

In the name of Allah

**Watching over
The Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets
And
The illustrious Imāms**

By

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Foreword

The world, in which we live has become like a great, unique village, where everybody can be acquainted with the opinions and points of view of one another in a rightful, correct way.

In fact, this Divine Blessing can become a means to create sympathy and harmony in thoughts and opinions among Muslims, all around the world. But it is regretful that some of the Muslims, instead of insisting upon their common similarities pay attention to their disagreements et prevent the possibility of a cooperation and a unity among the Muslims, and tend to recount the opinions

and the points of view of their brothers in religion in an untruthful way...

Sometimes also, they go so far as to transform a theological issue [such as the construction of the shrines] into an ideological question and present it as a blasphemous thing.

Recently a book entitled “Al-Mazār Endal A’ēmattul At’hār” has been published, which is the work of Abdul’hādi Al-Hussēyni from Bahrain. This book was published in Saudi Arabia, and another person by the name of Zēy’nul Abidin Ēbrāhimi has translated it into Fārsi. Its Persian title is “Pilgrimage, from the Imāms’ points of view [Dārul Ghā’im Publishing - (Mohum)] and which has been published in Mecca and Medina.

They have shown a theological issue in such an erroneous way that it would seem to the general public that those who are interested in the Holy Shrines of the Prophets and their Successors have come out of the path of the Monotheists to become heretics...

We, in turn, have studied their reasoning from all the possible angles, and have repeatedly given them answers.

In order to terminate the argument for that writer and its translator, and clear the fact that the Wahhābi reasoning is weak and without any solid foundation, we shall study these two books, and give answers to their questions, in the next chapters of the present book.

We shall also try to show that those who love and respect the holy Family of the Venerable Prophet do in fact, possess a strong and solid reasoning,

- 1- Constructive signs of “pilgrimage” from the Holy Qur’ān’s point of view; and that of the Sunnah.
- 2- The construction of the Holy Shrines and the preservation of the monuments that are related to Prophets and their Successors
- 3- The construction of a Mosque, beside the Holy Shrine of the Prophets and the Successors of

God, and the action of performing a Salāt in such Mosques

4- To lament and mourn the absence of such illustrious personalities

5- Sins, committed beside such Holy Shrines

While studying these five questions, we shall also study and analyze the greatest parts of the “Al-Mazār...”

The said writer had talked about seeking out the help of the holy spirits in the last chapter of his book. This would evidently require another book, in order to offer him answers, and we have already spoken fully and thoroughly about that matter in two other books.

Let us be brief. We deeply hope that all the Muslims, from all around the world would do well in preserving all the Islamic Monuments, which have remained from those illustrious personalities who have been endowed with purity and holiness and to do all in their power to preserve and watch over the Islamic values!

**Qom- The Institute of Imām Sādiq
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Part 1

**Constructive Signs of “Pilgrimage”
From the Holy Qur’ān’s point of view
And that of the “Sunnah”**

“Pilgrimage” means: “to intend”, and it is used when a person goes from a definite point A to another definite point B, in order to see someone or some place; and his goal and intention is to bow down and pay respect to that person or that place.¹ Sometimes, it is also referred to phrases and sentences, in which the person begins to speak directly to these illustrious personalities, as a person to person; and this is another expression, which differs from the meaning of the word itself.

**“Fitrat” [nature - disposition]
And Islam**

¹ Misbāhul Monir – page 354

Islam is a natural religion, and its Precepts and Commandments are in harmony with Man's Creation; this religion is free from all kinds of precepts, which are in opposition with "Fitrat". The Holy Qur'an insists upon this very fact and announces. *"So set your face steadily and truly to the faith: (establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: no change (let there be) in the work of Allah: that is the standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not."* [Al-Rum - 30]

For example, Man has always loved justice and equity, while hating oppression and tyranny. Man loves social life and turns away from retreats...

Now, we shall study the question of meeting the beloved personalities in their Sanctuaries [Holy Shrines], from the Islamic point of view.

**Interest in those who have passed away
Is a natural feeling for Man**

Indeed, every healthy man loves his father and mother, his wife and children, and all his relatives and kinfolk, and sometimes, he is ready to sacrifice his life for their sake; at the same time, when these persons pass away and go to the better world, he shall remember them always, and develop and nurture their love and affection forever, in his heart...

Therefore, after burying them in the ground, he wishes to show his love and deep affection beside their graves, so that his relation with the dead remains just as before. He wishes their graves to remain preserved and taken care of, in a special way.

That is why, to prevent the people from visiting the graves of one's beloved ones is an action opposed to the

nature of Man, and appears as a step opposed to the wishes of Man's Creation.

For that, the Religious Law, which is also holy, has commanded that we visit the graves of the dead; and there are things, said and written about this matter.

The instructive signs of Visiting the graves of the dead

There is no doubt, that Man has come to this world with avidity towards wealth and all kinds of material possessions; at the same time, there are elements in his life, which temper this avidity and corrects this instinct. These elements help him in a way that his efforts to gather and collect wealth and material possessions may place him in a path, which would take him to happiness and not in a path that would help him only to gather these possessions...

One of these transforming elements is to visit the dwelling-places of the silent ones who are no longer with us... A place, where all the illustrious personalities, all the mighty and wealthy ones of the world are resting in the ground, while donning the same white cloth, which is nothing but their simple shroud.

For this is, indeed, the only thing they could take with them...

This visit reduces Man's avidity. In the Ahādith reported from the Holy Prophet [may God's Greetings be upon him and his holy Family], the venerable Prophet had said. "I had prevented you from visiting the graves, because the people went to visit the graves of the heretics, which is a forbidden act. Now that [the graves of the Muslims and the Martyrs are before you], go and visit them! For, to visit the graves of the dead softens the heart, and makes one's eyes to shed tears and remember the Hereafter..."

In another hadith, he had said. “Go and visit the graves of the dead. For it shall make you remember the Hereafter.”

Omme Salamah had declared. “The Holy Prophet had said: “Go and visit the graves of the dead, for it is instructive for you all.”

To visit the graves of the Erudite

What has been written so far, concerns the fact of visiting the graves of the common people. The least thing it could bring to the human mind is the remembrance of Death and Judgment Day.

Somehow, to visit the sepulchers of the Learned and the Erudite has other effects too. For, not only by visiting theses sepulchers, we pay our respect to these Erudite [Islamic jurisprudents], but it also means that we have tried to propagate knowledge and science, in a way.

It also encourages the young generation to get interested in knowledge, for the very respect that we are indeed showing towards these respected dead - not only in their lifetimes, but also after their death -; thus, they develop the wish to become just like them.

To visit the Holy Shrines of the Martyrs

To visit the Holy Shrines of the noble Martyrs, who, by shedding their blood had defended the national honor and glory of their nation bears a deeper meaning, compared to the visit of the common people's graves...

To present oneself beside their Holy Shrines is a kind of swearing a formal pledge to them, in order to continue their honorable path... To make this matter clearer, we shall offer you an example:

The pilgrim of the House of God [Ka'aba] should “touch” the “Black Stone” [i.e. Hajarul As'vad] during his circumambulation [Tavāf].

What is, in fact, the reason for that...?

Why should we touch that “Black Stone”?

The ultimate goal is to swear a pledge with Abraham, known as the “Friend of God” [Khalilollāh]. One swears to strive and make all kinds of efforts for the sake of Abraham's Ideal and aspiration! As it is, in fact, impossible for the pilgrim to touch the hand of that Monotheistic Champion of all times, he touches then, what has been left, and which is considered as a memory [and a souvenir] of Abraham.

In Islamic Ahādith, one finds out that the pilgrim of the House of God should pronounce this sentence, while touching the “Black Stone” [Hajarul As'vad]: *“I have just performed the duty, which was an obligation and I have renewed my allegiance, so that ye may attest it...”*

By this, it becomes clear, why Islam orders that we [Muslims] go and visit the Holy Shrines of the Martyrs of Uhud, and those of Karbalā, and the other illustrious Martyrs resting in other places. For, to be near their Holy Sepulchers or touching the grills of their Sanctuaries is to swear a formal pledge with their holy spirits and the goals they had achieved; it is indeed, a way to say that the pilgrim shall continue their “way” and their “goal”.

Therefore, to visit the Holy Shrine of a noble Martyr, apart from showing him our deepest respect and love, is a way to demonstrate that we shall watch over his ideals...

Presenting oneself inside the Holy Sanctuary Of the venerable Prophet

Presenting oneself inside the Holy Sanctuary of the venerable Prophet is a sign of one’s gratitude for all the sacrifices and abnegations he had shown during his lifetime. It also implies a pledge, an allegiance towards

that illustrious personality and a clear sign of the continuation of his ideals.

Imām Rēzā [May God’s Greetings be upon him] had announced: “Each Imām has a pledge with his friends and his [Shiite] followers, and to visit the Holy Shrines of these leaders [Imāms] is part of this pledge and allegiance.”¹

It seems as though, the pilgrim is swearing an allegiance to his Imām, and vows to follow his way only, and not the other ways. The pilgrim of the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Messenger of God should initiate a conversation, in this manner, with his leader:

“O Messenger of Allah! If the “Ansār” [Helpers] swore a pledge of allegiance to you in the “Second Aghaba”, in order to defend the borders of your Mission. If a group of the “Emigrants” [Muhājirin], along with the “Ansār” swore a pledge of allegiance to you in

¹ Vassā’el Al-Shi’a– volume 10 – chapter 44 from the section called “on the Holy Sepulchers” – hadith number 3

“Hoday’biyah”, in order to defend their religion, I too, by presenting myself in your Holy Sanctuary and by being in contact with your Holy Sepulcher swear a pledge of allegiance to you, O Intercessor of the Ummah...!

I swear to watch over and preserve all your ideals and aspirations! I swear to turn away from every sin and heresy; and I beg of you to ask from God Almighty for my forgiveness!

If those who travel to all over the world, in order to see all the important monuments and edifices, and all the most beautiful landscapes, while taking all the difficulties, I, for my part, wish to visit your Holy Sepulcher above all other things, even if I have to run in the desert or sleep beside scrub and brush...!

As it is impossible for me to touch you, I shall smell instead, the earth, which embraces you and I kiss it lovingly...”

To ask for forgiveness From the Holy Prophet

In the Holy Qur'ān, the sinners have been ordered to present themselves to the Holy Prophet, in order to ask for his forgiveness. In like manner, the Messenger of God should then pray for them. Only in this way, God shall forgive their sins:

“If they had only, when they were unjust to themselves, come unto you and asked Allah’s forgiveness, and the Messenger had asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah indeed Oft-Returning, Most Merciful.” [Al-Nisā – 64]

At first glance, it appears that this noble verse refers to the time, when the Holy Prophet was alive only.

The truth is, the Holy Prophet of the noble Martyrs is much more alive than all those honorable Martyrs! He hears then, that which the pilgrims utter in his Sanctuary. He also answers at all times, the greetings of the Angels.

Therefore, he can indeed ask from God, that the pilgrims of his Sanctuary be forgiven.

Strangely enough, now that the Holy Shrine of the Messenger of God has been entrusted in the care of some group of people who show little or no respect at all to it, this very verse is suspended above his Holy Sepulcher and everyone can see it...

Visiting the Holy Sepulchers, And the “Sunnah” of the venerable Prophet

The Holy Prophet, not only invited his companions [orally, and by his words] to visit the graves of the dead, but he also demonstrated that, by visiting himself those graves. Moslem, in his “Sahih” recounts: “Āy’sha - the Holy Prophet’s wife - had once declared:

“In the last part of the night, the Holy Prophet used to get out and go to “Baghi” Cemetery. When he entered

the Cemetery, he used to talk in this way, with those who were resting eternally in their graves:

“Greetings to you: O dwellers of the house of the faithful...! That which had been predicted for your future, came to you finally (and you are now between Death and Judgment Day)... We too shall join you one day. O, God! Do forgive those who rest in Baghi!”

Not only the Holy Prophet went to visit them, he had also taught his wife, in the ways, one should perform this act and had told her to visit the dead, in this manner:

“Greetings, to the faithful dwellers and the Muslims of this land...! May God forgive all the faithful: those who had passed away in the past, and those who shall pass away in the future! We too shall join you one day, by the Will of God!”

In fact, the Holy Prophet’s wife, along with the illustrious daughter of the Messenger of God: [Hazrat] Fātēmēyeh Zahrā [May God’s Greetings be upon her]

went regularly to visit those graves, and no one reproved them whatsoever, for doing this.

Nowadays, unfortunately, to visit the graves inside Baghi Cemetery is forbidden for women, and the doors of this Cemetery are closed for them. This is indeed a kind of paradox between the Sunnah and the Tradition of the close companions of the Holy Prophet [Sahābis] and the strange behavior of the religious system of certain modern countries...

Is it, per chance that Allah's Commandment has gone through some unexplained change, in the fourteenth century...?

Why then, should women be deprived? Why cannot they visit the graves, and benefit from the constructive signs of this action? Why should they be deprived of a visit to the Holy Sepulchers of the noble Martyrs and the "Aw'liā" [Friends of God]...?

**To visit the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable
Prophet
According to the Ahādith**

Taghi'uddin Sabki Shāfē'ī [dead in 756 A.H] was a brilliant jurispudent and scholar [Faghi'h]; he has reported the opinions of a man called Ibn Tēymiyeh, in regard with the question of visiting the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet. He had also written a book entitled "Shēfā Al-Sēghām fi Ziyārat Khēyrēl Anām".

In that book, he has reported many Ahādith about the question of visiting the Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet, reported by the narrators of Ahādith; and this can explain and clear things more thoroughly. Even the "Mufti" of Saudi Arabia had once, issued a "Fat'wā" in

regard with the benefits of visiting the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet. ¹

We shall mention some of these Ahādith in the present book. Abdēllāh Ibn Omar had reported this hadith from the holy person of the Prophet: “Indeed, whoever visits my Sepulcher, I shall certainly intercede for him.”

Imām Muhammad Bāghir [May God’s Greeting be upon him] had also reported from the Holy Prophet: “Whoever comes to my Sepulcher and visits me, while I am alive or dead, I shall no doubt intercede for him.”

In like manner, the lord of the believers [Ali Ibn Abi Tālib], [May God’s Greetings be upon him] had announced. “From the very moment you make the intention of becoming a “pilgrim” of the House of God, you should finish your Hajj, by visiting the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet! In fact, not visiting

¹ Jaridat al-Jazirah – dated Zil’ghadah 24th 1411 – number 6826

his Holy Sepulcher is a sign of injustice, unfaithfulness, and cruelty towards his illustrious person! Indeed, you are ordered to perform this action. And you are ordered to visit the holy sepulchers, in order to put an end to your pilgrimage [Hajj].”

For that matter, during Hajj season, all the Muslims from all over the world organize the program of their journey [Pilgrimage] in a way that they visit the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet either just after entering that country or just before their departure from that country, in order to achieve this noble goal.

The interpretation of the hadith “No journey is accomplished...”

A question may take shape in your mind, in regard with those Ahādith, which encourage the faithful to visit the Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet. Nothing is written about a journey, in order to make this visit. In fact, one

could also say that according to the hadith of Abu Horayrah, no journey is allowed, in order to visit his Holy Sepulcher; and that is because he had reported this hadith from the Holy Prophet: “No journey is accomplished, unless for three Mosques: my Mosque, Masjidul’Harām, and Masjidul Agh’sā...”

Somehow, the answer to that question is very clear. The subject of this hadith is solely about a journey made to visit Mosques and not a journey for another destination and for a place, apart from those Mosques. For example, it is not about visiting the graves of the dead or a journey made to visit one’s parents, or a business [commercial] journey or an educational one, for that matter...

The reason this hadith speaks of only three Mosques is that apart from these three places, the benefit that one would gain is identically equal.

Let us give an example: he, who lives in Tehran should not go to another city, in order to benefit from the

constructive signs of a great Mosque, situated in that other city. For the benefit that he may gain, by going to the great Mosque, situated in Tehran itself is equally identical to the benefit of visiting a Mosque, in a city such as Sēmnān. Therefore, this has nothing to do whatsoever, with the notion of visiting the graves of the dead.

To visit the “Seven Mosques”

The pilgrims of the honorable city of Medina visit the “Seven Mosques” [Masājid Sab’aa] and if we were to add the mosques of “Raddol Shams”, “Bēlāl”, and “Ijābat”, this number would increase to ten mosques.

If the pilgrims of the House of God go and visit these Mosques, it is not because they wish to gain greater spiritual rewards by performing “Salāt” [prayer] in such holy places; but to commemorate duly and respectfully, the memory of the first Muslims, at the time of the rise of

Islam. Those Muslims who had built some of those Mosques during the most difficult times [the battle of the moat] and they had performed their prayers in these places.

Therefore, to come to these places is a way to remember those very first Muslims, and swear a pledge of allegiance to the noble Martyrs who had given their lives for Islam. There is also another reason for that, which is to get spiritual blessings from these Mosques: places, where the blood of the noble Martyrs who had offered their lives in the Path of the Pure Monotheism are mixed and intertwined with all the good deeds, that exist inside their own sanctuaries.

Therefore, when the pilgrims enter into those Mosques, they are complying with all the good, recommended deeds; they do not go to these holy places, to perform prayers.

In the end, we shall recall a noble verse, which orders most clearly that one should visit the graves of the

dead. This noble verse is this: “*Nor do you ever pray for any of them that dies, nor stand at his grave...*” [At-Tawbah - 84]

In this noble verse, the Holy Prophet is forbidden to do two things, in regard with the heretics:

- 1- He should not pray for any of them when they die
- 2- He should not stand beside their graves

The second part of this verse has a special importance for us, that is, does this sentence mean that one should not stand beside a grave, during a burial, or does it have another meaning, much more extended...?

The interpreters confirm the second possibility, and we are going to show you some of the things that they have pronounced in regard with this question.

Bēy'zāvi had declared. “Do not stand beside the graves of the heretics, whether for their burial or to pay a visit to their graves.”

This same opinion has been confirmed by Jalāluddin Suyuti [Tafsir Jalālēyn - the sourate “At-Tawbah” - verse 84] and Ārēf Bursi [Ruhul Bayān - volume 10 - page 155]. In this way, the meaning would be such as this. “Do not stop at any times, at the graves of any Munāfiq [Hypocrite], whatsoever.”

The meaning of this noble verse is that one has the permission to stop at the graves of the believers, and that it is very dignifying to be present during the burial of the believers or in some other occasions. Therefore, any faithful believer can benefit from this blessing [that is, from the great honor that the Holy Prophet could stop at the grave of any believer, and pray for his soul. Except for the Hypocrites who are deprived of this blessing.]

**To preserve the monuments of the righteous,
By visiting the graves of the dead**

The constructive signs of visiting the graves of the dead, especially the graves of the Erudite [scholars-Islamic jurisprudents], the Martyrs, the Guardians [chosen by God], and the venerable Prophet can only subsist, by preserving and taking care of their Holy Sepulchers.

By visiting these Holy Sepulchers, we have to restore them, and watch over them, and preserve them duly. If the Islamic Ummah cuts its spiritual bond with these Holy Sepulchers, then, with the passage of time, these holy places will soon be forgotten, and after a while, there shall remain no sign of them... Therefore, two great damages are destined to the Islamic Ummah:

- 1- The constructive, positive signs, which were present in these holy places, shall disappear gradually.
- 2- Then, little by little, all the important issues during the advent of Islam and the biography of the Guardians of men, chosen by God shall

be forgotten; so that the future generations will look at all those events, with a dubious eye. For, by visiting their graves, there was indeed a way to commemorate those dead, and remember their lives and deeds. If we were to prevent these actions, with the passage of time, all those things were prone to oblivion. At the same time, what has been written so far, will never take the place of those things, seen and observed with human eyes. After that, some other Islamic issues will have the same fate, and gradually, people shall become dubious in regard with the religion of the last Prophet, his venerable person, and all his ideals, aspirations, and plans. Thus, with each passing day, all these things shall become vaguer... Just as it is with all that was related to Jesus Christ. In fact, nothing has remained of Jesus and his

Apostles, and there is not a concrete, palpable book, remained of him. Nowadays, the present generation, which is only concerned about that which is palpable and concrete, considers Jesus and the religion he had brought with a dubious eye. They even go so far as to offer some strange possibilities that maybe Jesus had been a personality, which had “not” lived, and which had only been created by historians and writers of fiction... Just as famous loving couples, such as Lēyli and Maj'nun or Shirin and Farhād have faced such a tragic fate...

Therefore, because of this ideal, the Holy Qur'ān orders that those houses, inside which God is glorified in the mornings and in the evenings, again and again, should be honored, at all times :

“(Lit is such a Light) in houses, which Allah has permitted to be raised to honor; for the celebration in them, of His name: in them s He glorified in the mornings and in the evenings (again and again). By men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the Remembrance of Allah, nor from regular Prayer, nor from the practice of regular Charity : their (only) fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed (in a world wholly new)...” [Al-Nur - 36-37]

Therefore, the meaning of those “houses” [Buyut] does not refer to the Mosques; for the Mosques are different from the houses; and in the Holy Qur’ān, when the word “Bēy’tollāhil Harām” is used, it is different from “Masjidul Harām”. This is because the house [Bēyt] has a roof to protect its inhabitants from the cold and the heat; while the Mosques, on the contrary, do not have roofs, necessarily; and the fact of the openness of the roof in certain regions is a recommended fact for a Mosque.

In this way, the houses of the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] [such as [Hazrat] Ali’s house, and the houses of his progeny], used as their daily and nightly “temple” should thus, be well preserved and honored.

We should also say that, strangely enough, the Holy Sanctuary called “Askariyîn”, which was destroyed because of rancor was the temple of the Imāms; a place where they had always performed their prayers and glorified Allah, the Sublime, while being in that place...

Suyuti had written. “When this noble verse was sent down and the venerable Prophet recited it inside the Mosque, a man rose suddenly and asked the Messenger of God: “To which houses are referred the word “Buyut”...?”

The Prophet replied. “It means the houses of the Prophets.”

At that moment, Abubakr who was showing Ali and Fātēmeh’s house with his forefinger, asked. “Is that house, one of those houses...?”

The Prophet answered: “It is indeed the best of them!”¹

Now, let us be brief and concise. We hope that all the Muslims, from all over the world will be lucky enough to well preserve the Islamic monuments and edifices, and all the memorabilia of the “Pure” and their illustrious ancestors, and do all in their power, to be able to continue this kind of preservation.

¹ Al-Dorral Mansur, the interpretation of the said verse.

Part 2

The preservation of the Holy Sepulchers Of the “Aw’liā”

We now have been acquainted with the constructive, positive signs, which exist in the act of visiting the Holy Shrines of the great ones, especially the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets and the Imāms; even though there remains much to be said about the meaning of the word “pilgrimage”. However, our aim was to be brief as much as possible.

What we are about to discuss is the question of preserving the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] and their restoration, and the making of buildings over them. For this matter, we shall make the

Book of God and the “Sunnah” of the venerable Messenger of God speak up, so that this religious issue may be cleared, once and for all.

Just as we had said earlier, in our “Foreword”, a book entitled “Figh’h al-Mazār”, whose author was Abdol’hādi Al-Hussēyni was recently published; its Persian translation was also done by Zēynul Ābēdin Ēbrāhimi, and published in Saudi Arabia.

The writer had wanted to study this matter, with the eyes of a Shiite “Faghi’h” [Islamic jurist]. He wanted to prove that according to the Ahādith reported from the infallible Imāms [May God’s Greetings be upon them all], the preservation and protection of the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God], and the restoration and repair was not a permissible thing. Using this method, he wanted to prove to the Shiites, that the illustrious Imāms were in agreement with the opinions of the Wahhābis...

In his booklet, he not only speaks about that, but he also studies some other issues, such as to ask for the Intercession of the Prophet and the Imāms, and seek help from the Prophet and the Imāms, and finally about the issue of “Tavassul”¹.

In the future studies, we shall prove that not only this writer is not a “Faghi’h” [religious scholar - Islamic jurisprudent], neither is he a Shiite...

In fact, by presenting himself as a Shiite, he had only sought to open up a place for himself among the Shiites. He had wanted to achieve a goal, by unlawful means, and benefit from a very astute Machiavellian principle, which says. “The end [ultimate goal], always justifies the means...”

The author is an obedient, most submissive follower and disciple of two leaders of the School of “Wahābism”, and these two are none other than:

¹ This word means: to have recourse to someone, to turn to someone in utter desperation, in order to ask for help and to go to... [translator]

1- Ahmad Ibn Abdol'Hamid Ibn Tēymiyeh
Harrāni [662-728 A.H]

2- Muhammad Ibn Abdol'Wahhāb Naj'di
[1115-1206 A.H]

From the first day that the Wahhābi thoughts were propagated, by the person of Muhammad Ibn Abdol'Wahhāb, along with the military and financial helps of the Saudi Arabians, more than hundred critical analysis have been written about this School of thought, in various ways. Indeed, powerful Egyptian, Syrian, Lebanese, and Iraqi Islamic jurists have written the major part of these refutations.

These writings had a major impact on the minds of the Erudite [scientific and cultural]. However, what has preserved this kind of thought in Saudi Arabia, and in the minds of their followers is nothing, but a power triggered by vast sums of money, and the existence of a monarchic system, which preserves itself with the money it gains from petroleum. This is how they can fortify and

strengthen these thoughts, and preserve their monarchy...

*Therefore, let me tell ye some other time
About this cruel separation and the sufferings, I bore...*

**A study of two accusations:
Innovation [Bid'at] and Polytheism [Shirk]**

The author of that booklet had tried not to insist too much upon the question of “Innovation” [Bid'at]; but his colleagues and those who have the same ideas have insisted more upon this specific question. They have declared that to preserve [watch over] and care for the Holy Sepulchers and the need to repair and restore these Holy Edifices are considered as acts of polytheism [atheism]. They believe these kinds of things are somehow a kind of “adding” to the religion. They pretend

that these kinds of actions had never been included in the “Shari’a” [Islamic Precepts], and that they represent a manifest and evident “Innovation” in the Shari’a.

In the next pages, you shall see for yourselves, and in a most clear way, that the Holy Qur’an and the Ahādith of the illustrious Imāms had spoken with clear arguments about the blessings and rewards, which lie in these kinds of action. Therefore, endowed with such solid arguments, these actions are “lawful” in a most absolute way, and in accordance with the Shari’a, and not at all considered as an “Innovation”.

“Innovation” is an action, which has not a special or general reason for its lawfulness. Fortunately, in this matter, we do possess the two reasons, and shall present them consequently to you, dear readers.

“Shirk” and the fact of worshipping The owner of the grave

Sometimes, fanatical Wahhābis go a step further and consider that to build anything over the graves of the dead is a way of worshipping the owners of those graves.

These men, before even defining correctly and thoroughly, what the meaning of things is, [such as worshipping in a wrongful and polytheistic way...], tend to consider that all kinds of actions, which are in fact a way of commemorating and demonstrating our deepest respect to illustrious, great men are a wrongful “worship”.

Whereas, the meaning of “praying” is that one shows humility and pays homage to someone, according to one’s own belief that one is accomplishing this, either before God Almighty Who is the Creator of the World and Man, or before a creature whom the destiny of Man is unto his hands.

Therefore, two conditions are needed for a sincere praying: the first condition is related to one's actions and deeds, and the second one concerns his creed and thoughts.

A- To show humility and pay homage in any way are considered as the pillars of worship. They are performed, by doing the "Ruku" [bowing down], by prostrating, praying and finally doing the "Qunut".

B- To have the belief that the person towards whom one is showing utter humility is either the Lord of the World, (and it is with this firm creed that the Monotheists worship God), or he is not God, the Creator of all things, but that somehow, the destiny of Man, on Earth and in the Hereafter, is unto his hands. Just as heretics, while standing before their idols used to believe. They

performed all the actions explained before, with this mentality of humility and humbleness. One should add that the Arabs of the era of “Jahiliyat” [Ignorance] did not consider their idols as their creators and ingenious makers of the world. They believed somehow, that a part of their destiny, such as the fact of being forgiven for their sins ¹ or to acquire honor and dignity in the world ², or to attain victory in wars ³ and even the falling down of rain ⁴ were inevitably unto the hands of those idols. That is why they used to show humility before those idols.

Now, by considering these explanations, whenever humility and the action of paying homage are free from the second condition [mentioned above], one cannot call

¹ Āli-Imrān - 135

² Maryam - 81

³ Yāsin - 47

⁴ Sirēyeh Ibn Hēshām – 1/79

it “adoration” or “worship”; that is why, the Holy Qur’ān reports the humility of the Angels and their prostrations before Adam¹. It also reports the prostrations of Jacob and his sons, before Joseph². It also blames Iblis [Satan] for having disobeyed to prostrate before Adam.

It proves thus, that any kind of praise and humility, even in a most enthusiastic and passionate way, if not opposed to any notion of “Divinity” and “Godhead” is not to be considered as “worship” or “adoration”.

The Holy Qur’ān instructs and commands the people to show complete humility, modesty and humbleness before one’s own parents [father and mother] and announces: “*And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility and say: “My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy, even as they cherished me in childhood.”* [Al-Isrā – 24]

¹ Al-Baqarah - 34

² Yussuf - 100

With the definition offered for words such as “prayer” and “worship” [adoration], it now becomes clear that to show deep respect and homage to the Divine Prophets, along with the actions of preserving and/or repairing the “houses” inside which, they had been buried are not polytheistic actions at all! On the contrary, they are very good and dignifying actions!

For, the people who repair the Holy Sepulchers of these illustrious, glorious persons believe and consider them as the “heralds” of Pure Monotheism, and fierce opponents of Polytheism and Idolatry; that is why, they preserve and watch over their monuments with diligence and enthusiasm.

In the end, we shall recall the dearest readers, of a noble verse, which can describe best, the limit to “worship” and “adoration”: *“O you people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, Who created you and those who came*

before you, that you may have the chance to learn righteousness.” [Al-Baqarah - 21]

It is necessary that we pay attention to the sentence “Adore your Guardian-Lord”. Here, the criterion of adoration is the Divinity and Lordship of God Almighty and it says. “You should adore God, because He is your Guardian-Lord. This means that “adoration” exists with the “belief” in the “Divinity and Lordship of God”; whether this belief is right - like the belief of the Monotheists - or wrong - like the belief of the polytheists about their idols - .”

In conclusion, not all kinds of paying homage and showing respect, which are devoid of such belief, are considered as “adoration” and “worship”. They are only signs of deep respect.

Now, one should ask, is it possible that the Muslims and all those who had pronounced the sentence “Lā Ilāha Ilallāh” [God is the Greatest!] and tried to

preserve the monuments and edifices of the Prophets, in countries, such as Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, considered those Prophets as their “God” and their “Guardian-Lord”? Or was it because they considered those Prophets as the great “Teachers of Pure Monotheism, and the Oneness of God”, and that is why they had tried to pay them homage and praise them duly...?

It is now clear that the preservation of the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets is not an act of polytheism or a way to adore those Prophets, as one would adore God Almighty. At the same time, it is also most imperative that one reaches such conclusion and know the legitimacy of such a thing, by seeking confirmation from the Book of God and the “Sunnah”. For, it is possible that an action is not based on polytheism or adoration, but at the same time, not be lawful or permitted.

Now, we shall study the permission of building monuments and edifices over the graves, from the Holy

Qur'ān's point of view, that of the "Sunnah", and that of the Islamic customs ["Sirēh"] followed by the Muslims.

1- Building of monuments over the Sepulchers among ancient nations

By reading certain noble verses of the Holy Qur'ān, one concludes that there existed a deep respect for the Sepulchers [burial grounds] of illustrious personalities among the ancient nations, even before the advent of Islam.

For example, where it is written about the Dwellers in the Cave [As'hāb Kahf]: when the people knew their case, they went to the entrance of the Cave and said among them. "*Construct a building over them.*" and those who prevailed over their affair said. "*Let us surely build a place of worship over them.*" [Al-Kahf – 21]

We see that the Holy Qur'ān reports the two opinions at the same time, without any criticism.

Therefore, we can say that if these two opinions were wrong, the Holy Qur'ān would have surely made a criticism; or it would have reported their action, in a most critical tone and objected to it. Anyway, the two opinions show us that they are modes of paying homage to the “Aw'liā” [Friends of God] and the “Righteous”.

2- To show friendship and love To “the next of kin”

The Holy Qur'ān commands us to show our love and affection to the next of kin and close members of the venerable Prophet. Where it says: “*No reward do I ask of you for this, except the love of those near of kin.*” [Al-Shurā- 23]

It is evident that in the opinion of the Muslims, one of the ways to show love and affection to the holy Family of the Prophet is the preservation and repair of their Holy

Sepulchers; and this custom exists indeed among the nations, in all over the world.

All the people consider these actions as ways to show their love and affection to the owners of those sepulchers. That is why great personalities (in sciences and politics) are buried in cathedrals or famous, prestigious cemeteries, and all around these holy sepulchers, one could see beautiful flowers and tall trees...

Now, we may ask ourselves, are they not a sign of love and affection...?

In like manner, is the building of monuments over the graves, not an expression of this love and friendship for the owners of those graves...?

Is it not true that the destruction of the Cupola of the venerable Prophet, along with the destruction of the sanctuaries and shrines of the great men of Religion is indeed an insult and an offense to their holy, sanctified persons...?

Conclusion: to prevent any construction over the Holy Sepulchers or the destruction of the already existing edifices or monuments, provoke all kinds of trouble.

In fact, these holy places may become a place for wild animals, which bring uncleanness in these holy places; in fact, no wise person does consider such actions as expressions of their love and affection towards the holy Family of the Prophet... On the contrary, it shall be seen as a clear antagonism, enmity, and disrespect towards them.

Therefore, we can say that if the Monotheists [before the advent of Islam] had built a monument over the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets and their Successors, it was exactly for this specific, clear reason.

First, they had wanted to pay homage and show their deepest respect to them.

Secondly, to leave a Holy Sanctuary, unattended and uncared for, would have brought on the presence of all kinds of wild animals and beasts to prowl and move

around, near their burial places and everything would have become soiled and unclean...

One must say then, that this behavior was a sure way to express one's disrespect towards them. For that matter, the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets, such as Abraham's Holy Sepulcher and those from the Children of Israel have remained intact, and have been preserved with the help of precious edifices and monuments. These monuments are now in countries such as Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt; and thousands and thousands of Muslim tourists go and visit their Holy Sepulchers, by paying them their homage.

3-The "houses" of the "Aw'liā" As their Holy Sepulchers

The "houses" of the Prophets and the Righteous possess indeed great dignity. This dignity has nothing to

do with their material or physical aspect. For their houses were built in a simple way, just like every other house: that is, with earth, brick, or lime. This dignity and worth exist in fact, because of the presence of the supreme beings that had dwelled and lived inside them...

In the famous verse known as the “light”¹, the Holy Qur’ān describes “God’s Light” as a splendid “Lamp”, which is a brilliant star that is lit in houses that Righteous men [and women] are glorifying Allah, in the mornings and in the evening.

“(Lit is such Light) in houses, which Allah has permitted to be raised to honor, for the celebration, in them, of His name: in them is He glorified in the mornings and in the evenings.” [Al-Nur - 36]

The sentence “...*in them is He glorified...*” shows the greatness and majesty of these “houses”; and the previous sentence had attested that fact. In the next

¹ That is : the sourate of An-Nur - 35

sentence, the qualities of those worshippers are enumerated: *“By men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the Remembrance of Allah, or from regular Prayer, nor from the practice of regular Charity: their (only) fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed (in a world wholly new).”* [Al-Nur - 37]

This noble verse informs with precision, the rank, and importance of the “houses” of those “Divine men” who are celebrating and glorifying incessantly the name of Allah. In order to explain further this matter, two points should be cleared first.

What is the meaning of the word “Buyut”?

One certain thing is that those “houses” referred to as “Buyut” are not Mosques. It means, instead, the “houses” of the Prophets and their Successors, chosen by

Allah. For the word “Buyut” is the plural noun of the word “Bēyt”, which means a “house” or a “dwelling place”.

Ibn Manzur in his book had written. “Bēyt is the house of a man and his dwelling place.”¹

In like manner, Rāghib had written in his “Mofradāt”. “Bēyt is the refuge and shelter of Man.”

Apart from this, the next hadith interprets best that noble verse. Jalālēddin Suyuti reports from Anas Ibn Mālīk, that when the Messenger of God recited that noble verse [Al-Nur - 37] in the Mosque, a man got up: “What are these “houses” exactly?” he asked.

The Prophet replied to him. “These are the houses of the Prophets.”

In that moment, Abubakr showed Ali and Fātēmeh’s house with his forefinger and asked. “Is that house, one of

¹ Lēssān al-Arab – volume 4 – page 14 – on “Bēyt”

those houses that God has ordered [us] to respect their eminence and rank?”

The Prophet had replied to him. “It is indeed the best one [among them all]!”¹

By considering these proofs, one should say that the “Buyut”, named in the noble sourate “Al-Nur” are in fact the “houses” of the Prophets and their Successors. Because of the fact that the name of Allah is incessantly celebrated and glorified, in such houses, they possess great eminence and high prestige, and they benefit from a high rank. God has ordered then, that we strive for the preservation of their eminence and rank. Now, if these “Buyut” become also their burial ground, we have to strive to exalt their interiors and their exteriors [appearances], according the Commandment written in that particular noble verse.

¹ Suyuti – Al-Dorral Mansur – volume 6 – page 203

Houses that have become Holy Sanctuaries

Some of the Holy Sepulchers of the great men of God are situated inside their “Buyut”. With this affirmation, how is it conceivable that there are some men, who dare to destroy these majestic houses with shovels and spades...?

- 1- Historiographers and those who wrote the biography [life and death] of great men, agree that the Messenger of God was buried inside his house, where his wife Āy’sha had lived beside him. This house possessed a great dignity and eminence: not only because it had been the Prophet’s home and dwelling place during his lifetime, but also because it had acted as his burial ground, where his Holy remains had to rest in peace. It was so precious that the two first caliphs had ordered in their

testaments that their bodies were to be buried in that place, beside the Holy Prophet. With the passage of time, this glorious place has always been well taken care of and been repaired on various occasions. It had even gone under restorations, and now, by God's Grace, it is still intact. In fact, the Wahhābis, for fear of the Muslims from all over the world, have never dared to touch its structure and the Saudi princes have always taken good care of the Holy Sanctuary of the venerable Prophet and watch over it, so that no demonic hand would damage the house of the Holy Prophet. Now, we present you some other examples of these "Buyut" which became later, the burial grounds for their illustrious owners.

- 2- The holy sepulcher of Abbās Ibn Abdul'muttalib was inside the house of Aghil.¹
- 3- The Holy "Askariyîn", that is : Imām Hādi and Imām Hassan Askari [may God's Greetings be upon them] were both buried inside their houses; and the dwelling-place of these illustrious Imāms are a fine example for the noble verse, which announces: "...*in houses, which Allah has permitted to be raised to honor, for the celebration, in them, of His name...*". Therefore, all the houses of the "Aw'liā" [Friends of God] should be considered as holy places and revered because of this very fact, and even more so, when they also become their burial grounds. In that case, one should show deep reverence to them and pay homage. One should well take care of them and preserve

¹ Ibn Shohbeh – Tārīkh al- Madīnatul al-Monnavarah – volume 1 – page 127

them in the best of conditions; for it is indeed an Islamic duty that one should respect seriously.

The caliphs and the Holy Sepulchers Of the previous Prophets

On the propitious day, when the sun of Islam shone over the major parts of the inhabited, civilized world, the Holy Sepulchers of the [ancient] Prophets in various, conquered lands were well taken care of and they even possessed vast courts and splendid halls.

The Muslims did not touch any of those edifices and monuments and they have preserved them until this day and age. They have also repaired all those buildings with the passage of time.

Nowadays, the Holy Sepulchers of Prophets, such as Ibrāhīm [Abraham] and his progeny : Is'hāgh [Isaac] and Ya'ghhub [Jacob] and Yusuf [Joseph] are situated inside

the invaded “Ghuds” [in Palestine] and each and every one of these Holy Sepulchers have beautiful edifices and monuments for themselves...

In like manner, the Holy Sepulcher of Eve, in Jeddah, did indeed have an edifice; but after the domination of the Wahhābis, it was completely destroyed. Now in Jordan, the Holy Sepulchers of certain Prophets of the Children of Israel are still preserved and tourists from all over the world fly over to visit them.

When the Muslims conquered those faraway lands, they never destroyed any of these Holy Sepulchers and were not annoyed in discovering them in those lands, whatsoever. If the action of repairing and restoring the graves and the action of burying the dead, inside edifices and shrines were forbidden acts according to Islam, those Muslims would have certainly destroyed those edifices in Jordan, Palestine and Iraq, without wasting any time. They would have also tried to put an end in the repairing

and restoring of those edifices, during these passed centuries.

In fact, not only did they not destroy those graves, but they also tried during these passed fourteen centuries, to preserve and well take care of them, so that all the things related to those illustrious Prophets of the past remain whole and intact. With their intelligence and wisdom, which are truly Divine Gifts, they knew that they had to preserve what had remained of these ancient Prophets, while preserving and revering them duly, according to their importance and eminence. Thus, by doing all this, they had placed themselves among the benevolent souls.

Ibn Tēymiyeh in his book entitled “Al-Sira al-Mostaghim” had written. “When Jerusalem was conquered, the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets were

adorned with edifices; but their doors remained closed and sealed until the year 400 A.H¹.”

Now let us imagine that, what Ibn Tēymiyeh had written is true, while it is nothing but hearsay. If the building of mortuary edifices over the graves was an unlawful act, the destruction of such edifices should then have been mandatory [according to the Islamic Laws].

At the same time, the closed doors, which forbade any entry inside those mortuary edifices, were not considered as a permit for their preservation. Thus, those edifices should have been destroyed, as soon as possible, along with their roofs and walls, with shovels...

Summary: the existence of these buildings, edifices and shrines, was an evident sign that their existence was permitted in Islam and that these edifices had always been before the eyes of the Islamic jurists and the

¹ Kashful Al-Ertiāb – page 384 – second edition- quoted from Al-Sirāt al-Mostaghim by Ibn Tēymiyeh.

heads of Islamic government during all those long centuries... In like manner, after the conquest of Shām [later known as Damascus], the Islamic army not only did “not” destroy the Holy Sepulchers of the ancient Prophets, but also renewed the mission and dutiful responsibility of those who had taken care of those Holy Sepulchers so far. They never showed any sign of repugnance or antagonism towards those Holy Sepulchers.

The Islamic custom and the building of edifices Over the graves

During many years, and until the day when the “Wahhābis” took over and dominated those revered Holy Shrines, the Islamic custom was to take care of those

Holy Sepulchers, preserve them from any damage, while repairing and restoring them to their first conditions.

These duties extended to the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets, the Successors of the Prophets and their respected family members and their next of kin. They had the duty to build a dome or a cupola over their Sepulchers, which would act as a shelter against the hot sun. This custom, during these fourteen centuries, can show that there exists indeed an Islamic Commandment for it, and that we have to execute it duly.

The jurisprudents consider that if the Islamic Ummah and/or the jurisprudents are agreeing unanimously upon a specific matter, then this general agreement is an irrefutable, formal, and definitive “permit” for the legitimacy of that matter. It is thus, regarded as an Islamic jurisprudential Commandment.

Now, one may ask the following question:

Why is it that the unanimous agreement of the Islamic Ummah in a particular century can produce an

Islamic jurisprudential Commandment, while the opinion of the majority of the Muslims and their practical custom about building an edifice over the graves of the dead cannot be accepted as an Islamic, jurisprudential Commandment, at all times...?

By reading and studying the historical books and the travel journals of the Muslim writers, we know that there are hundreds and hundreds of beautiful shrines and sepulchers in the holy land of the Revelation and in other Islamic countries. That is why we wish to quote the descriptions of some of these trusted Islamic travelers and historiographers. Trustworthy men, such as Massudi in his book entitled “Moruj al-Zahab” or Ibn Jobēyr, Ibn Najjār, or Ibn Hajjāj. In this way, we shall see that during all these centuries, the Islamic Ummah had always considered those edifices and monuments with reverence and respect.

- 1- Massudi in his precious book describes in this way the Holy Sepulchers of the illustrious Imāms

in “Baghi” Cemetery: “Over their Graves, there is a stone upon which is written the sentence: “In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful! Praise belongs to Allah Who destroyed the nations and resuscitated the dead! These are the Sepulcher of Fātēmeh, the daughter of the Prophet: the sovereign lady of the world, and the Sepulcher of Hassan Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Tālib, and the Sepulcher of Ali Ibn’l Hussēyn Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Tālib, and the Sepulcher of Muhammad Ibn Ali, and the Sepulcher of Jafar Ibn Muhammad.”¹

Massudi was a historiographer in the fourth century. The fanatical “Salafis” consider this century and the passed centuries as the best ones in the Islamic History. They consider that the

¹ Massudi – Moruj al-Zahab - volume 2 - page 288 - according to Massudi, the famous Sepulcher known as “Fātēmeh’s Sepulcher” belongs to the illustrious daughter of the venerable Prophet. But according to our opinion, that sepulcher belongs in fact to Fātēmeh Bent Assad [Ali Ibn Abi Tālib’s illustrious mother] [the author]

actions of those Muslims proved their legitimacy. Unfortunately, nowadays, the great stone described by Massudi, has remained hidden under tons of earth, due to Wahhābi's domination. Nowadays, these Holy Sepulchers cannot be differentiated properly, from one another.

2- Ibn Jobēyr (540-614 A.H): he was a notorious traveler. He visited the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets, the Righteous, and the holy Family Members of the venerable Prophet in Egypt, illustrious Mecca, glorious Medina, Iraq, and Shām [in Syria]. He has written their characteristics and included thorough and complete descriptions of these Holy Sepulchers in his famous "Travel log". Thus, we are informed that the construction of those vast edifices over the Holy Sepulchers of the illustrious Imāms, and

the “Aw’liā”, and the noble Martyrs, goes back to the time of the “Sahābis” [illustrious companions of the Prophet during his lifetime], as well as the “Tābī’īn” [those who were deprived of the blessing and honor of meeting the venerable Prophet in person, during his lifetime]. In those days, the pious Muslims were motivated to do such accomplishments, because of the extreme love and devotion that they felt in their hearts, for those great religious Leaders. They built all kinds of edifices and vast courts; not one of those “Sahābis” or “Tābī’īn”, ever considered those edifices as an action against the principle of Pure Monotheism! We are quoting a part of his report about the Islamic monuments and edifices: “One of the greatest Holy Shrines in Cairo is called “Ra’assul Hussēyn”. The place where the holy head of that illustrious Imām was buried; it is hidden with grills made of silver; an extraordinary

edifice, that one's tongue finds it impossible to describe it properly and fully, and that one's mind is unable to comprehend it, is built over this holy place. Upon the wall of this holy place, one can see a very polished stone, which shines and appears to be like Indian mirrors, which are usually very polished. It shows clearly the image of the things or persons that stand before it. I also saw the pilgrims of "Ra'assul Hussēyn"¹. Many pilgrims were gathered there, and the throng was a strange scene to watch, because they were all stepping forward, towards that holy place, by fixing their gaze reverently upon it; they sought continual blessing, by rubbing cloths on those grills..."

Ibn Jobēyr has also written about a place called "Gharāfeh" in Egypt; he considers it as one

¹ It means "the [holy] head of Hussēyn" [the translator]

of the great wonders of the world. According to him, many Prophets and many of the acquaintances of the Holy Prophet, along with the “Sahābis”, the “Tābīʿīn”, the Erudite, and the Pious were buried in that holy place. For example, Prophet Sālih’s child, and Rubil who was the son of Ya’ghub Ibn Is’hāgh, and Āssiyah [the Pharaoh’s virtuous wife] are all buried there. From the members of the holy members of the noble Prophet, there are two holy sepulchers, belonging to the children of [Imām] Jafar Ibn Muhammad Al-Sādigh. There are also the holy sepulchers of Ghāssim Ibn Muhammad Ibn Jafar Al-Sādigh, and that of his son Abdēllāh and that of his son Yah’yabne Ghāssim, along with his brother Yah’yabne Abdēllāh.

Ibn Jobēyr speaks then of the shrines of the “Sahābis” and the “Tābīʿīn”, and the sepulcher of Imām Shāfiʿ. He marvels at the beauty and glory

of that vast shrine, and recalls to his readers that Salāhuddin Ayyubi was paying for the religious ceremonies inside Imām Shāfiʿī's shrine. He also speaks of various edifices in Mecca and the existence of cupolas over those graves. His descriptions are too long to quote in the present book. However, to give you an example, we can name "Mowled An-Nabi" and "Mowled Az-Zahrā" and "Dārul Khēyzarān", [which was the secret place where the Holy Prophet used to pray in solitude]. He also names the famous graves of the "Sahābis" and the "Tābī'īn", buried in Medina. While speaking of those, he names the sepulcher of Abbās and that of Hassan Ibn Ali and explains that a high edifice was over those two holy sepulchers, and describes the characteristics of their grills.

If we were to recount all the things that Ibn Jobēyr had seen in Iraq and Shām, and all the

descriptions he had given about the holy shrines of the noble Martyrs, the Erudite, and the Righteous, the present work would become too long. For that reason, we shall go no further. Those who are interested in such matters can refer to his book.

3- Ibn Najjār (578-643 A.H): Muhammad Ibn Mahmud, known as “Ibn Najjār” was a notorious Muslim traveler. In his book, entitled “Akh’bār Madinatul Rassul” he says. “Near the entrance of “Baghi” Cemetery, there stands an edifice with a very high cupola, which appears to be very ancient. It has two doors. Each day, only one of these doors opens, to let the pilgrims enter the Cemetery compound.

4- Ibn Hajjāj Bagh’dādi (262-392 A.H): one of the great Iraqi poets. In one of his ballads, he had

praised the lord of the believers [Ali Ibn Abi Tālib]. Once, before a multitude of men, he had recited this particular poem, inside the Holy Sepulcher of the lord of the believers. At the beginning of his ballad, he says:

*O, you: possessor of the white cupola, in the city of Najaf!
Whoever visits thy Holy Sepulcher and asks God for a
healing,
For the sake of being near you, God shall certainly heal
him!*

These verses show clearly that at the end of the fourth century, the Holy Sepulcher of the lord of the believers, Ali Ibn Abi Tālib had a cupola and a princely court.

**The preservation of the Sepulchers
In Ahādith narrated by Imāms**

The Ahādith, which speak of the preservation of the sepulchers and the building of edifices, divide into various groups. We shall now study them together, in order to show you clearly that the construction of edifices over the sepulchers, according to illustrious Imāms was a lawful, permitted thing to do. It was for that matter that Shiite jurists complied in their turn and followed these Precepts, according to these Ahādith.

The first group:

The rewarding action of repairing the sepulchers

In various books, containing a compilation of Ahādith, such as “Tah’zib”, written by the illustrious Sheikh Tussi, there are many things, regarding the rewarding action of repairing the Holy Sepulchers of the Infallible Imāms. In the book mentioned above, there is a long story about this matter. We shall present it to you, dearest readers:

Sheikh Tussi had written in his book that Abu Āmer [a great preacher who was originally from Hijāz] had reported the following story to him. He had said. “I went to the house of [Imām] Jafar Ibn Muhammad [May God’s Greetings be upon him] and asked him. “If one went to the pilgrimage of the lord of the believers [Ali Ibn Abi Tālib], and visited it, and took care of his Sepulcher, what would be his spiritual reward?”

Imām Sādigh had replied to him. “My father had heard from his father, and his father from [Imām] Hussēyn Ibn Ali who had heard it from Ali Ibn Abi Tālib who had said. “The Holy Prophet had declared. “O Ali! They will kill you in Iraq and you will be buried in that place...”

Ali had said. “I asked the Prophet. “What will be the rewards of those who will make the pilgrimage to visit our graves and who will strive to take care of them and who will come frequently to visit them...?”

The Holy Prophet had replied. “O Abul’hassan! God Almighty has designated your sepulcher and the sepulchers of your progeny as a part of the Paradise and its soil. At the same time, God has made the hearts of good souls who are the “Elect” among His servants, to love and cherish you all. In order to get closer to God and show their love and reverence to their Prophet, they shall stand all kinds of difficulties, and shall take care of your sepulchers...,” he had then continued, by saying:

“Dearest Ali! They will be those for whom I shall intercede; and they shall come to me, beside the Fountain of Kowsar...

Dearest Ali! Whoever tends to your sepulchers, takes care of them, and visits them is as though he had helped and assisted Solomon [Sulēy’ mān Ibn Dāvud] in his efforts, during the construction of Jerusalem!

In like manner, whoever visits your sepulchers, the reward of seventy Pilgrimages of Hajj [except for Hajjatul Islam] will be written for him! Whoever comes back from

your pilgrimage shall be purified and free of sins, and shall resemble he who was just born!

Dearest Ali! Announce the “Good News” to your followers [who love you dearly]. Announce them about all the blessings that no eyes had seen the like; no ears had heard the like; and no mind can recall the like!

Evidently, there shall also be unworthy men who will blame [bitterly] the pilgrims of your sepulchers. They are indeed the “wicked” among my Ummah, and my Intercession shall never reach them [shall be to no avail to them]. They will never come to me, near the Fountain of Kowsar...”¹

**The second group:
The nature of the pilgrimage,
Justifies the existence of those edifices**

¹ Tah'zib by Sheikh Tussi – volume 6 – page 62 – chapter 18 – hadith number 1

Certain Ahādith, which speak about the nature of the pilgrimage that one should perform, while visiting the Holy Sepulchers of the Infallible Imāms, show clearly that their Sepulchers had possessed edifices and portals in the past.

1- For example, the way one should make the pilgrimage, in order to visit the Holy Sepulcher of Hussēyn Ibn Ali is as below :

“Wash yourself with the water of Euphrates and don your best cloths. Begin then to walk barefoot, for you are [going] inside a [Holy] Sanctuary among [Holy] Sanctuaries of God and His Messenger. Say “Tah’lil” and “Takbir” incessantly, and bow down before God, and send your greetings to Muhammad and his Household, until you reach the door of “Hā’er”...”¹

“Hā’er” is the place where the holy remains of Imām Hussēyn were buried. Around 12 meters from each

¹ Tah’zib by Sheikh Tussi – volume 6 – page 62 – chapter 18 – hadith number 1

side is called with that name and this means that at the time of that hadith, the Holy Sepulcher of the “lord of the Martyrs” [Sēyyēdo’shohadā] had a door and an edifice.

2- In certain Ahādith, one should enter from the door, known as “Bābul Mashad”. One is then instructed to follow the steps below:

“When you have reached “Bābul Mashad” [the place where the lord of the Martyrs was killed], stop from going any further, and say instead a “Takbir”...

3- To visit the Holy Sepulcher of [Hazrat] Abbās Ibn Ali, one is instructed to act as follows:

“... Look over to where would be the [exact] spot of the Martyrdom of [the lord] Abbās Ibn Ali. Go towards it, and when you have reached a covered area, stop from going any further and say this and that...”

4- Once, a man came to see Imām Hādi [May God’s Greetings be upon him] and asked him to teach him a prayer, so that he may recite it, whenever he wished to present and offer a prayer to an infallible Imām. It

was then that Imām Hādi instructed him in this manner: “Whenever you reach the door where that particular Imām is buried, say the Islamic “Testimony”...”¹

- 5- According to certain Ahādith, it is well known that one’s prayers, just under the Cupola of the Holy Sepulcher of Imām Hussēyn Ibn Ali will be certainly and surely fulfilled. Ibn Abbās had reported from the Prophet himself that he had informed them of the Martyrdom of Hussēyn Ibn Ali and had then announced. “Whoever prays under his Cupola, his prayers will be answered; and in the place where his sepulcher is situated, its soil [earth] shall procure healing from all harms.”²

- 6- One of the best proofs is as follows:

¹ Al-Tah’zib - volume 6 - chapter 46 - from “ On the Sepulchers” - hadith number 1

² Vassā’el Al-Shi’a - volume 14 - chapter 45 - from : “On the Sepulchers” - hadith number 16

During the first part of the third century, the Holy Sepulcher of Hussēyn Ibn Ali was adorned with a Cupola and a vast court. Mutivakkil Abbāssi, who was famous for his deep antagonism and strong enmity towards the holy Family of the Prophet ordered in the year 236 A.H that the Holy Sepulcher of Hussēyn Ibn Ali be destroyed, along with all the houses that were built around it.

He had ordered that all the grounds around the Sepulcher should be transformed into cultivated grounds... This reprehensible and terrible decision provoked such a fury and such a chaos in the hearts of all the Muslims that the inhabitants of Baghdad went so far as to write numerous satirical poems on the walls and inside the Mosques, mocking, ridiculing and humiliating Mutivakkil...

Unfortunately, there is not enough space to write about these insurrections in the present work.¹ Massudi wrote that Mutivakkil gave large sums of money to workers and men who were used to destroying everything [so that they would begin to destroy the Holy Sepulcher of Hussēyn Ibn Ali]. However, many people refused absolutely to comply with that order. This fact enraged Mutivakkil so much, that he took a spade himself and began destroying the roof, which hung over the Holy Sepulcher of Hussēyn Ibn Ali. Then, little by little, the workers continued the work he had begun, and the Holy Sepulcher of that glorious Imām remained like that, until finally Montassir came to power.

The third group: Reverence towards the Holy

¹ Kashful al-Ertiāb - page 309 - according to Massudi, from Moruj al-Zahab and Tārikh al-Kholafā by Suyuti - page 407 - Dārul Jil Publication - Bēyrouth

Sanctuaries and invitation to visit them

In many Ahādith, whose number exceeds more than one hundred, an invitation is offered to the people, to go to the pilgrimage, and visit the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet and his illustrious progeny. In these Ahādith, the reverence and respect that one should show to these Holy Sepulchers are of utmost importance. These Ahādith are so numerous, that we shall not be able to include them in the present work, not even one percent of them, alas. We shall then present you with some limited examples:

- 1- The lord of the believers considered that the perfection of Hajj and its finest culmination for the pilgrim of the House of God was best shown, when he visited the Holy Sepulcher of the Messenger of God and finished his Hajj, in this way. He said. "Complete your Hajj, by visiting the Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet of God and thus, achieve perfection! For, to

stop visiting his Sepulcher is a cruel and wicked thing to do. For you have been commanded to do so.”

2- Ibn Ghulvēy'h, in his book entitled “Kāmelo Ziārat” reports about a man called “Vashā” who had said. “I had heard from Imām Rēzā himself [May God’s Greetings be upon him] that: “Each Imām has indeed a pledge and a vow over the heads of his friends and his Shiite [followers]. And the pilgrimage of the Holy Sepulchers of the Imāms is a part of their engagement towards that pledge...”

By considering the importance and the insistence upon visiting the Holy Sepulchers of the illustrious Imāms and the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God], one could definitively say that this invitation was made to all the Muslims, from all over the world. Only if these Sepulchers are truly well preserved, and only if they are truly well taken care of... Thus, the pilgrims could come

and visit them openly, to perform a rewarding act of duty.

On the other hand, if their Sepulchers are devoid of any modes of preservation and any monuments, it is evident that natural causes, such as rain and wind and all the other factors could destroy these Sepulchers, and soon there shall remain nothing of these edifices; and soon after, no pilgrim could visit these holy places...

Thus, these kinds of Ahādith, which insist upon the visiting of the Holy Sepulchers of the illustrious members of the Family of the venerable Prophet should help and make it so that these Sepulchers remain truly well preserved and outside the ravages of Time.

We conclude then, that the action of preserving the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] is a very good and dignifying thing to do. It is also considered as an Islamic Tradition, and the Holy Qur’ān and all the other books in this regard, along with the Ahādith reported from the holy Family members of the Prophet,

prove this very fact. Therefore, whoever wishes to destroy their Holy Sepulchers with the spade of oppression and the shovel of tyranny has awakened God's Wrath upon himself. His place is nowhere but that which belongs to the sworn enemies of the Family members of the Prophet [Ahlil Bēyt]...

Weak arguments

The author of that booklet has included a series of Ahādith, which can be divided into various classifications, in order to give some weight to his argument. In truth, he has narrated all these Ahādith, without any order and classification, and as though he was affected with some strange agitation... If he were truly a scholar and an erudite, he would not have forgotten to classify scrupulously these Ahādith.

Now, we shall narrate these Ahādith, by placing them in various classifications.

1-Fill the grave with the same earth:

From the three Ahādith, below, one should know that when one is burying a dead, and actually filling the grave with earth, one should be attentive to the fact that the grave should be filled with the same earth from inside the grave itself, and not with the earth, scattered all around the grave. One reads: “The Prophet had forbidden that one fills a grave with the earth, scattered all around the grave.”

1- Sheikh Sadugh, without naming a source, reports from Imām Sādigh [May God’s Greetings be upon him]:

“Whatever you spill over the grave of the dead, apart from the earth which belongs to the grave itself, becomes a burden for the dead.”

2- *“Do not fill the grave, with anything but the earth of the grave itself.”*¹

Analysis of those Ahādith

First of all: the second hadith is not authentic and one cannot argue with that hadith.

At the same time, the first hadith and the third one come from two individuals who were not Shiites, whose names were Nafali and Sakkuni.

Secondly, these Ahādith, if they were authentic, announce that one should not take from the earth, which does not belong to the grave, to fill the grave. In that case, the context of these Ahādith, do not have any connection

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 2 – chapter 36 from “On the Burial of the dead” – Ahādith number 1-2-3

with the subject of the present work. Because an edifice built over a grave does not “add” anything to the grave. It is only built for the pilgrims who come to visit those graves, so that they may not get any harm from the heat or the cold of the outside. Thus, they can offer their supplications to the illustrious souls who are resting in those Sepulchers, with ease and serenity. At the same time, when an edifice is built over the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw’liā”, no additional earth is added to the earth which covers those Holy Sepulchers.

Thirdly, the context of these Ahādith is in direct contrast and opposition with what the venerable Prophet had done during the funeral of Osmān Ibn Maz’un. For the holy Prophet, after burying the son of Maz’un, put a big stone over the grave, so that it may act as a familiar sign and that the other Muslims may come and visit his grave easily.

Ibn Mājah reports from Anas Ibn Mālik that the Messenger of God had put a big stone over the grave of

Osmān Ibn Maz'un. Sendi in his turn had made notes in the margin of the "Sunan" of Ibn Mājah and written. "He had put a stone over the grave, so that it may be recognized." ¹

Sam'hudi, in his book entitled "Vafā al-Vafā" had written. "When Osmān Ibn Maz'un was buried, the Holy Prophet ordered a man to transport a big stone and bring it near that grave. The man could not transport that stone.

The Messenger of God rolled on his sleeves then, and transported himself that big stone towards the grave where Osmān was buried. He then put the stone over his grave and declared. "I have done so, in order that this grave may be recognized, and that I may bury my family members beside this grave..." ²

Fourthly, to put a grill or a burial box over the grave does have nothing to do with these Ahādīth; for the

¹ Sunan by Ibn Mājah – Kētāb Janā'ez – page 365 - 1551

² Vafā al-Vafā – volume 2 – page 85

legs of the grill or the feet of the burial box will stand outside the grave itself, and they give no weight whatsoever on the grave.

2- To forbid any building over the graves

From certain Ahādith, one may conclude that one is forbidden to build an edifice over the graves.

1- Imām Sādigh [May God's Greetings be upon him] says: "To build an edifice over the grave and then to sit on it is not a good thing to do. Nor is it good to whitewash or mud plaster the grave."

2- Yunus Ibn Zabiān reported from Imām Sādigh [May God's Greetings be upon him] that the Holy Prophet had forbidden three things:

"That one performs a prayer [Salāt] over a grave.

That one sits over a grave.

That one constructs a building over it."

3- Jarrāh Madā'eni had reported from Imām Sādigh. “Do not construct a building over the graves and do not paint the roofs of the houses.”

Analysis of the Ahādith

1- The second hadith is weak. In that hadith, the names of individuals, such as Ziād Ibn Marvān Ghandi and Yunos Ibn Zēbiān are mentioned. This shows clearly the wickedness of that author. Kash'shi in his turn had reported a hadith from Ziād Ibn Marvān Ghandi, showing his wickedness, most evidently. Besides, the erudite Allāmeḥ had declared in this regard. “His Ahādith are not accepted by me [they are not authentic].”

At the same time, Najāshi says about Yunos Ibn Zebīān. “His hadith is truly weak and inconsistent, and one cannot pay due attention to what he has

reported. This fact is so true that Imām Rēzā [May God’s Greetings be upon him] had cursed him, and Kash’shi had said about him. “He was one of the most notorious liars in matters of Ahādith!”¹

One should add that in the sentence: “... is not a good thing to do” [in the first hadith], one can detect some kind of aversion for the execution of that action, and it is thus unadvisable to do it.

Also in the third hadith, where it says: “Do not construct a building over the graves”, one can sense, once again, that it is unadvisable to do that action. One concludes then, that the second hadith is weak and inconsistent, while the first hadith and the third one show a kind of aversion in doing those things and nothing more. That is, one cannot detect any sign of prohibition and unlawfulness in those sentences.

¹ Al Mossu’a Al-Rējāliyah – numbers 2459 and 6713

One important thing that one should understand is to know what thing and which action are influenced by this aversion...?

2- Those particular cases [in regard with the first hadith and the third one] refer to public properties [lands] that the people [of those times] had built to transform them as the burial grounds for their dead. It is most evident that to construct buildings over such graves could have brought a lot of trouble for all; for, if each rich person or each wealthy family had wanted to build an edifice over the graves of their dead, the burial of the dead would have been met with great difficulties...¹

¹ Allāmeḥ Hēlli in his book entitled Al-Muntahā – volume 7 – page 403.

3- The context of these Ahādith has also been included in the Sunni books of Ahādith; that is why, some of the jurists of the Māliki sect have declared that these Ahādith concern those people who, by pride and vanity wish to construct an edifice over the graves of their dead and nothing more. Apart from these three explanations, one can say that to build an edifice or monument over the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] does not refer to these Ahādith. For their Sepulchers are situated, either in Cemeteries, or inside their own houses, and the only reason that one wishes to build an edifice over their Holy Sepulchers is to facilitate the pilgrimage of those who have come to visit those Holy Sepulchers with feelings of devotion and dedication.

The author of “Al-Figh’h Alā Al-Mazāhib Al-Arba’a” had written. “To construct an edifice over a grave, while the intention is not based on vanity and pride, is in itself unadvisable [Mak’ruh]. Unless it is build on a land, which is considered as a “Wagh’f” [i.e. charity foundation] or as a land, which has already been prepared to become the burial grounds for the dead. In that case, it is not permitted; for the existing space for other people’s dead will become narrow.¹

Now, from what has already been written about the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets, and their Successors, from the Holy Qur’ān’s point of view, and that of the “Sunnah”, and that of the Islamic jurists, one may say that these Ahādith concerned the common people.

In fact, the preservation of their graves is not only a lack of usefulness, but it can also provoke some trouble and annoyance for other people, and be a sign of vanity

¹ Al-Figh’h alā al-Mazāhib al-Arba’a – volume 1 – page 505

and arrogance. While the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets and the Successors are on the opposite side of this fact.

Consequently, these Ahādith do not concern the Holy Sepulchers, whatsoever.

3- To whitewash or mud plastering

In certain Ahādith, it is written that to whitewash or mud plaster the grave is not permitted. In this case, there is one hadith only, whose context was seen in the second group of the first hadith; Sheikh Tussi in his book “Nahāyat” and Ēmādoddin Tussi have given their “Fat’wā” and declared that it was inadvisable to do those two things over a grave.¹

Analysis of the hadith

¹ Al-Nahāyat – page 44 and Al-vassilah elā Neyl al-Fazilah – page 63

First of all, the sentence "... is not a good thing" shows that it is unadvisable to do so.

Secondly, Kolēyni reports from Yunos Ibn Ya'ghub's book ["Sahih"]. "When one of Imām Kāzim's children died in Medina, he ordered that they whitewash his grave and inscribe the name of the dead child on a stone and place it over his grave."¹

Thirdly, all the jurists in Islam generally agree, that it is advisable that a grave should rest a little bit higher from the ground [eight to ten inches].

Now, if a grave is made without being whitewashed or mud plastered, after a while, the wind, the rain, and the storm may destroy everything and take away any sign of the grave. Therefore, it is mandatory that the preservation of the grave be guaranteed with a natural element, which would bond the earth. That element cannot possibly exist without the action of whitewashing,

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a- volume 2 – chapter 36 "On the burial" hadith number 1

mud plastering, or the like of them. That is why, this hadith concerns what is inside the grave and the need to preserve it in the most natural way. It does not concern its appearance.

4- The height of the grave should be

Eight to ten inches

There are many Ahādith from the Infallible Imāms, in which they announce that it is good and advisable that the grave may be eight to ten inches high or a little bit more.

These Ahādith have been reported by Sheikh Horr Āmēli in his “Vassā’el Al-Shi’a” [chapter 31 - “On the burial”]. The total number of these Ahādith is eleven.

In all these Ahādith, it is written that the grave should be around eight to ten inches high [from the ground]; but no one has ever objected to a higher

measure, either. For example, Muhammad Ibn Moslem reports from Imām Bāghir [May God’s Greetings be upon him]: “*The grave should stand eight inches higher from the ground.*”¹

In other Ahādith, it says the same thing and thus, it is advisable for the grave, to be eight inches high; but no hadith has shown any objection to a higher grave.

In fact, they recognize that the necessary height is mandatory for the grave of the dead to be recognized by his family members, or that it should not become a place, where pedestrians may trample it underfoot. That is why they say that eight to ten inches high are necessary.

There is only one hadith from Imām Mussabne Jafar [May God’s Greetings be upon him] where he has announced. “When you will have buried me, the height of my grave should not exceed eight inches...” and this is a clear matter. For, if the grave of the Imām had been

¹ Vassā’el Al-Shi’a – volume 2 – chapter 30 “On the burial” – hadith number 1

higher, it would have provoked his enemies and Hārūn; and those who followed Hārūn's way of thinking would not have let that pass that easily. It might have incited them to insult and desecrate that Holy Sepulcher. That is why Imām had not permitted a higher grave and had announced that particular height as sufficient.

5- Leveling of the grave

Sheikh Kolēyni reported from Imām Sādigh [May God's Greetings be upon him] that the lord of the believers [Ali Ibn Abi Tālib] had declared. "The Messenger of God sent me to Medina and instructed me to execute three things: that I destroy any image, and level every grave I saw, and kill any dog that I happened to see." ¹

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – chapter 43 "On the burial" – hadith number 2

The author of that booklet has offered his argument, by referring to this particular hadith, which is also narrated by the Sunnis, and which says that one has no permission to build something over a grave.

That is why, in 1344 A.H, at the time when Medina was invaded by the Wahhābis, the “Ghāzi” [Magistrate] of that period who was called Ibn Balihad, because of this particular hadith destroyed all the monuments of the ancients, and leveled everything shamelessly. He did not however destroy the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet, because of the extreme fear that he had from all the Muslims from all over the world.

In regard with the explanation that we shall offer you now, this particular hadith had no relation whatsoever, with what the Wahhābis had wanted to commit.

To begin with, the context of that particular hadith is not in harmony with the formal and definitive biography of the venerable Prophet; for we have to know

in which year, the Prophet had sent Ali to Medina, to execute those three commandments... Was it before the Emigration [“Hijrah”] or afterwards?

The first eventuality is definitively out of the question, for Ali had never left Mecca before the Emigration, to a mission to Medina, in order to execute those three commandments. It was a very difficult task and Ali would not have had the power to do that, because of the domination of the polytheists over the city of Medina.

The second eventuality has an even greater difficulty, for after two important tribes called “Ows” and “Khazraj” embraced Islam, no idol or the image of an idol were left among the inhabitants of Medina anymore, and there was no reason at all for Ali, to go there to destroy those things.¹

¹ Sahih by Moslem – volume 3 – Kētāb Janā’ez – page 61

Secondly, when the Arabic word “Savvay’to” is used as a complement, the word “leveling” becomes the adjective of that same word, just as we can see it in the Holy Qur’ān: “*When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him of My Spirit, fall you down in obeisance unto him.*” [Al-Hijr - 29]

In this noble verse, the word “level” means to complete and achieve, and one can see that it means the end of the Creation of Adam.

However, when it is used in another way, it does not act as its own adjective; in fact, it becomes the adjective for another thing. For example, when one produces two threads with the same length, one can say that one has leveled the two threads equally. In like manner, the Holy Qur’ān quotes from the polytheists’ mouths that they will be blaming themselves for their idolatry, on the Day of Retribution and shall say. “*When*

we held you as equals with the Lord of the Worlds.” [Al-Shu’arā - 98]

Concerning all these explanations, this particular hadith appears to be in harmony with the first possibility.

Therefore, the word “leveling” in that hadith, becomes the adjective of the word “grave” itself; it means then, that one should level equally the surface of a grave, so that the grave may have a flat, even surface.

That word appears in opposition with the word “Tasnim”, which makes the grave appear rough, bumpy, and uneven like the camel’s humps. That is why the Shiite jurists declare that it is good and advisable that the surface of a grave become level and equally even from every side.

This hadith is also narrated in Moslem’s “Sahih” and the commentators of “Sahih” have given an explanation identical to what we have offered you now as an explanation.

Novi, the notorious commentator of Moslem's "Sahih" offers this comment for this particular hadith:

"The tradition is that the grave should not be too much elevated from the ground; at the same time, it should not appear bumpy or uneven, like the camel's humps. It should be in fact, ten inches higher from the ground and appear even and level."¹

Ibn Hajar Ghastalāni in his book entitled "Ērshād al-Sāri bē Sharheh Sahih Bukhāri" has commented in this way this particular hadith: "The tradition for a grave is that it should be level and even, and we should never ignore the Tradition for the fact that "leveling" is the motto of the "Rāfēzis"²..."³

6- The renewal [reconstruction] of the grave

¹ Navavi – Sharheh Sahih Moslem – 7/41

² Name given to the Shiites by other Islamic sects [translator]

³ Ērshād Al-Sāri – 2/468

As'bagh Ibn Nabāteh had reported from the lord of the believers [Ali Ibn Abi Tālib, may God's Greetings be upon him]: *“Whoever reconstructs [rebuilds] a grave or paints a drawing on it, has gone out of the boundaries of Islam.”*¹

The author of that booklet has used this hadith, in order to boycott any building over a grave. In fact, this hadith has nothing to do with the present subject, for this particular hadith is very weak, and it is due, because of two individuals by the name of:

1- Muhammad Ibn Sanān 2- Abel Jārud.

Secondly, the context of that hadith is opposed to the Islamic Precepts. How can it be possible that the reconstruction of a grave or the drawing of an animal makes one get out of the boundaries of Islam?

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 10 – chapter 43 – On the burial – hadith number 1

Thirdly, this hadith has been narrated in four different ways and no one knows what exactly the lord of the believers had declared in the first place. From these four possibilities, which one was the sentence that he had pronounced?

- 1- Whoever who reconstructs a grave
- 2- Whoever who sharpens a grave
- 3- Whoever buries someone in another one's grave
- 4- Whoever digs a grave ¹

By considering these four false examples, how can one argue with such a strange hadith?!

Until now, we came to know about the author's arguments about the construction of edifices and monuments over the graves, and it became clear to us, that the author, along with his beloved teachers had benefited from the words of men such as Ibn Tēymiyeh and Muhammad Abdol'Wahhāb... If they were not truly

¹ Al-Zēkri – From Shahid Awal – 2/44

prejudiced, they would not have opposed solid arguments against the reverence that one should demonstrate to the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets...

Now has come the time when we shall have to study his second claim in regard with the interdiction of building a mosque, near the Holy Sepulchers.

Part 3

To build a place of worship

Near the Holy Sepulchers

A “mosque” [a place of worship] is the proper place, where a Monotheist prays and worships the Unique God. From ancient times, the great Monotheists, in order to seek blessings from the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets of God and the Successors had always built a place of worship [mosque] near these Holy Shrines.

They used to worship God in those places of worship, the only real reason for building a place of worship near the Holy Sepulchers of the Prophets was to receive great blessings from God, by the graceful presence of the holy remains of these Prophets and their Successors, and that was the only reason for it. There was no other motive. In those places of worship [mosques], they used to adore only God, and perform their Salât [prayers] towards the “Qiblah” that their Religion had ordered them to turn to. They used to prostrate on the ground of the mosque and never did they choose those Holy Sepulchers as their

“Qiblah” or the places towards which they should prostrate; neither did they ever “worship” or “adore” the illustrious owners of those Holy Sepulchers.

The thought that a Holy Sepulcher might be their:

- 1- Qiblah
- 2- or the point towards which they should prostrate
- 3- or their most beloved aspiration are only imaginary eventualities, which no one testifies about them.

The desire to be near Holy Sepulchers is only to seek blessings from them and from the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] who are resting eternally in peace, in those Shrines.

The question of seeking blessings from the Prophets and “Aw’liā” is something that needs not any discussion or explanation. For all the Muslims, during the Holy Prophet’s lifetime, always sought blessings, most enthusiastically, from the dripping water of his “Vuzu” or

from his holy wet hair; they even went so far as to eat the remains of his food. ¹

Now, let us explain this action from the Monotheists' point of view during the human History:

1- Construction of a place of worship over the Holy Sepulchers of the Dwellers in the Cave

When the time came, and the veil of mystery was pulled away from the Holy Sepulchers of the Dwellers of the Cave, after the passage of some three hundred years, the wheel of destiny turned and Christianity defeated Heresy. It was then, that the hidden-place of the Dwellers of the Cave was discovered finally.

People gathered around their Sepulchers, to pay homage and praise those good men who, in order to preserve their faith, had taken shelter in that Cave. In that

¹ In this regard, you can refer to "Al-Tabbaruk" by Ahmadi Miānji – page 178 /184.

moment, the people who were there were divided into two groups:

A- The first group was not among the Monotheists and was not considered as Christians. They proposed that a monument should be built over their graves.

B- The second group was believers and Monotheists. They proposed that a mosque [a place of worship] should be built beside their Holy Sepulchers.

The first group said. “*Construct a building over them.*”

While the second group said. “*Let us surely build a place of worship over them.*” [Al-Kahf - 21]

Because of the fact that God has spoken of both opinions and viewed them with a positive outlook, one can say that both of those proposals were in concordance

with God's Contentment and Satisfaction, specially the second proposal, which begins with a clear sentence.

“Those who prevailed over their affair said: “Let us surely build a place of worship over them....” [Al-Kahf-21] opposed to the first group who had said. *“Their Lord knows best about them.”*

Therefore, the construction of a place of worship beside the Holy Sepulchers of those men of God was confirmed, because it was not only in accordance with “Fitrat”, but also in harmony with the Precepts of the passed Divine Religions.

One of the contemporary narrator of hadith, called Mr. Al-bāni, who had been devoted to the Wahhābis has refuted with a touch of prejudice, this noble verse, which gives permission to the construction of a place of worship beside the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw'liā” [Friends of God]. Thus, he has declared. *“Those who prevailed over*

their affair” refers to the notable and leaders, and it is not known whether they were good, believing men or not.”¹

However, one should remind him of two things:

1- The meaning of the verse: “*Those who prevailed over their affair*” returns to the people who had come to know about the secrets of the Dwellers of the Cave.

They had responded in such manner before the first group who had claimed they knew nothing about those things and had declared. “*Their Lord knows best about them.*” Therefore, the second group who had offered that proposal was composed of good, sublime creatures.

It was in fact for that very reason that they had come to know about the secrets of the Dwellers of the Cave in this way, and not because they were powerful and influential men.

2- Now let us imagine that the verse: “*Those who prevailed over their affair*” refers to a group of

¹ Tahzir al-Sājīd be Ittikhāz al-Ghubur Masājīd – page 72

men who had truly prevailed; but one should add that it was a religious prevalence, not a military one. Tabari in his “Commentary” [Tafsir] recalls that when the Dwellers of the Cave awoke from their deep sleep after three hundred years or so, they chose a man among them, to go to the city, in order to bring them back some food. When that man came out of the Cave, he immediately saw that things had changed. He leaned on a wall, while looking around him and he thought to himself. “Until yesterday, if someone had dared to pronounce the name of Jesus, he would have been killed surely; but now, everywhere, Jesus’ name is heard...” He then said to himself. “Maybe this is not the city that I had seen previously...”¹

¹ Tafsir Tabari - volume 15 – page 219

These historical piece shows that the group of men that had proposed the second solution was Monotheist, and had embraced the Religion of Jesus [Christianity]. If the meaning of the verse “*Those who prevailed over their affair*” was prevalence over something and a victory gained, it was indeed the religious prevalence. That is, that particular religion had prevailed and become the formal religion of that region.

2- The Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet Inside Masjidun'nabi

On the day when the Messenger of God passed away and joined His Creator, his house was not part of the Mosque. He was buried inside his house, with the approval of his close companions [Sahābis].

After his burial, his wife - Āy'sha - spent many years in that place, and performed many prayers [Salāt] in there.¹

Not once, did anyone among the close companions of the Holy Prophet object to her performing her prayers [Salāt] in that place, and near the Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet...

When in the year 88 A.H, the Mosque grew larger during the caliphate of Valid Ibn Abdol'malek, the governor of Medina who was no other than Omar Ibn Abdol'aziz, destroyed all the private apartments belonging to the wives of the Holy Prophet by Valid's order. Those private apartments were built wall to wall with the Mosque. He then included those apartments as parts of the Mosque. In that way, the Holy Sepulcher was "included" inside the Mosque. Once again, not one of the

¹ Sonan Bēy'haghi – volume 4 – page 78 – Mostadrak Hākīm – volume 1 – page 377

“Tābī’in” or the jurists who lived in Medina objected to that decision.

More important than that: never did [Hazrat] Imām Sajjād, offer any objection to that.

This shows that the inclusion of the Mosque in the houses of the “Aw’liā”, and the action of performing prayers [Salāt] in those places as a way to seek spiritual blessings were indeed, legitimate and permissible actions. From that time on, thirteen centuries have passed, and all the Muslims from all over the world, and even the Wahhābis themselves, perform Salāt all around the Holy Sepulcher of the Messenger of God and no one ever objects to that...

Aye, at the time of the destruction of those private apartments, there was indeed a jurist by the name of Sa’id Ibn Mossayebb who did object to that decision.

However, the reason for his objection is not mentioned in historical books. It is possible that the destruction of the private apartments of the wives of the

Prophet had been executed without the agreement of their owners, and that was why Sa'īd Ibn Mossayyebb had objected.

Another eventuality is that maybe in his opinion, it would have been better, for those private apartments to have remained just as they were. That is, in their rustic simplicity, so that they would be a moral lesson for the future generations. Therefore, if those two goals could have been achieved, surely no one would have objected to the destruction of Āy'sha's house, along with the inclusion of the Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet, inside the Mosque.

During past centuries, many great jurists have performed their prayers [Salāt] in that holy place. Great men, such as the four Imāms of the four sects have performed numerous prayers in there; they had even accepted the responsibility of being the "Imām" and not once, did they object to that.

3- Mosques near the Holy Sepulchers And the act of performing prayers in such places

Not only the Holy Prophet's Sepulcher is inside a Mosque, but also Islamic History shows that numerous mosques were built near the sepulchers of great, illustrious men throughout centuries.

Now, we shall present some of them to you.

1- The exact spot of the sepulcher of Fātēmeh Bent Assad became later, a mosque. When that illustrious woman who was Ali Ibn Abi Tālib's mother passed away, the Holy Prophet went to Baghi Cemetery and prepared a burial ground for her. The spot where she is buried, is that mosque, and it is called "Fātēmeh's Sepulcher".¹

2- Near the sepulcher of Hamzah, there is indeed a mosque. This mosque was built over the graves of Mas'ab Ibn Omēyr and Abdēllāh Ibn Jah'sh.² If building a

¹ Vafā al-Vafā – volume 3 – page 897

² Vafā al-Vafā – volume 3 – page 292

mosque [a place of worship] near the sepulchers of the noble Martyrs was a forbidden, unlawful thing, why then the “Sahābis” and the “Ṭabī’in” did such things...?

We know that the illustrious daughter of the Holy Prophet, the “Sovereign Lady” among all the women in the world [May God’s Greetings be upon her] went to visit the sepulcher of his great-uncle, Hamzah, and she used to cry there and perform prayers [Salāt] beside his sepulcher.¹

In fact, to perform a prayer [Salāt] in those Holy places is a thing, which is agreeable to human nature. It also pleases God.

Suyuti, in his book “Khassā’īs”, had written about the Prophet’s “Ascension”: “The Holy Prophet, in the night of “Ascension” descended in places such as “Ṭayyēbah” and the mount “Sinā” and “Bethlehem” and performed his prayer [Salāt] in all these holy places. The Archangel

¹ Sonan Bēy’haghi – volume 4 – page 78 – Mostadrak Hākīm – volume 1 – page 377

Gabriel told him then. “Tayyēbah” is the place where you shall emigrate and the mount of Sinā is where God spoke with Mussā [Moses] and Bethlehem is the birthplace of Jesus. Therefore, perform prayers [Salāt] in these places! ¹ There is no difference between a birthplace and a sepulcher...”

3- To perform a prayer in the Holy Sanctuary of Hussēyn Ibn Ali, from the Imāms’ Points of view

The Infallible, Shiite leaders [Imāms] insisted that people should perform prayers [Salāt] in Holy places.

Now, let us review some of these Ahādith:

1- In his book, Sheikh Mofid reports from Ibn Abi Omayr, who in his turn reports from another person who in turn, had reported from Imām Muhammad Bāghir

¹ Khassā’is Kobrā – volume 1 – page 154

[May God's Greeting be upon him]: "To perform a prayer near the Holy Sepulcher of Hussēyn, is equal to the reward of one pilgrimage of "Umrah"..."

2-He then reports from Abi Ali Harrāni who had reported from Imām Sādigh [May God's Greeting be upon him]: "Whoever goes to the pilgrimage of Hussēyn's Holy Sepulcher and performs a prayer of two rakat or four rakat in there, he shall receive the rewards of one "Hajj" and one "Umrah"! That is also true for he who goes to visit his Imām [towards whom he should be obedient] and performs a prayer of two rakat beside him." ¹

3- Again, Sheikh Mofid reports from Shu'ayb Aghraghuni who in his turn, reports from Imām Sādigh. "Whoever performs a prayer of two rakat, near the Holy Sepulcher of Imām Hussēyn, God shall indeed accept his prayer; and if he prays to God, his prayers will be

¹ Al-Mazār – page 117 – hadith number 3

accepted [answered] sooner or later, by God.”¹ He then adds that such Ahādith from the Imāms are numerous; we shall stop now.

4- Ibn Ghulvey’h [dead in 368 A.H] had created a chapter in his book, entitled “Kāmelo Ziārat”, about “performing a prayer in the Holy Sanctuary of Imām Hussēyn Ibn Ali” [May God’s Greetings be upon him]. He had reported six hadith, about the spiritual rewards that can be obtained, by performing a prayer in the Holy Sanctuary of that illustrious Imām. In the present work, because of the limited space, we shall not quote them.²

However, from all these Ahādith, we conclude that to perform prayers [Salāt] in the Holy Sepulchers of great men, not only one may obtain great spiritual rewards, but also the Imāms had insisted upon it; and it is not a forbidden thing to do, whatsoever.

¹ Al-Mazār – page 118 – hadith number 4

² Kāmelo Ziārat – page 424-426

Futile, partial pretexts

The legitimacy of performing prayers [Salāt] in the Holy Sanctuaries of “Ahlil Beyt” [close members of the holy Family of the Prophet] is a matter of general agreement among all the Shiites, so much so that Shahid Awal writes that the Shiite Ulēmas [Erudite] agree most upon two things:

- 1- To construct edifices over the Holy Sanctuaries of the Imāms
- 2- To perform prayers [Salāt] in their Holy Sanctuaries¹

However, there are few hadith, which the author of that booklet has translated in a most partial, wicked way. The title of that translation is “Pilgrimage from the Imāms’ points of view”, and it is imperative that we study them.

¹ Al-Zikra – Shahid Awal – volume 2 – page 35

1- Sheikh Sadugh had reported from the Holy Prophet [and without naming any source] [“Morsel”]: “The Holy Prophet had declared. “Do not transform my grave as the “Qiblah” or a place of worship [Masjid]. May God’s Curse be upon the Jewish people who transformed the sepulchers of their Prophets as a place of worship [Masjid]!”¹

This hadith forbids two things:

- A- That people perform their prayers [Salāt] towards his Sepulcher, instead of turning towards Ka’aba.
- B- That the Holy Prophet’s Sepulcher is considered as a place of worship [Masjid].

Now, with the help of the first sentence, one should take away the vagueness of the second sentence. In the first sentence, where his sepulcher becomes the Qiblah, it is evident that this is indeed against Islam’s Precepts and Commandments.

¹ Vassā’el Al-Shi’a – volume 2 – chapter 95 “On the burial” – hadith 2

In the second sentence, and in accordance with the previous sentence, his Holy Sepulcher becomes a place of prostration. That means, he who is performing a prayer, puts his forehead over the Holy Sepulcher, even if it was meant only as a respectful, reverential bow.

In that case, this hadith has nothing to do with the action of performing prayers [Salāt] in Holy places. For, no one is choosing that Holy Sepulcher as the Qiblah, nor is one prostrating on the Holy Sepulcher, as a sign of respect [bowing down with reverence]. In fact, the prayer [Salāt] is performed towards the Qiblah [Ka'aba] and the forehead of the pilgrim touches the ground.

2- Sheikh Tussi reports from Imām Rēzā [May God's Greetings be upon him]. "To perform a prayer among graves is all right, on the condition that the grave should not be considered as the Qiblah."

The last sentence, however, offers two eventualities:

A- The grave in question replaces Ka'aba. In that case, it will certainly be an "Innovation" [Bid'at] and it is indeed an unlawful, forbidden action.

B- The grave is situated directly before the pilgrim. In that case, this may become a case of inadvisability; for, all the Muslims from all over the world perform a prayer [Salāt] in the part known as "Soffeh" [balcony - terrace] inside Masjidun'nabi, and the Holy Sepulcher of the Prophet is situated just in front of them. Apart from that, we would like to draw your attention to two more things:

1- That hadith applies only to the public cemeteries, where the common people are buried, and not to the famous Sanctuaries and Holy Sepulchers, where the site of the holy grave, [and whether it is situated in front of the pilgrim or behind him], is not considered as unadvisable at all.

2- Some of those Ahādith are weak and inconsistent and at the same time, all of them are telling a unique event, and one cannot come to a definitive conclusion;

especially in front of solid arguments, which insist on the fact that one should perform prayers [Salāt] in Holy Sanctuaries and in the sites of Holy Sepulchers.¹

The Shiite jurists and specially the author of “Javāher” have spoken long and explicitly, about the reconstruction of the great Holy Sepulchers in Islam, and the action of performing prayers [Salāt] in those places. However, for the lack of necessary space in this work, we shall not quote them here.²

In the end, we recall the dearest readers that we studied deeply and thoroughly both questions [i.e. construction of an edifice over a grave - construction of a place of worship near the Holy Sepulchers of the “Aw’liā”], from the points of view, given in the Shiite Ahādith. In fact, the author of that booklet had gone so far as to claim that he had the same outlook, as the Shiite Ahādith, about this particular topic... Now, the study of

¹ Al-Zēkri – Shahid – volume 2 – page 35

² Javāher al-Kalām – volume 4 – page 324-341

the Ahādith found in the Sunni sources about this same topic is a matter, outside the boundary and the principal subject of the present book. Therefore, we shall not mention their Ahādith. Those who are interested in such subjects can refer to the following books:

- 1- Wahhābism
- 2- Wahhābism, the foundation of this school of thought, and the practical program it offers.

Part 4

To mourn the death of the loved ones

To be sad and sorrowful for the death of loved ones is a natural human feeling, and this emotion exists in all human societies, in all over the world...

The venerable Prophet, at the death of his beloved little son Ibrāhīm cried and used to say. “The eyes are shedding tears and the heart is grieved, but I shall not utter, that which will bring God’s Wrath... And if death was not an undeniable truth [fact] and a promise that will

indeed be fulfilled and [if we knew not] that all of us have to take this same path, our grief and sorrow would have been much more acute for your death...”¹

When Osmān Ibn Maz’un passed away, the Prophet cried and grieved beside his remains and kissed him tenderly, while his tears were rolling down on his cheeks...²

In like manner, the pure daughter of the Messenger of God, [Hazrat] Fātēmēyeh Zahrā stood beside the Holy Sepulcher of his beloved father, and after having taken a fistful of earth into the palm of her holy hand, she smelled the earth with crying eyes, and recited then these verses:

He who smells the pure earth [of the Holy Sepulcher]
Of the Messenger of God,
Does not care, if he were never to smell
Any more perfumes, henceforth!

¹ Sonan Abi Dāvud – volume 1 – page 58 – Sonan Ibn Mājah – volume 1 – page 482

² Sonan Abi Dāvud – volume 2 – page 63 – Sonan Ibn Mājah – volume 1 – page 445

So many calamities have fallen on me,
That if it had happened to the days of Life,
Those days would have indeed become obscure nights...!

In fact, to cry for the loved ones who have passed away is not a thing, which only the Holy Prophet or his close Family members were allowed to do. A large group of “Sahābis” and “Tābī’in” had cried so much for the death of their friends and loved ones, that we cannot possibly include their numerous stories in the present book...¹

When Abdul Rah’mān Ibn Owf objected to the tears that the Holy Prophet was shedding for his dead son, Ibrāhīm, the Prophet answered him. “My crying is a sign of compassion and pity. If one does not show pity, one shall not receive pity...”²

In fact, to cry for the death of the loved ones is not in opposition with the feelings of patience and

¹ The boundaries of Tow’hid and Shirk – page 295-299

² Sirēyeh Halabi – volume 3 – page 348

forbearance. Even Prophet Ya'ghub [Jacob] who was exempt from any sin, and while he showed patience and forbearance before his personal tragedy, nevertheless, he cried for forty whole years for [the absence of] his son Yusuf [Joseph]...

He had said. *“For me, patience is most fitting: against that which you assert, it is only Allah, Whose help can be sought...”* [Yusuf - 18]; at the same time, the Holy Qur'ān says about him: *“And his eyes became white with sorrow, and he fell into silent melancholy...”* [Yusuf - 84]

Where Islam is concerned, when a tragedy, which has fallen on the mourner, is too great, the child of the deceased [i.e. the mourner] has the permission of tearing his cloths at the death of his father... When Imām Hādī [May God's Greetings be upon him] passed away, his illustrious son, Imām Hassan Askari [May God's Greetings be upon him] tore down his collar. When some people objected to this behavior, Imām replied. “You are

not aware of the Divine Commandment. Mussa'bne Imrān [Moses] tore down his cloths when his brother Hārūn [Aaron] passed away...”¹

It is true that the first reaction and primary behavior on the death of a loved one is to remain calm and not to cry or shout painfully or tear down the cloths.²

Somehow, when the tragedy, which has fallen is too great and unbearable for the person concerned, so much, that he loses control over himself, in that case, Islam can give some permissions in special occasions.

To mourn the death of the loved ones

Until now, we have written about the crying of the mourner. Sometimes, it is necessary to organize a funeral ceremony for the deceased, so that people cry for the departed one and mourn him dutifully.

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 2 – chapter 84 “On the Burial” hadiths 1-9

² Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 2 – chapter 84 “On the Burial” hadith 2

Our great leader, the Messenger of God, after returning to Medina from Uhud, was informed that the wives of the “Helpers” [Ansār] were crying tragically for their Martyrs. He said with a sad voice. “Alas, Hamzah does not have a family to cry for him...”

The “Helpers” on hearing this sentence, told their wives: “Whoever wishes to cry and mourn their dead, should first cry and mourn for Hamzah, the Prophet’s illustrious uncle...!”

According to the author of “Maj’ma al-Zavā’ed”, this custom has been kept on, to this day. Muslim people do not cry, unless they cry first for Hamzah. ¹

To mourn for the “lord of the Martyrs” Hussēyn Ibn Ali

¹ Maj’ma al-Zavā’ed – volume 6 – page 120

The Wahhābi authors are used to objecting and criticizing violently the mourning of millions of Shiites, during the first ten days of the month of Muharram.

The reason for their criticism is that the Shiites, by organizing all sorts of mourning ceremonies, in different ways, put the history of the caliphates and the “Salafis”, under a great question mark, and present them as the enemies of “Ahlil Beyt” and the illustrious Progeny of the venerable Prophet [May God’s Greetings be upon them all]. That is why the Wahhābis try hard to extinguish that Divine Voice, which surges out from the hearts of those devoted people. While, the reason and the goal of organizing such mourning ceremonies for the illustrious Imām Hussēyn is a way to revive faithfully his Cause and way of thinking.

The Shiites, by marching, lamenting, and reciting tragic eulogies recall to all, that Shiism [Shi’a creed] is truly the religion of righteousness, justice and “Jihād”;

that it is truly a combat in that rightful path against oppression and tyranny.

In a simpler way: the lamentation and recitation of religious eulogies, the need to utter the deepest feelings of sorrow and grief, entwined with extreme compassion, are a way to sympathize with those noble Martyrs who had marched on that righteous path. In that way, the Shiites show their dedication and devotion to their just Cause, that has its foundation on Sacrifice and in the Way of Religion; and the refusal to bow down before tyranny, degradation, and humility...

If such religious ceremonies close down, and the memory of those noble Martyrs are not commemorated each year, as it should be, the notion of Sacrifice and Martyrdom will soon be forgotten...

The Shiites, by organizing such mourning ceremonies in the months of Muharram and Safar, revive faithfully the reason and argument of [Imām] Hussēyn

Ibn Ali, which are the reason and argument of all those noble Martyrs.

Part 5

To commit sins near the graves

The author of the booklet has exaggerated many things in a chapter called: "The sins that are committed

near the graves”, and recalls some sinful actions, committed near the graves of the dead. We shall study some of them.

To hit one’s own head

He has quoted some hadith in this regard, and claims that to do that is unlawful. Now let us study his Ahādith:

The first hadith

Imām Sādigh [May God’s Greetings be upon him] had reported from the Holy Prophet: “*If a Muslim beats his hip during a tragedy that has fallen on him, he shall lose his [spiritual] reward.*”¹

Analysis of the hadith

¹ Kāfi – volume 3 – page 224 – hadith number 4 and page 225 - hadith number 9

To begin with, two narrators reported this hadith; and both of them are weak and inconsistent narrators. In the first narration, two common narrators, by the name of Nafali and Sakkuni, and in the second narration, a narrator by the name of Sahl Ibn Ziād have reported this hadith. The latter is also considered as a weak narrator. At the same time, the narrator in question had reported this hadith from a man named Ali Ibn Hassān, whose name is among those who have narrated weak Ahādith, but at the same time, among those whose Ahādith are considered as trustworthy and authentic. Therefore, it is not possible to reach a clear conclusion.

Secondly, this hadith has also an opposed hadith. In fact, there is another hadith from Imām Sādigh, where he says. “*The reward of a believer for the death of his child is Paradise, whether he remains patient or not...*”¹

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 2 – chapter 72 – hadith number 7

Thirdly, the context of that hadith has no relation, whatsoever, with the subject of our discussion. The fact is to visit the graves of the dead or to mourn those dead are not always entwined with those emotional gestures.

In fact, the author may have the right to say that in such ceremonies, no one should behave like that, but he is in no position whatsoever, to say that to visit the graves of the dead is to be prohibited, or to make the mourning of the mourners appear to be something useless and vain! It is possible that one may also conclude that if the action of hitting one's thigh before a tragedy is wrong and unlawful, in that case, to hit one's own chest during the mourning ceremony for the Martyrdom of Imām Hussēyn may also be wrong and unlawful, which is not the case whatsoever.

The answer to that is very clear. One should know that to hit one's thigh, [an action, which is related to the context of that hadith], is due to personal, private tragedies. Sometimes, the mourner is so grieved and so

sad that the cup of his patience is overturned and he shows a reaction that is outside the boundary of people who are endowed with patience and forbearance.

However, the action of hitting one's chest, during the mourning ceremony for Imām Hussēyn is a sign of deep, religious sorrow, and not a sign of personal, private grief. It is indeed a sign, which demonstrates one's affection, love, and devotion towards the venerable Prophet and his holy Family [May God's Greetings be upon them all]. That is, those very same persons who were killed by the hands of the tyrants and oppressors of their time, and who bore and suffered all kinds of hardship, sorrow, and injustice from those cruel creatures...

In another word: to hit one' chest, in this regard, is not a sign of mental agitation or weakness in one's own faith and belief. At the same time, it is not a sign of objection against God Almighty, but a feeling of extreme love and compassion for the Holy Prophet and his Family

[May God's Greetings be upon them all]. This composes the truth, which exists in a religion; and it is indeed according to the explanation of the Prophet who had said. "Is Faith other than love and rancor?" ¹

These actions, which are accompanied by the action of lamenting, reciting eulogies and the beating of one's chest, and the installation of black flags in all places, show that:

- 1- The revival of Justice, and the need to fight against injustice and oppression, and the refusal to submit oneself to tyranny, injustice and oppression
- 2- The need to draw the attention of the present generation to the terrible treason of the passed leaders, and their wicked, tyrannical behavior
- 3- The need to show sympathy and compassion to the venerable Prophet and his holy Family for all

¹ Kāfi – volume 2 – page 124 – hadith number 5

the tragedies and calamities they had been forced to bear.

- 4- The necessity of giving a warning to the present leaders who have been led to transgress the line of justice and duty; those who have chosen to walk in the path of selfishness, pride and arrogance...

The second hadith

It has been reported that once, a man asked Imām Bāghir [May God's Greetings be upon him] about the meaning of "agitation"?"

Imām described the highest measure of human agitation and explained: "*It is to shout and cry, lament and moan. It is to hit one's own face and head and to cut*

*one's hair from the forehead. He, who laments, has lost his patience and thus, has taken a wrong way.”*¹

Analysis of the hadith

First, this hadith is a weak and inconsistent document, just as Majlēssi has reported it in his “Mer’āt al-Oghul”.²

Secondly, this hadith has no relation with the subject of the present book for two reasons:

1- The context of this hadith concerns the personal, earthly tragedies. That is, when tragic events and all sorts of mental tribulations befall, and Man loses his patience and does all kinds of unprepared actions and behaves differently. For example, he begins to shout or beat his face; or to hit the walls, etc...

This behavior has nothing to do, whatsoever, with the religious tragedies or sorrowful, spiritual events, so

¹ Kāfi - volume 3 - page 222-223

² Mer’āt al-Oghul – volume 14- page 181

that one may begin to cry and moan for all the tragedies that had fallen on the Religion. The marching of the Shiites, during the mourning ceremonies for the illustrious Imāms, belongs to the second category and not to the first one, whatsoever.

2- The meaning of “lamentation” in this hadith is a eulogy dedicated to something wrong and vain, something that we Shiites call it a wrong thing, too. However, to lament and recite eulogies in religious mourning ceremonies is not a wrong thing to do. In fact, Shahid Awal had prescribed the action of lamenting and reciting rightful, legitimate eulogies, in the two tragic events, mentioned above.¹

In the previous pages, we wrote that the Holy Prophet had ordered that people would do good to lament and recite eulogies for his deceased uncle Hamzah, and mourn him in this way; the women of

¹ Mer'at al-Oghul -volume 14 – page 181 - Shahid Awal.

Medina gathered, in order to execute that religious ceremony for Hamzah. We do know, however, how the Arab women behave in such sad ceremonies.

The third hadith

Imām Sādigh had been reported to say that there are indeed three worst things to be committed, and that he did not know which one of them was greater in its wrongness:

- 1- He, who walks in a funeral procession, without having put on a cloak [abā] over his shoulder
- 2- He, who beats his thigh during a tragic event
- 3- He, who says to the others, that they should have pity and mercy for the dead person, so that God may have pity for them all ¹

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a- volume 2 – chapter 47 – “On the agony of death” – hadith 3

Analysis of the hadith

First: this hadith is weak and the author of “Vassā’el Al-Shi’a” had reported it with two narrations. In the first narration, Nafali and Sakkuni were the narrators, and in the second narration, a group of untrustworthy narrators had reported it; men such as Ahmad Ibn Yah’yā Al-Ghattān, Bakr Ibn Abdēllāh, Ibn Habib, and Tamim Ibn Bohlul. Therefore, with such a weak hadith, one cannot make a jurisprudential decision.

Secondly, the context of this hadith is not in concordance with Islamic Precepts, and there is no compatibility whatsoever. The reason is that:

1- Let us imagine that a man, without having donned his cloak [abā] is accompanying the body of a dead person towards his resting place. Has he committed a capital crime?! His crime is so great that Imām is forced to say that he does “not know” which one of those crimes are worst than the others?!

Now, if somebody is to stand beside a dead body, and say. “Have some pity for that deceased man [or: do pray for this dead man, so that God’s Mercy may be granted to him], is this a wicked crime?!

And finally, about the beating of one’s thigh: we had already explained that if a person does that, it means that he is not a patient creature in regard with the tragic event that he is facing.

That means that he shall not have the rewards of those who are patient. This does not mean that he has committed a crime! On the other hand, in some hadiths, it has been reported that to be impatient for a man does not necessarily mean that he has lost all his spiritual rewards. Kolēyni reports from Abdēllāh Ibn Bokēyr that Imām Sādigh had said: “The rewards of a believer who had to bear the death of a child is Paradise, whether he is patient or not...”¹

¹ Vassā’el Al-Shi’a – volume 2 – chapter 72 – hadith number 7

To lament for a believer, with a rightful words

The death of loved ones provokes a great storm in the heart of Man. This inner, violent storm destroys the foundation of the human being. To preserve a mental equilibrium, the mourner should empty his sorrow, in some way. The best way to take control over this storm is to cry and lament. He should do that with sincere, truthful words, so that he may receive God's Grace and Mercy, without provoking his Wrath, in any way at all...

That is why there are so many Ahādith in this regard; and they show the tears that great men had shed before tragic events.

We shall present some of them to you:

- 1- One of Imām Sādigh's daughters passed away. Imām cried for a whole year. Then another one of his children passed away in his turn. Once again,

Imām cried and lamented for another whole year... Then when his son Ismā'il died, his lamentation increased. Some people told him: “Why is it that incessant sorrowful lamentation is heard from your house?”

He answered them: “When Hamzah died, the Prophet ordered the women of Medina to lament for him, for Hamzah did have no one to lament for him...”¹

2- A man told Imām Sādigh: “A child of mine has died and I am so sad and I mourn him so much that I fear I may lose my mental equilibrium...”

Imām answered him: “Whenever you face such unbearable grief, shed some tears, for it will indeed help you to regain your calm...”²

¹ Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 2 – chapter 7 – hadith number 2 “On the burial”

² Vassā'el Al-Shi'a – volume 2 – chapter 87 – hadith number 3

- 3- Imām Sādigh had also said. “When Jafar Ibn Abi Tālib and Zēyd Ibn Hāris were killed in Muteh, whenever the Holy Prophet went to Jafar’s house to pay a visit to the deceased family, he used to cry very much for both of those men.”¹
- 4- Imām Sajjād, as well, cried many long years for his beloved father... He used to fast for long periods of time and during the night, he used to wake up, in order to pray, and supplicate God. Each day, when the moment of breaking his fast arrived, as his eyes fell on the meal and the water before him, he used to eat and drink very little. In those moments, his slave would ask him: “My lord... why do you refuse to eat?” and Imām would answer: “The son of the Messenger of God was killed while he was hungry and thirsty...” and while he repeated that sentence, the tears would

¹ Vassā’el Al-Shi’a – volume 2 – chapter 87 – hadith number 6

roll down from his eyes, mixing with the food
before him... ¹

These Ahādith are so numerous, that we truly cannot write them down all, in the present work. The only thing that one may say is that verily, the author of that booklet and his teachers are cruel men.

God Almighty has indeed taken any compassion and pity, away from their hearts... In brief, they are indeed the followers of the way of the “Umayyad” leaders, alas. That is, those who took great pleasure in killing an innocent infant... They are indeed those who cannot, in any way, bear to see that people cry for those great souls that God and His Messenger love so very much. That is why they cannot say that these actions are most legitimate, indeed...

¹ Vassā’el Al-Shi’a – volume 2 – chapter 87 – hadith number 1

Other subjects

The author of the booklet has also deviated from his first topic, and spoken of other points, by criticizing them:

- 1- To turn to the holy spirits, after their death
- 2- To make a vow for the holy spirits
- 3- To ask for the Intercession of the “Aw’liā”
- 4- To seek help and assistance from the “Aw’liā”
- 5- To swear to the “Aw’liā”
- 6- To turn around their holy sepulchers
- 7- The mixing of men and women in the Holy Sanctuaries

Some of these subjects are outside the boundary of the topic of the present work. However, we shall discuss them briefly.

1- To turn to the “Aw’liā”

The author of the booklet has committed a very wrong deed. He has compared all the noble verses, which had been sent down about the Polytheists, with the Monotheists, and has claimed that, the supplications that the Monotheists offer to the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] in order to ask them for their help [Tavassul], resemble the help that the Polytheists had asked from their idols...!

However, he has ignored a crucial principle, whether by ignorance or on purpose. It is true that both groups had sought the help of other than God, but the great difference is that the Polytheists recognized the idols, as the origin and source of their glory and victory.

They believed that forgiveness rested in the hands of those idols... However, in the previous chapters, we have shown the dearest readers, the verses, which showed the opinions and the creed of the Polytheists.

On the other hand, the Monotheists, by the Will of God, seek the help and assistance of the Holy Prophet

[May God's Peace and Glory be upon him and his holy Family] and turn to him, naturally, in times of trouble.

For they recognize him as the most sublime human being; and they know that if the Prophet prays for something or someone, his prayer will be fulfilled, certainly and undoubtedly. At the same time, they are endowed with the inner knowledge that the fate and destiny of the world and the human life are not in the hands of the venerable Prophet.

2- To make a vow for the 'Aw'liā"

The truth, about the act of making a vow is that it concerns people who are troubled and afflicted by a serious problem... If their problem is arranged somehow, they should then pay for the price of a sheep, so that the meat of the [immolated] sheep becomes a meal for the pilgrims of the Holy Sepulcher of the venerable Prophet.

In those instances, they say. “O Good God! We offer our vow to You, so that You do this and that...”

Therefore, their vow is offered to God and with this action, they seek to get nearer to God and then they offer the rewards of their action to the Holy Prophet or to one of the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God]. Now we ask the dearest readers: which part of this action is considered as a polytheistic action, in truth?!

3- To ask for the Intercession

To ask for the Intercession is nothing but to ask that the “Aw’liā” [Friends of God] pray for your sake.

Man can offer his request in two ways, in order to be blessed with the Intercession of the “Aw’liā”:

- 1- He may say. “O Lord! Make the Holy Prophet intercede for us in the Day of Retribution!”

[Allāhuma shaffa nabiyenā Muhammadan finā
yaom al-Ghiāmat...]

- 2- He may ask the Holy Prophet that he intercedes for him on Judgment Day and thus, he should say:
“Esh’fa lanā Ēndallāh...”

As the Intercession is nothing but a request for a prayer, and that Muslims, during the Prophet’s lifetime were ordered to ask him to pray for them and ask from God, for their Forgiveness, this action continued, even after his death.

Therefore, if to ask for the Intercession, after the Prophet’s death is a polytheistic action, it must have also been as such, during his lifetime...

In like manner, if there is someone who claims that to ask for the Intercession, during the Prophet’s lifetime was a good thing to do, while it shall not be as such, after his death, the answer to this claim is very clear and evident.

For, even if such preposterous claim is true, to ask for the Intercession, after the Prophet's death, can only be seen as a useless thing to do, and never shall it be seen as a polytheistic action or as a cult for a dead person...

At the same time, how can one claim that this action is not useful, when the noble Martyrs are alive forever? And should we pretend that the venerable Prophet [May God forgive us for this thought!] has a lesser position and a lower rank, in comparison with the noble Martyrs...?!

4- To seek help and assistance From the "Aw'liā"

To seek help and assistance from the "Aw'liā" [Friends of God] is identical as the action of asking for their Intercession, and the return of all human beings to God is because of the prayer made by these "Aw'liā".

5- To swear to other than God

The author of that booklet believes that to swear to other than God is an unlawful thing to do, while in the Holy Qur'ān, we see numerous swearing, made to other than God Almighty!

God has sworn to the moon and the sun, to their lights, to the day and the night, to the sky and the earth; and to the life of Man, in the noble sourate “Al-Shams”. If to swear to things and persons apart from God, is a wrong thing to do, we should thus consider the Holy Qur'ān as a polytheistic propagation system!

There are times, when the Holy Qur'ān swears to the life of the Prophet: “*Verily, by your life (O Prophet!), in their wild intoxication, they wander in distraction, to and fro.*” [Al-Hijr – 72]

The Holy Prophet used to swear repeatedly to the lives of the people, and the dearest readers can refer to a book called “Wahhābism” [page 303 onward].

6- To turn around the Holy Sepulcher

To turn around the Holy Sepulchers [inside the Holy Sanctuaries] is a wrong thing to do indeed, and no man can, and should turn around the graves. However, the turning around the grill of a Holy Sepulcher, for Muslims, is a sign of their love, devotion, and reverence to the owner of that Holy Sepulcher.

7- The mixing of men and women

In like manner, the mixing of men and women together in Holy Sanctuaries is identical to that which exists inside Masjidul'Harām. Certainly if things could be arranged properly, so that this kind of mixing of men and women cease to be, it would be a very good thing to

happen. Fortunately, nowadays, the Holy Sanctuaries have different entrances for women and men, and the places of their pilgrimage are separated from one another.

Dearest readers, in the present work, we have tried to study and analyze all the arguments offered by the author of that booklet. Thus, it becomes clear that not only he has not only any excellent arguments to offer, but he also lacks the power of presenting them properly and rationally.

These groups of men are not trying to clear things up, or to prove the rightfulness and legitimacy of things whatsoever. In fact, their only wish is to “inject” - at any price, and with all kinds of tricks and lies -, the perverted opinions of men, such as Ibn Tēymiyeh and Muhammad Ibn Abdol’Wahhāb; and they do this, by “donning” the clothes of a Shiite jurisprudent alas; and they tend to quote famous books such as “Kāfi” and “Vassā’el”...

Therefore, O Good God, Lighten our hearts with the Light of Faith and the Holy Qur'ān! O Good God, Do not take the affection and friendship of the Prophet and his holy Family, away from us! O Good God, Place us as the true followers of the Messenger of God and his “Ahlil Beyt”! Do not make a distance between us and the Holy Qur'ān and “Ahlil Beyt”! Do cut off those treacherous hands who wish to separate the two “Gravities” [Saghalēyn]!

Qom, Jafar Sob'hāni

Sha'bān 20^h 1429 - Shah'rivar 1st 1387