

Part 2: A Leap Forward

Divine Training

Spiritual stations and virtues of the reverend Shaykh are quite evident to all those who knew him closely or those who had listened to him in his sessions. 1

The major question regarding the life of this great charismatic figure is that how he achieved such high human status. How a person, who lacked formal academic education and had no experience in *Hawza* (Islamic seminary), attained such high spiritual achievements that not only the general public but also educated scholars from *Hawza* and university enjoyed the blessings of his guidance? What was the secret of the reverend Shaykh's leap forward in his achievement? And finally: Who has trained him and who was his spiritual instructor?

The Shaykh's Masters

Although the reverend Shaykh was lacking in formal knowledge commonly acquired at universities and *Hawza* centers, he had actually enjoyed the company of some great dignitaries in scholarship and spirituality. Some great scholars such as the Ayatollah Muammad Ali Shah Abadi –Imam Khomeini's (ra) teacher² –and the late Ayatollah Mirza Muhammad Taqi Bafqi and the late Ayatollah Mirza Jamal Isfahani,³ were as his teachers. He also enjoyed the teachings of two other noble scholars: Agha Sayyid Ali Mufassir and Sayyid Ali Gharavi –the interpreter of the Qur'an and the prayer leader at a Masjid in Salsabil neighborhood of Tehran.

As a result of the same informal education, he (the Shaykh) had become quite familiar with the Holy Qur'an and *Ahadith*, and would translate and interpret the Qur'an, the *Ahadith*, and supplications, presenting very fine and accurate comments of them that others were less aware of.

Thus, the reverend Shaykh's familiarization with the Islamic knowledge was due to his benefiting from

the presence of such great dignitaries and their like. However, the beginning of his leap forward and spiritual development must be sought somewhere else, which was a turning point in his blessed life. That is, when the Shaykh said, "I had no teachers", he was pointing out to this issue.

One of his devotees quoted the Shaykh as having said: "I had no teachers, but I attended the sessions by the late Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Bafqi⁴ held in the courtyard of Harat Abdul Azim's (a) holy shrine where he lectured in the evenings. He was a spiritual man. One night he addressed me among the audience and said: 'You will attain a (high) station'."

A Turning Point

To my opinion, the secret of the Shaykh's leap forward, beginning, of development, and his turning point in life lies in an event that is extremely impressive and instructive. In his early youth, something happened to the Shaykh that was very similar to what happened to the Prophet Yusuf (a). This event and what ensued was an example of the Shaykh's practical monotheism. It indicated that what the Holy Qur'an says at the latter part of the story of the Prophet Yusuf (a) in the verse:

انه من يتق ويصبر فان الله لا يضيع أجر المحسنين

(Behold, he that is righteous and patient—never will Allah let the reward to be lost, of those who do right.) (Yusuf: 90), is a general rule and is not restricted only to the Prophet Yusuf (a).

This shows that what the Holy Qur'an says concerning the Prophet Musa (a) i.e.

(ولما بلغ أشده وأستوى أتيناها حكماً وعلماً وكذلك نجزي المحسنين)

(When he attained his full manhood, and was firmly established (in life) We gave him power and knowledge: thus do We reward those who do right.) (al-Qasas: 14)⁵, is also a general rule. From the viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an all the righteous and the benevolent people are endowed with the light of wisdom and specific Divine knowledge.

A Story Similar to that of the Prophet Yusuf (a)

The Shaykh had rarely told a full account of this event; however, he did on some occasions make a brief hint at it:

"I did not have any *ustad* (master), but I said: O God! I refrain from this for the sake of pleasing You, and

I restrain myself in the hope that You train me only for Yourself."

Referring to this story, the eminent *faqih*, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Hadi Milani (ra) said: 'The Shaykh had been graced with blessings, and that was because of the self-restraint he had practiced in his youth.

The Shaykh himself had related this story in a meeting with that noble *faqih*. In the meeting, Ayatollah Milani's Son, Hujjat al-Islam. Sayyid Muhammad Ali Milani, was also present, who quoted the Shaykh telling the event as follows:⁶

"In my youth, a beautiful daughter of my relatives fell in love with me, and eventually found me alone in a desolate place. I said to myself: 'Rajab Ali! God can test you many times; why do not you test God once!? Restrain from this pleasurable unlawful act for the sake of God!'

'Then I said to God':

"O God! I refrain from this sin; and You train me for Your own in return!"

Thereupon, like the Prophet Yusuf (a), he bravely resisted falling into the sinful temptation, evaded the enticement, and promptly rushed away from the risky snare.

This self-control and avoidance of committing sin led him to insight and intuition; his otherworldly vision enlightened, seeing and hearing what others could not see and hear. He got such clear an insight that whenever he went out of his house he would see some people as they really were, and some mysteries were revealed to him.⁷ The reverend Shaykh is quoted as saying:

"One day I went from "Mawlavi" intersection through "Sirus" Avenue down to "Galubandak" (a neighborhood in Tehran) and returned (the same way) and I saw just one human face!"

How he Received Divine Training

The invocation of an entrapped young man entreating: "O God! Train me for Yourself!" was answered in that sensational situation and caused such a leap forward in the spiritual life of this holy young man that the superficial people are unable to comprehend. With this leap, Rajab Ali traveled in one night a one hundred-year-long distance (defying the limits set by space and time), and became renowned as "Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayat."

In the first step of Divine training, his eyes, ears, and heart opened up so that he could see beyond the world of matter and through the high Heaven the things other people could not see and hear what others could not hear. This esoteric experience prompted the Shaykh to believe that: *ikhlas* (sincerity and devotion) causes the eyes and the ears of the 'heart' to open up. He often asserted to his disciples:

"If one works for Allah, their heart's eyes and ears will open up."

The Eyes and Ears of the Heart

One may wonder here whether a heart can have eyes and ears. One may ask: Is man capable of seeing and hearing things by means other than the physical eyes and ears?

The answer is, "yes", it is true. The Islamic *hadiths*– narrated by both Shi'as and Sunnis –have given positive answers to this question. Hereby, some examples are given in this respect:⁸ The Holy prophet (s) said:

"ما من عبد الا وله في وجهه عينان يبصر بهما امر الدنيا، وعينان في قلبه
يبصر بهما أمر الآخرة، فاذا أراد الله بعبد خيراً فتح عينيه اللتين في قلبه،
فأبصر بهما ما وعده بالغيب، فأمن بالغيب على الغيب"

"There is no servant (human being) except that they have two eyes on their faces to see the worldly things with, and two eyes in their hearts to see the affairs of the Hereafter. Whenever God wants the good of a servant, He opens two eyes in their hearts by which they can see His promised bounties and believe in the Unseen through their unseen eyes."⁹

And in another *hadith*, the Holy Prophet (s) said:

"لولا تمزّع قلوبكم وتزيدكم في الحديث لسمعتم ما أسمع"

"If your hearts were not dispersed and you were not so loquacious, you would undoubtedly hear what I hear."¹⁰

Similarly, Imam al-Sadiq (a) said:

"ان للقلب أذنين: روح الايمان يساره بالخير، والشيطان يساره بالشر، فايهما
ظهر على صاحبه غلبه"

"Verily the heart has two ears: the Spirit of Faith whispers good in one and the Satan whispers evil in the other one. Thus, anyone of those that wins over the other will dominate him."¹¹

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1. In chapter three of the same part, more will be said in this regard.
 2. Imam Khomeini (ra) repeatedly remembered and named the latter as his Ustad (master) in Divine Knowledge. See: Misbah al-Hidayah, XXVII,46:90.
 3. It is related that he is the brother of Haj Agha Nurullah Isfahani known as Agha Najati Isfahani. He was the prayer leader of the Masjid of Sayyid Azizullah in Bazaar of Tehran at the beginning of Reza Shah's reign. About his sermons, it is quoted from the late Shaykh Rajab Ali who said: "His minbars (sermons) produce lovers of God." Because of his opposition to Reza Khan, he was exiled to Isfahan where he was martyred and buried in "Takht-i Fulad" cemetery. Dr. Abul Hasan Shaykh said: 'Once the reverend Shaykh and I went to Takht-i Fulad cemetery. We sat down beside a grave. The Shaykh said: "The man buried here had been my master."

'Hujjatul Islam Karimi has quoted Ayatollah Kazim Assar as narrating an interesting Karamat that Ayatollah Mirza Jamal Isfahani had been graced with by Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) as follows:

Hadrat Ayatollah Assar was a great teacher of Asfar in Shahid Mutahhari Islamic Seminary (formerly called Sipahsalar), and I, Shaykh Karam Ali Karimi, passed the six year-course of the seminary with him and some other teachers. The first miracle about Mirza Jamal Isfahani was told to us at our Asfar lesson by Ayatollah Assar while he was shedding tears: "Hadrat Ayatollah Haj Agha Jama1 Isfahani (ra), who was exiled by Reza Khan Pahlavi to Tehran and was the prayer leader of Masjid Haj Sayyid Azizullah in Bazaar, used to teach at Marvi Islamic seminary. His teaching in that Madrasa was so fascinating and rich in content that his classes were always overcrowded with scholars and learned students, to the extent that some of the prayer leaders felt highly envious toward him.' 'So the latter held a meeting in which they declared that he (Ayatollah Isfahani) was illiterate and deceived the clerics he had gathered around him. They made an arrangement to test Haj Agha Jamal in three topics: Philosophy, fiqh, and usul. I was assigned to test him in philosophy, i. e., Asfar, and two others-whose names I do not remember-were supposed to examine him in fiqh and usul. The three of us arranged to attend his class, sit at separate places, and each ask him our questions during his lessons.'

I (Assar) had taken a copy of Asfar with me. When Haj Agha Jama1 Isfahani was explaining a philosophical viewpoint, I brought up a question from Asfar finding fault with his viewpoint. He looked at me and said: "I did not answer your question in such a way. You go on and open Asfar at random (by the way of istikhara (bibliomancy)) and read the first of the page."

I did so and read the top sentence of a page. He said: "That is enough" and then began to recite the whole page word by word by heart and translated it. Then he said: "You have come here to test me? I have nothing of my own; whatever I have is (bestowed on me) by the Mawla (Imam) of the pious, Ali ibn Abi Talib (a)."

Then Haj Agha Jamal related an account of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali's (a) miracles: "I studied in Najaf for forty years, achieving the rank of ijthad and high levels of scholarship. My father sent some of the scholars and traders from Isfahan to Najaf to bring me back to Isfahan to administer the Hawzah as head and chairman. The night after which we were supposed to leave Najaf for Iran, all of a sudden I came down with typhoid fever and fell unconscious for forty days. When I regained consciousness, I found that I had forgotten all the things I had learned since childhood up to then; absolutely oblivious of all my accumulated knowledge.

I got bitterly distressed and went to (the holy shrine of) Amir al Mu'minin Ali (a) and began to wail and lament, saying to my Mawla: "My lord! For forty years I acquired much scholarly provision from the widespread expanse of your 'ilm (Divine knowledge) but know that I want to return home, I am empty-handed. You are an ocean of Magnanimity." (The late Assar was crying while narrating.) Then the late Ayatollah Haj Agha Jamal said: "I wept and lamented so much that I felt drowsy and then fell asleep. (In my sleep) I saw the Mawla Ali (a) who put a fingertip of honey in my mouth and caressed me, and then I came to. When I returned home I found I knew by heart whatever I had learned from childhood to the present."

After that' Haj Agha Jamal cried and said: "Sirs! I have nothing of my own. Whatever I know belong to my Mawla and Imam Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a). You do come and examine me; I know by heart all the texts by the Grace of Allah (s) and the favor from Amir al Mu'minin Ali (a). Mr. Assar was crying while he said: When Haj Agha Jama1 stated this event, a commotion arose from among the gathering, and I got up and approached him to rub that nobleman's slippers on my eyes

as a blessing.'

4. The perfect ascetic and the practicing scholarly mujahid. Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Bafqi Yazdi who, as a result of a confrontation with Reza Khan on the issue of Kashf-i Hijab (Reza Khan's order to remove Qijab (veils) from the Iranian Muslim women), and after being beaten up by that despotic monarch in the holy shrine of Hazrat Ma'sumeh (a), he was exiled to Shahr-i Ray. He remained in exile there till the end of his life. Those who enjoyed close association with this Divinely endowed scholar, relate many miraculous acts performed by him. His servant, the late Shaykh Isma'il told me (the author): "In the latter years of his life, the Shaykh (Bafqi) was unable to leave home due to illness. Once he asked me: 'When you go for a ziyarat pilgrimage to Hazrat Shah Abdul Azim, do you make a ziyarat to all three Imamzadehs (grandchildren of Imams-(a)) or do you say Salam (pay homage) to the Imamzadeh Tahir while you are just passing by his tomb? In that era the development project of the holy shrine had not been carried out yet, and the shrine of Imamzadeh Tahir was located off the main site. I replied to him: 'I do not enter Imamzadeh Tahir for a ziyarat; rather I just make the pilgrimage from outside of his shrine. The Shaykh said: 'This is not decent. You fmd the audience with the three nobles, and you visit two of them closely but visit one from a distance?! This is considered disrespectful. The next time you go for a Ziyarat, go inside the shrine of Hazrat Tahir (a) and make your Ziyarat give my regards to him too.' Shaykh Isma'il said: As recommended by the Shaykh, I entered the shrine 'of Hazrat Tahir (a). Nobody was inside the shrine; I remembered the Shaykh's bidding; I was about to say that he sent regards when all of a sudden I heard the phrase "Labbayk, Labbayk, Labbayk (here am I)!" from inside the darhi. "

Also in his private teaching sessions and in order to encourage his students to meet with the late Bafqi who was in exile, Imam Khomeini (ra) would often recite this couplet:

How joyful it is to attain double bliss with one act,

Ziyarat of Shah Abdul Azim and visiting the beloved (the late Shaykh Bafqi).

5. It is worth mentioning that the same verse is repeated about the prophet Yusuf (a) in sura Yusuf, ayah 22 excluding the word istawa.

6. The Shaykh had brought up some other points in this regard that will come up in the first chapter of part 3: "Private Guidelines."

7. This had apparently happened to the Shaykh at the age of 23.

8. For further information of these ahadith, see: Mizan al Hikmah, X, 4988: 3390-1.

9. Mizan al-Hikmah, X, 4988: 16942.

10. Ibid, X, 4990: 16956.

11. Ibid, X, 4988: 16950.

Help from the Unseen World

We read in Nahjul Balagha that Imam Ali (a) asserts that God Almighty throughout the history has meritorious servants to whom He talks through their mind and intellect. The words of Imam (a) are as follows:

"وما برح لله - عزت آلاؤه - في البرهة بعد البرهة وفي أزمان الفترات عباد"

ناجاهم في فكرهم، وكلمهم في ذات عقولهم، فاستصبحوا بنور يقظة في
الأبصار والأسماع والأفئدة..."

"In all periods and times, particularly during the interregnum (the interval between the coming of two prophets) there are persons with whom Allah—great are His bounties—whispers (through inspiration) into their minds and intellect, and illumines their heart's eyes and ears with the light of consciousness. 1

These competent servants of Allah are the ones who are thus described in "*al-Munajat al-Sha'baniyya*":

"الهي واجعلني ممن ناديتهم فأجابك ولاحظته فصعقَ لجلالك فناجيتهم سرا وعمل
لك جهراً"

"O Allah! Rank me among those who will answer you when You call them, and will fall unconscious by the manifestation of your Light when you look at them; You whisper to them secretly, and they work for You openly."

After being delivered from the traps of *nafs-i ammara* (the imperative carnal soul) and the satanic temptation and opening up of his heart's eyes and ears, the young tailor was ranked among such competent servants and from then on occasionally enjoyed inspirations from the Unseen, some received in dreams and some while awake, thus being graced with special guidance that is granted to the devoted and sincere *mujahids* (volunteers of faith).2

This guidance is explained in a *hadith* quoted from the Holy Messenger of Allah (s):

"إذا أراد الله بعبده خيراً فقهه في الدين، وألهمه رشده"

"Whenever Allah intends good for a person, He makes them expert in religious law and inspires them toward the right path.3"

Penalty of a Disapproved Thought

One of the significant blessings of Divine guidance for those under His special training is awareness of one's own shortcomings. The Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying:

"إذا أراد الله عز وجل بعبد خيراً فقهه في الدين، زهده في الدنيا، وبصره
بعيوب نفسه"

"Whenever Allah intends good for a person, He makes them expert in religious law, unwilling toward the world and aware of his own shortcomings.⁴"

Having been directed on the path of Divine guidance, the young tailor enjoyed plenty of such inspirations.

Ayatollah Fahri⁵ related that the reverend Shaykh had told him:

"One day I got out to the market for some business; an improper thought crossed my mind, but I repented right away. On the way, I saw a string of camels carrying in firewood from outside town. All of a sudden one of the camels gave me kick that if I hadn't pulled myself aside in time, it would severely hurt me. I went to the mosque with this question in my mind that where this event had originated from. I asked anxiously: 'O God! What was that?!"

I was told intuitively: 'That was the outcome of what you thought. I said I did not commit any sin. I was responded: 'The camel's kick did not really hit you either.'⁶"

Threatened to a Destiny Like that of Balaam of Boer (*Bal'am-i Ba'ura*)

Among the Shaykh's devoted disciples was also Ayatollah Agha Mirza Mahmud—Friday prayer leader of Zanjan—who was a scholarly student of Mirza Na'ini. Such a learned scholar was highly impressed by the sincerity and brilliance of a detached person who was lacking formal education.

The Shaykh once said: "The Friday prayer leader of Zanjan came over along with some of the dignitaries from Tehran. He introduced the latter to me. Due to this visit I felt (with a sense of self-importance) that I attained such a high status that dignitaries come to meet me.

The night (of that same day) I had a strange state of mind, feeling so depressed. With imploring and beseeching God Almighty, my state of purity was restored. I got mindful that if this attitude had continued, what I would have done. How did it turn out this way?! I was engaged in such thought when I was shown Balaam of Boer⁷ and was told: If this (attitude) continued you would turn like him; the outcome of all your struggle and attempts was that you would associate with famous figures, enjoying the world and being deprived of the Hereafter. This event was over and done with. On Fridays, we had regular sessions. Once, the session took longer than usual and lasted until noon. The owner of the house and the other friends proposed to have lunch there, and I agreed. The next week again the session lasted until noon and once again the tablecloth was spread; naturally with more variety of foods this time. And this happened for several weeks. In one banquet with various foods and a best quality bar of butter in the middle of the tablecloth attracting everyone's attention. It crossed my mind that this

banquet was for me, the meeting was held for me, and the other friends were invited for my sake, so I was prior to others to have the butter.

With this idea, I picked a little bread, and as soon as I reached for the butter, I saw Balaam of Boer in a corner of the room laughing at me! Then I held back my hand."

"You are Satiated and your Neighbor is Hungry?!"

One of the Shaykh's disciples related that he had heard him say: "One night I dreamed that I had been found guilty and some agents came over to take me to the prison. The next morning I was very upset, wondering what the cause of that dream had been. With the grace from the Almighty Allah I found out that the dream was somehow related to my neighbor. I asked my family to see into the matter and inform me about it. My neighbor was a bricklayer; it was found out that he had been out of work for several days and the night before he and his wife had nothing to eat and slept the night hungry. I was told (intuitively): 'Woe to you! You sleep full whereas your neighbor is hungry?' At that time, I had a saving of three *abbasis* in cash! Without any delay, I borrowed another *abbasi* from a grocer in the neighborhood and together with my savings gave it to the neighbor and requested him to let me know whenever he was jobless and penniless."

"Love your Children for the Sake of God!"

Once the Shaykh said:

"One night I found I was in veil⁸, and was unable to find my way to the Beloved. I tried to trace the origin of this veil. After long pleading and probing, I found it was the result of the feeling affection or one of my children the evening before when I looked at his (her?) face! I was told (intuitively) that I should love my child for the sake of God! (So) I prayed God to forgive me for that (personal) affection. ..."

The Veil of Eating Food beyond Need!

One of the Shaykh's devotees related about him that the Shaykh was once holding a session in one of his friends' house. Before starting his talk, he felt somehow weak due to hunger and asked for some bread. The householder brought him half a loaf of bread for him to eat, and then he started the meeting. The following night he said:

"Last night I made salutations to the holy Imams (a) but I did not see them. I pleaded to find the reason. I was told intuitively: 'You had half of that food and the hunger alleviated. Why then did you eat the other half?! Having some food enough for body's need is all right, but extra to that would cause veil and darkness.'"

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1. Nahjul Balagha, Sermon 222.
 2. (والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا) (And those who strive in Our (Cause) –We will certainly guide them to our paths.) (Al Mulk: 69)
 3. Mizan al-Hikma, IV, 1602: 5359.
 4. Ibid., IV, 1602: 5360.
 5. The representative of Wali Faqih and prayer leader of Masjid of Zainabiyyah in Damascus. He has narrated the next account about the Shaykh, too.
 6. This account has been related in very slightly a different form by two of the Shaykh's other devotees. The present account was narrated by Ayatollah Fahri.
 7. Balaam of Boer was a scholar, according to the Tafsirs, whose supplications were granted. He had twelve thousand disciples, but due to carnal desire and whims, he went to the aid of the despotic ruler of his time, to the extent that he got ready to curse the army of the Prophet Musa (a). He was likened to a dog, as referred to in the Qur'an: (His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls out his tongue.) فمثله كمثل الكلب ان تحمل عليه يلهث او تتركه يلهث (al-A'raf: 176). See also: Tafsir al-Mizan, VIII, 339; Tafsir Qummi, 1, 248; Munityat al-Murid, 151.
 8. i. e., veiled inwardly and in darkness of soul.

Spiritual Perfections

There is a renowned *hadith* that the experts call "*hadith-i qurb-i nawafil*" (the *hadith* of proximity in supererogation).

Both Shi'a and Sunni scholars of *hadith* quoted, with a slight difference, the Holy Prophet (s) as saying: 1

"قال الله عز وجل: ... ما تقرب إلي عبد بشيء أحب إلي مما افترضت عليه،
وانه ليتقرب الي بالنافلة حتى أحبه، فاذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به،
وبصره الذي يبصر به، ولسانه الذي ينطق به، ويده التي يبطش بها، ان دعاني
أجبتة، وإن سألني أعطيته"

"The Almighty Allah said: No servant is drawn nigh to Me except by means of what is more favorable to Me than what I have made obligatory to them. Verily, he approaches to Me by *nafila* (supererogatory prayers) to the extent that I get to love him; in that case, I will become his ears to hear with, his eyes to see with and his tongue to speak with, and his hand to strike with. If he calls Me, I will answer him and if he makes a request from Me I will grant him"²

What is meant by "*nafila*" in the *ahadith-i qurb-i nawafil*, which follow the obligatory prayers, consist of good and righteous deeds, which expedite man's flight toward absolute perfection and the Sublime

Destination of humanity.

One can, accordingly, through performance of good deeds for God's sake get closer and closer to absolute perfection; and at the peak of servitude, his eyes would not see except for the sake of God, his ears would not hear except for the sake of God, his tongue would not talk except for the sake of God, and his heart would not yearn except for the sake of God.

In other words, by submerging your will in the Will of Allah (swt)--as put in the *ahadith-i qurb-i nawafil*--God will become your eyes, ears, tongue and heart; and you will eventually attain the essence of servitude and Divinity.

According to the reverend Shaykh:

"If the eye works for God, it becomes **Eye of Allah**, if the ear works for God it becomes **Ear of Allah**, if the hand works for God, it becomes **Hand of Allah**, and so forth to the heart of man, which is God's place; as narrated:

"قلب المؤمن من عرش الرحمن"

"The heart of a believer is the Throne of Allah, the compassionate.³"

And as Imam Husayn (a) says:

"جعلت قلوب أوليائك مسكناً لمشيئتك"

"O Lord! You made Your lover's hearts the station of Your Will and Providence.⁴"

Accurate and fair probing into the Shaykh's spiritual states indicates that, after the enormous leap he made in his youth as a result of rejecting the lustful temptation; and as an outcome of Divine training and the inspirations and assistance granted to him from the Unseen, he achieved such high levels of spiritual virtues. Perhaps, this was the secret of his great interest in the following poems which he frequently whispered:

"In the school of Eternity, it was Your Beauty that guided me; Your Grace aided me to be trapped in your (Divine) Snare."

"My vile carnal soul yearned for any falsehood; Your Gracious Emanation liberated me from its grips."

Absorbed in Monotheism

One of the Shaykh's close disciples who had been associating with him for about thirty years said: 'On the recommendation of the Shaykh I went to visit Ayatollah Kuhistani?5

The late Ayatollah Kuhistani once said about the Shaykh: 'Whatever the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat was granted (spiritually), was due to his fine monotheism; he was absorbed in monotheism.

The Station of Fana (Annihilation)

Dr. Hamid Farzam who has enjoyed the reverend Shaykh's sessions, described him as follows: 'His reverence Shaykh Rajab Ali Nikuguyan (May God's Mercy be upon him) was a detached ascetic who had achieved union with God. He had, out of purification of *nafs* and inward purity, attained the status of *fana fi Allah*, and *baqa bi Allah* (subsistence in Allah); and by means of acting according to legal ordinances and spiritual path-faring through stations and states of spiritual discipline, he joined the origin of Truth, graced with the Blessing from Almighty God.'

The Lover of God

Another of the Shaykh's disciples had the following description about him: 'The late Shaykh was from among those whose beings are captivated by God. He was literally unable to see anything except God; whatever he saw was God; whatever he said was about God. His first and last word was God, for he was in love with God. He was in love both with God and Ahl al-Bayt (a); whatever he said was about them. Being sacred is apart from being a lover. Shaykh Rajab 'Ali was a lover. His art was the Love of God and work for God. Those who are Divinely in love; their eyes display that love; his eyes were not like ordinary ones, he seemed to see nothing but God.'

The reverend Shaykh considered as sinful taking pleasure in anything except in God. Once in a very hot summer day, the Shaykh blew (some air onto his face with) a manual straw fan to cool off a little. As soon as he felt cool, he said at once:

"وأستغفركَ من كل لذة بغيرك ذكرك ومن كل راحة بغير أنسك ومن كل سرور بغير قربك ومن كل شغل بغير طاعتك."

"O God! I pray forgiveness from Thee for every pleasure but remembering Thee, every ease but proximity with Thee, every happiness but nearness to Thee every occupation but obeying Thee!6"

Another of his disciples, described the Shaykh's love of God as follows: 'The Shaykh was so enamored

of God that in his presence nothing but talking about his beloved would be allowed to come up, except of course for some necessary subjects of daily matters. Sometimes he referred to the story of **Layli and Majnun**, in which Majnun was never interested to hear anything but about Layli. It was related that someone asked Majnun: Is Ali (a) rightful or 'Umar?

To which he answered: ' Layli is rightful! , He (the Shaykh) would say:

"Even if this story is not real, it may be fitting to drive home the (latent) reality in it."

The Greatest Status

The young tailor, in his intense love of God and perfection of sincerity, was granted the Supreme Status and the Sublime Destiny. Thus, as asserted by the Ahl al-Bayt (a), he achieved the virtues and stations of people of cognition (those endowed with Divine Knowledge) through a way other than the common ways. Imam al-Sadiq (a) is quoted as saying:

"ان أولي الألباب الذين عملوا بالفكرة حتى ورثوا منه حب الله - الى ان قال -
فاذا بلغ هذه المنزلة جعل شهوته ومحبته في خالقه، فاذا فعل ذلك نزل المنزلة
الكبرى فعابن ربه في قلبه، وورث الحكمة بغير ما ورثه الحكماء، وورث العلم
بغير ما ورثه العلماء، وورث الصدق بغير ما ورثه الصديقون. ان الحكماء
ورثوا الحكمة بالصمت، وان العلماء ورثوا العلم بالطلب، وان الصديقين ورثوا
الصدق بالخشوع وطول العبادة"

"The wise people are those who put their thought in work by means of which to acquire Love of God. When they reach this status--the holy Imam (a) went on to say--they set their desire and love toward their Creator, and thereby they reach the highest status, find their Lord in their hearts, and obtain wisdom not through the way the sages obtained, and find knowledge not through the way the scholars found, and achieve *Sidq* (sincerity) not through the way the pious achieved. The sages found sagacity by silence, the scholars found knowledge by seeking, and the pious attained piety and sincerity through humility and long-term worship.⁷

Finding Way into all Worlds

One of the Shaykh's devotees who had been closely associating with him for so many years wrote about the Shaykh's spiritual achievements: 'As a result of his great love in Almighty God and the Ahl al-Bayt (a), there remained no veil between him and God. He had access to all "worlds". He would talk to all the souls residing in *Barzakh* (Purgatory World) since the beginning of creation up to the present. He would

"see", by his own will, whatever anyone had done in their whole life and would tell the signs,⁸ and would reveal what he willed and would be allowed to.

Visiting the *Malakut* (the Celestial Kingdom)!

Visiting the *Malakut* of the heavens and the earth with the eye of the heart is a prologue to attaining the high status of intuition of certitude.

وكذلك نري ابراهيم ملكوت السموت والأرض وليكون من الموقنين))

(So also We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude.) (Al An'am: 75)

The Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying:

"لولا ان الشياطين يحومون على قلوب بني آدم لنظروا الى الملكوت"

"If it were not that devils are dominant over the hearts of human beings, they would be witnessing the *Malakut*.⁹"

All those who have been delivered from the snares of *nafs* and Satan, by tearing apart the heart's veils, are able to observe the *Malakut* of the heavens and the earth, and to bear witness to the Oneness of the Sacred Essence of God.

(شهد الله أنه لا اله الا هو والملائكة وأولوا العلم)

(There is no God but He: That is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endowed with knowledge...) (Ale Imran: 18)

One of the Shaykh's disciples related: 'I asked the late Haj Muqaddas¹⁰ whether the following *hadith* attributed to the Holy Prophet (s) is correct:

"لولا ان الشياطين يحومون على قلوب بني آدم لنظروا الى الملكوت"

"If it were not that devils are dominant over the hearts of human beings, they would be witnessing the

Malakut."

He answered: 'Yes.'

I asked: 'Do you see the *Malakut* of the heavens and the earth?'

'No, but Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayat does!' He replied.

The Shaykh at the Age of Sixty

It is related by the late Shaykh ' Abdul Karim Hamid that the Shaykh (Rajab Ali) was in such a state of mind at the age of sixty that whenever he willed he would understand what he wished to. 11

The great Difference Between our Knowledge and his

Dr. Hamid Farzam said: 'I usually visited the reverend Shaykh on Thursday evenings and attended his public sessions for prayers and supplications. Until I found I had questions that I needed to put to him privately, so it crossed my mind to have audience with him in the middle of the week.

A Monday afternoon I went to see him to ask some questions. It was a very nice day, as the late Hujj. Dr. Muhammad Muhaqqiqi, a university professor and the representative to Ayatollah Burujirdi was also present in his session. He was a brilliant figure whom I had not met or known till then. Anyway, I asked for permission, sat down, and enjoyed a lot the scholarly discussions of those two noble characters. Earlier in the evening at the end of the session, Dr. Muhaqqiqi said goodbye and left and I bid farewell too and followed him out of the house. In the alley, I said to him that I liked to get more acquainted with him. He said: "I am (Mr.) Muhaqqiqi and I am a teacher." I said I came to see the Shaykh to benefit from his presence (and knowledge), and I see you are, thanks God, very learned--intending to see what he had to say. He said: "No, sir. My knowledge is of the bookish kind and all memorized. You should see for yourself what a high position the Shaykh has attained; he sees many things and knows many things that are incomparable to what I know." I asked: 'How come?' He said: "The first time I had an audience with him, the first thing he asked me after greetings was about my job. I said: I am a teacher. He asked: "Apart from teaching?" I replied: "I am a university professor and teach." He said: "No, I see you deal with a global object!" I was shocked to hear that and answered: "Yes, I do make geographical globes for livelihood and nobody knows about that."

Confirming Dr. Muhaqqiqi's views, Dr. Farzam goes on with his memories about the reverend Shaykh: 'There are lots of things to say that if I were to count it would come to many volumes. The reverend Shaykh, due to his purified soul and inner sincerity, would simply see things and would plainly state them without needing--as the Sufis put it--"to be emerged in the sea of revelations", so that he has often said explicitly in the presence of his disciples:

"Friends! God has graced me with the blessing of seeing the *Barzakhi* (of intermediate world) body of

people."

I have some other memories of the same nature to tell:

Helping out the Hard-Working Laborer

A) There was an industrious and honest worker named Ali Qudati from Azerbaijan who used to work for the neighbors and sometimes worked in our house as well and got paid for it. Both in summer and winter he would wear a long military coat. Having not ever seen him, the Shaykh once told me unprecedentedly:

"That tall man who wears military coat and comes to your house sometimes to help, is poor and has a large family, you should help him more!"

"You Lose Temper too quickly!"

B) One Thursday morning I left home sulkily. In the evening, I went to the Shaykh's house for evening Prayer; all the friends were gathered waiting for the *adhan* (call to prayer) and the Shaykh was sitting in a corner. As soon as he saw me, he faced me and said: "You lose temper too quickly!" Then, shaking his head in contempt and surprise, recited the following couplet by Hafiz:

'Under His sword of sorrow, you ought to go on dancing (cheerfully)!

For the one who was killed by Him, would be granted a happy ending'

And I immediately found out my own fault!

"I See the Hair on his Head and Face is Growing Grey!"

C) About forty years ago I had some heart trouble and I got somewhat scared. I told Dr. Goya that my heart was not in a good condition and would possibly. ...

It seemed that he told the reverend Shaykh about my heart condition and he had commented:

"He should not be worried, I see the hair on his head and face is growing white."

And he had apparently proceeded to say:

"He will live on well through his seventies."

Now, thanks God, I am over seventy years old. Such accounts are too many to bring up here; however, I further point out very briefly some accounts that rate much higher than intuitive vision of state of affairs:

Contact with the Souls of Dr. Farzam's Parents

D) It was around 1958, i. e., later in the blessed life of the Shaykh, and I was appointed to go to Punjab University in Lahore Pakistan to teach Persian language and literature. One afternoon I went to see him for consultation. Speaking by conjecture, I said: Your reverence! I have come to you to consult with you whether to go to Pakistan; and request you, if possible, to consult my parents in this respect, too.

The reverend Shaykh said: "Send Three Salawat!"

Then he began talking to them, and at the end, he was driven to tears. Getting upset, I said: ' If I had known you would get disturbed and wept, I would not have asked you to contact my parents.

He said:

"No sir! I asked them about the reappearance of Hazrat Hujjat Imam Mahdi (aj), and my weeping was in that relation."

Then he gave me some evidence of my father's countenance and went on to say:

"Your mother was wearing a *chador* (Islamic modest covering) and was talking in Kermani dialect some of which I did not understand."

I confirmed: 'that's right your reverence! If they speak in Kermani accent, some of their words cannot be recognized by you.'

The Shaykh said:

"All in all, their last word was that you should not go to Pakistan; and why should you go anyway?!"

And, of course, I did not happen to go; their words and those of the reverend Shaykh came true.'

How a Relation was established between Dr. Shaykh and Shaykh Rajab Ali

The reverend Shaykh's son quoted the late Dr. Abul Hasan Shaykh¹² talking about his first acquaintance with the reverend Shaykh as follows: 'The reason for my getting familiar with the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat was the event of my wife having gotten lost for a couple of months. The more we looked for her the less we found a sign of her; we even visited some spiritualists, but to no effect. In our utmost despair, someone gave me the Shaykh's home address, and that was the first time that I had an audience with him. When he saw me, he pondered for a while and then said:

"Your wife is in America and she will return in two weeks do not worry."

He was quite right. My wife was in America and returned in due time.

After this event, most of the days after work at the university; I would call on the Shaykh, and then went home

The late Dr Shaykh said in an interview made with him on August 2, 1996 concerning (compilation of) this volume 'Once we went to "Pass Qal'a" in his company We had hired a donkey for him to ride on and I was walking in front leading the donkey I was thinking to myself 'What do I want professorship of university for? If I want to become a full Professor all I need is to walk in his shadow (follow him) to become like him When I went to Karbala with him, we had gone to a bathhouse with him and I rubbed his back with a Turkish rubbing glove How pleasurable it was to be with him!'

"The Automobile is All Right, Move on!"

Dr Thubati said 'One day the reverend Shaykh together with Mr. Mirza Sayyid ' Ali and Agha Akrami were waiting in the bus station to go to mount "Bibi Shahrbanu¹³" There were too many passengers waiting there. The first bus arrived and the reverend Shaykh said:

"We are not destined to get on this one"

The bus filled up and left. The second bus came and the Shaykh said the same again. The passengers rushed to the bus and got on, but the Shaykh and his friends were left behind. The third bus arrived, but this time too the crowd rushed on and the Shaykh and his companions did not happen to get on. The bus driver tried to get the bus started up, but whatever he tried the bus failed to start! Finally, the driver told the passengers to get off as the bus had stalled; and they did so.

The reverend Shaykh said to his companions: "Get on the bus now!" And they got on the bus; the driver said: 'The bus is stalled and it does not get started sir!'

The Shaykh said:

"Nothing is wrong with it let's set off."

The driver sat behind the wheel, started and the bus got started up. At this moment, the other passengers got on and we set off. On the way the bus conductor began collecting the fares and when he reached us, he refused to get fare from us three, but we disagreed. At last the conductor said: ' I will not get fare from that one—pointing to the Shaykh!'

Your Request is granted

Agha Haj Sayyid Ibrahim Musawi Zanjani¹⁴ said: 'In February 1956, I traveled to Baghdad together with my family, on a mission as the Deputy of the Iranian Passport Office. Two days before the coup d'etat in

Iraq my family and I returned to Iran but my mother and son stayed on in Kazmayn. Two days later, the news about the coup d'etat in Iraq spread around and the borders were closed, making me extremely upset about my mother and son who were left behind in Iraq. I frequented the Iraqi Embassy to get the latest news, while applying for a visa to go back to Iraq. There were many others who were in the same situation as I was, and would refer to the embassy but to no effect.

Hearing the bothering news (about the situation in Iraq) made me more deeply tense and worried. Those days coincided with the month of Muharram; so I went to Qum for *Ziyarat*. It was already dark when I got into the Holy shrine of Hadrat Ma'suma (a). I went right to the upper part of the *zarih* and began to supplicate importunately and lament while reciting the "Special Salawat" dedicated to Holy Imam Musa bin Ja'far (a) and entreating that noble Imam (a) to help my getting visa. I returned to Tehran two days later. One of my colleagues, the late Ahmad Fayd Mahdawi, wanted to make an arrangement for his cousin named (the late) Hujj. Haj Agha Ziya'uddin Fayd Mahdawi to meet with the reverend Shaykh. Together with him (Haj Agha Ziya'uddin), we went to the Shaykh's house. When we got there, we were guided into a room that was half carpeted and was very simply furnished. The Shaykh asked us to recite the Sura of Tawhid seven times. He believed in the number seven very strongly. Then, he started to speak; and while busy giving guidance and advising, suddenly and unprecedentedly he faced me and said:

"You had a very good pilgrimage and your request had been granted; the effects are evident. Pray for me too!!"

I asked the Shaykh which pilgrimage he was talking about. He said: "The pilgrimage to Qum." And then went on with his advice.

Cursing Causes Darkness (of the Heart)

In the meantime, he said to the late Haj Agha Ziya'uddin Fayd Mahdawi:

"Do not curse so much! Cursing so much causes darkness; pray, instead!!"

And the latter replied: 'Obeyed!'

This admonition, obviously irrelevant to the discussion going on, was ambiguous to me. The next day, I brought up the subject with my colleague, Agha Ahmad Fayd Mahdawi, and asked him: 'What was the story of the cursing by Haj Agha Ziya'uddin?'

He explained: 'My cousin, i.e., Haj Agha Ziya'uddin, has a son who has got atheistic ideas; and he curses him (his son) after every prayer!'

As for my request having been granted as mentioned by the Shaykh, when I referred to the Iraqi Embassy two days later, as soon as the related officer saw me he said: Give me your passport to stamp it for a visa! Then he stamped my passport with a stamp having old Royal logo on it and then crossed

out the word "Malik" (Imperial) and wrote "Jumhuri" (Republic) above it. This sounded very surprising to the other clients who were applying for a visa too.

Having received the visa, I left for Baghdad; and later on it turned out that before me only an American journalist had been admitted into Baghdad.

The Effect of Humility toward People for God's Sake

One of the Shaykh's disciples related (quoting a friend): The late Agha Murtada Zahid was being laid in his grave pit, the reverend Shaykh said:

"The *Nakirayn* (the two angels interrogating the dead persons in their tombs) were immediately addressed by God Almighty: Leave that servant (of Mine) to Me; do not bother him... He has all his life been humble with people for My sake; he did not feel any vanity."

Talking to Plants

One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted him as saying:

"The plants are alive too and they talk. I speak to them and they tell me about their properties."

The Reward for the Inventor of Electric Fan

One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted him as saying:

"Once a small electric fan was brought to me as a gift; I saw (intuitively) there was a fan placed before its inventor in the Hell-- (actually he meant) *Barzakh*."

This intuition is confined by the *hadith* that suggests that although the unbelievers do not go to paradise, but if they had done good things they would be rewarded. In a *hadith* by the Holy Prophet (s) we read:

"ما أحسن محسن من مسلم ولا كافر إلا أثابه الله. قيل: ما إثابة الكافر؟ قال: ان كان قد وصل رحماً، أو تصدق بصدقة، أو عمل حسنة، أثابه الله تعالى المال والولد والصحة وأشباه ذلك. قيل: وما إثابته في الآخرة؟ قال: عذاب دون العذاب، وقرأ: (أدخلوا آل فرعون أشد العذاب)"

"Whoever does good, whether a Muslim or an unbeliever, God will reward him." His Holiness (s) was asked: 'What is rewarding an unbeliever like?' The Holy Prophet (s) replied: "If they have had regard for kinship or given alms or done any good, God Almighty would grant them wealth, children, and health in

reward to their good deeds. 15 " He was (further) asked: 'How will they be rewarded in the Hereafter?' The Holy Prophet (s) replied: "They will receive less severe punishment. Then he recited this verse from the Holy Qur'an: (Cast the people of Pharaoh into the severest burning fire!) (Al Nur: 46)

Conditional Fulfillment of Supplication

One of the Shaykh's friends related: 'A disciple of the Shaykh could not have children. Whatever he did was to no effect, until in a session—in which I was present too—he asked the Shaykh for a solution, saying: 'I want a child to bequeath from me after my death.

The Shaykh responded:

"I will reply to you later on"

Some time elapsed and I was not informed of what answer the Shaykh gave to him. Until one day he invited me to a banquet. I asked him the occasion for the banquet. He replied that he had been granted a daughter. Recalling that session with the Shaykh, I asked him: 'Was the Shaykh's prayer answered?' He said: 'On some condition of course.' I asked: 'How come?' He explained: 'He (the Saykh) made me commit myself to take a calf to the village "Imam Zadeh Hasan" – a village near Shahr-i Ray –on the birthday of my daughter and slaughter it (as a sacrifice) to be distributed among the people there. And now is the first year of that commitment.

This continued for seven years. In the eighth year, however, the father was abroad and he could not fulfill his commitment. The same year the child died.

After this event, he was very frustrated. I intended to go to the Shaykh's house and asked him if he would like to go there too. He agreed, and I went a little earlier and told the Shaykh that such and such is upset for the death of his daughter. The Shaykh said:

"What shall I do? Is not the fulfillment of commitment one of the first conditions for being a Muslim? He did not fulfill his commitment."

Then our friend arrived, and the Shaykh made a little joking with him, saying:

"Do not be sad! God has granted you several palaces in paradise, instead; just be careful not to ruin them!"

Helping the One Who Had Lost his Properties

After the Shaykh's death, someone related to one of his sons: 'I had sold my house and planned to deposit the money in the bank, but it was closed. So I took the money home, and it was stolen in the nighttime. I pursued the matter at the Crime Investigation Department, but they could not help me there.

I pleaded with Imam al 'Asr (aj). On the fortieth night of my pleading, I was given in a dream the address to the Shaykh's house. I went to the Shaykh's house early in the morning and told him my problem. He said:

"I am not a soothsayer or a fortune teller; you have been wrongly informed!"

I said: I swear to my forefather (meaning a Holy Imam (a), for he was a Sayyid) that I will not leave you. The Shaykh hesitated for a while, took me inside his house, and then said: "Go to Varamin (a city near Tehran), to such-and-such a village in such-and-such a house in which there are two rooms. Your money, wrapped intact in a red silk handkerchief, is placed beside an oven. Take the money and leave the house. They (i.e., the people in the house) will offer you to have tea, but (do not accept and) rush back immediately!"

I went to the same address--which was that of my own servant--the landlord assumed that I was accompanied by an agent from the C.I.D. I went right into the room and took the money from exactly where the Shaykh had described to me. When I was leaving, the landlord offered me tea, but I shouted at him and left the house.

The money was a sum of one hundred *tomans* in all. I took half of that money to the Shaykh and placed it with much gratitude before him, imploring him to accept it as my gift. He did not accept it. After my insistence and to my greatest pleasure, he agreed to pick twenty *tomans*, but not for himself; rather, he gave it back to me and said:

"I introduce to you some poor family whose daughters are in need of dowries; you should not leave it to anybody else but yourself do it. Go ahead and buy whatever they require and deliver them to their houses."

He did not take even a penny for himself!

The Scent of Red Apples

One of the Shaykh's friends gave the following account: 'Together with the Shaykh we went to Kashan. The Shaykh had the habit that wherever he traveled, he would visit the cemetery of that place. As we entered the cemetery in Kashan, he said:

"Assalamu 'Alayk ya 'Aba 'Abd Allah (a)" ("Salutations be on you O Imam Husayn (a)") We walked a few steps further on, and then he said:

"Do you not smell anything?"

'No, what smell?' We asked. Then he asked:

"The smell (scent) of red apples?"

Our answer was 'no' again. We went further on and met the man in charge of the cemetery

The Shaykh asked him:

"Has anyone been buried here today?"

The man answered: 'Just before you arrived someone was buried', and then he took us to a newly covered tomb. There it was! We all smelled the scent of red apples. We asked the Shaykh about the scent, to which he answered:

"When this person was buried here, His Holiness Hadrat Sayyid al-Shuhada Imam Husayn (a) came here and for the sake of this person (and by the blessed visit of Sayyid al-Shuhada (a)) the punishment was removed from those buried in this cemetery."

The Reward for Abstaining from Unlawful Look

Another disciple said: 'I was driving a taxi down the (newly named) Sipah Square, when I saw a tall, good-looking lady in a *chador* who was standing along the street waiting for a taxi. I pulled up and let her get in, while keeping my look away from her and asking God for forgiveness, and drove her to her destination.

The next day when I had an audience with the Shaykh, he said- as if he had witnessed the event in person:

"Who was that tall lady you looked at and turned away your look from and asked God for forgiveness? The Almighty and Exalted God has reserved a palace in the Paradise for you as well as a *hour* similar to that....."

The Fire within the Unlawful Property

In a session, someone was practicing witchcraft and the Shaykh's son was also present. He stated: 'I tried to hamper him, so whatever he did ended in failure. At last, he found out that I was interfering in his business and implored me not to "cut off his daily bread". Then, he gave me a precious rug as a gift. I took the rug home. As soon as my father saw it he said:

"Who has given this rug to you? (I see) fire and smoke is rising out of it! Take it back to its owner right away!"

And I did so.'

How the Gramophone Stopped Working

One of the Shaykh's sons said: 'My father and I went to a wedding ceremony of one of our relatives. When the host noticed the Shaykh's arrival, he asked the young men around to turn off the gramophone. As we entered, the young men came over to see who is coming that because of him they should not listen to music. When the Shaykh was shown to them, they said: 'Come on! Shall we turn off the gramophone for him?!' And went back and turned it on again.

I had eaten half of my ice cream when my father patted on my arm beckoning to leave. Not knowing what the matter was, I said: 'I have not finished eating my ice cream yet. He said: "That's all right, let's go!"

I heard (later on) that as soon as we left, the gramophone broke down. They had to bring in another one, and that one burned up too. This event made the host to that ceremony turn into a devotee of the Shaykh.

The Appeal by the Youth in Love

One of the Shaykh's friends said: 'I went on a trip to Mashhad with the Shaykh. In the Holy Shrine of Imam al-Reza (a), we saw a young man beside the steel window in Sahn-i Inqilab crying and lamenting bitterly and swearing the Holy Imam (a) to his mother.

The reverend Shaykh said to me:

"Go and tell him it got heard, and tell him to leave."

I went ahead and told it to the young man; he thanked and left. I asked the Shaykh what it was all about.

He explained:

"This young man is in love with a girl and wants to get married to her, but they (her parents) do not agree; he has come here to entreat Imam al-Reza (a) to help him. His Holiness (a) said: It got answered, he may go."

"Do not get Furious!"

One of the Shaykh's students said: 'One day I was discussing in the market with a person about the religious matters. He would not accept any of the evidence I brought up. I got a little angry. An hour later, I went to visit the Shaykh. As soon as he saw me, he said:

"Did you have a row with someone?"

I told him what happened. He said:

"In such situations do not get angry, follow the way of the Holy Ahl al-Bayt (a); if you see they do not accept, discontinue the argument.

"His Beard is of no Concern to You!"

One of the Shaykh's disciples is quoted as saying: 'One evening I arrived in the session and I was a little late, as the Shaykh was already reciting the *munajat* (whispering prayer). When I looked at the audience, I saw someone with a shaved beard. I got upset in my heart and felt sorry why this person had shaved. The reverend Shaykh who was standing behind me and facing the *qibla*, stopped his praying all of a sudden and said:

"His beard is of no concern to you! See what his deeds are like; he may have some good in him which you are lacking."

Responding Satan's Temptation

The Shaykh's son related: 'Once I was going somewhere with my father, I saw two women with made up faces and without *hijab* were each walking on either side of my father. Each one of them was holding a top in her hand and spinning it. They said to my father: 'Hey fellow! Look! Which of our tops is spinning prettier?'

I was too little to say anything, and my father was ignoring them while he was holding his head down and smiling. They came along with us a few steps and suddenly disappeared! I asked my father who they were. He answered: "They were both Satan."

1. See Mizan al-Hikmah, X, 4856: 3330.

2. Al-Kafi, II, 352: 7; Mizan al-Hikmah, X, 4858: 16627.

3. Bihar al-Anwar, LVIII, 39.

4. Muhaj al-Da'wat, 68; Bihar al-Anwar, LXXXV, 214.

5. One of the eminent scholars that the Shaykh frequently visited was Ayatollah Kuhistani about whom the Shaykh said: "From Agha Kuhistani a light is emitted that rises into the heaven." In one of the visits, the late Ayatollah Kuhistani accompanied the Shaykh to the side of the road --about a kilometer away from his residence --in order to see him off. Some years later when the Shaykh's words about Ayatollah Kuhistani was related to him, he humbly said: Those days we had (various kinds of) dhikrs (remembrances of God). It is worthwhile here to read a miraculous act about Ayatollah Kuhistani. Hujjat al-Islam. Agha Sayyid Qasim Shuja'i, an eloquent preacher, told me (the author): 'Agha Sadra'i Ishkiwari, a preacher in Rasht, was afflicted with a heart disease. He was transferred from Rasht to Tehran and hospitalized in Aban Hospital. One day the late Agha Falsafi called me and asked me to visit him together in the hospital. When we got there and after greeting, Agha Falsafi asked him:

'What is your (financial) condition like?'

"The bounty from Sayyid al-Shuhada Imam Husayn (a) is running us (providing for our livelihood)." He answered.

'We all enjoy Sayyid al-Shuhada's bestowal', said Agha Falsafi. To which Agha Sadra'i replied: 'Ours is a different account!' Mr. Falsafi curiously inquired more. Agha Sadra'i explained: 'I have got a piece of tea growing garden bestowed on me by Sayyid al-Shuhada and the yield provide for my old age and retirement.' Agha Falsafi asked: 'How do you know it is bestowed on you by Sayyid al-Shuhada?' He answered: 'I had made a preliminary agreement to sell this garden. Two days later I paid a visit to Ayatollah Kuhistani.

When I entered he said: 'Sadra'i! Why are you selling the 'atiyyeh Mulukaneh (regal bestowal)?' I said to him: 'Agha I have nothing to do with the Shah!' He said: 'I do not mean that, I am talking about our Imam Sayyid al-Shuhada; these (dynasty of Pahlavi) have stolen the term ('atiyye Mulukaneh). Do you remember when as a youth you visited the holy shrine of Sayyid al-Shuhada and whispered to him through the grits of his Zarih, saying: 'O Imam Sayyid al Shuhada! Do me a favor so that at my retirement I'll be living on your bestowal'? This garden is the answer to that request, why did you deal it?'

I kissed his (Ayatollah Kuhistani's) hand, got out of his house, took a car back to Rasht, and tore up the document of preliminary agreement; and my livelihood has been sustained with by this garden up until the present.'

I (Shuja'i) got deeply impressed (by that account). I decided to meet with him (but I didn't manage). It was time for Hajj and I was appointed as the clergyman of the Hajj caravan. There was a doctor in our caravan named Dr. Tahmasbi. I told him how I had in mind visiting Agha Kuhistani but I could not until then. He said that he was his physician. I got very glad and asked him to promise to take me to him as soon as we get back to Iran. He said when we left Iran he (Ayatollah Kuhistani) had been seriously ill. I was very worried until we went from Makka to 'Arafat, where I began to quietly recite the supplication of 'Arafa, pondering on the content and the meanings. When I reached the phrase, "amiat 'aynun la tarak" (may the eye that does not see You be blind!), my heart broke and tears rolled down my cheeks. I said: 'O God! I know I have nothing of value to offer, but one thmg I sure have and that is my siyadat (being a Sayyid). I leave it to you in pledge: I swear You to the rights and dignity of our forefathers to grace this servant of Yours--Ayatollah Kuhistani-- with healing.

When we returned to Iran, I didn't happen to visit Ayatollah Kuhistani. I went to Mashhad. It was 11: 30 p.m. when in Dar al-Siyada (porch of the holy shrine of Imam al-Reza (a)) I saw an old man coming in being supported by two other men holding him by his arms. I asked who he was, and they said: 'Agha Kuhistani." I had not seen him before. I approached him, greeted him, and bowed to kiss his hand. As I bowed down, he laid his hand on my right shoulder and said: "Shuja'i, may God grant you a blessed long life! Your supplication in 'Arafat reached (saved) me!" I broke out in a sweat just as I heard that. I sat down right there.

My wife asked: 'What happened?' I said: Nothing just let me sit down for a while. And I sat for about half on hour. Agha Ray Shahri! Only God was witnessing in Arafat and nobody else was there when I prayed to God for him. This was a miraculous act I remember from him. I prayed for him in 'Arafat in total solitude as a drop of tear rolled down my face on the book I was holding in my hand, and he said to me in the Holy shrine of Imam al-Reza (a) that he received my du'a (that I made for him) in Arafat. It was a strange memory in my life.

6. Mafatih al-Jinan, Munajat al-Dhakirin, Munajat No. 15. English translation adopted from: The Psalms of Islam (al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya), The Whispered Prayer of the Remembers, part XIII, 256.

7. Mizan al-Hikmah, II, 960: 3159.

8. An example of such accounts is related to my (the narrator's) first trip to the Holy City of Makkah. See "The Only Place Where they Displayed Affection to You", chapter Nine, Part 3.

9. Mizan al-Hikmah, X, 4988: 16945.

10. One of the famous preachers in Tehran who was rightfully a man of piety and sanctity.

11. The author of "Two Treatises on the Recent History of the Mysticism in Iran" (Du risalih Dar tarikh Jadid tasawwuf-i Iran), (Manuchehr Saduqi) writes on page 103 under the title "A Note": The compiler said pertinently: 'I heard from Mr. Mudarrisi saying that earlier in his studying at faculty of science (of Tehran University) he and several of the professors there sometimes attended the weekly sessions of the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat (ra). He (Mr. Mudarrisi) would ask him

some difficult questions on physics such as magnetic field, etc., and the Shaykh would say: "I will ask and answer (you)."
Then he would lower his head in deliberation and a while later would raise his head and give the right answer to his questions.

12. He is known as "The Father of Chemistry in Iran."

13. A mountain near Shahr-i Ray,

14. Son-in-law to the late Ayatollah Sayyid Mahmud, Friday prayer leader of Zanjan.

15. Mizan al-Hikmah, II, 662: 2213.

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