

## The Editor's Introduction

Getting acquainted with my professor: it was a hot day in Tir (the fourth month of the Iranian Calendar corresponding to June–July), 1379 (2000 AD) and I had finished *sat'h* (intermediate level) examinations at the *Hawzah* (Islamic theology school). From the very same day, I got determined to further my studies in Islamic jurisprudence and principles (*kharij fiqh wa usul*). Those who have experienced this know quite well that benefiting from a fully qualified professor plays a great role in one's success, and I was deeply aware of this fact.

Summer was coming to its end and choosing my professor was becoming a sophisticated concern for me. The middle of Shahrivar (the sixth month of the Iranian Calendar corresponding to August–September) was coming, which was the beginning of the academic year in the *Hawzah*, and I was so anxious. Choosing my professor had so much engaged my mind that it was my sole request from God in my pilgrimage (*Ziyarah*) to the holy shrines of Imam Reza (a.s)<sup>1</sup> and Lady Fatima Ma'suma (a.s). Meanwhile I consulted so many trustee people to reach my purpose.

Finally, by God's favor, I joined the circle of study of my dear professor, Ayatollah Hajj Sayyid Muhammad Reza Mudarrisi Tabataba'i Yazdi.

The professor's lectures were vital to me and brought academic cheerfulness for me. I got to understand better the meaning of traditions praising knowledge, studying and teaching,<sup>2</sup> and this honorable verse seemed so new to me as though it had just been revealed:

وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا.

***And whoever keeps it alive, it is as though he kept alive all men. (Holy Qur'an 6:32).***

In order to praise Allah and thank my professor, I was looking for an opportunity to help him instead. This became possible when one day he asked me for help after his lecture. He said he had written about some jurisprudential issues during the previous years but could not arrange them due to his busy

schedule. The professor suggested that I may make them ready for publishing. I accepted wholeheartedly and started the work a few days before Muharram (the first month in the Hijri Calendar).

Now, after six months, I have always been engaged in this work. In my trip to Qazvin for religious training, and then in Qom, I spent most of the nights to prepare the book until dawn. When I was in Qom, I used the books in Ayatollah Mar'ashi Najafi's Library and also technical library of Ayatollah Sistani and available software. In Mashhad too, I benefited a lot from the library of *Astan Qods Radhawi* and the library of Goharshad Mosque, thanks God for all this.

These written materials were five pamphlets to which another one was added after being written entitled "*Prostration in the Tradition of the Prophet and the Companions.*" In all these materials, besides the interesting method of posing the discussion, technical way of posing and terminating the issues, power of analysis, reasoning and concluding, what was eye-catching was the way the traditions of the Sunni were benefited from. Moreover, the professor had fortunately used the most valid books of the Sunnis as well as their most authentic traditions.

Of course, the basic references of these materials are our Sunni brothers, but reading them is so useful for clearing the reasons as well as the roots of the Shi'a viewpoints, especially since they have been conveyed so eloquently. A report of the primary materials: The first pamphlet entitled "*An Introduction to Knowing the Imams in the Light of the Traditions,*" is about the Imamate of the twelve Imams (a.s). It was published for the second time in 1359 (1980). Despite the solid discussions, right arrangement of chapters and excellent materials, there were some problems in printing. Its typesetting, for example, was done by old printing machines. Lack of vowels in Arabic parts as well as necessary footnotes reduced the attraction of the book.

During my last visit to Mashhad, I saw the book in the library of Goharshad Mosque and told the person in charge that I will soon give them a new edition of it. Among the advantages of this new edition are: adding new traditions, explanation of some vague traditions, the quality of adducing the Twelver Shi'a from the traditions of "Imams are twelve in number" and some worthy points I have never seen elsewhere. For instance, in a footnote, some uncommon traditions of the Sunni about Mahdawiyyat (the Affairs of Imam Mahdi) are discussed.

The second pamphlet entitled '*Ijtihad and Taqlid*' is a jurisprudential-discoursal discussion. I have studied various books in this regard, each having some advantages, but none of them is as worthy as this book. The professor in this book, avoiding repeated and useless issues, has comprehensively discussed about Ijtihad and Taqlid in a comparative method. This part was first published using manual printing-machine in 1372 (1997) for the Conference of Islamic Unity in Zahidan.

The third, fourth and fifth pamphlets in jurisprudence were also written later to be presented to the same conference. The titles of these chapters are '*Tradition and Heresy in Adhan,*' '*Ablution in the Qur'an and Tradition*' and '*Simultaneous Performance of Prayers*' respectively. Among these three chapters, the last

two were included in the *Al-Mu'jam Al-Fiqhi Software, Third Edition of the Institute of Ayatollah Al-Uzma Golpaygani* and is now available in the Information Bank. These three chapters and the next one, despite being too technical, have been arranged in a way that most people, like students and the youth, can use with a little attention and pondering.

The last pamphlet was written after the arrangement of the previous five ones and was submitted to me for editing.

What I did in these pamphlets was

(1) researching about the verses and the traditions and materials quoted from other books and adding new sources to them and

(2) inserting necessary footnotes for better understanding and reducing the sophistication of the contents. These materials are signaled with (Editor) in the footnotes.<sup>3</sup>

Anyway, the discussions in this book are in the form of a sincere scientific conversation and are provided with the purpose of illuminating the truth. Our purpose is hence: “Scientific Conversation; Practical Unity”. It is hoped that the book help the readers know Islam better, and may Allah favor the author, the readers and I. In the last days of preparing this book, it crossed my mind to dedicate it to the Great Lady of Islam, Fatimah Al-Zahra (a.s) to be as an offering for the day on which “All the people wish they were the followers of Fatimah.”<sup>4</sup>

O Allah! Accept this from us! You are surely All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

**Hamid Reza Torabi**

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1. For maintaining readability, (a.s) which is an acronym for “Alayh(um) Salaam” is used throughout the book to denote “May God bless him, her or them.” When used for the Prophet, his Household is included. When used for others, it only refers to that person.

2. Like the traditions narrated from Amir al-Mu'minin (the Commander of the Believers) Imam Ali (a.s) which read, “Knowing the scholars is a duty for which there is reprimand,” and “When you see a scholar, serve him/her.”

3. Of course, as it was mentioned before, the professor's style was so eloquent. In some cases, he told me to change the edited phrases into their original form due to technical points of jurisprudence and tradition sciences.

4. Bihar Al-Anwar, Vol. 8, p. 54.

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