Conclusion

A fundamental principle of the Muslims is that Islam has been perfected by God,

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (***5:3***)

Muslims also consider Prophet Muhammad as the best example to emulate,

"Verily, in the Apostle of God you have a good example [***to follow***] ***for everyone who looks forward*** [***with hope and awe***] ***to God and the Last Day, and remembers God unceasingly."*** (***33:21***)

Having believed in these two proclamations, those who held the highest office of authority in Islam – the caliphate (from after the Prophet's death until the collapse of the caliphate rule in 1923) – should have been more attentive to preserve and protect the integrity of Islam and follow the ways of Prophet Muhammadwithout any modifications, alterations, innovations, or introduction of new practices. However, this was not the case, as mentioned throughout this book.

Some people continue to argue that "the Shi'a are the innovators of Islam," and that it is actually the Shi'a who have introduced new ideas and concepts into Islam, when in fact, through careful research and examination of Islamic history and jurisprudence this accusation becomes baseless.

Even as recently as in 2008, a well-known Egyptian cleric (considered as a "moderate" figure) reiterated the same propaganda, which caused a wave of rebuttals from Shi'a scholars. In part, this book is a reply to such accusations and labeling as well.

Although, the thought of writing this book came about some ten years ago, the writing took an intermission of six of those years; and what urged its publication now are the false accusations being hurled against the followers of Ahlul Bayt, which extensively arise from global pulpits and through multi-media sources. My conscience did not permit me to remain on the sideline and be silent about this matter any longer.

The truth of the matter is, and as this book details, the innovations and alterations were never started or

practiced by the followers of Ahlul Bayt; rather, the Shi'a have always maintained, without waiver or variation that they follow the path of the Prophet.

In part, in our times we are witnessing the effect of the past on the present. Today's violent acts of terrorism and the radical ideological interpretation being perpetrated by some "Muslims" against Muslims and non-Muslims are conjoined to the times of the early Muslim governance and their successive caliphate regimes.

The Muslim leaders of the past, like those of the Umayyah and Abbasid dynasties, mentally and culturally cultivated the seeds of anarchic dogma, hatred, and violence, which is present among the most extremist Muslim parties of today. Establishments like the Taliban and the teachings of the Wahhabis are deeply rooted in the same radical mentality and hegemonic control like the ones of the past.

Our time has witnessed people like Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the sinister aid of al-Qaida who introduced suicide bombers to the streets of Iraq and caused thousands of lives to be lost. We can also see this totalitarian and violent force on the streets of Kabul, Mumbai, Jakarta, and Islamabad, and on the dreadful day of 9-11-2001.

It is the anticipation of the author of this book, for the reader to know the reality. As a scholar and researcher it is incumbent to ascend personal interest and contracted thoughts, and to speak the rightful truth without apprehension. I am held to the highest degree by the covenant taken from the early scholars by which Allah holds them to the following,

"Those who conceal the clear (Signs) We have sent down, and the Guidance, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, on them shall be Allah's curse, and the curse of those entitled to curse." (***2:159***)

Along with,

"And remember Allah took a covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it; but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And vile was the bargain that they made!" (***3:187***)

What has been documented and cited in this work are facts, written by the most revered authentic (*sahih*) books and respected Sunni scholars. Thus, no one can argue that the author was relying on outside sources; and in addition, not one source has been taken out of context or exaggerated.

Some may argue that there is no need to frequent the past of the Muslims. As difficult as it may be, the past of the Muslims should not be impervious. Muslims must know their history in order to understand the current predicament they find themselves in. There are reasons why the state of the ummah is the way it is today. The record shows that in our history there were certain Muslims who affected the course of Islam and Muslims forever - politically, theologically, and historically.

The Quraysh group had systematically planned, influenced, and executed the orders of the caliph and wished to design it as a revolving political hegemony. Even on the deathbed of the Prophet, they prevented the Prophet from writing his will – a will that would have forever guarded the ummah from misguidance – and then they sealed it at Saqifah. In the words of the second caliph himself, they prevented the Prophet from writing his will because they did not want both prophethood and successorship vested in Bani Hashim, namely ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib. In short, the pre-Islamic Arab rivalry first impregnated the division of the ummah.

Shi’a and Sunni have two opposing views when it comes to the appointment of the caliph. According to the Ahlul Bayt, Allah ordains the highest accolade (leadership office) of the ummah. On the other end, the Sunni believe that it is one of consulate (*shura*). Although, the early history of political Islam records that “*shura*” was never fairly executed, nor was the method of it consistent as seen in the appointments of the first three caliphs and the caliphs of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties.

To leave the ummah without continued Divine guidance would be to expose the religion to unwarranted innovations, modifications, and personal conjecture.

The history of the Islamic caliphate earmarks acts of nepotism, corruption, and incompetency, primarily witnessed during the reins of ‘Uthman, Bani Umayyah, and Bani Abbas. We find unqualified and incompetent leaders who changed and modified Islam, and practiced nepotism and favoritism.

One day, a group of companions was with the Prophet and they said, “O Allah’s Apostle! We know how to greet you, but how should we invoke Allah for you?” The Prophet said, “Say: ‘O Allah! Send your blessings (greeting, which is God’s mercy upon the Prophet – *salawat*) on Muhammad and his family, the same way as You sent Your blessings (greetings & mercy) on Ibrahim’s family; You are indeed worthy of all praise, full of glory.’”[1]

On another occasion, the Prophet said to his companions, “Do not salute me in short!” The companions asked, “What is saluting you in short?” The Prophet replied, “Saying that blessing (mercy) of Allah be upon Muhammad.” They asked, “What should we say?” The Prophet answered, “Say: ‘Blessing (mercy) of Allah be upon Muhammad and his Ahlul Bayt!’”[2] Despite being purified by Allah (c. 33:33) and recognized by the Prophet, a misfortunate mistreatment of the household of the Prophet by some of the companions has been recorded in history.

The attempt to burn the house of Fatima and ‘Ali, denying them economic power by confiscating their property, and a forty-year campaign to smear and discredit them are just some of the ill workings made by those who stood to secure their power post and sway public opinion against the household of the Prophet.

Most notably, one of the most consequential effects on the ummah was depriving them of the unabridged sayings (Hadith) of the Prophet. The Prophet emphatically urged his companions to write his sayings, but unfortunately, those who held power prevented this writing, and even barred those from

traveling so as to not inform others about the Prophet's sayings.

Eventually, unsubstantiated hadith surfaced – even ludicrous ones – such as the hadith that exhorts the religious knowledge of the second caliph as being superior to that of the Prophet, or the Prophet frolicking with unveiled women! As a result, Muslim scholars had to develop the Science of Hadith, in which each hadith went under intense scrutiny to ascertain its authenticity.

Although the followers of Ahlul Bayt continued to record the hadith and passed them along to their followers, nonetheless they were the minority as opposed to the majority who held public attitude. The trepidation of transmitting the hadith was a form of maintaining dominance of the caliphate, because had the hadith about the Ahlul Bayt (especially the Prophet's appointment of 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib as his successor and the importance of adhering to his family on numerous occasions) circulated, then the ummah would have known the truth. The consequence is that the people would have instigated a collapse of the illegitimate institute of the caliphate and those appointed.

Understanding that the historical and political aspects covered throughout this book may be delicate for some; nonetheless, never is it meant to be as a means to jostle sectarian division – this is far from my intention. I have maintained judicious care in the manner of presenting this work, but it is my belief that in order for Islam and Muslims to go forward in harmony and solidarity, we have to have the courage to recognize the truth of our past and rationally discuss the matter in a dignified and scholarly fashion.

When an injustice is done in the past against others, then it becomes incumbent upon the people of the present to acknowledge it and make amends. This needs to happen so that the Muslims can truly practice what Allah has intended for them – a religion of brotherhood, peace, and justice.

Until the end of time, even the most sincere Muslims will disagree upon what they truly believe is the most correct path. However, while accepting that there will be disagreement, it is important to represent each school of thought accurately – as it represents itself, and as reliable and mutually agreed-upon historical sources represents it, rather than continue to propagate confusion.

I do not believe that the divisions amongst the Muslims are an irreparable part of our history. If Muslims and non-Muslims can sit side by side, have intellectual and scholarly discussions, engage in a deeper understanding about each other's faith, and then publish their findings, then what prevents responsible and respected Shi'a and Sunni Muslim scholars from doing the same? The time has come to hold such dialogue.

I continue to uphold and encourage an open and rational discussion policy with my colleagues. The invitation to hold such roundtable discussions remains open and is welcomed.

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1. Ibn Hajar, Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah, c.11, section 1, p.225
2. Sahih al-Bukhari, 6.320

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