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1

Sharhu Babi 'l-Hādi 'Ashar 4 Jumadi II 1442 / 18 Jan 2021 2

Imamate (Al-Imāmah)

- Section VI of *Sharh Bābi 'l-Hādi 'Ashar* deals with al-Imāmah (الإمامة), the leadership [after the Prophet], vicegerency, succession.
- There five issues discussed under al-Imāmah:
 1. Definition of an Imām.
 2. Infallibility of the Imām.
 3. Appointment of the Imām.
 4. The Imām should be “*Afdhal*, the Best.”
 5. Who are the Imāms?

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2

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1. Definition of an Imāmate

- “الإمامة رئاسة عامة في أمور الدنيا و الدين لشخص من الأشخاص نيابة عن النبي” (para 174)
- “Imāmah means refers to a universal authority in the matters pertaining to the world and the religion for a person from the people in succession of the Prophet.”
- Imāmat is a necessity according to reason.
- Because is a lutf, a grace of Allāh and that is wajib.
- It is a lutf because we surely know that when people have a chief and a guide who is obeyed, he imparts justice for the oppressed against the oppressor and restrains the oppressor from his injustice – they will be on path of goodness and away from corruption. And this lutf is wajib on Allāh.

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3

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1. Definition of an Imāmate (2)

- “a *universal* authority - رياسة عامة” separates this Imāmate from the authority given to the judges and appointed agents such as the governors. Moreover, this authority essentially belongs to the Imām, and others appointed by him are only in authority because of their appointment by him.
- “pertaining to the world and the religion” covers all aspects of the society: *dīn* and *dunya*.
- “in succession of the Prophet” separates this position from that of *nubuwwat* since this authority also applies to the Prophet (s) but it comes from Allāh.

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4

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2. Is Imāmate necessity?

- The Muslims are divided on this issue:
 1. Khawārij: Imāmate is not necessary at all.
 2. Ashā'irah & Mu'tazilah: Imāmate is necessary upon the Muslims, but then they differ in the details:
 - a) Ashā'irah: its necessity is based on religious grounds.
 - b) Mu'tazilah: its necessity is based on reason.
 3. Shi'as: Imāmate is necessary upon Allāh on basis of reason.
 - Imāamat is a *lutf* (a grace of Allāh).
 - *Lutf* is wājib on Allāh.
(*Lutf* “whatever brings the people towards obedience & keeps them away from disobedience and sins.”)
 - Therefore, Imāmate is wājib on Allāh.

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5

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2. Is Imāmate necessity? (2)

- So the majority of Muslims would agree that Imāmate is necessary but the Sunnis say that it is upon the people to appoint the Imām whereas the Shi'as say that it is upon Allāh to appoint the Imām.
- The Mu'tazilah says that our reason dictates that we must have an Imām in order to avert harm from ourselves – and averting harm is rationally wājib.
- The Shi'as don't disagree with that line of thought but disagree that this task has been delegated to the people – that leads to differences in appointing the Imāms, and that is the harm wanted to avert in the first place!

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6

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3. The Imām must be Ma'sūm

- When it comes to the conditions of an Imām, there is a difference among Muslims. The Shi'as, unlike the others, believe in infallibility of the Imām on the followings:

1. If the Imām is not ma'sūm, then it leads to a continues chain of Imāms: the role of the Imām is to restrain the oppressor from injustice and to impart justice to the oppressed. A non-ma'sūm Imām, in order to fulfill his duty, will need another Imām who can restrain him from error. If this other Imām is also non-ma'sūm, then he will need another Imām.....
= The conclusion is invalid, so the Imām must be infallible.

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7

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3. The Imām must be Ma'sūm (2)

2. If the Imām is not ma'sūm, then sins are possible for him. And if he sins, then:
Either he must be rebuked for his actions and that would bring his esteem down in people's hearts and therefore the purpose of his appointment will be defeated.
Or the duty of amr bil ma'ruf & nahi 'anil munkar will be suspended.
= Both are unacceptable consequences, and so it is wrong.
3. The Imām is the guardian of the law.
Is the Qur'an is guardian of the law?
Is the

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8

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3. The Imām must be Ma'sūm (3)

3. The Imām is the guardian of the law.
Is the Qur'an is guardian of the law?
Is the sunnah guardian of the law?
Is al-bara'at al-asliyya guardian of the law?
Is qiyas guardian of the law?
Is istishab guardian of the law?
- None of these are sufficient guardian of the law.
- The Qur'an & sunnah don't contain everything.
- The ijma' is not sufficient as it consists of fallible individuals.
- The qiyas is considered to insufficient knowledge...

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9