs, who were dipped in the colorful jars of Persia and Rome. They were attracted by the animating scenery of these beautiful countries and the economic position of these two civilized nations and became used to pleasure and feasting. Their ignorant morals returned in a more colorful form, and the market for sensuality revived. Of the customs of Islam, nothing was left except a name and soulless acts. We read in history about what happened to the Muslims, the physical and mental abjectness and decline. We see it now with our own eyes, and it was all because they put aside ;the family of Muhammad, which among the faithful was like Noah's ship, the rescue ship, which in the storm of revolutions resorted to rotten pieces of wood to stay afloat.

A— Do we have any proofs from the Sunnis in regard to this matter?

H— We have countless proofs, and I will narrate a few hadiths by great Sunni men.

The Family of Muhammad is the Rescue Ship of the Faithful

(1) His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) says, "Know that the likes of my family among you is like Noah's ship. Whoever resorts to it is saved, and whoever was left behind and violated it is drowned." This hadith is narrated

by Hakem from Abuzar in the third section of his book *Mostadarak*, page 151.

(2) Tabarani in his book *Osat* has related, drawing on Abi Saiid, that His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) said, "Among you, my family is like Noah's ark. Whoever got on it is saved, and whoever violated it is drowned."

(3) "The likes of my family among you is like the Hatteh door in Bani Israel. Whoever entered it was blessed." This hadith is hadith 18, taken from *Arbaeen*, and hadith 25 from *Alarbaeen Arbaeen* by Nebhani, page 616.

(4) His Majesty the Prophet (praise be upon him) said, "As stars are security for earthlings from drowning, my family is security of faithful from differences in religion. Therefore, if an Arab tribe opposes my family, it is a violator and is counted in the party of the devil." Hakem has narrated this hadith in the third section of *Mostadarak*, page 149, taking it from Ebn Abbas, and he admitted the correctness of the proofs of the hadith. We also have conveyed all of the pertinent hadiths from page 17 of the *Moradjeaat*.

A— You said that the caliph's attempts to conquer the world had caused bad morality and a decline of Muslims. If Ali (praise be upon him) had become the first caliph, if after him our Imams had become caliphs, would they not have fought against Rome and Persia?

H— If Ali and his chosen children, as the Great Prophet (praise be upon him) had said, had become the external caliphs, they certainly would have acted according to the divine policies and would have started from the first to train the morals of the faithful and would have walked in the footsteps of God's Messenger and made training of the soul of Islam more important. Then it would have been impossible for lewd people like Khaled and Moghayreh and Valid to commit murder, or adultery, or get drunk and not be punished or flogged, or for the likes of these lascivious people to become the rulers and generals of Muslims. Aside from these bad morals, their conquests had no effect but to add on their enemies and produce dissatisfaction among the masses.

As long as the hearts of Arabs were not strengthened with certainty and their depths not filled with faith, they would not have sent them to the prosperous lands of Persia and Rome and would have prevented them from seeing the interesting lusting and the situation of their wealthy neighbors, and would have pursued war, if necessary.

A— Then the voice of Islam would have taken a long time to reach the ears of the Persians and Romans.

H— No my dear, you do not see the point. At that time, the Persians and Romans would have become Muslims without a war and, voluntarily, they would have abandoned the worship of Jesus and fire, and they would have all welcomed this pure religion with a pure faith, and the banner of monotheism would have been raised all over the inhabited parts of the world because of the damages that these two great nations of Rome and Persia incurred as a result of the attacks by Muslims. But they observed how the Arabs behaved. Immature and unaware of the great soul of Islam, they naturally turned against the Arabs and the faith of the Arabs. The uncivilized behavior of the untrained desert dwellers and their destruction and devastation of those beautiful cities and developed countries of the East and the West, the attacks by the thirsty, lascivious ones on the chastity of the royal and imperial countries—all this created a sort of nationalist fury in them that was passed on to their children and grandchildren. And because of this fury inside and outside of the governments of the caliphs, poisonous organizations and parties were formed against Islam. And as a result, the caravan of Islam, which due to the damage caused by the Umayyad robbers and some of the bloodthirsty Abbasids had lost its great soul, stopped from moving ahead, and the river of monotheism and worship of God stopped flowing.¹⁷

¹⁷ *Everybody knows how much the murder of that great Persian, (Hormazan of Firouzan) and the failure to punish the murderer Othman made Persians dissatisfied and weakened the faith of the weak. Also there were many harmful consequences of the oppression of this noble nation by the*

A— Without the powerful attacks by the Islamic champion fighter, how would the Persians and Romans have become Muslims?

The Able Soul of Islam and the Dejected Soul of the Idolators

H— I will give you proof from history of the advance of Islam, so that you completely understand my meaning. It has been said that the number of His Great Majesty the Messenger's (praise be upon him) wars and fights was about 80. In most of these wars the Muslims triumphed, and Islam became supreme in the city or tribe. As a result, the inhabitants of that city or people of that tribe have become Muslims or paid an indemnity. But none of these conquests had the importance or yielded the profit of the event at Hadibieh. Although there was no fighting nor any conquest by the forces of monotheism, only one article in the peace treaty, which on the surface was supposed to achieve a balance between Islam and Ghoraish, ended up a beneficial result for Islam. That one article weakened the foundation of Ghoraish, and after a short time the great Mecca was surrendered to the Prophet without any fighting.

A— What was this amazingly potent factor?

H— Elimination of the wall of exile blocking the monotheist propagandists, and removal of obstacles to association between the monotheists and idolators. Until that day traffic back and forth between the Islamic land and the pagans had been cut off. The leaders of Ghoraish had been careful to make sure that the voice of Muslim propagandists would not reach the ears of the pagans. But the Hadibieh peace broke that strong dam and opened up a straight and smooth road for the advance of the monotheists.

A— How did this mixing and association turn out to benefit Islam?

H— As a result of the enlightening training of God's Prophet (praise be upon him), Islam's soul was powerful and joyful, contrary to the souls of the Ghoraish and Arabs, who

Umayyads, which transformed Islam from a religious way of life to despotic rule.

were gradually being debilitated by disappointment in the help they were receiving from their lifeless gods. That's why as soon as there was association, the strong soul of the Muslims under the shadow of their great leader, created a great revolution in the hearts of the idolators, and whomever the Muslims faced was attracted to God's faith. A year later, as soon as Khaled Ebn Valid observed Muslim ceremonies of the hadj, he turned against his tribe and became a Muslim inspite of Abu Sofian. Gradually, the Arab pagans went to Medina from Mecca and Hedjaz and became Muslim. The ones who remained polytheist were pessimistic about their gods and idles, and lived with hearts full of doubt and hesitation. Day by day their hope and confidence and mental strength and courage and boldness were exhausted. Finally, two years after the Hadibieh peace, God's Prophet (praise be upon him) entered Mecca with great power and glory and a huge army. There was no resistance. The refractories of ignorance surrendered to that same orphan of Abutaleb without a war and with a downcast soul.

After the death of the Prophet (praise be upon him), the world of humanity did not need wars and bloodshed, because no other nation, except Islam, had a bright platform or a clear purpose. Had there been a proper association with the Muslims, the small souls of great nations would have been filled with joy and attracted to the potent soul of Islam. Without any array of troops or anger, the flag of monotheism and justice would have been raised all over the world. And only Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) would have been able to carry on this true policy and with mental calm, because he was the true heir of the Prophet's knowledge and the carrier of divine inspiration.¹⁸ After his death, his pure chosen children, who were trained in

18 *It was Ali (grace be upon him) who treated the captured Persians, an honorable family, with total kindness and freed them from the oppression of slavery. If Ali had not been there, the men and the pure and chaste women of the royal nation, even the daughters of the Yazdgerd III, would have been bought and sold as slaves in the world markets.*

the school of that unique man of monotheism and faith, could have performed guardianship and caliphate with correct justice. Child, linger on this story a bit and carefully read the history of Hadibieh, and read the story about the second caliph's haste and impetuosity and low-mindedness and how he opposed God's Prophet in matters of peace and did not want the treaty to be signed and was so hurt and angry that traces of hesitancy and doubt appeared in his statement.¹⁹ Although Abu Bakr answered him and ordered him to be calm and patient, he did not become calm and voiced his opposition in front of the Prophet and spoke harshly, as if he had forgotten his Majesty Muhammad Ebn Abdullah's (praise be upon him) prophecy that popular spokesman for Islam would do everything in accordance with the divine commands. It was as if his purpose and idea were that God and Gabriel and the Prophet should do as he wanted them to and use his plans to fight Ghoraish without any hesitation and attack God's house. That is why His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) said after the end of his speech, "I am the follower and the envoy of God. I do not oppose His orders and He will not hurt me."²⁰

Now, my child, imagine that the same impetuous and impatient person became the second caliph for a little less than nine years and was responsible for some turns of the wheel of the caliphate of Islam with his own hands. Also, for two years he managed the actions of the first caliphs, and perhaps he poured the foundation for the actions of the third caliph, too. God was merciful to keep Ali (grace be upon him) alive during this period. Because of the manifestation of divine policy and

19 From his statement, "At no time did I doubt Muhammad's prophecy, as I had at Hadibieh." *Nasekhaltavarikh Ketab Omar*, page 437.

20 *The life of His Majesty Muhammad (praise be upon him) written by Doctor Muhammad Houssain Haykal, Egypt's secretary of education and translated by Abulghasem Payandeh, second volume, page 505.*

knowledge, the caliphs washed their hands of much misbehavior and restrained some of their own actions. Otherwise obvious chaos would have appeared in the passing of judgments and issuing of commands at the beginning of Islam.

Now my dear, compare the history of the Hadibieh peace with the history of caliphs after the Prophet, and observe the truth in your father's statement, and understand that this impoverished man who acts as a guide for the masses of Iran and acts with the painful voice against this noble nation is unaware of everything. Kasravi is self-conceited and egotistic. He does not read history and does not know anything about the divine policy.

A— Do we recognize Ali and his eleven great children (grace be upon them) as our Imams and leaders only because of their knowledge of religious laws and judgment, and were they the keepers of the gem of religion, or do they have other qualifications?

H— Our great Imams (grace be upon them), like the scholars who follow His Majesty the Last of The Prophets (praise be upon him), are all knowledgeable about everything and have good character and virtuous morals, and are innocent and without sin, and do not make mistakes, errors, or slips. Others flee from a fight. Ali (grace be upon him) did not. Others hesitate in their action about following the prophet's orders, which are exactly like the divine commands. Ali (grace be upon him) did not allow doubt or hesitation to enter into his strong faithful heart. Others opposed His Majesty the Messenger about the peace of Hadibeih. Ali was obedient and wrote the treaty with his own hands. Others said,

ان الرجل ليهجر.

Ali said,

ان هو الا وحى يوحى.

It is no less than inspiration sent down to him.

As an effect of true knowledge and divine insight, the verses reverence, stability, perseverance, faith, and confidence.

انما يخشى الله من عبادة العلماء •

It is they who know the interpretation and paraphrasing and ins and outs of the glorious Koran and are aware of the truths of the honorable verses and details of their inspiration. They know everything and are aware of all meaning and no knowledge or plans or policy is hidden or concealed from them.

A— Sunni scholars do not know that Muhammad's family is knowledgeable about paraphrasing, and they translate the honorable verses in another way.

H— Djafari scholars have answered Sunni scholars on every point and have proven the divine platform. Now that we are writing to reject Kasravi we will prove this with his own confession. He writes in the book *Altashayo Valshieh*, page 73: "The verses of the Koran are divided into two sections, the Mohkamat* and Moteshabehat**, and no one has the knowledge of paraphrasing except God and Rasekhoun."*** He confesses repeatedly in the book to the knowledgeability of Rasekhoun in paraphrasing. Now, if Kasravi asked about who has knowledge of everything, can he name anyone but Muhammad (praise be upon him) and Ali (grace be upon him)? And if he names someone else, it is for sake of lying and false claims. Except for the chosen children of Muhammad and Ali (grace be upon him), no one has been taught in the school of these two great men.

The problem is not that His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him), with his divine training is, knowledgeable of his own book and verses both in interpretation and paraphrasing, externally and internally, but that none of the Shi'ite and Sunni

**Commandments that are explicit and absolute.* Trans.

***Commandments that have to be interpreted and explained, and from which conclusions have to be drawn.*

****The Prophet, Fatima, and the twelve Imams.*

scholars should have any doubt or argument about the fact that Ali (grace be upon him) was the door to the Prophet's knowledge and had learned all in the school of Muhammad. And there are more applicable hadiths and predicates than I could find room for in this small space. And it is Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) himself who said in the second section of *Nahdjalbalagheh*, "Where are the ones who think they are initiated into knowledge along with us. While they have lied to us, God has made us lofty and them inferior. He has blessed us and denied them His blessing, and he has admitted us in and left them out."

A— Previously you said, in the opinion of us Shi'ites, the great Imams (grace be upon them) are associates of the Koran. Do we have any clear proof of this? If they are the partners of the Koran then there is nothing more to say. Since the glorious Koran is the master of all, then they are masters over all Muslims—indeed, the entire universe.

Ali (Grace Be Upon Him) Is the Koran's Associate

H— Our statement about the ones who have knowledge of everything proves this opinion. After it was made obvious that Ali (grace be upon him) is the heir to the Prophet's (praise be upon him) knowledge and is carrier of divine learning and is conversant with the glorious Koran's revelations including the Mohkam and Moteshabeh.* He could recite them succinctly or elaborate on them, and resolve the contradictions. There is no doubt of his mastery. The fact is that the three caliphs yielded to his judgments and decrees without argument and the saying "If it had not been for Ali, Omar would have perished," makes this all the more clear. What stronger proof is there of our idea than that His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) repeatedly said with total candor in public and in private gatherings and even in his last will and testament, as well as other places, that Ali and his children (grace be upon them) are associates of the Koran. This is a hadith that has been proven with certainty by

*Singular forms of Mohkamat and Moteshabehat. Trans.

the Shi'ites and Sunnis. So that the truth will become clearer to you, I will narrate seven hadiths by Sunni scholars and great men:

(1) The Great Prophet (praise be upon him) said, "Oh people, I have left with you something that if you resort to it you will never be lost, God's book and my own family." This hadith has been narrated by Tormozi and Nasaii, from Djabjer and Motaghi Hendi, at the beginning of the book *Aletesam Belketab Vasonat*, taken from Kanzolemal, page 44, first section.

(2) The Prophet also said, "I have left among you God's book as an extended sign from the sky to the earth, and if you resort to it you will not go astray. This means it is from God to the faithful and my family. And the two will not be separated until they join me. Therefore, watch that you follow my recommendations and have respect for them." Tormozi has narrated this hadith from Zaydebn Argham. It is hadith 874 of the Kanzalemal hadiths and is on page 44, first section.

(3) And he said: "I have two caliphs as successors among you. God's book is an extended sign between the sky and the earth and my own family. These two will not be separated until they come to me at the pond." Imam Ahmad has narrated this hadith in the correct way on the basis of Zaydebn Thabet's hadith, once at the beginning of page 182 and a second time at the end of page 189 in the fifth section of his book. Tabarani also has narrated it in *Kabir*, taking it from Zaydebn Thabet. It is hadith 873 of the Alkans hadiths and is on page 44, first section.

(4) And he said, "I have placed among you the glorious book of God and the members of my own family. They will not be separated until they reach me at the pond." Hakem has narrated this hadith on page 148 in the third section of *Almostadrek*.

(5) And he said, "I may be invited and then I will accept." This means, "My God calls me to the other world, and I will say yes to the Lord's call, and I have placed among you two things that are valuable and dear. God's book is an extended thread from the sky to the earth, which means there is a firm love be-

tween God and his subjects and my family. And His Majesty the Lord has informed me that these two will not be separated until they reach me at the side of the pond. Then watch that you keep my recommendations and respect in regard to them." Imam Ahmad has narrated this, on the basis of the Abi Saiid Khadari hadith twice—first at the end of page 17 and another time at the end of page 26 in the third section of his book. Also Ebn Abi Shaybeh and Abu Yali and Ebn Saad, taken from Abi Saiid. It is hadith 945 of the Alkanz hadiths on page 47 of the first section.

(6) His Majesty the Great Prophet (praise be upon him), upon returning from his last hadj, came to Ghadir Khom and said, "It seems that I have been invited, so I accept." The allusion is to death. "I have put among you two valuable and honorable things, one greater than the other: The book of the Only God and my own family. Therefore pay attention that you treat them in keeping with my recommendations and with respect. The two will not be separated from each other until they reach me at the pond of Kothar." Hakem has narrated this hadith from Zaydebn Argham on page 109 of the third section of *Almostadrek* and has confessed to its correctness, as Zahabi has confessed to the correctness of the hadith.

(7) From Abdullah Ebn Hantab, who said "His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) inspired us with a speech at Djahfeh and then said, "Am I not superior to your own selves?' They said, 'Yes, oh Messenger of God.'" He said, 'Then I will ask you for two things. The Koran and my family.' " Tabarani has narrated this hadith as it is mentioned in *Arbaeen Arbaeen* by Nabhani and in *Ehyaalmeyet* by Sayouti.

The correct hadiths, which recognize that resorting to God's glorious book and the family of Muhammad is essential, are numerous and have been told by twenty-odd collaborators. His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) on different occasions emphasized that they should be resorted to, a number of times at Ghadir Khom and a number of times on Orfeh Day in Hodjat Alvedaa and a number of times after returning from Taef and a number of times in Medina on the podium and other

times in his honorable residence, when he was sick and his house was full of companions. At that time especially, he took Ali's (grace be upon him) hand after the hadiths and said, "This Ali is with the Koran and the Koran is with Ali. They will not separate until they join me by the pond's side." Ebn Hadjar has mentioned this at the end of the second chapter of the tenth section on page 75 of *Savaegh Moharagheh* after narrating forty hadiths like those were mentioned. And also when Ebn Hadjar is narrating the honorable hadith, he talks about the numerous ways and occasions on which it was said, and then remarks, "The plurality of forms and repetition of this statement by His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) does not make them incompatible and there is no objection to it, because that noble man has repeated it for the sake of the dignity and position of God's book and his family among the Muslims." For elaboration, refer to interpretation of the fourth verse,

وقفوهم انهم مسئولون

But stop them for they must be asked.

in the first section of Chapter Eleven of *Savaegh*, at the end of page 89.

A— Actually, a Muslim cannot deny these hadiths or hesitate about the mastery of Ali and the family of Ali (grace be upon them). But Kasravi has objections about this type of predicate and one of them is that most of the predicates are fabricated by Shi'ites and have no basis, and that in regard to these matters one must refer to history.

H— Very well, we will refer to history. Are we deniers of history? But let's see what Kasravi calls history. If he is talking about the history that was written by the European or American orientalist, then we must refer to their documents. There are certain documents undeniable, like the truths that have been discovered as a result of excavations in Baynalnahrain and Khuzestan and Egypt and that have clarified parts of the history of the old nations of Kaldeh and Ashour and Eelam, or of Hakhmaneshian and others. But they do not have such

positive documents about Islamic history that we must yield to their statements. Therefore, the proof in their writings is the same as in our interpretations of Islamic events and books of hadiths. When they make erasures or corrections according to their own opinions, it is not acceptable to Muslims. Perhaps Kasravi means the history books of Islamic historians like Tabari and Aghadi and Ebn Athir, but one cannot call their writings correct proof either. As Kasravi and some of the Sunni tribes and especially the Vahabi's consider that Djafari predicates have been forged by high-ranking Shi'ites, Shi'ites also know that some of the not-so-agreeable hadiths have been forged by a group of the enemies of Muhammad's family. How can Kasravi prove the correctness of these hadiths? Have Muslims forgotten the forged hadiths of Muawiyah and that group of worldly people who arose against Muhammad's (praise be upon him) family and Ali and his family (grace be upon them)? The Umayyads tried to conceal the position of the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him) and extinguish the divine light for a thousand months, and he forged hadiths about the knowledge of their kin, and with power of the derham and dinar they forced many people who were unaware of God to attribute many sayings to God's Prophet in accordance with their own opinions and to tell a lot of lies about that noble man. We do not know which of these histories the Vahabis and Kasravi rely on. And which historian do they have confidence in? They must say and write it. But I know that they have no answers to our questions and will remain dumb.

The Sins and Crimes of Some Historians

Now let's research the taste of those historians and writers of Islamic history and the identities of their reliable sources. And let's see if Tabari and his equals are familiar with the duties of historians? Did they do their duty? Could they write with a free pen or a pure conscience. Secondly, let's take a look at them men who produced the hadiths. Were they just and reliable? Or were they among the lewd and oppressors and hypocrites? The late Bohlool Behdjat Afandi Ghazi Zangheh Zouri, in his book

Tashrih and Mohakemeh Dar Tarikh All Muhammad (praise be upon him), has a brief and clear statement in this regard that is sufficient for our needs. I mention his writing precisely so that you will see the truths unveiled. He writes on page 11 of his book: "One of the defects and failures of the scholars of history is that, as the old saying goes, 'Finding fault with nobles is a fault.' They become infatuated and do not criticize the errors and oppression of a lot of people who have stepped into the world of Islam. They have included these oppressors among the righteous. The killer who has given poison to the followers of the righteous Imams they interpret as a fast healer, and they call most of the masters of crime the moral people and ones who want prosperity for the masses. They have deceived the innocent nation. This situation has become a pernicious sickness and an unhealable wound, the vexing effects of which constantly torment the world of Islam." To explain I want to give you a few examples.

Among the histories of Islam, open up Tabari's. It is very important because of its antiquity and the large number of hadiths it contains. You will find a great many criminals depicted as righteous. Tabari's history mentions people like Abu Harireh and Moghayretebn Shobeh with a kind tone. The historian has not carefully examined people's acts and deeds. Merely because they were among the companions of Muhammad he bows to them.

This policy, in my humble opinion, is a great mistake and an obscene error. How is it possible that only being one of companions purifies the sinful acts of a person and is sufficient to stop the historian from research into the person's good or bad acts? Indeed, because a guilty person was a companion his punishment should be harsher.

You see that the glorious Koran says in a verse that was indited about the pure wives of His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him), "Oh wives of the Prophet, you are not like other women. If one of you commits a sin, the punishment for it is multiplied." So as the degree of distinction increases, the punishment of the act goes up commensurately. It is essential and necessary for everyone to obey the performers of good

deeds and to avoid with harsh disgust the perpetrators of sins of commission and criticize and try to change their shameful acts.

It is true that His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) has said, "Do not curse my companions, but to criticize abominable acts is not to speak badly." If one calls criticism speaking badly, then it is unacceptable to criticize anyone. It is forbidden to speak badly not only of the companions, but of anyone. Thus criticizing someone's obscene acts would also not be permissible. Such an idea is totally meaningless. The truth is that the actions of every person, without distinction, may be raised or condemned. Abu Harireh is deserving of mercy of his having been one of the companions. But afterwards he was used by Muawiyah and Marwan and, even cruler, Basr Ebn Ertat, and we will curse him because of this and his crime. Let him be rewarded for his good deeds, but also punished for his mischief. We do not deny that Abu Harireh was companion of the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) and his servant and the narrator of many hadiths. But do you know what else Abu Harireh had done? If you don't, ask me.

When Muawiyah wanted to get an oath of allegiance from the people for his son Yazid, the citizens of delightful Medina spoke out in opposition to this innovation and crime, and wanted to resist and prevent it. Muawiyah to frighten the pure, faithful citizens of Medina and remove the obstacles from private ambitions, sent a most vicious person, Basr Ebn Ertat, to Medina to collect the oath of allegiance. Basr, under orders from Muawiyah, killed seven hundred of the citizens of Medina and companions of God's Prophet, and took 300 of Islam's chaste women prisoner and for three days in a row the plunderers of Shaam were appointed to plunder the area of pure gardens and the pure sanctuary of His Majesty. At that time, Abu Harireh was assistant to Basr Ebn Ertat. When Basr finished his work and headed towards Yemen, he made Abu Harireh his deputy and successor. In all of his crimes and acts of oppression, Abu Harireh was friend and accomplice of Basr. Now, we do not want to overlook these crimes, otherwise we will be one of the selfish and the trampers of truth and God. Yes, we will always curse Abu Harireh because of all of these crimes.

Another matter: the fact that Ziad, under Muawiyah's orders killed, and plundered the followers of the family of the Messenger (praise be upon him) one by one is obvious and clear. At that time Hodjar Ebn Addi, who was one of the famous companions, was sent to Muawiyah with a few of his friends. As the result of a plot by Abu Harireh and his likes who had always sold the faith for money with the excuse that Hodjar was a fan of Muhammad's family, Hodjar and his friends achieved the exaltation of martyrdom. In this crime Abu Harireh was Muawiyah's accomplice, and he was a partner in every act of oppression and torture that was done to them. Therefore, we will never ignore Abu Harireh's crime, no matter if all of the historians look away from his crimes because he was one of the companions of Muhammad. Now, let us proceed to the errors of Tabari and other masters of history. I do not imagine that there would be someone who does not know who Moghayart Ebn Shobeh is. He also was an accomplice of Muawiyah's in all of his crimes and on the podium always cursed His Majesty Ali (grace be upon him) and spoke badly of the family of the Messenger (praise be upon him). Yes, many historians have not taken Moghayareh's sins into account. Merely because of his companionship with Muhammad, his name has been mentioned with respect. That he was one of the companions is deserving of praise, but his taking sides with Muawiyah and Yazid and causing a criminal like Yazid to become successor to caliph which resulted in a fire that will not be put out until the resurrection day, is an unpardonable mistake and an unforgivable sin that we absolutely will not overlook by praising and honoring him because he was a companion. As we look at his obscene and ugly acts, we will publicly curse him forever. Let us mention another matter at this point to show a little more clearly the negligence and carelessness of masters of history a degree clearer.

It is obvious to all that the Djamal war was an extremely frightening event in Islam, and was the first blow against the body of unity and oneness of Muhammad's family. History writes about this event in full. But even though it distinguishes between right and wrong, and those who committed this

catastrophy and why they perpetrated such a terrible crime are not hidden at all, the pity is that historians have narrated the event in such a way that right and wrong, oppressed and oppressor are not clearly distinguishable and indeed most of the truth is hidden. With a bunch of vain apologies and baseless excuses, they have knowingly and deliberately covered up the truth. A hundred pities that they have forgotten the ultimate reason for writing history and have diminished its importance and may even have struck a deadly blow to this honorable science. In ancient times, which we still imitate, the honest and righteous person was one who had power. On page 26 of the same book, Tabari writes, "Though I, the humble author of this book am only one of the lesser of the Shi'ite Ulamas, I am nevertheless satisfied that injustice was done to most of the companions. I will mention the following: The Sunni Ulama have accepted the narrations of Moghayaretebn Shobeh, who was one of the companions and also have agreed that he is a just man. But it seems that justice has no essential existence, for its existence or absence is judged by external signs and decrees."

Of course, the justness of those who are opposed to and rebellious against the invariable commandments of Islam, no matter what they are, is not under consideration. They are judged to be lewd and oppressors. The comments of Sunni scholars about changing the truth of the Islamic commandments are not hidden from anyone.

Let us look at what is used to prove whether Moghayaret was a just man or a fornicator. To the informed it is obvious and clear that during the caliphate of the second caliph, Moghayarat Ebn Shobeh, who was the governor of Basreh, committed adultery with a woman named Om Djamil of the Ben Amer tribe, and four of the great companions had seen him. One of these was Aba Bakre, and the others were Nafe and Shabal and Ziad. The first three bore witness. The fourth did not, and as a result a verdict could not be rendered.*

**To convict someone of adultery, for which the penalty is stoning, four witnesses are required. Trans.*

From this episode it is proven that Moghayareh had committed adultery, and should have been convicted before the caliph and sentenced to be stoned. The entire story of this even can be read in history books, particularly in *Faghrat Aleslam*, and Ebn Abi Alhadid has said that refusing to accept the testimony of the witnesses to the commission of such a mortal sin would guarantee non-acceptance of the narration of the hadith.

It is obvious to all that when Moghayareh was the governor of Koufeh, he cursed His Majesty Amir (grace be upon him), on the podium. The late Bohloul Behdjat Afandi, after proving this point by the testimony of Ebn Abi Alhadid and Abulfaradj Esphahani, says, "From these events it is obvious that Moghayareh spoke badly of Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him), whereupon His Majesty the Messenger said, 'Whoever curses Ali has cursed me, and whoever curses me has cursed God.' " Shohabeldin Alousi in his interpretation has said, "Whoever speaks badly of Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him) during his life or after his death is a pagan." And in proving Moghayareh's fornication and paganism, the late Bohloul Behdjat Afandi included the proofs of Abu Harireh's lack of justice and his fornication, which we have previously mentioned. At the end he writes, "Again Abu Harireh says, 'Prayer standing behind Ali (grace be upon him) is more complete and Muawiyah's table is more colorful.' Abu Harireh was confessing to the fact that His Majesty Ali (grace be upon him) was righteous and Muawiyah, with his colorful table, was false." He again proceeds toward the void, and in doing so transgresses the bounds of justice. The insertion of material from the book *Tarikh All Muhammad* (praise be upon him), which we felt necessary, is finished, and now we return to the subject.

It became obvious that the history which the twentieth century guide throws in the face of the Shi'ites is the same history that was written for the satisfaction and praise of the kings of those periods, or the historian has committed errors and mistakes as a result of copying the hadiths. Men of distinction and historians like Abu Harireh and Moghayareh were in love with the colorful tables and sweet and tasty food of the

Muawiyahs and Yazids and Mansours and Motevakels, and moreover those famous histories were written out of fear of and the hope of rewards from the oppressors and enemies of Muhammad's (praise be upon him) family. Thick curtains have been closed between their statements and proven truths, so much so that any reader is made dizzy and left wandering and moves him away a thousand miles from the light. Yes, one who wants to base his false prophecy on Shi'ite society would need such history, too.

A— Then what are Muslims to do? Which history must they act on?

Islam's Correct History and the Clear Proof

H— We can prove that correct history is limited to Shi'ite predicates and narrations, because the Shi'ite Ulama (may God's paradise be for them) were very careful about the hadith's men of distinction and would not forget or forgive a mistake or sin by a narrator, and they do not quickly accept a narration by just anyone. Of course, they have many sound measures for adapting the narrations. But in regard to this and opposition to the claims that have been made, especially about the caliphate and similar matters, there is no choice but to accept the unified hadiths against both sides and call them correct history and make them the basis of our statements. And the proof for us Shi'ites in battling against Kasravi and his followers is that same history. Of course, intelligence, in its place, rules and distinguishes the correct from the untrue and ruling above all are the indisputable verses and Mohkamat of the glorious Koran. If there is a collaborator on God's book, all the better. If we discover an obvious opponent, we will find a predicate and hadith from anywhere and hang them on the wall. And if we do not find a contradiction with the Koran, we will be satisfied to agree unanimously upon a hadith. This is the correct and positive proof by Ethna Asharian Djafaris about these matters when faced with opponents or the indifferent, and in this regard their proofs are known to be the clearest of proofs.

Now, Kasravi must read the Shi'ite hadiths that provide proofs about the caliphate and Imamate. If they do not corres-

pond to correct history, then he can object. Kasravi's way of doing things is funny. He tells hadiths from Tabari and Ebn Athir and Ebn Teymieh for the Shi'ites, and the hadiths he likes, too. He chooses narrators whose series of hadiths end up with the fattening tables or the gold and silver pouches of the impious oppressors. Yes, the hadith of this kind of worldly and unconscientious person is correct and reliable to Kasravi. But of no consequence to him are the hadiths that the family of Muhammad (praise be upon him) have relayed from their own great fathers, and the proofs go back to God's Prophet and Gabriel and Michael and the tablet and pen of the great God. May God put the world and the worldly to shame for having put a pen in the hand of such an ignoble person who is more of an oppressor than Genghis Khan and Zahak. In every page of his writings, he has committed thousands of shameful sins and crimes in respect to history. This lewd man, who has been caught in a whirlpool of dizziness and fatigue, does not know what he is writing himself, or he does not imagine that with these tricks and incantations he can pour the foundation for a new religion or provide the basis for religiouslessness.

A— Actually, the only straight path and correct and moderate way is, as you have said, from an intellectually correct historical point of view. Tell me what proof we have against Kasravi, so that a clear compilation of material about the Imamate can be published.

H— My dear, our Ulama of the past (may God's paradise be for them) have not had a failing in this regard and have written valuable books in different languages and have distributed them. Their proofs and clear arguments are enough to prove what is right and true for this age, the age of the weakness and decline of Muslims. It is not right to repeat the war among Muslims. The reason I answered your question is that I am compelled by Kasravi's lies and slanders to make his ignorance and spitefulness clear, so that the hands of Shi'ites remain clean of contamination by his false accusations.

After all, we will not wash our hands of proving our beliefs. We will present enough temperate and logical and moderate reasons and indisputable hadiths, so that, God will-

ing, our platform is proven and our Islamic brothers from the Sunni group and some nobles are not offended.

A— Then beforehand make it clear why Kasravi, with a lot of pride and haughtiness, writes and attacks the Shi'ite arguments.

H— Which subject are you talking about?

A— Kasravi writes, "The Shi'ites in proving the Ghadir Khom event put forward this verse,

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم واتممت عليكم نعمتى ورضيت لكم الاسلام
دينا.

This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.²¹

21 In the company of the Imami Ulama on Ghadir Khom day, the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) appointed by divine order the master Amir Almomenin Ali Abitaleb (grace be upon him) to succeed him as divine caliph and the Imam of the faithful. This noble verse, which shows the perfection of religion and superiority of all blessings resulting from the guardianship of Ali (grace be upon him), ascended from God. And the glorious God declared his satisfaction in this matter. But aside from the Imami leaders, a number of researchers and just scholars of the Sunni persuasion have narrated this matter the same way. We will mention some of them below:

(1) *Tafsir Dar Manthour* by Djalal Edin Sayouti, second volume, page 259. The narration, with its proofs, is from Ebn Abbas, who said, "As the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) on Ghadir Khom Day appointed Ali (grace be upon him) to guardianship and as his successor, so did Gabriel indite and bring from the sole God the noble verse, in the above Surran.

(2) *Tafsir Dar Manthour* by Djalaleldin Sayouti, second volume, page 259. The narration with its proofs from Abuharireh, who said, "Oh Ghadir Khom Day, the 18th of

While the verse refers to blood and pork and similar matters, it has nothing to do with the Imamate and caliphate.

the month Zee Alhadjeh, the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) said, 'Whoever I was a master to, Ali is his master.' " Then in respect to this the only God indited the verse.

(3) Tarikh Dameshgh by Ebn Asaker, second volume page 85, the narration with its proofs from Abu Saiid Khadari, who said, "As the Great Messenger on Ghadir Khom Day chose Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him) to succeed him and proclaimed his guardianship, Gabriel indited and brought from the only God the verse,

يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك...

O Apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord.

(4) Shavahed Altanzeel by Alheskani. Hadith number 211, with its proofs from Abu Saiid Khadari, who said, "When the verse, appeared to the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), His Majesty, said, 'God is great, the perfection of religion, and the superior blessing, and the Lord is satisfied with my prophecy and Ali Ebn Abitaleb's (grace be upon him) guardianship after me.' Then he said, 'Whoever I was a master to, Ali is his master. Oh God, love the friends of Ali, and be an enemy to the enemies of Ali and help the helpers of Ali and humiliate the humiliators of Ali.' "

(5) Alvelayea by Alhafez Abu Djafar Muhammad Ebn Djarir Altabari Motardjem, page 100. the narration with its proofs is from Zayd Ebn Argham, who said, "The honorable verse, was indited on Ghadir Khom Day about Amir Almomenin Ali Abitaleb (grace be upon him). "Of course, there are other narrations in this regard from the Sunnis, but we content ourselves with five hadiths for the sake of brevity. A.E.

H— First of all, this honorable verse is a parenthetical sentence inside matter, and in the glorious Koran there are many such parenthetical sentences. Perhaps this same sentence has been indited repeatedly, and if so there is no harm. Secondly, we have another verse that was specifically indited about Ghadir Khom, and a great number of the Sunni writers have narrated it. But because Kasravi sees himself condemned by this verse, he presents a similar verse. God says in the Koran,

يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك وان لم تفعل فما بلغت رسالته والله يعصمك من الناس .

O Apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission. And God will defend thee from men (who mean mischief).

This firm verse makes the meaning of this especially understandable, along with writings by Shi'ites and a great many nobles about the guardianship and Imamate and caliphate of Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) in a place called Ghadir Khom.²²

22 *There is a consensus among Shi'ite scholars and a great many just Sunni scholars that the honorable verse dealing with the guardianship of the master Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him), appeared as to the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) on Ghadir Khom Day. We will mention some of them, below, in the Sunni way:*

(1) *Tafsir Dar Manthour, by Djalaleidin Sayouti, page 298, the narration with its proofs from Abu Saiid Khadari, who said, "This honorable verse was indited in regard to the guardianship by Amir Almomenin Ali Ebn Abitaleb on the day of Ghadir Khom."*

(2) *Tafsir Dar Manthour, page 289, the narration with its proof from Ebn Masood, who said, "During the time of*

Because of the importance of the matter and intensity of divine emphasis, His Majesty, the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), did not let the caravan of Hadji's reach home. Rather, in execution of Great God's orders, he commanded the caravan's

the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), Muslims read the verse this way,

يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك ان عليا مولى المؤمنين فان
لم تفعل فما بلغت رسالته والله يعصمك من الناس .

O Apostle! proclaim the (Message), which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord, that Ali is the Imam of all pious men. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission. And God will defend thee from men (who mean mischief).

(3) Yana Bay Almodat by Hafez Soleyman Ebn Ibrahim Alghandouzi Alhanafi, page 120, the narration with its documentation from Ebn Abass and Abu Saiid Khadari and Abu Harireh, who said, "This honorable verse has been indited about the guardianship of Amir Almomenin Ali (grace be upon him) on Ghadir Khom Day."

(4) Mateleb Alsoul by Abu Saalem Alnasibi Alshafee, page 16, the narration with its documentation from Abu Saiid Khadari, who said, "This honorable verse was indited in regard to Amir Almomenin Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him) on Ghadir Khom Day."

(5) Movadat Algharbi by Alseyed Ali Alhamdani, the narration with its documentation from Bara Ebn Aazeb. He says at the end of the Ghadir Khom narration, "This honorable verse was indited on Ghadir Khom Day in regard to the guardianship by Ali (grace be upon him)." Of course, there are so many narrations about this by different people that to relate them all would require the publication of another, even longer book. Therefore, we have contented ourselves to five hadiths for the sake of brevity. A.E.

forerunners to return, and he did not wait for the ones who were left behind. Then he made a podium out of camel's rigging and God's Prophet climbed to the top of it and took hold of his brother and honorable cousin Ali (grace be upon him) and held him up so that all Muslims could see and recognize that great man. Then he proclaimed the command of the Only God's. And thirdly, since Kasravi has specially confessed to the hadith, it is sufficient for us and we do not need to give any more proof.

A— It is true that Kasravi has opposed this verse and confessed to the hadith but he attributes a different meaning to the word "Moala," which does not relate to the subjects of Imamate and caliphate. In the book *Goft Va Shanid*, page 6, line 12, he says, "First you tell the story of Ghadir Khom: The Prophet said, "Whoever I was master to, Ali is his master."

I am amazed that the mullas do not know the meaning of this sentence. Among Arabs there is a tradition name "valaa," which means that if one freed his slave, a relationship (called valaa) developed between the slave and his master, and it had certain rules. For example, if the slave died without an heir, his inheritance passed to his master. Also the Arab tribes concluded a treaty among themselves which stipulated that they become each other's haleef.* Among them also this relationship is valaa. Islam's Prophet was from an Arab people who had a valaa relationship with a few people. In this regard, he made his son-in-law Ali his successor and said, "If I had valaa with anyone and was his master, after me this Ali will be his master." Finally this was a family will." The end of Kasravi's statement in the book *Goft Va Shaneed* is included in his book *Altashayo Valshieh*, which he wrote in Arabic.

H— Child, the words *valli* and *moala* are similar words. They mean owner, slave, liberator and liberated, as Kasravi has written. They also mean friend, gentleman, prince, governor, companion, king, and aide. I do not know the reason Kasravi has closed his eyes to these meanings. Yet he wants to prove his argument against the Shi'ites.

*A haleef is one who assumes responsibility for another person.
Trans.

A— Why do we Shi'ites turn away from the meaning given by Kasravi and want to prove that the meaning is mastership and principality and priority?

H— We Shi'ites have indications for accepting the meanings master and prince and priority, which all agree with our platform and purpose. But what Kasravi says is unsuitable for our purpose. When the only god says, "Oh our messenger, if you do not propagandize this matter, know that you have not propagandized my messages," you can imagine the existence of a brief will, which had such importance that it warrants so much threatening. This family will (as Kasravi calls it) had such importance that it was equal to all of His Majesty the Messenger's troubles and hardships, so much so that if the Prophet had not propagandized it he would not have performed any of the commandments. He would not have presented the basis of his prophecy to the people, as though this last message had been the consequence of His Prophecy and messengership. And also why is a family will, in which God's Prophet wants to make his son-in-law and cousin his successor and heir in his own family, so dangerous that it makes His Majesty the Last of the Prophets, the champion of leaders, apprehensive, because of which the Omnipotent God, in order to calm his heart and console his mind, says,

والله يعصمك من الناس .

And God will defend thee from men (who mean mischief).

Do intelligent and perceptive readers believe this dangerous matter would be merely a will for the family?

Let us assume that Kasravi's mind and thinking have been damaged by an internal illness. I do not know what has happened to the perceptive eye and insight of neutral people. Why don't the brave youngsters and scholarly students of this brilliant century understand such a clear subject? A family will is made among the family. At the most, a number of close friends attend to act as witnesses. What is the broad field of

Ghadir Khom needed for then? Why must a large crowd stay for hours under that burning sun in the Arabian desert, and why would God's Prophet, with such fervor and seriousness, take Ali's (grace be upon him) arm and hold him up before 70,000 people to make him known, and complete his prophecy and call on God to witness this message. I am amazed.

Let us say to Kasravi, suppose a few ignorant or low-minded or sick people believed your statements and contaminated the stormy atmosphere of Shi'a or Islam and that as a result you are happy and joyful, then the wise and the honorable men who are informed of the history would curse you, ridicule you for your crooked opinion and comprehension.

Yes, child, the ideas and statements of the Shi'ites are correct. The message was the message of Guardianship, it was the message of caliphate and Imamate. It involved fear and danger, the danger of fire, the danger of storm, the danger of selfishness, and worldliness. That's why He says, "Oh my friend, do not be afraid. Your God is powerful and capable. He is your protector. Oh Muhammad, you must spread my last commandment to the faithful. You must propagandize this important matter. Otherwise, all of the services you have performed for the prosperity of humanity in accordance with My resolve will be wasted and all that effort and those holy wars will be abortive and to no avail.

"Yes, it is the subject of guardianship that waters the tree of prophecy and messengership and achieves some results. An ignorant and timid person must not become caliph. Cowards and people who are uninformed about the commandments are not worthy of Imamate and ruling. Remember that when you chose Abu Bakr to propagandize to the pagans and read the verse Braat, we did not like him and said this duty must be performed by yourself or a person of your family. The decision now is the same. Now that death has come closer and you are travelling to the other world in your mind and are contemplating the joy of seeing us, appoint Ali as your successor and choose him for the caliphate and Imamate. Among the faithful there is no one like you but Ali. No one except him can bear the weight of guardianship. It is he alone who is Our tongue and is familiar with

Our language. Ali is the protector of religion and religion is nourished with Amir Almomenin's hands." After all of this, Omar makes the meaning of moala more clear. The second caliph, following that lengthy event at that same place, Ghadir Khom, enters the tent of caliph and guardian and takes the oath of allegiance to Ali, saying, "Oh Ali, now you have become my master and the prince of all pious men and women."

The Ghadir Khom Hadith by the Sunnis

A— Is there a Sunni hadith in this regard that would be a knockdown answer to Kasravi and close the road of dispute?

H— Not only one hadith, but more than one hundred are available from the Sunnis. And at this point here I will relay a clear and brief hadith from the book *Moradjeaat* by the greatest of the Sunni leaders.

Imam Ahmad narrates it in two ways, on the basis of a Bara Ebn Auzeb hadith, on page 281 in the fourth section of his book. He said:

We were with God's Messenger and came to Ghadir Khom. Then the sound of prayer arose, and a space was made between two trees for God's Messenger. Then he recited the noon prayer and took the hand of Ali (grace be upon him) and said, "Do you not know that I am superior to all living pious men?" They said, "Yes." "Do you not know that I am superior to any pious man living?" They said, "Yes." Bara says, "Then his excellency took Ali's hand and said, 'Whoever I am master to, Ali is master to. Oh Lord, love his friends and be an enemy of his enemies.' " Bara said, "After that Omar met Ali (grace be upon him) and said, 'Oh Abutaleb's child, as you passed from morning to evening you became master of all pious men and women.' "

In this honorable hadith His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) for the first time makes the Muslims confess to his guardianship, and then in accordance with that guardianship, the Koran says,

النبي اولى بالمؤمنين من انفسهم وازواجه امهاتهم.

The Prophet is closer to the believers than to their own selves.

He proves Ali's guardianship, which means that Ali is to become the caliph and Imam and master. Omar also shouts, "Oh Ali, may guardianship be agreeable to you. As the morning departed for the evening, you became the master of all pious men and women." What does friendship and family will have to do with this matter? This is where Kasravi's ignorance or enmity and grudge becomes obvious and clear.

A longer hadith was narrated by the writer of *Nasekh Altavarikh* in the first section of the second book on page 501. He derived it from *Ibrahim Ebn Muhammad Hamvaini*, who is one of the greats of the Sunnis. It contains the story of how His Majesty Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) was standing in the mosque by himself among many of the companions one day during the Othman caliphate. He proves what happened at Ghadir Khom and also the two honorable verses,

يا ايها الذين آمنوا اطيعوا الله ورسوله واولى الامر منكم.

O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle and those charged with authority among you.

and

انما وليكم الله ورسوله والذين آمنوا الذين يقيمون الصلاة ويؤتون الزكاة وهم راكعون.

Your (real) friends are (no less than) God, His Apostle, and the (Fellowship) of Believers—those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship).

Ali speaks about his own rights and the listeners confess to them. Ali says,

Salman go up and ask, "Oh God's Messenger, what is the meaning of guardianship?" His Majesty said, "A guardianship similar to my own. Whoever I am superior to, Ali also is superior to." After that God's messenger said, "God is great"* and went on to say, "After my death, the whole of my prophecy and the whole of God's religion relies on Ali's guardianship." Then Abu Bakr and Omar got up and asked God's Messenger whether the verses were about Ali. He said, "Yes, they are in regard to my successors until the resurrection day." They said, "Oh God's Messenger, tell us about them." His Majesty said, "Ali (grace be upon him) is my brother and minister and heir and executor and caliph. Among my followers he is after me, the master of every pious man. After him is his child Hassan (grace be upon him) and after him Houssain (grace be upon him) and after him nine of my child Houssain's children, one after another. The Koran is with them and they are with the Koran. They do not separate from the Koran and the Koran will not separate from them until they meet me at Kothar Pond."

This hadith, which is mentioned in *Nasekh Altavarikh*, is very long and its purpose is to prove Ali's (grace be upon him) guardianship and caliphate. For the sake of brevity, it was condensed to these few lines.

A— Praise be to God. The question of Ghadir Khom has been proved. But about the honorable verse,

انا وليكم الله

Your (real) friends are (no less than) God.

Kasravi writes, "The honorable verse is not particularly for Ali (grace be upon him). Rather, any pious man who prays and gives the Zakat and genuflects is the guardian and friend of the Muslims."

H— Kasravi does not know and does not know and does not know! Basically, this verse was indited for Ali (grace be upon him). All Shi'ite scholars and a large group of Sunni greats are united about this meaning. The narration of Ibrahim Ebn

Muhammad Alhamvaini in *Nasekh Altavarikh Hadith* was related just now in proving the point. We will mention others:

انما وليكم الله Also Was About Ali (Grace Be Upon Him)

Among them is the Ebn Alsalam hadith about His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) in Nasai's book, in which he interprets the Maedeh verse, taken from the book *Aldjam Bain Alsahah Alsatet*. Also among them is the Ebn Abass hadith and Ali's hadith in interpretation of this verse in the book *Asbab Alnozool* by Imam Vahedi, which Khatib has narrated in the book *Almotafegh* and that is hadith 5990 of the *Kanzalamal* hadiths, on page 291 of the third section. Also it has been narrated in *Montakhab Kanz* on page 38, fifth section, from *Kanzalamal*, alongside Ali's hadith, with two proofs by Ebn Mardouyeh and Abi Alshaikh, and also in the *Kanzalemal* hadith, 6137 from the *Kanz* hadiths, on page 405 of the sixth section of that book. And in all the rest, it has been said that the honorable verse,

انما وليكم الله

Your (real) friends are (no less than) God.

is about Ali (grace be upon him). All the commentators are together on this, and the consensus among them has been relayed by many Sunni scholars. Among the Sunni scholars is Imam Ghoshchi who in the Imamate chapter of his book *Sharh Tadjrid* narrated it in the Sunni manner. Also in section 18 of *Ghayat Almaram* there are twenty-four hadiths by the Sunnis, which we will not relay for the sake of brevity. (See *Moradjeaat*, page 147.)

A— Kasravi says that

الذين يقيمون الصلوة ويؤتون الزكاة وهم راكعون.

Who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship).

is in the plural fashion. Therefore, it is obvious that the honorable verse is not about one certain person, but rather generally about whoever prays and gives the Zakat and genuflects and is worthy of being guardian.

H— Firstly, when contrary to the text of the Prophet (praise be upon him) and the consensus among Islamic scholars, Kasravi's pronouncement of judgment is wrong. His Majesty the Messenger has said that the honorable verse is in regard to Ali (grace be upon him). Great Shi'ite and Sunni men have said the same thing. Secondly, let us translate the verse and match it with Kasravi's statement and see the result. God says, "Oh Muslims, your guardian is God and the Prophet and the ones who pray and give the Zakat during genuflection." If we take this verse, as Kasravi says, to include everybody, the meaning becomes this, "Oh Muslims, your guardian is the one who prays and as he is genuflecting pays the Zakat." Thus the condition for being a guardian is giving the Zakat and alms during genuflection. As of now, none of the scholars of the religion has said such a thing or has interpreted it this way or has granted such privilege for genuflection. It almost becomes a ridiculous wisecrack.

Therefore, the honorable verse is about Ali (grace be upon him) only. And it was occasioned by the following event: A beggar entered the mosque of God's Messenger and asked for something. No one gave him anything. By chance, His Majesty the Amir had been praying and genuflecting. He called the beggar over with a sign and gave him his own ring. And because of this pure generosity, the Kind God sent Gabriel with this verse: "Oh Muslims, your guardian after God and the Prophet is this same person who you saw praying and giving his ring to the beggar as he was genuflecting." This is a clear and correct meaning that one cannot object to.

Thirdly, we proved that the meaning of guardianship is the same as the divine guardianship, which is in the nature of His Majesty the Prophet and is the same guardianship and priority of the Prophet that is pointed out in the great verse,

الذين يقيمون الصلوة ويؤتون الزكاة وهم راكعون.

Who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship).

Then, if we say that all the people who pray and, as they are genuflecting, give the Zakat are, like the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) the lords and masters of all pious men, and therefore superior to themselves, it becomes more ridiculous.

Fourthly, the word *vaav* in the above verse is not a conjunction, as Kasravi's interprets it to be. On the contrary, it is a verb in the present tense. As the masters of hadith have narrated the Shi'ite and Sunni have concluded from their research, this honorable verse was indited about His Majesty Moalay Motaghian Amir Almomenan (grace be upon him) when he gave his ring to a beggar while he was genuflecting.

Therefore, Kasravi has no right to object to this text, the meaning of which is obvious. It was appropriate for him to ask the experts in total politeness and the science of eloquence, about the reason why the verse is in the plural form. The answer is that among Arabs, indeed among any nation, a great person is mentioned in plural form out of homage, as the author of *Moradjeaat* writes: "Imam Tabarsi, in interpreting the honorable verse from Madjmaal Bayan, mentions that the plural form was applied to Amir Almomenin to honor and do homage to him because the master of words pays homage by mentioning one in the plural form." This point of Arabic linguistics needs not further explanation.

You, my dear, note that the Lord has indited the honorable verse Mobaheleh in the plural form:

ابنائنا ونسائنا وانفسنا.

Your sons and your women and yourselves.

The objects of Abnaena are His Excellencies Hasan and Imam Houssain (grace be upon him) and the object of Nasaena is her excellency Fatima Zahra (grace be upon her) and the object of

Anfosna is his excellency Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) and in the Koran and Arab language people like these are referred to in the plural form, and Sunni and Shi'ite scholars have made other points, which for now we do not need to mention. Child, do you want the truth? Intervention of the ignorant in a science or job that is not their business is a cause for pity by scholars and an aberration for the public.

The Word Valli (Guardian) Means Master, Lord, and Prince

A— Some believe that the word *valli* in the Ennama verse means friend.

H— My dear, just as it was proved that the honorable verse is about Ali (grace be upon him), we must confess to its meaning as mastery and Imamate and priority. Although being friends is important, it is not so praiseworthy that the honorable verse limits kindness to God, the Prophet, and Ali. Instead, all pious men are each other's friends, and the friendship of all pious people is assumed. There is no restriction on this. Therefore, it is that divine guardianship that the Prophet and the Imam are the product of, and the remoteness and fearfulness of the word are removed by the honorable verse:

النبي اولى بالمؤمنين من انفسهم.

Their affairs by mutual consultation.

Child, the guardianship verses comment on each other, and when they are gathered in one place the Shi'ite platform is proven.

A— I beg your pardon, but after all of this Kasravi says that God has ordered Muslims to consult on the matter of caliphate and that the Shi'ite reasons are fundamentally invalid.

The Divine Caliphate Is in Accordance with the Prophet's Text and Not a Council of the Faithful

H— Kasravi has made a mistake. In God's book and Muhammad's (praise be upon him) Koran, there is no such verse. The honorable verse,

وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ

does not refer to the caliphate. God says one must not be despotic and opinionated in any matter, and in an important affair must consult with knowledgeable friends and use the intellect and planning of wise people. Consultation is man's most important means of achieving prosperity. But the selection of a caliph and Imam, who must lean on the throne of the caliphate and guardianship and take control of religious and worldly prosperity of the faithful, is up to the knowledgeable and omnipotent and must be conducted in conformance with the Prophet's text as was proven by clear arguments.

A— One of Kasravi's reasons for trying to prove the necessity of a council is that Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) stated in his letter to Muawiyah that consensus among the Muslims is proof of his right to the caliphate.

H— His Majesty Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) always knew the caliphate to be his right. In proving it, he argued in various ways. He had firm, logical evidence in the verses and hadiths and the testimony of the companions and intelligence. The evidence is in the hands of Shi'ites. All of the documentation that he cited in the mosque of God's Messenger or on the podium at Kufeh or during speeches is recorded in books by Shi'ites and Sunnis, and there is no room for denial. But contention and argument differ according to the time and the person. With Abu Bakr it was necessary for him to reason on the basis of the verses and hadiths and testimony of the companions. On the other hand, with Muawiyah he had to argue with exact proof and documentation and use their own weapons against them. Therefore, to convict and obligate the son of Abu Sofian, he would choose the easiest and closest route. If Ali (grace be upon him) had counted on the exact verses and the relevant hadiths to prove his case, as he had before, he would have been complaining and interpreting and they would have denied them. In addition, they would have thrown the caliphate of the three caliphs at him. This would have been a long and hard route to take.

That's why His Majesty Amir Almomentin (grace be upon him) reasoned with them by means of the same arguments they used to take the caliphate from him. He used their weapons against the despotic Umayyads and presented a reason that Muawiyah never could reject. And if he ever did reject this reasoning, and thus the validity of the consensus of the companions who had sworn allegiance to him, the caliphate of the three would have immediately become void and their usurpation would have become obvious. Then they would have had to refer to hadiths and the relevant verses, and with no difficulty the truth would have become clear and Ali's rightful claim would have been proven.

Ali (grace be upon him), in his correspondence with Muawiyah, reasoned in such a way that the false claimant is convicted. In truth, the reasoning of his excellency was one of the best ways of arguing and putting them on trial. But it was the impudent immodesty of the son of Harb* that enabled the obvious reasoning of God's guardian to go unheard and unseen. Claiming to avenge the blood of Othman, he raised the banner of opposition.

A Few Hadiths that Prove the Right of Ali (Grace Be Upon Him) to the Caliphate

A— Have there been any other Sunni hadiths except the Ghadir Khom narration in regard to the guardianship and caliphate of Ali (grace be upon him) or is that the only one?

H— Actually, after the Ghadir Khom hadith, which was related repeatedly in such a clear and obvious way by Sunni and Shi'ite narrators, we do not need any more hadiths or predicates. But for the sake of a blessing and good luck, and to overcome doubts or grudges, I will read a few hadiths for you.

The first hadith is based on ones that prove the immediate caliphate of His Majesty Amir Almonenin (grace be upon him). It is known as the Dar Hadith and describes an event that occurred in the initial stages of Islam, before the spreading of

**Harb is Muawiyah's mother.* Trans.

the religion to the honorable Mecca, when the only God gave to the prophet the honorable verse,

وانذر عشيرتك الاقربين

And admonish thy nearest kinsmen.

God's Messenger (grace be upon him) invited his close friends to his uncle's house. There were about forty of them, more or less, and present among them were his uncles Abutaleb, Hamzeh, Abbas, and Abulahab. Eventually, His Majesty the Messenger said, "Oh sons of Abdul Mottaleb, I swear to God I do not know in all the Arab tribes a youngster who has brought his tribe something better than I have brought for you. I have brought you salvation in this world and the next. God has ordered me to invite you to him. Then, which one of you will become my minister and assistant in this matter?" Ali, who was the youngest of them all, said, "Oh God's Prophet, I will become your minister." Then God's Prophet put his hand on Ali's (grace be upon him) shoulder and said, "This is my brother and my successor among you. Listen to his words and obey him." Then the crowd started to laugh and said to Abutaleb, "Muhammad is telling you to listen to your child's word and obey him."

A great number of protestors of the relics of the Prophet have narrated this in the same words. For example: Ebn Ashagh and Ebn Djarir and Ebn Abi Hatam Ebn Mardoyeh and Abu Naeem Bayhaghi in their recitals of traditions and ratiocinations. And Thalabi and Tabari in their great interpretive works. Also Tabari in the second section of his book *Tarikh Alamam Va Almolook*, page 217, has narrated it in different ways. And Ebn Harir in the second section of his book *Kaamel* has counted the hadith among the indisputable ones. And Abu Alfada in the first section of his history, page 116. And Imam Abu Djafar Askafi Motazeli in his book *Naghz Alothmanieh* has narrated it and has defined it. As has been mentioned, on page 263 on the

third volume of *Sharh Nahdjolbalagheh* by Ebn Abi Alhadid, printed in Egypt. And Halabi has written in his book *Sayreh Maroufeh* about The Great Messenger and his companion hiding at Argham's house. And refer to the fourth page of that book or to page 381 of the first section of Siareh Halbieh about the domineering and idle talk of Ebn Taymimeh, who was famous for his party spirit and was forced to deny him but it is not significant and requires no attention.

And also the Egyptian social writer Muhammad Houssain Heykal has narrated it in the second column of page 5 of Annex No. 2751 of the *Alsiasieh* newspaper, which was issued on Zialghadeh 12, 1350;* you will find a comprehensive version of it there. And if you refer to the fourth column of page 6 of Annex No. 2275 of *Alsiasieh* you will find tht he has relayed this hadith from Muslim in his book *Sahih* and from Aham in his book *Masnad* and from Abdullah Ebn Ahmad in his book *Ziadat Masnad* and from Ebn Hadjar Haythami in his book *Djamolfavayed* and from Omar Ebn Bahr Al Djaher in his book and from Bani Hashem and from Ahmad Ebn Abdarbeh in his book *Alaghd Alfarid* and from Ebn Ghatibeh in his book *Ayoun Alakhbar* and from Imam Abu Ashagh Thalabi in his interpretation. Goergis the Englishman in his book *Maghalat Fel Eslam* has narrated it, and that Protestant atheist who has named himself Hashem Arabi has translated it from the Arabic. You will find this hadith on page 89 in the translation of Al Maghaleh, Sixth Edition.

And because of the fame of this hadith, a number of foreigners have mentioned it in French and German and English books; Thomas Carlyle in his book *Heroes and Hero-worship* has written a shortened version.

And with the same meaning and convergent interpretation, many great men of the Sunni and their learned men and researchers, like Tahavi and Zia Moghadasi and Saiid Ebn Mansour, have narrated, it. And it is enough for you that Ahmad Ebn Hanbal has narrated it in the Hadith Ali, on pages 111 and

*1931. Trans.

159 of the first section of his book (translated from the book *Moradjeaat*).

Child, this one hadith is enough to prove the right to the caliphate of his Majesty Amir (grace be upon him), and there is no need at all for intellectual reasons and scriptural documents. Incidentally, this clear text and this hadith, in addition to being in the Shi'ite books of predicates and Sunni histories, corresponds to the very history that Kasravi throws at the Djafari. That is to say, the orientalist and the American and European historians have documented this honorable verse in their histories.

The second hadith is the Manzelat hadith. One day Abu Bakr and Omar and Abu Habidatebn Aldjarah were in God's Messenger's (praise be upon him) presence, and the Prophet had leaned on Ali (grace be upon him). He then slapped Ali on the shoulder with his blessed hand, and said, "Oh Ali, you are first in piety and faith and Islam, and you are the same to me as Haroun was to Moses." This hadith was narrated by Hasan Ebn Badr and Hakem in the book *Kani*, and by Shirazi in *Alghab*, and by Ebn Nadjar. The hadiths are Nos. 6029 and 6032 of the *Kanz* hadiths, on page 395 in the sixth section of that book.

The Manzelat is one of the hadiths that has been mentioned repeatedly by most of the Sunni scholars and reliable persons and historians, and as in the case of the Dari hadith, which was just mentioned, they narrated and wrote it, some in lengthier versions than others.

The same hadith is mentioned as occurring during the first and second Movakhat when His Excellency the Messenger (praise be upon him) made a treaty of brotherhood among the companions. The prophet made each of the companions a brother to another. Ali was left alone and behind everyone else. He asked about the delay, and God's Messenger said, "I have kept you for myself and you are to me as Haroun was to Moses, because there will be no prophet after me." Imam Ahmad Ebn Hanbal in the book *Managheb Ali* and Ebn Asaker in his history and Baghavi and Tabarani in their selections and Baroudi in his book *Almarefat* and Ebn Adi and others all have relayed the first Movakhar from Zayd Ebn Abi Oufi. The second

Movakhat has been narrated by Tabarani in the *Tafsir Karir* of Ebn Abbas, and by others. This hadith relates a very famous incident in the Tabouk war. His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) sent his cousin to Medina to take his place. Ali said, "Oh God's Messenger, may I travel with you?" The messenger said, "Oh Ali, are you not satisfied to be to me as Haroun was to Moses. Unless there is to be a prophet after me, oh Ali, it is not right for me to travel if you would be my successor." Any historian and narrator who has mentioned a hadith about the Tabouk war has certainly related this hadith. History books prove the correctness of our statement. (*Moradjeaat*, page 126.)

The third is the Barideh hadith, which is mentioned on page 356 of the fifth section of Ahmad's *Masnad*. His Majesty the Messenger (praise be upon him) sent two armies to Yemen, choosing Ali Ebn Abitaleb (grace be upon him) to be master of one and Khaled Ebn Valid master of the other, and he said, "If you meet each other and join each other, then Ali is the master of all. If you separate, each one is the master of his own army." Barideh says, "Then we met a Yemeni, Bani Zobaideh, and fought, and the Muslims conquered the pagans. We took their wives and children prisoners. Then Ali (grace be upon him) chose a woman slave from among the prisoners. Khaled sent a letter to God's Messenger (praise be upon him), by me, which informed the Prophet about that event." Barideh continues, "As soon as I reached the Prophet, I gave him the letter, and someone read it to His Majesty then I observed anger in His Majesty's face and I said, "Oh God's Messenger, I resort to you. You sent me with a man and told me to obey him and I did.' He said, 'Do not say bad words against Ali, because he is from me and I am from him and he is your guardian after me.' " Ahmad has narrated this predicate taken from Abdullah Ebn Barideh, who learned it from his father, on page 356.

And on page 347 of the fifth section of the *Masnad* it is narrated in this way taken from Saad Ebn Djabir and from Ebn Abbas and from Barideh: "Barideh says, I fought in Yemen at Ali's side, and observed a coarseness and a harshness in him. Then when I reached the Prophet, I spoke ill of him. I noticed his blessed face change, and he said, 'Oh Barideh, am I not superior

to other pious men?' I said, 'Yes, oh God's Messenger.' He said, 'Whoever I am the master to, then Ali is a master to.' " At the end of the Hadith, Tabarani relates that His Majesty says, "Oh Barideh, did you not know that Ali's (grace be upon him) right is greater than that of the woman slave he has picked? He is your master after me." (*Moradjeaat*, page 136.)

In the *Moradjeaat* there are seven hadiths that have been relayed from the Sunnis, and, as you see, in regard to the meaning of guardianship and the caliphate they are candid and clear.

A— The guardianship and Imamate of Ali (grace be upon him) and his true caliphate have become as clear as the sun to me. Kasravi's ignorance and deceits also are proven. Now what do you say about prescience? Did the Prophet and Ali (grace be upon him) truly have hidden knowledge and know the secrets of creation? In this regard Kasravi attacks Shi'ites harshly.

The Prophet, the Imam, and Clairvoyance

H— Kasravi has raised the banner of opposition against all truth. One of the problems is the question of clairvoyance. My dear, clairvoyance, either about past or future events or the secrets of creation and the details of the earth and sky and hidden personalities and hidden matters, is considered clairvoyance for us with limited ability who obtain all of our knowledge through ordinary means. But for the All-Knowing creator, the Omniscient and Discerning God, Who is the Creator of the mortals, there is no curtain, nothing is invisible. The present, past, and the future are all known to him, and he has control of all truths.

Whatever the Prophet knew it was a result of his divine training. Therefore, when God's Prophet informed us about the invisible, it was not clairvoyance, but narration of the information he has heard from His Majesty the Lord. For example, in regard to the past events, God created the verse Yuseph and read that sweet story to his friend, then said,

ذلك من انباء الغيب نوحيه اليك •

Such is one of the stories of what happened unseen.

He also created the verse Monafeghin and makes clear the inner secrets of the hypocrites. He also taught the honorable leader of the caravan of humanity all the details of life and events of the Genesis and the commandments of past religious laws and invisible worlds and what occurs after death and the other world and the resurrection day, which are present in the interior and exterior revelations of the glorious Koran. And in truth the Great Messenger (praise be upon him) is the uniquely skilled student of the final class of the university of the Lord.

Also we do not say that Ali and Ali's children (grace be upon them) had knowledge and clairvoyance. Rather, they went relaying the teaching of God and the Prophet. Whatever they knew was derived from God and the Prophet, and whatever they said was from the protected tablet and true book, and whatever they brought to us was from the source of enlightenment and spring of blessing. We say also that without proper means it is not possible to learn a secret or a truth. The difference is that common people have common means and God's chosen leaders had superordinary means. That is to say, in addition to natural human gifts, it is the unlimited help of the Great Divine Leadership that puts the greats of this world in control and enables them to dominate the invisible and the truth of the universe.

A— Kasravi, in attempting to prove his statements, refers to the verse,

قل لا يعلم غيب السموات والارض الا الله ولا اعلم الغيب.

Nor do I know what is hidden.

He says no one knows the hidden truths but God. He also quotes another verse,

ولا اعلم الغيب.

Nor do I know what is hidden.

and says the Prophet himself renounced and was disgusted with clairvoyance.

H— Against these, there are other firm positive verses, like,

ولا يظهر على غيبه احدا الا من ارتضى من رسول

Nor does He make anyone acquainted with his mysteries, except an apostle whom He has chosen.

This clearly proves that the great Prophet, who is God's chosen Messenger, had knowledge of the unknown. The honorable verse,

ذلك من انباء الغيب نوحيه اليك

Such is one of the stories of what happened unseen.

which he repeats in a few Surrahs of the Koran, has already been mentioned. Both these verses prove our platform with total clarity. The Holy Being who knows all the secret truths relating to mortals without any intermediary or any instrument, is the Sole God, who created everyone. The only being that truly has knowledge is He. Everyone else's knowledge is derived from divine training and information nor do we see any objection to this interpretation. There are no contradictions in the Koran. But contumacy and selfishness keep one away from truth and prosperity.

The other clear reason for our belief and rejection of Kasravi is His Majesty Jesus Christ's (grace be upon him) knowledge of the hidden. As the Lord said through the mouth of Jesus,

وانبئكم بما تأكلون وما تدخرون.

And I declare to you what ye eat and what ye store.

This is known to be one of his miracles. It is obvious though, that it happened because of divine training, and people thought

it to be one of the miracles. Kasravi, in order to prove his claim, has closed his eyes to all of these Koranic verses and obvious things, and does not see anything but his own flimsy ideas.²³

A— Everything you've said is clear. There is no reason for hesitation and objection. I do not know why Kasravi has picked up the flag of enmity and disgraced Iranians. There is a limit to ignorance and grudges. His opposition and misleading statements are unlimited. He has related such terrible things about the Imams (grace be upon them) and especially the sixth Imam, Imam Djafar Sadegh (grace be upon him), in his books *Altashayo Valshieh* and *Goft Va Shanid* that an honorable person is ashamed to read them. If I did not want an answer to his arguments, I would not repeat them. But, with your permission, I will tell you what he says.

H— The relayer of paganism is not a pagan. You must tell me all of his criticisms and hear the answers, so they will be published and his simple-minded followers will become aware of their leader's lies and false accusations.

His Majesty Sadegh All Muhammad (Grace Be Upon Him)

A— Both in the book *Altashayo Valshieh* and in *Goft Va Shanid* he writes, "Imam Djafar Sadegh (grace be upon him) during his life made his son Esmaeel his successor. As a result of an accident, Esmaeel died before his father. The Imam, noticing that the Shi'ites now became unstable and that their faith weakened, said to them, 'God regrets having chosen Esmaeel as my successor, and in his place has chosen Mousa.'" Kasravi says that to protect his position, the sixth Imam said that the

23 *Contemporary scientists in the west have proven through research the effect of the twelfth sense. After this amazing sense is perfected, nothing remains hidden, the future is known. A person would know the future as well as the present, and would know the contents of the Book of Genesis without going through its pages. That is to say, knowing the affairs of past and future events is a natural human ability, which must be perfected.*

Great Lord had regrets so that people would not say the Imam did not know the hidden future.

H— Kasravi, with a world of shamelessness accuses the great Imam falsely and lies. In none of the histories and books of Djafari predicates does this predicate exist. The Imam never wrote this about Esmaeel. Our books are plentiful and are distributed all over the world. People should pick them up and read them and take note of the injustice of this rude man. The contrary has been written in the works of our scholars. Madjlesi, may God rest him in peace, wrote in his life of Sadagh All Muhammad (grace be upon him) that while the sixth Imam loved his child Esmaeel, he expressed his dissatisfaction with him many times and once said evil disguises itself as Esmaeel but cannot disguise itself as Mousa. This supports the Imamate of His Excellency Bob Alhavaiedj (grace be upon him) and disqualifies Esmaeel for this lofty position. Child, now is not the time to go into details and study the lives of the heads of the honorable Djafari religion. In the book *Bohar* you will see the correctness of our statements and the lies of the lusterless man.

Transmutation and Divine Change

Secondly, the word *bada*, used in regard to His Majesty the Lord, does not mean regret but, as the great scholars have said, divine change. People have thought that because of Esmaeel's being the older son, he would become the Imam of the Shi'ites after the death of his father and the truth was hidden from them. The Sole Lord made the truth visible by means of Esmaeel's death, and people found out that the preordained successor and Imam was His Majesty Mosa Ebn Djafar (grace be upon him) and not Esmaeel. This, in brief, is the meaning of *bada* in this type of situation. To say that the Sixth Imam (may our souls be sacrificed for him) called the All-Knowing, Omniscient, Sole Lord regretful, is wrong and rude. Some scholars have said that divine change means transmutation (*naskh*) in general and transmutation (*naskh*) is divine change (*bada*) in religious law. The meaning of *naskh*, for example, is that the All-Knowing God predetermined the duration and credibility of Adam's (grace be upon him) religious laws up to the time of His

Excellency Noah (grace be upon him), and also that Jesus's (grace be upon him) religious laws were valid until the prophecy of His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (praise be upon him) or that the commandment of such and such a verse is only valid until a certain day when another verse or different commandment or law takes its place. God was aware of these changes beforehand, and of course His knowledge and will cannot be altered. Unlike His incomplete subjects, his opinion does not change at different times, and as the decay of a matter becomes obvious to Him, the correctness of something else becomes clear. He still does not change his mind. He therefore does not change religious laws or commandments of the past because of a change of opinion. (God forbid.) The Shi'ite religion is this first to prove this. Thus, termination of a religious law and nullification by time of a commandment in such and such a verse, their replacement by other religious laws and commandments in accordance with the needs of the time and human understanding—this entire process is called *naskh*.

Some scholars interpret *naskh* as one of the prophet's miracles—that is, as giving life to the dead and as other incredible acts of Jesus (grace be upon him). For example, the miracles of Moses were transmuted and His Majesty the Last of the Prophet's (praise be upon him) Koran nullified the rest of them. That is why the Koran does not become void and will remain until the Resurrection Day. But nullification of commandments in general, whether religious laws or civil laws, is called substitution. As God has said,

وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَنْزِلُ .

When We substitute one revelation for another—and God knows best what He reveals (in stages).

And *Bada* means incompleted creation, like a fruit that falls from the tree before it is ripe and while it is still green. For every saying in the Koran there is a reason, which is discussed in detail in books, along with some of the interpretations.

Imamate and the Sword

A— Kasravi says, "If Imam Djafar Sadegh (grace be upon him) and the rest of the Imams know that they deserve the caliphate and Imamate, why did they not rebel with sword and spear? And although they have stopped rebellion and Jihad, why do they call themselves the Imams and successors to the Prophet?"

H— We proved that Imamate and divine caliphate, are not the essence of war and bloodshed but rather Imamate and caliphate are the gems of religious pious teachings of the Muslims. Its duty was performed completely. Can Kasravi deny the teaching and lessons of *Sadegh All Muhammad* (praise be upon him), which have been written firmly on the pages of history? According to scholars, four-thousand students were taught by the great man Bohloul Behdjat Afand Shafei Ghazi Zangeh Roudi, on page 128 of his book, "The glorious value and great dignity of the sixth Imam, Djafar Al Sadegh (grace be upon him), cannot be confined to the body of his writings and recitations. The degree of knowledge of His Majesty can be understood by the fact that Djaber Ebn Hayanalsoufi was a special student of his and that His Majesty's knowledge included more than 500 epistles. Take notice that only one of Imam Sadegh's students derived so much material from him. Then how much must the other companions and followers have acquired?"

Sheik Abu Abdulrahman Alsalmi, in the book *Tabaghat Almashayekh*, says, "Imam Djafar Sadegh passed all his peers. His asceticism was extraordinary, and he had great knowledge in religious matters. And was completely virtuous in his desires and was wise." And the leader of the Sufis and elder of the religion Aba Yazid Bastami says, "I served ninety-nine perfect masters. If I had gone to my grave without seeing Imam Djafar Sadegh, I would have gone without faith. In the sphere of science and sea of wisdom of mankind's Imam, the tyrants of the time prevented the light of his wisdom from spreading. Therefore, the endless graces of His Majesty have been passed on to his children and special followers only."

Mansour invited Abu Hanifeh to make a judgment. Abu Hanifeh rejected it. Abu Youseph, Abu Hanifeh's student, asked his master the reason for the rejection of Mansour's request. Abu Hanifeh answered that the religious laws are a deep sea. Abu Youseph said that the deep sea can be travelled and forced apart by the ship of knowledge. Abu Hanifeh said we are not the ship of knowledge, but are the members of the family of God's Messenger, and its sailor is Djafar Alsadegh (grace be upon him). The reference is from the late Bohloul's book. The argument is concluded.

Praise be to God, Kasravi himself, in the book *Shariat Ahmadi*, has confessed somewhat to this and has specially praised all of the Shi'ites Imams.

A— According to Kasravi Bohloul wrote that book after he had been misled, and in addition he was ordered to by the Shi'ite government. Actually, he had not believed those ideas.

H— How about Kasravi's book *Rah Rastegari*? Did he write that book by order of others also?

A— No, Kasravi thinks of the book *Rah Rastegari* as one of his soundest works and as his first instructional book. He has always invited people to read the book.

H— What would Kasravi do if I read a sentence from *Rah Rastegari* that agrees with our platform and is in opposition to what he wrote in the book *Goft Va Shanid*.

A— Nothing. He will simply become mute. Sir, have you read something in that book that is contradictory to what he said in *Goft Va Shanid*?

H— His books are full of these kinds of contradiction. he writes on page 63 of *Rah Rastegari*, "I know that some people will aks me about the Imams. I will say they were protectors of religion, and each in his turn suffered and tried to defend it." On page 64 he writes, "The Imams were the leaders, and their names must always be remembered respectfully."

This is the exact statement of Kasravi, in *Rah Rastegary*, which according to his own admission is a collection of his ideas and represents his platform. Considering this statement and the text dealing with the duties of the Imams (grace be upon them), he agrees with the Shi'ites beliefs. Now, in his new books, he

has rebelled against this statement, this clarifies the contradictory leader's position. The value of his sayings becomes obvious. Yes, if Kasravi had been exalted by God, one could not find a contradiction in his books and letters. His statements would be uniform.

افلا يتدبرون القرآن ولو كان من عند غير الله لوجدوا فيه اختلافا
كثيرا .

Do they not consider the Koran (with care)? Had it been from other than God, they would surely have found therein much deficiency.

The True Imams Against the Oppressive Caliphs

A— If Imam Djafar Sadegh (grace be upon him) and other Imams professed their Imamate to the Shi'ites and invited people to accept their knowledge of guardianship and knew themselves to be the caliphs and true successors of the Great Prophet and that others were usurpers, then why did they deny it to the Umayyads and Abbasi and follow them? Kasravi attacks especially hard on this matter and calls it double-dealing and hypocrisy in arguing against their lofty position.

H— Child, there is no contradiction in the statements of our Imams (grace be upon him). Whatever they said in regard to both these matters is correct, and they have spoken the truth. Where they have invited to accept their purpose was to emphasize that they are the successors of God's Messenger (praise be upon him) and the Imam of the Muslims and the scholars for the faithful and religious judiciary and trustees of divine knowledge and keepers of the gem of Islam and guardians of the truth. People must acquire knowledge and learn religious law from them and most receive divine commandments from them and accept them, since all people are ignorant and without knowledge of religious law and the commandments of His Majesty the Prophet. They are trained by their great grandfather and are the conveyors of God's word. Mortals must all learn moral requirements from them. They not only say this to the

Shi'ites, but also made it clear in the presence of Abu Hanifeh and all the greats of the time.²⁴

The caliphs were also aware of such statements, and some of them, like Mamoun, openly confessed to their validity.²⁵

But what they denied about the caliphs was different from this. His Majesty Imam Djafar Sadegh (grace be upon him) told Mansour, and His Majesty Imam Mousa Ebn Djafar (grace be upon him) told Haroun, "We do not rebel against you, would not cause people to revolt against you. We do not think about war and do not intend to take away your rule." They would swear to that and were telling the truth. Kasravi should study with all of his power the Shi'ites books and read the history of Islam. If he could find a predicate that the family (grace be upon him) had revolution or chieftainship in their minds, and had invited the Shi'ites to war, then we would agree with what he says. But one cannot find any contradiction in the statements of our honest Imams, and in all matters what they said was truthful.

Abulfathe Shahrestani in the book *Melal Va Nahal* mentions the honorable name of His Majesty the sixth Imam (grace be upon him) and says, "Sadegh Alli Muhammad (praise be upon him) had endless knowledge and an abundance of asceticism of a pure heart, and was highly literate. He was in Medina for a while and learned the secret knowledge of Shi'a and mastership. Then he went to Iraq, and stayed there. While

24 *The lecture of His Excellency Imam Zain Alabedin (grace be upon him) on the podium in Shaam is famous. Although he was ill and a prisoner in the hands of Shaamis under that bloodthirsty oppressor Yazid, he asserted in public his position and rank and proved his greatness and guardianship of the family.*

25 *One day Imam Mousa Ebn Djafar (grace be upon him) smelled the effulgence of his virtues. Haroun said jealously, "Do you smell caliphate in your virtues?" The Imam immediately answered, "No, but I smell prophecy." From Tarikh All Muhammad (praise be upon him), page 134.*

there, he did not object to the government at all and did not quarrel with anyone about the caliphate. Yes, one who is floating in the sea of knowledge has no greed for a small river, and one who steps on the peak of truth has no fear of decay. Related from the book *Melal Va Nehal* in Bagheri and Djafari versions. (*Moradjeaat*, page 298)

This is a confession by one of our great historians and students of our great Imams, considering that, how shameless and ugly Kasravi is to insult those holy persons and accuse them falsely.

A— In view of the fact the Imams had no designs against the caliphs, and had done nothing against their regimes, why was there such pressure on them and by the Umayyads and Abbasi caliphs?

What Was the Reason for the Oppressive Attack by the Umayyads and Abbasis against the Imams?

H— There were two big reasons for it: jealousy and suspicion. In regard to the first, they were jealous of their moral position and religious importance and true greatness. Yes, their knowledge and moral virtue, purity, and truthfulness, and the family upbringing of the chosen children of His Majesty the Great Messenger (praise be upon him), each of whom had an extraordinary Charisma—these qualities would attract anyone who saw or heard them. The qualities had earned the honorable family (grace be upon them) an extraordinary position in society, which troubled and worried the Umayyad and Abbasi caliphs. The abundance of fornication and debauchery in their rule, which they had obtained without merit and by means of the force of gold and the army and oppression, had no value compared to that holy center and the calm rule and religious and moral supremacy and true greatness of untainted guardianship. No day would pass without a great manifestation of their moral authority and greatness, which the caliphs claimed about themselves. In proportion to the decline in importance of the caliphs, the piety and morality of the Shi'ite Imams increased. In every period a world of difference was observed between the caliphate and the Imamate. In truth the Umayyads and Abbasi

caliphs saw their oppressive souls defeated by the pure souls of Muhammad's family (grace be upon them). That's why the fire of jealousy was ignited in their chests, and it compelled them to commit those shameful acts.

In regard to the other reason, they were suspicious of the Imams (grace be upon them) and were not convinced of their greetings and peaceful intentions. Opposition and untimely revolt by them would destroy the assurance of the caliphs totally.

Therefore, they assumed that to protect their position and independence, they had the duty to imprison and kill and destroy the children and Ali and Fatima (grace be upon them), especially with all of their power and ability. They attacked the true successors of the Great Prophet (praise be upon him), and as a result of their limitless oppression, the eyes of the sky of Islamic history are still raining blood instead of tears.

A— Why did His Majesty acquiesce when the Abbasi Caliph Mamoun put forward His Majesty Reza as the eighth Imam? And if the Imams themselves were the rightful caliph's, why did they show reluctance to struggle against the persistence of Mamoun? Kasravi, with a judgmental tone, criticizes this in the book *Altashayou Valshieh*.

His Majesty the Eighth Imam (Grace Be Upon Him) and Mamoun Abbasi

H— The lofty position and greatness of His Majesty Ali Ebn Mousa Alreza (grace be upon him), who was the most knowledgeable person of the period and the manifestation of His Majesty the Last of the Prophet's (praise be upon him) charisma. He shook the foundation of the Abbasi's caliphate and threatened to win independence from the oppression of that regime. Although that great man was not concerned about the superficial caliphate, he did defend it against the rebels of Bani Hashem. But naturally, his moral Islamic supremacy in piety and knowledge and virtue and generosity attracted the attention of the Abbasi caliphs. The statue of deceit and trickery—that is, Mamoun—wanted to act contrary to the policies of his father, Haroun, and wash away the shameful stain on the forehead of

the Abbasi caliphate because of the imprisonment and murder of His Majesty Mousa Ebn Djafar (grace be upon him), and at the same time strike a deadly blow to the able body of the Alavi Imamate. Therefore, before assuming the guardianship of the time, he presented the caliphate to His Majesty.

Caliphs, especially Mamoun, felt that the basis of the oppressive rule of the Abbasis was decaying because of their many obvious acts of tyranny, fornication, and debauchery. And in every instance a column in its moral structure crumbled. On the one hand, the tree of piety of Ali's children (grace be upon him) was becoming firmer because of the holy presence of His Majesty the eighth Imam (grace be upon him) in pure Medina, it even took roots in far cities. The lure for this critical situation could not be found in calmness and laxity. Therefore, the satanic man took the center of freedom and the land of his forebears to Marv and Tous, which were under his rule. Then the Imam resided in peace and with no worries in a paradise-like part of Iran.

But the bestowing of the caliphate had no validity. The only purpose was to test that great man. He wanted to find out about the depths of his character. Mamoun was a mysterious being. But he had run into someone more mysterious. His Majesty Reza (grace be upon him) discerned his purpose and deliberately refrained from governing his subjects and exercising the duties of the superficial caliphate. After great pressure was placed on him (almost forced), he was compelled to assume the guardianship of the time, but would be free and not have to actively rule the country and be exempt from the duties of the caliphate. With this plan, he was able to turn Mamoun's suspicion into good will, and at the same time begin to strengthen the religious aspects and laws of Shi'a. If he has accepted the caliphate or had welcomed the guardianship of the time without hesitation, he would have immediately been sentenced to death and the true divine purpose would not have been accomplished. After a short time, when the moral position of His Majesty began to spread into the east and north of Iran, the poisonous grape or pomegranate juice did its job. Therefore, presentation of the caliphate by Mamoun to His Majesty was out of deceit

and trickery, and His Majesty Reza's (grace be upon him) disregarding of it due to his knowledge of the true circumstances was one of his amazing, valid political feats. The succession to his throne by the Abbasi caliph, which was forced on His Majesty, was to discredit the Imam's piety and morality before the Muslims to diminish his stature and reputation for asceticism and piety. It was so that pure Alavi representative like the Abbasi could start to enjoy carnality. But the eighth Imam, who was the spring of divine policy and the protector of the valuable gem of the divine religion, paid no attention to superstition and allurements of the world, and following the platform of his pure ancestors, started to train the soul and position of humanity.

As soon as Mamoun knew that his acts and sowing of seeds were ineffective, he realized that the powerful rule of the Abbasi and his omnipotent caliphate had been defeated by His Majesty the eighth Imam and that his own policies had been overcome and bound by the hands of the plans of Ali Ebn Mousa Al Reza (grace be upon him). He was compelled to bring out the grapes or the bowl full of pomegranate juice and thus bring tears to the eyes of everyone who read or heard about this cruel act. And some have other opinions about Mamoun. They say that Abbasian rebelled against Mamoun and chose Ibrahim Abbasi for the caliphate in Baghdad, because Mamoun had chosen an Alavi as his successor and it was too early for the caliphate to be transferred from that tribe to the pure family of Ali (grace be upon him). Therefore, Mamoun, out of fear of a popular rebellion, and because of his own helplessness, committed this great crime. Yet he genuinely loved His Majesty and adored his knowledge and wisdom. On the surface and in his heart, his beliefs were the same as the Shi'ite and he revered the true Imams. So he married his daughter to Imam Muhammad Taghy (grace be upon him), and he married again into the chaste family. Only God knows. In any case, he committed a great crime and carried a heavy load on his shoulder and finally was captured, suffering heinous villany and torture.

Child, our Imams, after the martyrdom of their oppressed grandfather in Karbala, which proved the worldliness of all Muslims and also proved that they must temporarily renounce

the sword and wait for a new divine command for holy war and bearing the heavy weapons. These internal fights were destroying the body of Islam and the pagans were overcoming Muslims. If the chain of wars and internecine fighting continued, the religious scholars and the protectors of divine knowledge might disperse. Therefore, in accordance with the will of their great ancestor His Majesty the Honorable Messenger (praise be upon him), they renounced the superficial caliphate and started to train the followers in morality and the performance of religious duties. And all of their efforts and their planning and policy rotated around this holy center. Actually, they did not demand anything from the caliphs of this period but freedom to speak and write.

In order to spread the divine commandment and protect the true gem of religion, they removed their brothers and cousins from ruling. If it had not been for the rebellion of the brother and the cousins and their sons, and if they had followed their Imam and resorted to the divine plan, the religion would have flourished and Shi'a would have soared and the Djafari religion under the Abbasids would have become the legal religion of all Muslims, and there would have been no faith or religion but the Djafari.

Calm of the Imams and Rebellion of the Sons of the Imam

A— Kasravi says that the opposition of the Imams' son against the Shi'ites Imam is proof of their not being Imams. Most of them rebelled in holy wars and paid no attention to the Djafari Imams. Indeed, they invited them to follow them, as if they were unaware of their Imamate and their calling and did not consider them Imams. Therefore, the Djafari Imams' vocation was a false claim and baseless.

H— Is opposition and denial by brothers or uncles or cousins of Imams (grace be upon him) proof of an invalid Imamate? What reasoning dictates this? Where has this argument been proven? Were the brothers or the cousins of the Imams (grace be upon him) prophets or angels. Were they sent by God, so that their acceptance or rejection would be the measure of right and wrong? Suppose they did remove themselves from

command of the Imams. No one is free from love of high positions and the world. I do not know what Kasravi is saying, and what he intends by saying it. What is his reason? If he only considers the sword and holy war to be the true criteria, then any of the pretenders who ruled the Muslims by the force of their weapons was the true caliph and successor to the Prophet and holy representative of Islam. Thus we must worship Yazid Ebn Muawiyah and Valid and Mansour and Motevakel, who were athiests or lewd, and we must consider them the representatives of God and the Prophet. I take refuge in God from the ignorance and contempt that sinks one into the marshland of adversity. If he means that is why he brings their opposition to the Djafari, it is not correct. For after the death of His Majesty Abi Abdulah Al Houssain (grace be upon him), sons of Imams did not unite for holy war. None of the advocates of holy war who raised a banner, was able to gather a small group around the flag. But another group would follow the Imam of the period, and some were always following the oppressive caliphs and were paid by them. Kasravi must either support the followers of caliphs, or be an advocate for the rebels. Otherwise, he has to obey the Djafaris Imam and refrain from oppression and worshipping oppressors, refrain from rebellion and seditiousness. He must humble himself to that holy person who spent his time protecting the religion spreading the commandments of the Prophet.

Therefore, not everyone who raised a flag, with covetousness for power in mind, is deserving and wants the truth. One who wants divine governance and to lean on the throne of caliphate and Imamate needs, though he is a son of an Imam, asceticism and piety. He must take his text from God and the Prophet. As we have proved in the past, on the basis of a consensus of the greats of Islam, the children of Ali and Fatima (grace be upon her) had the outstanding qualities of divine knowledge and moral virtue. Each of the eleven, the family of the Prophet who with their great father are the Djafari Imams, was unique and superior in his time, whether on the battlefield of holy war or quiet in a corner, and was chosen by God and the Prophet for Imamatus.

Our great Imams were right to even hide the divine vocation from some of their cousins. Was it not the grandchildren of Imam Hasan Modjtabe who caused him such pain, and some of those sons of Imams were spies for the caliphs to obtain a few derhams or dinars. They were jealous of the Imam's exalted position and were responsible for having Imams.²⁶ Why is Kasravi not aware of the history of Shia or does he pretend to be unaware?

Disputes Among the Sons of Imams, and the Unity of the Umayyads and Abbasi

A— Although the Umayyads had no faith in God, the Prophet, or religion and its laws, and their denial of opposition to the greats of Islam are indisputable, and even they themselves know that they were usurping the Islamic caliphate—despite all this, they were united with each other everywhere and were firm and stable in obedience to their spokesman and ruler. The Abbasi also were most firm in their obedience to unity with their caliph. But the children of Ali (grace be upon him), in contrast, were all opposed to each other and were for the most part out of control during the period of their Imams, and each one had an opinion of his own, and they were dispersed like a heard without a shepherd. Although they had right on their side, and their holy spokesman had the right of guardianship, what was the cause of their differences and of the unity of the others?

H— The reasons for the unity of the Umayyads and Abbasi with their rulers and the lack of unity of the family of Ali (grace be upon him) are very obvious and clear. Our pure Imams (grace be upon him), like their great leader and exalted ruler, were the manifestations of divine justice, and their righteous judgments are very heavy and difficult for some people, especially those members of their own tribe who never liked

²⁶ *Ali Ebn Esmaeel Ebn Djafar Alsadegh (grace be upon him) went to Haroun Alrashid and said, "I did not think that there could be two caliphs on earth until I saw you and my uncle, Mousa Ebn Djafar, whom people greet as the caliph. (Mountakhab Altavarikh, page 464.)*

the just verdict of a spokesman but wanted chieftainship and to rule for the sake of gratifying among them their passions and sensuality. They want those who become rulers to make them independent chieftains and set them over the nation's treasury, and they did not want to be bound by rules or subject to law.

In passing judgment or dividing the treasury, His Excellency Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) made no distinction between the respected members of his own family—for example, his great and honorable brother Aghil—and the Iranian prisoner or the Ethiopian Muslims. He imposed divine law even on those who were closest and dearest to him in the Bani Hashem tribe, and Islamic revenues were divided among the Muslims without preference to anyone. That is why Aghil left his brother Ali (grace be upon him) the rightful caliph, and went to Shaam and sat at Muawiyah's table, even though he believed his brother was right and Abu Sofian's son wrong. Similarly, Abidulah Ebn Abbas, his respectable cousin, seized the treasury at Basra and fled to Mecca. The other Imams (grace be upon him) were like Ali. Their characteristic justness was among their most outstanding qualities, and their piety and honesty were the cleanest of their clothes. They did not sell God's religion to gratify the carnal desire of their tribe, brothers, uncles, or cousins.

Conversely, Umayyads, from the time of the third caliph Othman, had made a deal among themselves to select a caliph who would serve the desires and private motives of members of their family. To become the independent ruler of Egypt, Amross swore allegiance to Muawiyah. Abidulah Ebn Abbas, on receiving a million derham from Muawiyah, gave up the leadership of Imam Hasan Modjtaba's (grace be upon him) army in the middle of the night and joined the Umayyad camp.

Child, the higher-ups of any period make unwarranted demands against the laws of God, especially if they are from the tribe of the ruler or caliph. The decisions of Ali and his chosen children placed divine satisfaction above the wants of their close ones and important men. That is why the lustful and the opportunists, those who were close to the Imams as well as those who were distant, would defect. The stories of Aghil and Ebn Abbas

and Talheh and Zabir and even Muawiyah are all the same. If Ali (grace be upon him) had given in to their desires, none of them would have disobeyed that great man. But the Umayyad and Abbasi caliphs did not have the true faith that would have made them desire God's satisfaction. Instead, they wanted to use the religion and its laws and commandments for the sake of the caliphate and ruling and their own desires. Therefore, they always did what they could for their close associates and the powerful of society. Those who were not satisfied feared his powerful attacks.

The cause of all of these adversities and difficulties was the immaturity of and lack of awareness by most Muslims, who did not understand the pure soul of Islam and the laws of divine justice and the gem of religion, and who never came to know the caliphs.

The military expeditions and conquest by the caliphs, which resulted from the vision of the second caliph, brought the Muslims up to be materialistic and lustful, and before they get accustomed to the commandments of the human soul and become familiar with the laws of the Koran, they started grazing like animals in the plentiful lands of Rome and Iran. If, after the death of the Great Prophet (praise be upon him), and before anything else happened, they had followed the training of Ali and the Imams (grace be upon them) and had become used to the divine teachings for two or three centuries, they would have seen the truth like an advanced nation and would have become learned and the rulers of humanity until the last day of this world, and there would be the least danger to Islam from the enemies of religion.

Adversity fell on the Muslims the same day they took the caliphate away from the family of the Prophet, guardians of prophecy. They took the reins of religiousness out of the able hands of Rasekhoun, and as a result the Muslims were misled and suffered adversity, and the horizon of humanity blurred and darkened.

And as an unavoidable consequence, Abbasian, formed an army in eastern Turkistan and the harsh-tempered unfaithful, looked to it for support, believing it was for their own protec-

tion. The Shi'ites also, to obtain their independence and religious freedom, resorted to the likes of Holakou Khan, but this support and the refuge he offered were dangerous and threatened their true independence.

If the Muslims, as we said, had been under the rule of the divine Imams and the true successors of God's Prophet for a long time, and had become familiar with moral justice and freedom, then an ignoramus would not have been accepted by them as their guardian. Muawiyah would not have become greedy for the caliphate, and the likes of Yazid and Valid, Mansour and Motevakel, would not have become Islam's caliphs, and now we would not be suffering and decadent.

His Majesty Amir Almomenin and Politics

A— Why did not his Majesty Amir Almomenin, like other caliphs, satisfy the important men of the tribes and the powerful people of Islam, so that his reign would be passed on to his children and grandchildren?

H— My dear, as I have said, the use of tricks and deceit, compliments and flattery, oppression and fear by someone like Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) would be a fault and unsuitable for the duties of a true caliph and divine representative. His Majesty Amir (grace be upon him) knew himself that dismissing Muawiyah and rejecting Talheh and Zahir's demands and forming a closer relationship with the God-loving Iranians than with the Arab leaders would cause wars and rebellion. But lying and exaggeration, deceit and flattery were not worthy of that great man. Ali's (grace be upon him) policy was not for himself, but for the sake of truth, because Ali (grace be upon him) was the representative of truth. Ali (grace be upon him) did not exert any effort to obtain power. He wanted the caliphate for himself because he wanted to devote himself to the Muslims. He wanted to familiarize Muslims with the divine morality, to train them in divine teachings. He wanted honesty and truth, justice and equality, generosity and bravery to become the inner nature of Islam, so that the governance of the world would be stable, strong, and eternal. Ali was trained by God and the Prophet, and wanted to train people like himself to

bring up thousands who would be similar to Ali (grace be upon him) in morals and faith in Islamic society. But selfish lascivious people did not appreciate him and damaged the truth of Islam and Muslims. Yes, by depriving Ali (grace be upon him) of his rights, Islam was deprived of its rights and Muslims were shamed.

A— In truth, I have told some fresh valuable things. Now, let me ask you about another subject. Shi'ites believe that the Imam, like the Prophet, is capable of miracles and extraordinary power. Kasravi said that not only the Imams, but the Prophet too, were unable to perform miracles, and basically he denies the supernatural.

The Prophet, Imams, and the Supernatural

H— Miracles and the supernatural are subject to the orders of God, whose power resides in the supernatural, and his ability is not limited to natural laws. The Prophet and the Imams are instruments for manifesting and effecting miracles and do not see themselves as acting independently.

A— Kasravi says, that the existence of miracles is intellectually unacceptable, and that the supernatural is outside the sphere of reason.

H— An intellect that does not believe in God's omnipotence is an intellect like Kasravi's. It is amazing. A God who has created nature by the force of His will, and still maintains authority over events—can He not produce an extraordinary event? Is nature superior to God's will? Or has the Great Creator lost His will and power? None of these. That Unique Being is dominant over the creation, and the world is always under His supreme command.

With all of this, in my opinion, the fear and failure to believe results from a lack of knowledge, not denial by intellect. An intellectual impossibility is different from ordinary impossibility. For example, the emergence of the substance out of nothingness, by itself, without a creator, is intellectually impossible. And the progression of the accidental to the condition of being predetermined, or regression of the predetermined to the condition of the accidental, are intellectually impossible. It

is also intellectually impossible that a stone a human carves with his own hands and makes into an idol could be a God who turns into a human being or becomes an intermediary between the worshipped and the worshipper.

Fitting a fifteen-foot room into an egg without making the room smaller or the egg bigger is intellectually impossible. But if someone does have the ability and art to make the room smaller without changing the substance, or expanding the egg and fitting the room into it, it cannot be denied. Although it seems impossible, it is intellectually possible and is considered an amazing piece of workmanship, and astonishing work of art. But what we call miracle or the supernatural is like this: I bring this up as an example of an actual miracle that resulted from knowledge and control and power, the method of which is hidden to us and is out of the sphere of our ability. Except for the Only God's representative, who is familiar with the principles of nature and acts under the orders and influence of the Lord, no one has the power to do such things.

I do not speak of the truth of the miracles. It is not pertinent for our brief discussion. But miracles and the supernatural have meanings and truths and steps. And even in some great men a sort of miracle is manifested. But there is not room to elaborate.

We say, for example, that someone who speaks in Iran is heard in Medina by the Prophet or the Imams. Kasravis of the past have said that it is incredible and intellectually impossible for a person to hear another person's ordinary voice hundreds of miles away. But when the radio and telegraph were invented, the possibility of this was proven.

The Koran says that His Majesty Moses put his hand under his arm and when he took it out it was radiating. The likes of Kasravi do not believe it. Now the electric light bulb has been invented, and a phosphorescent ocean animal has been discovered that in the depths of the sea in darkness emits light from its forehead like a flashlight and brightens the area around it for a mile or two. Finally, science and industry have justified the beliefs of the pious and have proven that intellectual impossibility is different from ordinary impossibility.

Intellectual and intrinsic impossibility cannot be made possible by any science or technique. But the means of achieving something that is possible, is not restricted to one route. Humans install a device for attracting sound in a radio. But the Creator of humanity can concentrate this power anywhere he wants, and included in that is the hearing of the Prophet and Imams. This is not intellectually impossible, and the denials by confused and contaminated minds are wrong and improper.

A— It is proven now that there are not intellectual objections. But why did the Prophet and Imams need miracles? And why do we insist that they did?

H— So that the honest prophet can be distinguished from the liar the true Imam from the false Imam. It is so that the Manis and Mazdak's and Krishna Morti's²⁷ and Kasravis and Bob's and Ghadi's could not become Imams and prophesize, and so that humanity can rest in peace in the protective shadow of miracles and the supernatural, secure from the evil of the liar.

Child, the meek intelligence and pure thought judges. A person who is the representative of the supernatural must show a sign of it, and that the sign is the miraculous and the amazing. Hooliganism and idle talk do not prove the ability to guide. The glorious Koran, which is the holy, divine scripture proves the existence of miracles.²⁸

27 Krishna Morti was a young Indian man who, with his eloquent speech and attractive eyes, rose to the position of guide and called himself a prophet. He went to Europe from India, and a great many followers gathered around him. Eventually, when he saw that he could not make a living that way because he preferred dancing to prophecy, he became a skilled actor in the theaters of Switzerland. (Iranshahr magazine.)

28 The glorious Koran is a miracle in itself, and it confirms the existence of miracles. The stories of the ascension of the Prophet and Moses' cane and bringing the dead to life, which are related in the Koran, have proved the supernatural and miracles.

My dear, Saradj Ansari, in his book *Nabard Bidini*, used another form of reasoning to prove miracles, and he answered the objections of the denier in a good way. If you study pages 30 to 44, you'll find replies to the rest of Kasravi's objections.²⁹

His Majesty the Imam (May God Bring Him Back Soon)

A— In regard to the Imams, I have only one more question. It is about His Majesty Imam Zaman (may God bring him back soon), whom we believe to be alive and invisible. Kasravi denies this and considers the idea to be contrary to the dictates of intelligence, and he says it is impossible for one to live more than a thousand years.

29 *At the end of his answers, I would like to add a word myself. Kasravi's objection is that the Prophet of Islam professed to his inability to perform miracles. He cites a few verses from the Bani Israel Surrah*

وقالوا لن نؤمن لك حتى تفجر لنا من الارض ينبوعا.

They say: "We shall not believe in thee, until thou cause a spring to gush forth for us from the earth."

in which Mr. Saradj Ansary (may God rest him in peace) explains very well the Koranic requests and proves that none of the six is considered a miracle that the honorable Prophet (praise be upon him) would be expected to perform. I add that some of these requests were made by the Egyptian Ghebtian to his excellency Moses. Although Moses had performed the nine miracles, including the one of the cane, the followers of Pharaoh asked him for gold to rain from the sky or angels to come down to him, but His Majesty did not grant them their request. Although he had performed miracles and certainly was not unable to, he wanted to show that gold has nothing to do with miracles and is incompatible with the lofty stature of prophecy.

H— Basically, our Omnipotent God and our miracle-working Prophet and our unparalleled Imams are all unacceptable to Kasravi's intellect. If, extraordinarily, Kasravi's contaminated mind found them acceptable, he would also have to accept the long life of Imam Zaman. In Kasravi's opinion there are limits to being God, and the hands and arms of the Lord are bound. Prophecy and guidance are also derived from the capital of nature and ordinary duty; Imamate and caliphate are based on the force of the sword and stick.

My dear, the length of the life of Imam Zaman (may our souls be sacrificed for him) is also one of the supernatural happenings. It contains a world of secrets and wisdom. It is not the ordinary story of a superficial problem. For those of us who know the roots of Shi'a and the subject of the Imamate to be proven by God and the Prophet's text and the witness of intellect, and who consider the substance of the Imams to be divine and hidden, all of these questions are easy to answer.

A— Because only the Shi'ites believe in this, I want to have a convincing answer for the claimants.

H— It is not only the belief of Shi'ites, but the Sunnis have also confessed to existence of the invisible Imam, although in the final analysis there are small differences of opinion. In the book *Ghayat Al Maram* from the Sunnis, 160 hadiths are narrated. These hadiths and the text of His Majesty the Last of the Prophets (grace be upon him) are enough to prove our contention. At this point I will read to you the confession of the late Bohloul Behdjat Afandi, who was one of the Sunni's great men and one of the great scholars of Shafee. In the book *Tarikh All Muhammad*, page 138, he says, "The twelfth Imam, the possessor of time, Imam Alghaem Almehti, was born on 255 H 15th of Shabaan. His mother's name was Om Valad Nardjes Khaetoun. He was five years old when his great father died. The Imam (grace be upon him) became invisible twice, the first time during the small (Soghra) absence and the second time during the great (Kobra) absence. The Imam (grace be upon him) is still alive. When God permits, he will appear and fill the earth with justice. The world was full of oppression, as it is now. That the Imam (grace be upon him) will appear once again among the

faithful, is agreed upon unanimously. Therefore, we do not have to explain the reasons in this book. But we will repeat a part of the lengthy essay by the religious leader and leader of the Sufis Sheik Mohayeldin Arabi in regard to His Majesty Hodjat (grace be upon him).

Sheik Mohayeldin Arabi says, "Imam Mehdi (who is alive and waiting to return) will reappear, and he is the proof and caliph of God. His appearance will be between Rokn and Magham.* The luckiest people in regard to him are the residents of Kufeh, where he will divide the spoils equally, pronounce judgment and bring justice to his subjects. He exists in the period of religious decay. Whoever disobeys him will be killed, and whoever quarrels with him will be vanquished. The ones who swear allegiance to him know God. He has men who will attract others and assist him, and they are his ministers. They will bear the duties of the country. Their number on one day will amount to 313 people, none of whom is an Arab. But they speak Arabic." And so on, this is what the late Zangazouri said.

Repetition of Sunni Hadiths That Prove the Shi'ite Platform

A group of uninformed people like Kasravi say that the Shi'ite predicates and hadiths are mostly fabricated by the Shi'ite Islam leaders, who disseminated them in furtherance of their platform. That is why, in addition to the few famous hadiths I have inserted in this book along with proofs and documents, I want to mention some of the hadiths about which they talk and falsely accuse the Shi'ites of lacking proof. The texts of these clear narrations are mostly from the Sunnis, and great men of the Sunnis have confessed to their validity. People object to them in accordance with their own interests, and the objections of those who bear grudges are not valid.

Registered hadiths, along with text from God and the Prophet (praise be upon him) in regard to the position and merits of Ali and Fatima and their pure children (grace be upon them) are quoted in the book *Kafayat Al Khesam* translated by the honorable Sayed Hashem Bahrani (God rest him in peace).

* *Two spots close to the Kaaba in Mecca.* Trans.

They include:

(1) God's Messenger's (praise be upon him) thinking in regard to the fact that Ali (grace be upon him) and his children (grace be upon them) are the Prophets successors. Sixty-five Sunni and Nineteen Shi'ites hadiths.

(2) God's Messenger's (praise be upon him) thinking in regard to Ali's caliphate and the fact that there were eleven caliphs after Ali, His Majesty's children, and they were the twelve Imams and Prophet's caliphs. Twenty-nine Sunni and thirty-four Shi'ite.

(3) God's Messenger's (praise be upon him) thinking in regard to Amir Almomenin's (grace be upon him) in Ghadir Khom and his guardianship and his suitability for the Imamate and caliphate. Eighty-nine Sunni and forty-three Shi'ite hadiths.

(4) Explicit thinking about Amir Almomenin's (grace be upon him) being the guardian, in the verse,

انما وليكم الله .

*Your (real) friends are (no less than) God, His
Apostle, and the (Fellowship) of Believers.*

Twenty-four Sunni and nineteen Shi'ite hadiths.

(5) The hadith, "Oh Ali, you are to me as Haroun was Moses. One hundred Sunnis and seventy Shi'ite hadiths.

(6) Also about the fact that Ali and his eleven children (grace be upon them) are the religious leaders appointed by God's Messenger and are the twelve Imams. Seventy Sunni and one hundred Shi'ite hadiths.

(7) About the fact that there are twelve Imams after God's Prophet—with explicit, brief, and detailed text. The Imams are Ali, Hasan, Houssain, nine of the children of Houssain (grace be upon them). Fifty-eight Sunni and fifty Shi'ite hadiths.

(8) The Prophet of God's (praise be upon him) thinking in regard to the necessity of relying on trusted followers. Twenty-nine Sunni and eighty-two Shi'ite hadiths.

(9) The honorable verse about the Prophet's family,

فاسئلوا اهل الذکر ان کنتم لا تعلمون .

We granted inspiration: If ye realize this not, ask of those who possess the Message.

Two Sunni and twenty-one Shi'ite hadiths.

(10) About the fact that the honorable verse,

يا ايها الذين آمنوا اطيعوا الله واطيعوا الرسول واولى الامر منكم .

O ye who believe! Obey God and obey the Apostle and those charged with authority among you.

was indited about Ali and the Imams. Three Sunni and four Shi'ite hadiths.

(11) The verse,

انما يريد الله ليذهب عنكم الرجس اهل البيت ويطهرکم تطهيرا .

And God only wishes to remove all abomination from you, ye Members of the Family, and to make you pure and spotless.

which was indited about the Prophet (praise be upon him), Ali, Fatima, Hasan, Houssain, and the innocent Imams, the children of Houssain (grace be upon them). Forty-one Sunni and thirty-four Shi'ite hadiths.

(12) The Mobahaleh verse about the Five Innocents (grace be upon them). Nineteen Sunni and eleven Shi'ite hadiths.

(13) The honorable verse,

قل لا اسئلكم عليه اجرا الا المودة في القربى .

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of those near of kin."

Seventeen Sunni and twenty-two Shi'ite hadiths.

(14) As was mentioned earlier in this book, the honorable verse,

وانذر عشيرتك الاقربين

And admonish thy nearest kinsmen.

Five Sunni and eight Shi'ite hadiths.

(15) The honorable verse,

وربك يختار ما يشاء ما كان لهم الخيرة.

*Thy Lord does create and choose as He pleases:
no choice have they (in the matter).*

Two Sunni and one Shi'ite hadiths.

(16) The verse,

يا ايها الرسول بلغ ما انزل اليك من ربك.

*O Apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath
been sent to thee from thy Lord.*

Nine Sunni and eight Shi'ite hadiths.

(17) The verse,

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم.

This day have I perfected your religion for you.

Six Sunni and eleven Shi'ite hadiths.

(18) The honorable verse,

ان الله هو مولاه وجبريل وصالح المؤمنين.

*Truly God is his Protector, and Gabriel, and
every righteous one among those who
believe—and furthermore, the angels will back
(him) up.*

Six Sunni and five Shi'ite hadiths.

(19) The verse,

قل كفى بالله شهيدا بيني وبينكم ومن عنده علم الكتاب .

Say "Enough for a witness between me and you is God, and such as have knowledge of the Book.

Five Sunni and eighteen hadiths.

(20) The saying of the Glorious God

واركعوا مع الراكعين .

Four Sunni and one Shi'ite hadiths.

(21) About the fact the Ali (grace be upon him) is the best creature after God's Messenger (praise be upon him) and the best follower. Twenty-three Sunni and seventeen Shi'ite hadiths.

(22) About the fact that Ali (grace be upon him) is essentially like the Prophet. Three Sunni and three Shi'ite hadiths.

(23) About sending Ali (praise be upon him) to Mecca and reading the Braat verse and dismissing Abu Bakr. Thirty-six Sunni and six Shi'ite hadiths.

(24) About the brotherhood of God's Messenger (praise be upon him) and Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) twenty-one Sunni and twenty-one Shi'ite hadiths.

(25) About Ali (grace be upon him) being the best judge of people, in God's Messenger's (praise be upon him) writings, and the fact that the Prophet made him the administrator of justice. Seventeen Sunni and eight Shi'ite hadiths.

(26) The three caliphs and the rest of the companions resort to Amir Almomenin for justice in religious rulings. Thirty-three Sunni and twelve Shi'ite hadiths.

(27) His Majesty the Messenger's (praise be upon him) statement, "Ali is with the truth, and the truth is with Ali". Fourteen Sunni and ten Shi'ite hadiths.

(28) The Mohadjerin* and Ansar** had no doubt that after the death of God's Messenger Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) would be caliph, and that the three caliphs and Muawiyah knew this; also about Abu Bakr's statement. Ten Sunni hadiths.

(29) About the seizing of Ali (grace be upon him) reluctantly, for swearing allegiance. Thirty Sunni and five Shi'ite hadiths.

(30) References in histories after the death of Muhammad to the fact that Ali was right. Fifteen Sunni and eleven Shi'ite hadiths.

(31) About the virtues and friends of the Shi'ites and followers of Ali and Ali's children (grace be upon them). Ninety-five Sunni and forty-eight Shi'ite hadiths.

(32) Regarding the second caliph's statement that God's Messenger (praise be upon him) was delirious. Seventeen Sunni and two Shi'ite hadiths.

(33) About the fact that Abu Bakr, Omar, Othamn, Abu Abidat Ebn Aldjarah, Abdulrahman Ebn Ouf, Talheh, and Zahir were among the army of Asameh. Twelve Sunni and one Shi'ite hadiths.

(34) About the fact that the guardianship of Ali and the Djafari Imams is a principle and column of the faith, and whoever loves them has perfected his faith. Five Sunni and twenty-two Shi'ite hadiths.

(35) About the fact that His Majesty Amir Almomenin (grace be upon him) would be the carrier of the banner of monotheism on the Resurrection Day and the custodian of cupbearer at the Kothar pond. Eleven Sunni and nineteen Shi'ite hadiths.

(36) About the fact that Ali (grace be upon him) is the divider of heaven and hell. Twenty-eight Sunni and eighteen Shi'ite hadiths.

(37) In regard to the Imamate of the twelfth Imam, the twelve of whom were as follows: Ali and his eleven children, of

* *Men who went to Medina from Mecca with the Prophet.*

** *Men who helped the Prophet when he arrived at Medina.*

whom the last one is His Majesty Mehdi (alive and waiting to reappear), who is the true leader of the present time; after the death of his father Imam Hasan Askari (grace be upon him), he will be the people's Imam until God orders his appearance at the end of the world. After the earth is overcome by oppression, he will fill it with justice, according to God's Messenger's writings. One hundred sixty Sunni and twenty-seven Shi'ite hadiths.

(38) The reasoning of Shi'ite scholar Sheik Fazel Aameh Kamal Aldin Abu Abdulah Muahmmad Ebn Talheh Ebn Muhammad Hasan Alnasibi Alshafei in the book *Mataled Alosoul* in regard to the family of the Messenger's virtues; also about the Imamate of His Majesty Mehdi (grace be upon him), and the existence of that great man until the promised time.

(39) A chapter in Abu Othman Djahez's essay, proving Ali's, instead of Abu Bakr's, succession after the death of God's Messenger, with firm and proven reasons.

What's referred to briefly in the book *Kafayat Alkhesaam* ends here.

The Spreading of the Imamate is Assumed by the Shi'ites

A— In regard to the Imamate, our conversation was timely and necessary. But is it not better not to print this discussion and content ourselves with the previous subject?

H— Why should we abandon the printing of the discussion of the Imamate? Is there an objection?

A— Maybe. Since in this age, the age of weakness and adversity for Muslims, as you have said, unity and calmness are needed, it would produce discord and grudges.

H— No child, this conversation will never produce grudges. Any conscientious person will accept these reasonable and firm statements without fear. On the contrary, this neutral conversation creates unity.

Do you know what causes distance and divergence, my child? What has been the cause of wars and fighting these many years and what has separated the Muslims and will separate them? Harsh tones and strong party spirit and blatant cursing. A few of the dubious Sunni and Shi'ite men, contrary to God and His Messenger and the teaching of Muhammad's family

(grace be upon him) and according to their own judgment and crooked taste, have cursed the great men of the others on the podium and have stepped out of line due to politeness and ignorantly started a fire in a society that has not yet expired. It has become the greatest tool of the hooligan's revolution and followers of the adventurous ones.

Otherwise, why should intellectual and reasonable conversations, which take place in leniency and calmness, cause grudges and disharmony? Ultimately, how could the zealous Muslims hear the false accusation and read it and not answer it? How can one who has faith in a truth prevent himself from defending it against all those lies Kasravi relates and writes with his oppressive pen about the holy roots of Shi'a which is the cradle of religion and faith, and against the Shi'ites and the truths of Islam. Should we say nothing? Child, we are responsible before religion and conscience. We must perform our duty of defense. As long as we exist we will love the family of the Prophet and remain Shi'ites, and as much as we can will not relinquish the support and triumph of the divine effulgence and the sources of truth and hope. And God willing, we will not abandon the road of courtesy and politeness in performing our duty.

The Ghardir festival is one of the official festivals and very large in Iran and Shi'a. The government and the nation both welcome this victorious day. Whatever Kasravi has written in rejection of the truths and meaning of this day have been distributed everywhere. Therefore, we have to prove that all of the Shi'ite ceremonies are wise and proclaim them. Oh people, this happy festival is not the festival of the executorship by Ali's family. It is the festival of the divine guardianship and caliphate of His Majesty Amir Al-momenin (grace be upon him).

Now suppose we did not write this and others did not write either. Do you know what will happen? Twenty or thirty years from now, all of the dear children of this land and future youngsters of Islam and Shi'a would remain unaware of all of the good and bad events during the beginning of the religion, and God forbid the sun of truth would remain forever behind the cloud of negligence and the thousand years of troubles of the great men of the religion would be fruitless and void, and the

precious teachings of the great heads of the religion would be sacrificed to the worthless compliments and invalid and meaningless visions of the low-minded. As a result, the back-breaking responsibility for this and the next world would be placed on our weak shoulders.

Oh Lord, grant us power and happiness, so that we always try in the manner of your holy war. And do not take Islamic enthusiasm away from us, so that we become weak in performing our true duty. Grant us faith and devotion so that we do our duties perfectly.

Oh Lord, command the appearance of our Imam Zaman so that the oppression and adversity of the subjugated are ended and the world is filled with justice.

Oh Lord, lead us toward whatever is your satisfaction and the good of society, and Oh Lord of truth, protect us from the treachery of the jealous and the evil of the adventurous. We swear you to the life of Muhammad and his pure children. Greetings to all of them. Amen.

Osouli* Clergymen Practising Religious Jurisprudence and Akhbari Jurisconsultants**

A— Praise be to God, we've passed this step, too. The truth became perfectly clear and my questions in regard to the Imamate are concluded. I beg you to say something about Osouli clergymen and Akhbari clergy and their differences and the subject of imitation.

H— This subject is extraneous to our main discussion, and God willing, after a short time your studies will make you aware of their statements.

Briefly, know that the principles are preliminary tools of theology and Edjtehad.*** A scholar whose judgment is

* *Osouli clergymen solve religious problems through logic.*

** *Akhbari clergymen base their solutions to religious problems on predicates.*

*** *The ability to pass judgment based on divine commandments.*

followed must be a theologian and a Modjtahed.**** Imitating a live Modjtahed is essential for a non-Modjtahed who is mature. But some have said that the person near Edjtehad need not imitate, but must act cautiously.

A— Because some people criticize the difference between the opinions and statements of the Faghih and Modjtahed, who are the honorable leaders of the faithful and the honored successors of Imam Zaman, I wanted by this question to open a door for conversation and wanted you to explain and expand on this subject.

H— Criticism is a very good thing and actually a sort of reminder and the first step towards correction. But if people criticize ignorantly or with a grudge, they seem to be the conveyors and translators of the policies of foreigners. Now is not the time to explain and expand; we talked about the clergy's position in a previous conversation.

In any case, at this time, in the age of lustfulness and in the thick of man's feasting and pleasure, this group of holy pious men have submitted to the most difficult life, and have picked up the heaviest loads in society and placed them on their weak shoulders and have taken on a very heavy and back-breaking, unlimited responsibility, but with an abundance of love. To win God's favor, they welcome all incoming difficulties with amazing joy. Despite all of this, they have no request from anyone, but to obey God and His Messenger and follow their honorable successors. If the nation were appreciative, it would value the existence of these men, who, without having to be, are fighters, and it would worship their exalted position and esteem their moral and religious service. For their prosperity in this world and the next, these few submissive and obedient people consider respect and giving assistance to be their essential duties.

**** *One who has the ability to pass judgment based on divine commandments.*

5

ON RESURRECTION

A— What involvement is there between religion and the next world that requires the worshipper of God to believe in the next world?

H— Yes, one of the principles of our religion is resurrection. Intellect and religious law both consider the next world complimentary and supplementary to this deficient world and the events of creation.

A prophet is appointed by God and spreads the scripture of humanity among men. As we have seen, a few believe and in accordance with the statements of God and the Prophet, and many others remain in ignorance and contumacy and do not humble themselves and others. And because of selfishness, they wrong themselves and others.

We who regard God as being just and able and consider the world of creation His territory and the creature to be all His subjects, are compelled to believe that there must be a day of reward and punishment when the pious and the pagan both will learn of their reward and punishments for their good and bad deeds. We see criminals in this world who cause chaos and revolution in a country, and even cause the destruction of a nation or kill thousands of pious people, and despite the dictates of intellect and religious law do not get punished. Also there are beneficent and pure people who cause the happiness of millions of people and sacrifice their lives and wealth and children and whole existences travelling the road of His Majesty the Diety,

and who leave this world with disappointment and submissiveness that is beyond description, without seeing a reward or picking the fruit of their good deeds. That is why there must be another world, so that the blessings and justice of the Creator of the universe are realized and a permanent life begins. We call that perfect world resurrection, which is the day of judgment and the beginning of the future life.

A— Kasravi has also made a judgment in this regard. Contrary to what Muslims believe, he considers resurrection to be exclusively the resurrection of the mind.

H— Belief in the resurrection of the mind is not only Kasravi's opinion. Many opinionated people are not humbled by the statements of religion and the heavenly book. They want to evaluate and appreciate the secrets and truths of the universe in terms of their small minds, and therefore consider resurrection to be resurrection of the mind.

A— The soul, which is the main instrument of the world of existence—actually the world exists because of the existence of the soul—and the cause of all good and bad deeds, must step into the world of rewards and punishments. But what is resurrection of the body for?

Resurrection of the Body

H— It is because it accompanies the soul in every good and bad deed. The soul performs the worldly acts in company with the body. That's why they both deserve the rewards and punishments, and both must step into the field of judgment together, and both must benefit and be punished together. As they have been in this world, so will they be in the future life.

A— They ask, how can one imagine the return of a body that is disintegrated and destroyed?

H— True, the body disintegrates into particles, and with a strong gust of wind or the flow of flood waters is carried into the deserts and seas, where it settles, and maybe a part of the body settles in the depths of deep oceans and another part on the peak of a high mountain, or every particle is carried to different parts of the earth.

But whatever its form and wherever it is, the body is part of existence. It contains the substance of being and will never cease to exist and will always be protected and known in the divine territory.

A— They ask how these dispersed particles, which have the form of dust come together again, and how these disintegrated sections become a man again.

H— There is no obstacle. Only knowledge and power are required. You pour a few dishes of wheat and barley and other grains into one dish and mix them together, then throw them on a large field. Now, if you want to separate these grains and put them back into the dishes, you require nothing but some knowledge and familiarity with the appearance and forms of these grains and a bit of patience and ability.

You are waiting for me to give a more exact example and present a more difficult task, so that it is more closely related to the question? Let us not go too far. Imagine the bacteriologists who break down blood and separate microscopic animals. They distinguish, for example, the virus of one kind of fever from that of another. This amazing task and extraordinary act is performed by the weak hand of the man.

Now behold the most able hand of His Majesty the Unique Creator. Can the all-knowing eye of that Omnipotent Life-Giver not analyze the parts of the man and put each one in a particular body? We all are forced to spend time and energy in doing things. But the Great Lord does not need to, praise be to Him. We can not compare man's gift with His limitless knowledge and power.

Can a powerful being, who created this balanced and organized universe and lovely nature and this beautiful bride of life—of what, we do not know—can He not gather the particles of a body into one place? Of course he can. Certainly the resurrection of the body is one of the sweet masterpieces of His play, everything about that Creator-King is sweet and masterful.

The glorious Koran, in a loud voice, declares, in a few places the resurrection of the body and obviously and clearly proves that the dead come back to life. The verses that have

been indited about this are among those that admit of no allegorical interpretation.

وضرب لنا مثلاً ونسي خلقه قال من يحيي العظام وهي رميمٌ

And he makes comparisons for Us, and forgets his own (Origin and) Creation: He says "Who can give life to (dry) bones and decomposed ones (at that)?"

قل يحييها الذي انشأها اول مرة وهو بكل خلق عليم

Say, "He will give them life Who created them for the first time! For He is well-versed in every kind of creation!"

And finally, whoever confesses to the prophecy of His Majesty the Last of the Prophets and confesses to the knowledge and power of God and knows the glorious Koran to be the divine book will never deny the resurrection of the body.

Therefore, the Omnipotent and All-Knowing Lord will gather together the dispersed particles of the worldly body on the resurrection day, and He will invite palpable corpses to return. Yes, he will remove foreign particles and obstacles of durability and eternity, which in this world caused disease or death. And this amazing handiwork He will make even more amazing, so that shoulder to shoulder with the world of existence it will survive for eternity.

APOLOGY

Because this book, *Letter from the Shi'ites*, was written for the use of youngsters who are starting out and persons with no background, who are unaware of the elements of Islam and the Shi'a religion, but at the same time are familiar with the letters of Kasravi and criticisms by the enemies of the religion, I have, in proving these religious matters and rejecting the false accusations and deceptions, confined myself mostly to simple and extended, but powerful and knockdown, reasoning, so that the soul of the honorable reader will not become tired and worn. Respectable scholars are aware that the Shi'ites, in proving their beliefs and platform, employ esoteric reasoning and very careful philosophy. Our clear arguments, as I have mentioned, are not restricted to those in the book. The sphere of our ratiocination is not so limited.

In any case, I apologize to their excellencies, the honorable scholars. In addition, I beg them to inform me of any mistakes or errors, whether in meaning or words. I would be extremely thankful.

Praise be to God, the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds. God's greetings to Muhammad and his pure children. And God's curse be on all their enemies.

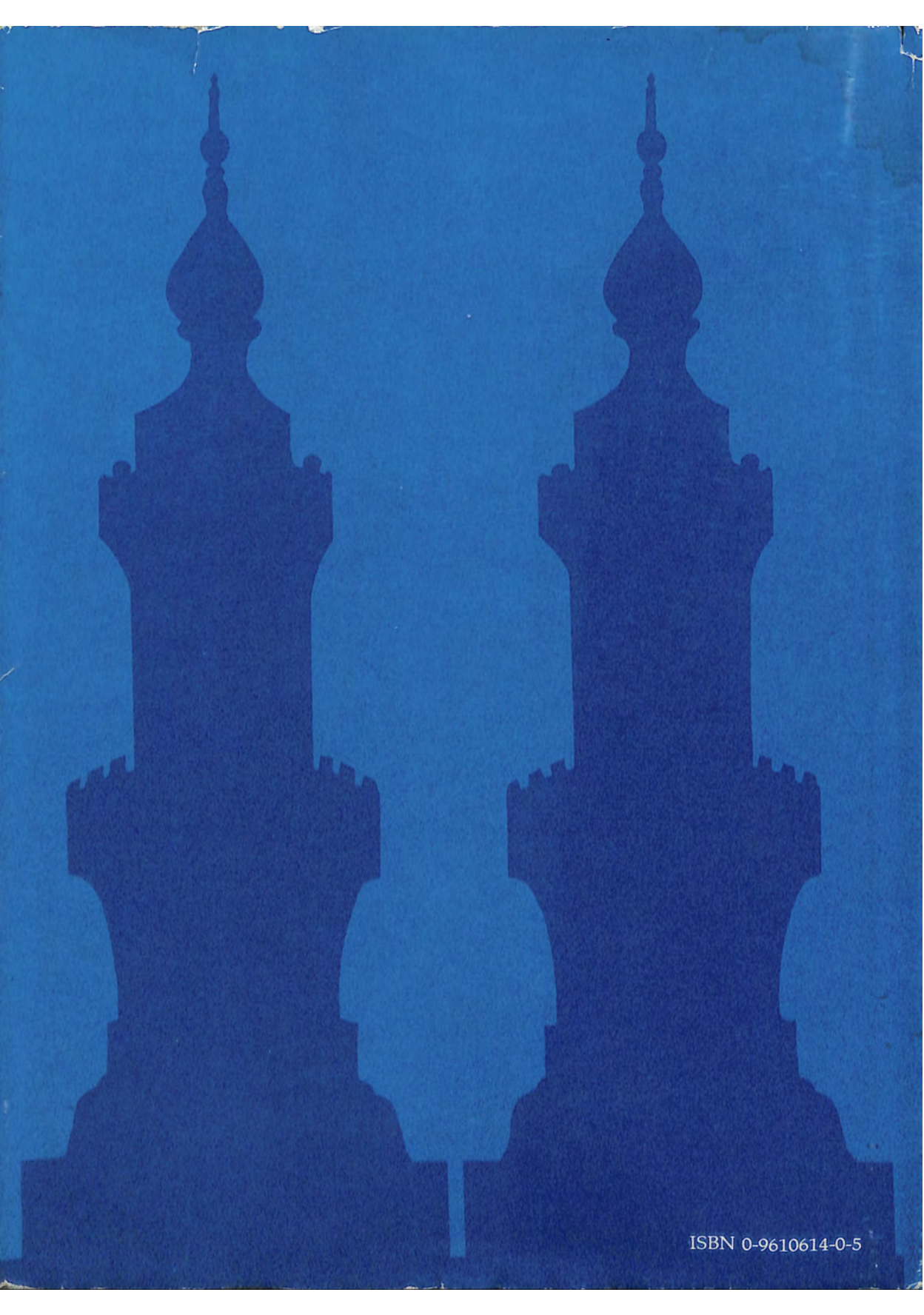
Hasan Ebn Mousa Ebn Muhammad Bagher
Alhaeri Alehghaghi Aloskooee

والحمد لله رب العالمين وصلى الله على محمد وآل الطاهرين ولعنة الله
على اعدائهم اجمعين . وانا الداعي حسن بن موسى بن محمد باقر
الخائري الاحقافي الاسكواني .

In a lifetime spanning more than eight decades, the Ayatollah Mirza Hasan Haeri Alehghaghi Aloskooee has written 27 books and acted as spiritual leader of Shi'ite communities in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Pakistan, India, China, Australia, Iraq, Syria, and the United States. Followers of the Ayatollah in Iran and other countries operate religious schools, libraries, and centers devoted to caring for the poor and oppressed. They also produce numerous religious publications and administer informational centers. Although these activities attract \$50 million in contributions a year, the Ayatollah lives simply, exerting his leadership through the example of his piety and decisiveness.

ISLAMIC FOUNDATION
1601 Second Street
San Rafael, California 94901

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



ISBN 0-9610614-0-5