

# **Al-Shahid al-Thani:**

## **Zayn al-Dinal-Jub'i al-Amili**

*This book about Shahid al-Thani is part of the series “Meeting the Pious”. This series introduces the biographies of the beacons of Islamic thought, those stars whose scientific horizons may inundate the leaders of other ideological dogmas and creeds, and other well-known thinkers.*

**Author(s): Ali Sadiqi**

**Translator(s): Hasan M. Najafi**

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### **Publisher's Foreword**

My dearest readers, in which they were all asking for books and leaflets dealing with the biography of the 'ulama', who played a bright role in the world of thought and religious sciences, in all fields. In response, this Foundation has embarked on perusing the matter attentively and with utmost care, to meet the sincere desires of the readers longing for studying the Islamic culture and its characters.

While Ansariyan Publications is presenting the series of "Meeting the Pious"(Liqa' ma'a al-'Abrar), it only hopes that it can attain the satisfaction and approval of our beloved readers, meeting their requests. And it is Allah Who helps us to succeed.

**Ansariyan Publications**

## Preamble

The cultural assault rests on two pillars: first, humiliating the pristine culture; and second, overstating in publicizing for the substitute Western culture. Through this cultural ravishment and vilification for the genuine culture, people may feel to be despised in comparison to others, heedless of their own culture and peerless containments of treasures, begging help from aliens, and offering their culture and civilization at an underrate.

The defunct Pahlavi dynasty adopted this wicked policy with the West, declaring it as the deity of civilization, modernism and art, beside even ethics and religion. Whereas it introduced the East as an example and source of savagery and backwardness, or at the best, be called the “Third World” “the non-developed countries. These devilish policies have, to some extent, managed in achieving their goals, as a large number of people “particularly the youth “began to view the West as representing the free world that defends the human rights, democracy and freedom.

But, the sun cannot be kept behind clouds forever, as said by the known dictum, and realities began to emerge as clear as noonday, with the start of the era of Islamic resurgence “the era characterized with the contemporary generation’s return to its inborn nature and disposition, to the Holy Qur’an and real dogma and its elements.

In spite of the present optimistic illumination auguring well, the state of thought ravishment is still suffering “in many of the sensitive and important fields”from the Western abnormal effects.

The high certificates got in the West, for example, are still dazzling our sights, and the medicine that does not hold an attractive and illustrious Western mark has actually no effective influence. Yet, a lot of Western cultural phenomena are still penetrative or rather firmly rooted in our society’s behaviorism. Meanwhile, the West is still selecting for us the costumes we wear, and determining the kinds of medals to be granted to the winning athletes. Not only that, but also we expect it to distribute the literary prizes, for which all are longing eagerly.

In any case, is it correct to regard the West as our unique model and example? That West whose ill-favoured intention has been revealed through its void mottos and false claims in defending the democracy and human rights. What are the reasons behind such feelings of inferiority towards the fifteenth Hijrah Century executioners?

We still view the West as an ideal, despite its adopting the apartheid policy, and awarding its literary prizes to those who are devoid of decency and good manners, like Salman Rushdie, while withholding the Muslim genius students from participating in the Physics Olympiad.

The Islamic world is asked then to strive hard to establish an ‘slamic World Order’, and to sever all connections between it and the Western slogans and pretensions, like democracy, freedom and defending the human rights.

Can we have any hope, then, in the West while we are witnessing the catastrophic events occurring all over the Islamic countries, such as Bosnia Herzegovina, Algeria, and Palestine? Whoever is concerned with the Muslims’ affairs should realize that no outlet or solution (for the crises) is

there, but only through resorting and returning to the warm wings of the Holy Qur'an and its expansive patronage.

“Meeting the Pious”series is then a practical attempt and an earnest endeavour to return to our genuine identity, through introducing the biographies of the beacons of Islamic thought, those stars whose scientific horizons may inundate the leaders of other ideological dogmas and creeds, and other well-known thinkers.

One of the most sensitive facts that disturbs the West and robs its sleep, is the serious return of the Islamic nation (ummah) to its real identity, to its leading figures “to those who managed in paving the hard way of Islam through their concerted efforts and honest contribution.

The staff of “Meeting the Pious”series has made a pledge to investigate the inherent characteristics and biographies of seventy glittering stars of the high sphere of Islamic thought, and introduce them as lofty shining ensigns who struggled to rebuild the Islamic civilization anew.

**Baqir al-'Ulum Research Foundation**  
**Qum**

## Translator's Introduction

It is really perplexing to see how identical were the two characters between whom a hundred and fifty years separate. Whoever investigates the biography of al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din al-'Amili, will verily realize its being complementary to the character of Muhammad ibn Makki, who was martyred in 786 H, and known later as al-Shahid al-'Awwal. No doubt then that al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din be called al-Shahid al-Thani, since both of them experienced identical circumstances, encountering similar conspiracies.

Each one of them was the superior intellectual character at their time, with his life being characterized with many travels among Islamic cities and metropolises. Their only objective was knowledge seeking, till each of them turned to be an encyclopedia in thought and knowledge, leaving behind a voluminous heritage indicating their genius and knowledgeability.

Both were born in Jabal 'Amil, living the same period of time, facing the same bloody fate, being victims of the plots of politicians and covetous people having malicious nature and degraded morals.

They resembled each other to the extent that al-Shahid al-Thani has embarked on studying al-Lum'ah alDimashqiyyah on fiqh, which is authored by al-Shahid al'Awwal. Then he expounded it under the title al-Rawdah al-bahiyyah fi sharh al-Lum'ah al-Dimashqiyyah, after which the original book and the exposition occupied the priority among the curricula of the theological schools despite the succession of numerous centuries.

Al-Shahid al-'Awwal was tried in Damascus, executed, then his body was crucified for several days, stonned and burnt, and transformed then to ashes dispersed by winds. Whereas al-Shahid al-Thani was taken guarded to Qastantine, whereat his fate was to be killed on the shores of the Mediterranean, and his body to be thrown into the sea, and be devoured by the whales.

The only reason behind liquidating them in this tragic way was their holding an opinion contradictory to that of the rulers, and enjoying the masses support, the fact exciting the then rulers' fears.

At last, we have to refer to the fact that the sequence of murder and bloody liquidations is still going on to the present time, inflicting the offspring of the Two Martyrs (al-Shahidayn), as al-'Imam Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr met his end at the hand of Iraq despot (Saddam) in 1980. After him his sister Aminat al-Sadr, known with the name Bint al-Huda, was martyred, and before them al-Imam Musa al-Sadr disappeared in vague circumstances in 1978.

This being the history of tragedies, initiated from Karbala' of al-Husayn (A), since the moment of 'Ashura', and is still continuing its course toward the age of green peace.

**Hasan M. Najafi**

## Chapter 1: The Beginning

### The Sacred Wrath

Al-Shahid was verily a spirit full of sacred wrath ... a heart beating with faith (iman) and bravery ... a peremptory tongue like a trenchant sword, and a man knows nothing but the truth.

He persevered on rejecting oppression, deploring prodigality, and condemning extravagance and deviation. Thus his heart burst like an outbreking volcano, ejecting its lava against the palaces of those unjust people given to luxury.

He found the straightforward path, being guided toward the right course, stepping forward with full confidence in Allah, relying upon his Lord, fearing neither the reproach of those who are entitled to reproach, nor the rulers' repression.

One day the Messenger of Allah, on looking at him, recognized his magnanimous self and high spirit, saying: "No meadow could overshadow and no earth could carry over it a man more truthful in speech than Abu Dharr."

True, it is Abu Dharr, the champion of the prickly hard way ... the way of bidding to good and forbidding evil. He recognized the truth, bidding people to follow it, and realized falsehood, forbidding from following it, being thus a source of fear for the oppressors, and a danger threatening the rulers. So, they did their utmost to dissuade him from his course, but failed, and all the abundant sums of money could never tempt him or weaken his resolute. All swords, lashes or other means of horror were humbled in front of his strong will.

Once upon a day a servant knocked at his house-door saying to him:

"O the Companion of the Messenger of Allah, here you are, this is the caliph's present to you ... an amount of money that is sufficient to sustain on all your life." Abu Dharr refused to accept the gift, but the servant insisted on him, begging him by saying:

"They promised to set me free ... O Abu Dharr, please accept it ... my emancipation is entailed from (your accepting) it.

Abu Dharr refused the rulers' presents, and decisively exclaimed:

"If it entails your emancipation, it causes my slavery. Yea, o gullible lad, are you asking such a thing from Abu Dharr? Are you asking him to have confidence in or submit to the oppressors?"

In this way everywhere was resounded with Abu Dharr's voice calling for truth, demanding to establish justice on earth. Consequently, the orders were issued to arrest and exile him to Sham, separating him from his beloved people and his struggle comrades, depriving him from the tenement-houses of revelation, the scent of Prophethood and warmth of Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

It was destined for Abu Dharr to tread, with his feet, the roads of Jabal Amil, that goodly region of the land of Lebanon, where lie simple hills, spacious valleys and limited-scope plains.

And thus was the fate of Jabal 'Amil to initiate a new chapter in its deep-rooted history. There, people came to discover a firebrand from the spirit of



Muhammad (God's benediction be upon him and his pure Progeny), as from the heart of his great Companion, Islam's concepts and message values began to effuse, and the rebellious words started to proceed into the heart of earth and history. Hence, sun of Islam began to rise from among the clouds, overwhelming that land with light, warmth and hope.

The palaces of the Umayyad ruler began to be shaken violently by the Ghifari earthquake, and strong feeling of trepidation and fright overwhelmed Mu'awiyah, who gave his orders to return the honourable companion to the centre of caliphate, with instructions to treat him very harshly.

So the Companion of Allah's Messenger returned to alMadinah, to see nothing but frowned faces and executioners' lashes. There, the expulsion cycle started anew, till his last exile be at Rabadhah "the severest region in the world in respect of climate and voidness of any traces of life.

In this place, Abu Dharr passes away, joining the caravan of freemen and the righteous, with his words in Jabal 'Amil turning to be seeds and buds, growing, blossoming and setting their roots firm into the depths of earth, history and civilization. Thereafter, Jabal 'Amil commenced to play its effective role on the scene of life, producing to the mankind "over long ages and eras "numerous reputed 'ulama', litterateurs and thinkers.

Among the 'ulama' produced by that generous land, we can refer to the renowned scholar Zayn al-Din al-Jub'ii al-'Amili, who was known later with the name of al-Shahid al-Thani<sup>1</sup>.

### His Household

Zayn al-Din ibn 'Ali ibn Ahmad al-'Amili is verily counted among the great 'ulama' and fuqaha', endowed with a versatile personality, being prominent in the fields of literature and medicine too.

He was brought up in an inveterate family of noble social and theological status. His father was Nur al-Din 'Ali, one of the honourable 'ulama', and so also were his both grandfathers Jamal al-Din and al-Taqi, beside his great grandfather al-Shaykh Salih. Hence his family was called Silsalat al-Dhahab (Golden Chain). Further his only son al-Shaykh Yasan was one of the most eminent Imamiyyah 'ulama', compiling the book al-Ma'alim<sup>2</sup> on usul al-fiqh.

Also his grandson, from his daughter, al-Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali al-'Amili, who was one among the most reputable Shi'ah researchers. He authored the book al-Madarik on fiqh.<sup>3</sup>

To him belong scientific personages of great influence and role in the thought and social fields, like al-'Imam Musa al-Sadr,<sup>4</sup> the President of the Supreme Shi'i Council in Lebanon, and the martyr al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr<sup>5</sup> with his sister the martyr Aminat al-Sadr, known as Bint al-Huda.

### His Birth

On the thirteenth of Shawwal 911 H., at Jub'i, one of south Lebanon villages, a lightening planet has brightened from Nur al-Din 'Ali's house, overshadowing the world with a shining comely face, overwhelming his parents heart with warmth and hope. So they gave him the name Zayn al-

Din, and after elapse of few days, the signs of smartness and genius, began to emerge as talents endowed on him. The boy grew up inside a chaste house, overfull of piety (taqwa), faith and modesty. He recited the whole holy Qur'an before reaching the age of nine.

### **His Learning**

Al-Shahid has betaken himself at this prime age to study the arts of Arabic literature and jurisprudence (fiqh). His first teacher was his father, who was among the grand 'ulama' of Jabal 'Amil during his time, teaching him the books al-Mukhta'ar al-nafi'i and al-Lum'ah alDimashqiyyah. For the latter one, al-Shahid has compiled his well-known exposition (sharh) under the title: al-Rawdhah al-bahiyyah, beside other various literary books.

Enough be for his father to boast of, is that he has educated al-Shahid in a way that put him on the course leading to geniusness and aptitude. He continued his study till the year 925 H. when his father deceased, while his age was less than 14 years.

But the dread of this shock and bitterness of orphanhood could never curb his activity, or frustrate his enthusiastic spirit from seeking knowledge, as it was the conduct of other genius unique men, whose talents were burnished by experiences of life.

### **Toward Mays Village**

Thus Zayn al-Din, the novice pupil, has set off toward the village of Mays in Jabal 'Amil, after being aware of the presence of a great scholar like al-Shaykh 'Ali ibn Abd al-'Ali in it. Under that man he learnt Shara'i al-'slam of al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli, Irshad al-'adhhah of al-'Allamah al-Hilli, and al-Qawa'id of al-Shahid al-'Awwal Muhammad ibn Makki, which all being among sublime fiqhi books.

Al-Shahid resided for eight years at Mays, till 933 H., prompted by the fact that his teacher was the husband of his aunt, who used to treat him compassionately, taking care of him throughout all that period.

### **His Marriage**

Al-Shahid persevered on learning so hard and actively, acquiring knowledge, and quaffing from its serene fountains, till reaching the age of twenty-two. Thereat he thought that it was opportune time to complete the other half of his religion, and start a new life ... a life common with his dreamgirl. And no one could be better than the daughter of his compassionate aunt and of his honourable professor. Thus al-Shahid found his promised rest<sup>6</sup> in that faithful girl, whose character was distinguished with all features of a goodly village, such as simplicity, content and serenity.

### **Toward Karak Noah**

Within only a short time after Zayn al-Din's marriage to his aunt's daughter, the idea of migration has stricken the mind of his new family, so they packed off to another village, being Karak Noah.<sup>7</sup> So, the knowledge-seeker, after acquiring much fiqh and other fields of knowledge, set off with his family.

In Karak Noah, he attended the lessons of literature, fiqh, philosophy, kalam and usul, under al-Sayyid Badr al-Din Yasan al-'A'raji, who taught

him al-Qawai'd of Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani, on ilm al-kalam, beside al-Tahdhib and al-'Umdah al-jaliyyah on usul al-fiqh, with the book al-Kafiyah on 'Im al-nahw (grammar).

After only seven months, the knowledge-seeker was bereaved with the decease of his teacher, whereat he recalled the passing away of his father a long time ago, yearning strongly for Jub', his birthplace.

### **Returning Home**

In Jumada al-Thaniyah 934, Zayn al-Din departed Karak Noah, betaking himself toward Jub', in which he stayed till the year 937, which he spent in reading, preaching and meeting people's needs. Hence he attained high position among people, deserving much applause and appreciation.

### **At Damascus**

Al-Shahid migrated to Damascus, the capital of Sham in 937 H. when he was twenty-six years old, prompted by the keen desire to seek knowledge. So he resided there for one year, attending the lectures of the philosopher Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Makki, learning under him the books authored by his teacher: Sharh al-Mujaz and Ghayat al-Qa'Id fi mairifat al-fa'Id. Besides, he learned the book Fu'Iul al-Farghani on 'ilm al-hay'ah, and Hikmat al-'Ishraq of al-Suhrawardi on philosophy. Also he learned under al-Shaykh Ahmad ibn Jabir, the book al-Shalibiyyah on 'Im al-qira'ah (science of reading), studying the readings of Nafi', Ibn Kathir, Ibn 'Amr and 'A'Im.

### **Returning Home**

Homesickness has pushed al-Shahid to return home, Jub'i, staying at his village till the year 941. Throughout all that period, he was engaged in reading, verification, teaching and preaching people.

### **Damascus Again**

Again, at the outset of 942, al-Shahid returned to Damascus to resume his learning there. During that period, he established contacts with many personalities from different Islamic schools of thought, to be acquainted with other thought trends.

So he met, on this course, the Damascene scholar al-Shaykh Shams al-Din ibn 'Aawlawn, reading for him parts of Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, after which Ibn 'Aawlawn has licensed him to narrate both of them. At that time, his disciple Ibn al-'Awdi came out to light, accompanying him for a long time.

### **In Land of Pyramids**

On the fifteenth of Rabi'i al-'Awwal 942 H., al-Shahid al-Thani departed Damascus<sup>8</sup> toward Egypt, in order to enrich his religious knowledge, and living in new thought spheres.

Since Egypt, at that time, was a huge thought centre, al-Shahid endeavoured, on his arrival there, to make contact with the leaders of other schools of thought.

He started to closely study their trends of thought, for having full knowledge of their rational point of view, and comprehending their scientific signification.

Al-Shahid proved his effective attendance at various circles of learning held everywhere, in mosques and schools, learning under a large number of professors of fiqh, exegesis (tafsir) and hadith (tradition). Among them he refers to:

“Al-Shaykh Shahab al-Din Ahmad al-Ramli al-Shafi’i, studying under him Minhaj al-Nawawi on fiqh, and Mukhtaar al-’u’Iul with reading the commentaries (hawashi) on it: al-Sa’diyyah and al-Sharifiyyah. I also heard under him many books on Arabic and rational arts, and other fields, like: Sharh al-Talkhi’I for the book al-Mukhtaar fi al-ma’ani wa al-bayan of al-Mulla Sa’id al-Din; al-Shaykh Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni’s Sharh on u’sul al-fiqh; and Ibn Hisham’s Taw’ih on nahw (grammar), beside other books whose mention is out of scope here, and he granted me a general license in reporting what is permitted to be narrated in 943 H.

“Among them also is al-Mulla Husayn al-Jurjani, under whom I learned al-Mulla ‘Ali al-Qawashachi, with Mulla Jalal al-Din al-Dawwani’s Aashiyah, Sharh ashkal alta’sis on geometry by Qa’i Zadah al-Ruhi and Sharh alJaghmini on hay’ah by him.

“Among them too is al-Mulla Muhammad al-Astrabadi, under whom we learned a portion from the book al-Mu’awwal, with al-Sayyid Sharif’s Aashiyah and Sharh al-Kafiyah. Beside al-Mulla Muhammad ‘Ali al-Jilani, under whom we heard some parts of ma’ani (rhetoric) and man’liq (logic).

“Among them further is al-Shaykh Shahab al-Din ibn al-Najjar al-Yanbali, under whom I learned all of the books Sharh al-Shafiyah and Sharh al-Khazrajiyyah on prosody and rhyming of al-Shaykh Zakariyya al-’Ansari, reciting numerous books on arts and hadith, among which are al-Sahihan, and he licensed me to report whatever I heard and recited, beside all that was permitted for him to narrate in the said year.

“Also among them is al-Shaykh Abu al-Yasan al-Bakri, under whom I heard a number of books on fiqh and exegesis (tafsir), beside his sharh on al-Minhaj.

“Of them too is al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din al-Jarmi alMaliki, under whom I recited Alfiyyat Ibn Malik.

“Of them again is al-Shaykh al-Muhaqqiq Na’sir al-Din al-Malaqani al-Maliki, the time researcher and honourable man of that town, who was the best scholar in rational and Arabic sciences, under whom I read al-Bayawi fi altafsir, with other books.

“Of them is al-Shaykh Na’sir al-Din al-Hablawi al-Shafi’i, under whom I recited the Qur’an according to Ibn Amr’s reading (qira’ah), and a treatise on reading authored by him.

“Of them is al-Shaykh Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abi al-Nahhas, under whom I read al-Shalibiyyah fi al-qira’ah wa al-Qur’an al-Aziz li al-’A’immah al-Sabah. Then I started to recite for him the ten without completing them to the end.

Ibn al-Awdi<sup>9</sup> commented on this by saying: “Most often al-Shahid was labelling this Shaykh with piety, uprightness and modesty. It was customary

for the virtuous men of Egypt to frequenting to him for reading under him arts of the holy Qur'an due to his being distinguished in this field. He was so concerned with this profession, that people used to recite (the Qur'an) for him while he being busy in his occupation, never dropping the hammer from his hand, except when visited by one of the great dignitaries, whereat he would spread a rug for him, whereas he himself sat on a straw mat."

Some of them are mentioned by al-Shahid when saying: Among them is the virtuous perfect Shaykh 'Abd al Hamid al-Sanhuri, for whom I read a good sum of arts, after which he granted me a general license.

Ibn al-Awdi commented thus:

This Shaykh also deserved the appraisal of our Shaykh, may Allah sanctify his soul, al-Shahid al-Thani, who used to ascribe to him the two virtues of 'ilm (knowledge) and generosity. He says that during the Month of Ramadhan, he used to invite all his friends to break their fasting at his house, so as that once upon a night they were absent during the time of ifḥār (breakfast at maghrib during RamaAn), but when coming after that, he treated them so kindly, saying:

"We all felt lonely and longed for you yesterday, even Latifah (his younger daughter).

He owned a maid servant, that whenever someone would come to invite him, he would tell her:

"Inform your master that so-and-so has invited the company to be his guests tonight.

Thereat she would reply:

"I never apprise him of this news at all.

Al-Shahid al-Thani goes on to introduce the Egyptian personalities he met, saying:

Among them is al-Shaykh Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abd al-Qadir al-Far'i al-Shafi'i, for whom I read many books on Indian arithmetic, and al-Yasaminah with its sharh (exposition) on algebra and comparison science, besides reciting Sharh al-Wasilah for which he granted me a general license.

In the same country, I recited under a large number of shaykhs, whose mention is out of scope, among them are: al-Shaykh 'Umayrah, al-Shaykh Shahab al-Din ibn Abd al-Yaqq, al-Shaykh Shahab al-Din al-Balqini, and al-Shaykh Shams al-Din al-Diruti, beside others.<sup>10</sup>

This document explicitly indicates the extent of al Shahid's activity, and his keenness to be acquainted with the different sciences prevalent at that time, besides endeavouring to comprehend the different schools of thought and methods of teaching. Though the period spent by al Shahid in the land of Egypt was so short "eighteen months "but he exploited it in an astounding way, as it was feasible for him to grasp numerous fields of knowledge, that others could not grasp, during that comparatively short time.

### **Toward the Ancient House**

When the youth felt quenched of knowledge and science, his sublime spirit started to strongly yearning for Makkah, the descension place of revelation and cornerstone of the everlasting message. So he eagerly set out

to make pilgrimage to the Ancient House, on the seventeenth of Shawwal 943 H., taking with him as companions two of his disciples.

The small caravan crossed the thorny deserts and sandy flat lands, to reach the land of Makkah ... the homeland of Ibrahim and Isma'il and Hajar, to witness by his own eyes the first house placed for mankind. Also to sight al-Madinah, which witnessed the birth of the best of human beings Muhammad (peace and benediction be upon him and his pure Progeny), and that of the eternal champion of Islam 'Ali (A). There at the youth began to recall to mind the vivid images of the jihad of the earlier Muslims ... Abu Talib, the Messenger's uncle and guardian, Khadijah with her sacrifices, Yasir with his steadfastness, Sumayyah the first martyr throughout the Islamic history and Bilal ... etc.

After performing the rites of 'umrah and hajj, al Shahid betook himself toward al-Madinah al Munawwarah ... to the land that witnessed the great miracle "the miracle of Islam and birth of the new Ummah (nation).

### **Peace be on Ahmad in the Worlds**

As the small caravan set out toward Yathrib, the youth started to imagine the memoir of the perilous travel, when the Prophet (S) decided to depart Makkah and migrate toward Yathrib, the event recording the Hijrah calendar that changed the face of the world, and rectified the human course all the world over.

There at the love fountains began to gush out, with the youth starting to chant:

Peace and salutation be upon the best of mankind, Whose grace exceeding limitation and confinement, That who ascended the seven skies with slippers, Whom Allah substituted with Barraaq for his foal, Whom the Almighty Allah addressed with His love, Orally, that never occurred for a slave or freeman, My inability to citing your virtues is seemly,

Of which my tongue is fatigued through poetry or prose, What have people to say in praise of that those,

Lofty laudations are mentioned in the holy Book, I rushed toward him hastily as a powerless

Burdened with abundant sins on my back, But love wind instigated my vigour,

And soul of hope in my self-weakness with poverty, The generous Arabs' habit toward their guest,

Is showering him with good, cheerness and affluence, They abundantly give their guest with no precedence, How then of the good you promised me in Egypt,<sup>11</sup>

My master, make me realize my hope of the visit, Through attaining my wish and intercession at resurrection.<sup>12</sup>

### **Returning to Homeland**

After traversing some parts of the Islamic world, travelling between Damascus and Cairo, then Makkah and al-Madinah, in a journey taking two years, strong yearning controlled him, pushing him to return to Jub`, his small lamblike village. So he set out, betaking himself toward it, on the fourteenth of Safar 944 H.

His arrival to the village turned to be a feast for its inhabitants, as all without exception went out for his reception with extreme hospitality.

Ibn al-Awdi says:

“His coming to the town resembled a descending mercy, or downpouring rain. With his knowledge he revived souls deadened by ignorance (jahl), and around him men of knowledge and virtue crowded, thronging to him as if gates of knowledge that were closed began to open witnessing the blossoming of his mart that was stagnant. The darkness of illiteracy was illuminated by his bright lights, and the hearts of men of knowledge were rejoiced and enlightened. He exposed and propagated all the sciences he acquired through his tireless exertion, benefitting people to a matchless extent, arranging the knowledge-seekers like men, showing the right way for whoever sought it.”

Thus al-Shahid's arrival to the small village led to the revival of a cultural movement, activating the thought arena, with his being object of attention of knowledge seekers who betook themselves to him from different cities and countries, and the 'ulama' gathered around him. So al-Shahid took upon his shoulders the responsibility entrusted to him in preaching and guiding people, besides conducting the religious affairs, building a new mosque, executing some public charitable programs.

### Notes

1. Al-Shahid al-'Awwal is the scholar Muhammad ibn Makki al-'Amili, who was martyred in 786 H., after a fictitious unjust trial. (Translator).
2. The book is still occupying an outstanding position among the curricula in the theological schools, though it was compiled several centuries ago.
3. It is among the well-known fiqhi books among the Shi'ah.
4. He disappeared in 1978 in vague circumstances, and his fate is still unknown. (Translator)
5. He was murdered by the Tyrant of Iraq Saddam in 1980. (Translator)
6. In reference to the holy verse: “And of His signs is this: He created for you helpmeets from yourselves that ye might find rest in them ...”(30:21).
7. It is situated near to Ba'labakk. It is called with this name due to its nearness to the tomb of the Prophet Noah (A).
8. The expenses of his travel to Egypt were subscribed by al- Hajj Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Hilal. It is worth mentioning that his benevolent man, about whom nothing is reported in history books, had allotted for al-Shahid a special stipend during his learning period in Damascus. Later on he was found slain with his wife and two sons, one of whom was still fosterling in the cradle, in 952 H., through dubious circumstances. (Translator)
9. He was one of al-Shahid's disciples, enjoying his company for a long time during which he wrote a part of his biography.
10. Excerpts from Ibn al-'Awdi's treatise on al-Shahid's biography.
11. It is a reference to a vision he dreamt of in Egypt.
12. Rawdat al-jannat, Vol. III, p. 363.



## Chapter 2: School for Generations

### His Character

The human character rests upon three pivots.

First: The ethical pivot, whereat the individual's behaviorism inside the society and method of living can be incarnated through the ethical capabilities he has.

Second: The rational pivot, through which man deals with nature and thought, out of the rational faculties he possesses.

Third: The spiritual pivot, which organizes the association between man and his Lord, that identifies, in turn, the nature of connection according to the spiritual powers man owns.

Al-Shahid's character was prominent in all these pivots, being established on balanced pillars, rendering him a centre of attraction, respect and veneration of people everywhere. This was due to the fact that al-Shahid attained a high degree of zuhd (asceticism), knowledge and credibility, that made some magnates believe in his reaching the level of infallibility.

### Following the Prophet's Guide

Al-Shahd al-Thani used to take the holy Messenger (S) as his pattern, in his morals and conduct, the fact making his love to grow inside the pure hearts.

During his meeting (majlis), he behaved among his companions and disciples as if being one of them, seeing no superiority for himself over them; doing everything himself without asking anyone to perform any of the house services for him. He used to go shopping himself, purchasing all the family necessities, setting out to the desert or forest for cutting and gathering firewood, carrying it on his back. He was doing all these practices while being at the climax of his scholastic and social glory, disdaining from all forms of haughtiness, and kinds of hypocrisy.

This is true, as al-Shahid (may Allah be pleased with him) got his education at the school of Ahl al-Bayt (A) far from whom Allah removed uncleanness and cleansed with a thorough cleansing.

### Others' Views about Him

Al-Shahid al-Thani's character drew the attention of many great dignitaries throughout history, deserving veneration of the 'ulama' of all eras. In his regard, al-Shaykh al-Hurr al-'Amili, the author of Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, has said:

"His attainment of fiqh, knowledge, honour, asceticism (zuhd), worship, righteousness, scrutiny, holiness, sublime position, and all other virtues and perfect attributes is so famous that needs no mention ... and his excellences and meritorious traits exceed numeration and limitation beside leaving behind well-known compilations. He was a faqih (jurisprudent), a mujtahid, a grammarian, a philosopher, a mutakallim, having full command over all fields of knowledge. He was the first among the Imamiyyah to compile a book on dirayat al-hadith (acquaintance of traditions)."<sup>1</sup>

In his book Rawdat al-jannat, al-Sayyid al-Khunsari says in his regard:



“Till the present time “1260 H. “I have never met, among the renowned ‘ulama’, anyone reaching his sublime status, great position, high rank, efficient comprehension, firm resolute, elegant instinct, straightforward method, discipline in acquiring knowledge, multiplicity of professors, delicate disposition, tender making, and objectivity and perfection of his compilations and works. Rather he was characterized with the morals prescribed by Allah “the Exalted “to the extent making him occupy the second rank after the infallible (ma’lum).”<sup>2</sup>

He also was referred to by al-’Allamah al-’Amin, the author of al-Ghadir, when he said:

“He was the greatest of time graces, the most profound in knowledge, the best of religion and sect, and shaykh of the reputable fuqaha’. Further, he contributed to significant sciences including philosophy, kalam, fiqh, u’lul (principles), poetry, literature, natural philosophy, and mathematics. His large-scale fame and reputation can introduce him much better than all that we said, leaving no room for uttering more words in his regard, as what can be said by that who drawls with his rhetoric. Whatever is said fails short of realizing his far-reaching privileges and wide-spread renown. Peace be upon him for the services he contributed to his ummah (nation) by his generous hands, and his propagation of beneficial sciences.”<sup>3</sup>

The Martyr Murtaza Mutahhari,<sup>4</sup> in his book al-’Ulum al-’Islamiyyah, extolled him by saying:

“Al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din, known as al-Shahid al-Thani, is counted among the greatest Shi’ah ‘ulama’, comprehending all fields of knowledge, belonging to Jabal ‘Amil. His sixth grandfather (Salih), was a disciple under al-’Allamah al-Hilli. He was born in 911 H., and was martyred in 966 H. He made so many trips and travels, meeting a large number of professors in Egypt, Damascus, Yijaz, Quds, Iraq, Istanbul, picking from every farm a fruit. The number of his teachers among Ahl al-Sunnah reached twelve, the fact making him an all-inclusive character, as besides fiqh and usul, he had a good command over philosophy, gnosticism, medicine and astronomy, enjoying the merits of zuhd (asceticism) and taqwa (piety).

Recording his biography, some of his disciples state that he used to cut firewood at night, to provide for his family, while practising the profession of teaching in the morning. He spent a long time at Ba’labakk, teaching the rules of the five schools of thought (Ja’fari, Yanafi, Shafi’i, Maliki, and Hanbali). Al-Shahid has left numerous works, the foremost of which being Sharh al-Lum`ah of al-Shahid al-’Awwal, beside Masalik al-’ifham which was an exposition (sharh) for al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli’s al-Shara’i. He learnt under al-Muhaqqiq al-Karaki (before the latter’s coming to Iran), never visiting Iran. His son was called Sahib al-Ma’alim, who was among the most renowned Shiah ‘ulama’.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Ibn al-Awdi**

His disciple and faithful follower, who accompanied him a long time, Ibn al-Awdi, says about him:

“Of the perfection merits he attained the best and most excellent, being clothed in the best of their sorts. He had a lofty self-brightened with flanks and ribs, and splendid temper of which honour diffuses and emanates. He

was the Ummah's shaykh and youth, the origin of virtues and their end ... no moment of his life was spent but in acquiring virtues, beside occupying himself all the time with that benefitting people day and night.<sup>6</sup>

Ibn al-`Awdi, who was admiring his teacher to a great extent, never forgot to demonstrate some of his features and complexion, saying:

"He was a square-built man, of straight stature, and at the last days of his life he inclined toward fatness ... of a circular radiant face, a lank hair nearer to fairness. He was of black eyes and brows, white-faced, of huge arms and legs, with fingers like silver bars, whoever looking at his face, hearing his sweet utterance would never allow himself to depart him, seeing comfort in talking to him with neglecting everything, ... all eyes be filled of his solemnity, with hearts rejoicing at his splendour. By Allah, he is higher than all that description, having praiseworthy attributes many more than those I cited."

He goes on to say that once upon an eve, he saw him leading his donkey, that was burdened with firewood, toward his house, while getting up early in the morning, betaking himself to teach at the mosque. His daytime was spent in investigation, researching and reading, setting out, after performing maghrib (evening) prayers in congregation, to inspecting his vintage orchard on the outskirts of the town.

Ibn al-`Awdi was so infatuated with al-Shahid's character, that he was used to keep his company wherever he travelled or resided, till the last days of his life.

### His Teachers

Al-Shahid's character was distinguished with versatility and manifold talents, with making various travels and establishing links with many professors that played an effective role in the formation of his all-inclusiveness and profundity of his scholarly personality.

His keenness to seek and learn different sciences was like the curiosity of a thirsty man desiring to drink water from serene fountains, the fact providing him a good opportunity to be acquainted with his time culture, going deeply into it within a very short period.

Making a thorough review over his works, that constituted an encyclopedia, one comes to realize the extent of comprehensiveness and profundity al-Shahid attained in most of the branches of knowledge known during the era he lived.

Below are some of his teachers:

1. 'Ali ibn Ahmad al-'Amili, known with the nickname 'Ibn al-Hajjah', who was his father and first teacher. Under him al-Shahid learnt Arabic grammar (nahw) and a part of principles of literature, beside the book al-Nafi' fi Mukhtaar al-Sharayi' and al-Lum'ah al-Dimashqiyyah.

2. Al-Shaykh 'Ali ibn 'Abd al-'Ali al-Maysi, under whom al-Shahid learnt for eight years, reading to him al-Shara'i' of al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli, al-'Irshad of al-'Allamah al-Hilli and al-Qawa'id of al-Shahid al-'Awwal, all being on fiqh. We have previously stated that this man is the husband of al-Shahid's aunt, who has married his daughter to al-Shahid later on.

3. Al-Sayyid Yasan al-'A'raji, under whom he studied al-Qawa'id of Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani on kalam, al-Tahdhib and al-'Umdah al-jaliyyah on u'sul, beside al-Kafiyah on nahw (grammar).

4. Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Makki al-Dimashqi, under whom al-Shahid learnt Sharh al-Mujaz al-Nafisi and Ghayat al-qa'id fi ma'rifat al-fa'id, both being on medicine. Further he studied under him Fu'sul al-Farghani on cosmography and astronomy, beside some parts of Hikmat al-'Ishraq of al-Suhrawardi, Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, all being on hadith.

Beside the above-mentioned books, al-Shahid learnt other ones under Egyptian professors, being the following:

5. Shahab al-Din Ahmad al-Ramli, under whom he learnt al-Minhaj al-Nawawi on fiqh, Mukhtaar al-'u'lul of Ibn Yajib, Sharh 'Aqa'id al-'A'iudi and Sharh al-Talkhi'i on rhetoric, beside Sharh al-Ta'rif al-'Arabi and Sharh Jam' al-jawami' on u'lul al-fiqh, with Taw'ih Ibn Hisham on grammar (nahw) and other books.

6. Mulla Husayn al-Jurjani, under whom al-Shahid learnt the books Sharh al-Tajrid of Mulla 'Ali al-Qushachi, Sharh al-'Ashkal on geometry and Sharh al-Jughmini of Qa'li Zadah al-Rumi.

7. Shahab al-Din ibn al-Najjar al-Yanbali, under whom al-Shahid learnt Sharh al-Shafiyah of al-Jarburdi, and Sharh al-Khazrajiyyah on prosody.

8. Na'sir al-Din al-Malaqani, under whom he learnt Tafsir al-Baydawi.

9. Na'sir al-Din al-Hablawi, under whom he studied science of reciting the Qur'an, reading to him a treatise authored by him.

10. Muhammad ibn Abi al-Nahas, under whom he studied al-Sha'ibiyyah on Qur'an recitation too.

11. 'Abd al-Yamid al-Sanhuri.

12. Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Qadir al-Shafi'i, under whom al-Shahid learnt books on mathematics, and the book al-Yasaminah on algebra and comparison.

### His Disciples

A large number of knowledge-seekers have learnt under al-Shahid, some of whom turning to be reputable 'ulama'. Al-Shahid was so concerned to convey and communicate all the sciences he learnt, to the largest possible number of knowledge and thought-seekers, deeply believing in the fact that zakat (purity) of knowledge ('ilm) lies in propagating and disseminating it.

The most notable of his disciples are the following:

1. Al-Sayyid Nur al-Din 'Ali al-'Amili al-Jub'i, the author of Madarik al-'ahkam, which was widely known. He was the most intimate of his disciples, being his son-in-law later on.

2. The investigating scholar al-Sayyid 'Ali al-Husayni al-'Amili al-Jizzini, known as al-Sa'igh, who is the author of the books Sharh al-Sharayi' and Sharh al-'Irshad of al-'Allamah al-Hilli (i.e. al-'Irshad).

3. Al-Shaykh Husayn ibn Abd al-Samad al-Harithi al-'Amili, who was among the eminent fuqaha', being the father of the well-known al-Shaykh al-Baha'i. He was the first among al-Shahid's disciples to accompany him in his travel to Egypt, Istanbul and then in his pilgrimage to the holy shrines in Iraq. After staying there for a long time, he visited Iran, where he got a

license from al-Shahid al-Thani.<sup>7</sup> His son was considered the most sagacious star in the sphere of the Islamic thought during the eleventh Hijrah century.<sup>8</sup>

4. Muhammad ibn Husayn, known with the nickname al-Hurr al-'Amili al-Mashghari, who was the great grandfather of the author of Wasa'il al-Shi'ah.

5. Finally, not the last, Baha' al-Din Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-'Awdi, known as Ibn al-'Awdi, who was the most outstanding of his disciples and followers. He enjoyed al-Shahid's company for about seventeen years, from 945 up to 962 H., when he travelled toward Khurasan, never meeting his teacher afterwards.

### **School for Generations**

Those to whom we referred were only the most eminent of his genius disciples, but has al-Shahid's school come to an end with his passing away from the world?

Never, as his books and works are still extant to the present day, with knowledge-seekers keeping on studying his valuable works, and his books being printed and published throughout days and with passage of years and differing of ages.

His books, like Sharh al-Lum'ah, al-Masalik, Irshad al-'adhhan, Raw' al-jinan and munyat al-Murid are still constituting fountains gushing science, knowledge and thought. Besides, Sharh al-Lum'ah is still an essential curriculum in the theological schools, though it was compiled four centuries ago.

Hence, isn't it possible to claim that al-Shahid is still giving his lectures and lessons, with his school keeping on producing generations after others of fuqaha' and 'ulama'?

### **His Works**

Verily, al-Shahid's character makes men stand in awe while studying it, as he managed to leave behind a huge heritage in thought and sciences, despite his relatively short age and hard bitter circumstance he experienced.

He used to labour to provide for his family, receiving people warmly, endeavouring to meet their needs and demands, travelling from a country to another, spending a part of his life under persecution and surveillance. Despite all that, he has compiled about seventy books on different fields of knowledge.

This phenomenon has excited the astonishment of his disciple Ibn al-'Awdi, striking him with wonder, while witnessing the bulkiness of problems inflicting al-Shahid, and people's frequenting to him and welcoming him with that extreme veneration. He would ask himself: how could al-Shahid leave for us all these great works, while he was supposed to be completely occupied by all these matters.

In front of this manifestation, it is inevitable for everyone but to admit and recognize al-Shahid's genius, rendering him to be among the everlasting history ingenious men.

Following is a survey for his works and treatises:

1. The licenses he granted to his disciples: The licenses were regarded at that time as graduate certificates. Al-Shahid has granted his disciples different licenses, some being epitomized, and others being protracted like the one he granted to al-Shaykh Husayn `Abd al-Samad, the father of al-Shaykh al-Baha'i, whose date goes back to the year 941 H<sup>9</sup>.

2. Asrar al-Alat.<sup>10</sup>

3. Al-Bidayah fi al-dirayah: Which deals with `ilm alhadith. He finished its compilation on the night of Tuesday the fifth of Dhu al-Yijjah 959 H. It was published, with its exposition (sharh), at Tehran in 1310 H.

4. Al-Bidayah fi sabil al-hidayah: It deals with the Islamic doctrines.

5. Tamhid al-qawa'id al-'u'luyyah wa al-'arabiyyah:<sup>11</sup> It contains a hundred rules about u'lul alfiqh. It was printed in Tehran in 1272 H.

6. Al-Tanbihat al-'alaniyyah fi wa'a'if al-Alat alqalbiyyah: It deals with obligatory and supererogatory prayers and secrets of prayer. Al-Shaykh Aqa Buzurg alTehrani reports that al-Shahid completed authoring the book on Saturday the ninth of Dhu al-Yijjah (Day of `Arafat) 951 H. It was published several times, one of which being in 1305 H.<sup>12</sup>

7. Tahqiq al-'iman wa al-'Islam.

8. Jawab al-masa'il al-Khurasaniyyah.

9. Jawab al-masa'il al-Shamiyyah.

10. Jawab al-masa'il al-Najafiyyah.

11. Jawab al-masa'il al-Hindiyyah.

Hence we come to know that al-Shahid used to give replies to the letters, reaching him from all over the Islamic world, giving, solutions to the different questions they put forth, about many subjects, like fiqh, kalam, literature and philosophy and other fields. His answers were printed in leaflets meeting the aspired purpose. Seemingly many of them have been lost.

12. Jawahir al-kalimat fi 'iyagh al-'uqud wa al'qa'at.

Al-Shaykh Aqa Buzurg al-Tehrani reports that he found a copy of the book in the library of al-Sayyid Muhammad 'Ali Hibat al-Din. It was in the form of a manuscript, dated 996 H., that was inscribed by Maq'Iud `Ali, the son of Shah Muhammad al-Damghani, but without holding the book's title<sup>13</sup> (Jawahir al-kalimat).

13. Aashiyat al-'Irshad.

14. Aashiyat Tamhid al-qawa'id.

15. Aashiyat Fatwa Khilafiyyat al-Sharayi`.

16. Aashiyat al-Qawa'id.

17. Aashiyat Mukhtaar al-Nafi`.

18. Aashiyah `ala `Uqud al-'Irshad.

19. Risalat adab al-Jumu'ah: A treatise dealing with the recommendable deeds on Fridays.

20. Risalah fi tahrir Talaq al-ha'i'dh (A Treatise on forbiddance of divorcing the menstruant).

21. Risalah fi tayaqqun al-Taharah wa al-hadath (being sure of purity and any act invalidating the ablution).

22. Risalah fi Alat al-Jumu`ah. A booklet dealing with the Friday prayer. Al-Shahid was believing in the obligation of performing Friday prayer in person.
23. Risalah fi al-bahth `an Alat al-Jumu`ah.
24. Risalah fi Talaq al-gha'ib (about divorce of the absentee).
25. Risalah fi man ahdatha fi athna' ghusl al-janabah.
26. Risalah fi hukm al-muqimin fi al-'asfar.
27. Risalah fi niyyat al-hajj wa al-'umrah (pilgrimage).
28. Risalah fi da'wa al-'ijma` (unanimity).
29. Risalah fi al-wilayah and that prayer is never accepted without it. Al-Shahid finished its compilation on the fifth of Safar 950 H.<sup>14</sup>
30. Risalah fi najasat al-bi'r bi al-mulaqat wa `adamiha (about impurity of the well).
31. Risalah fi ahkam al-hibwah (rulings of gift).
32. Risalah fi mirath al-Jumu`ah (Friday inheritance).
33. Risalah fi jawab thalath masa'il (replies for three questions).
34. Risalah fi `adam jawaz taqlid al-mayyit (impermissibility of imitating the dead [mujtahid]).
35. Risalah fi al-'ijtihad.
36. Risalah fi `ashrat mabahith (ten issues) formed within ten sciences.
37. Risalah fi hadith "the world is the farm for the Hereafter".
38. Risalah fi tahqiq al-niyyah (making the intention).
39. Risalat fatwa al-khilaf min al-Lum'ah (verdict of dispute from al-Lum'ah).
40. Risalah fi tahqiq al-'ijtima`.
41. Risalah fi tafsir Allah's saying: "And the foremost in the face, the foremost in the face."
42. Risalat masa'il Is'lanbuliyyah fi al-'wajibat al-'ayniyyah (about obligatory acts).
43. Risalah fi sharh al-Basmalah.
44. Risalah fi dhikr ahwalih: It was a booklet in the form of memoir, covering a part of his life since he was a boy learning under his father, till his travel to Sham and Egypt, beside his pilgrimage to the Holy Sanctuary of Allah (Mecca). It also covered his visit to the holy shrines in Iraq, with his journey to Turkey, and lastly his settlement in Ba`labakk, with shouldering the religious leadership.
45. Risalah fi tahqiq al-'adalah (justice).
46. Su'alat al-Shaykh Ahmad wa ajwibatuha.
47. Su'alat al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din wa ajwibatuha.
48. Al-Rawah al-bahiyyah fi sharh al-Lum'ah al Dimashqiyyah, which is considered his most ever well-known work, that will be exposed later on.
49. Raw'I al-jinan fi sharh Irshad al-'adhhan: May be it was the first book of al-Shahid about the inferential fiqh, that he compiled in 948 H. when being in the age of 37 years. Ibn Al-'Awdi reports that al-Shahid has never let anyone be acquainted with it. It is reported that al-Shahid has not managed to complete it, and only one volume of it was published, dealing with taharah (purity) and prayer. It was published in Tehran, in 1307 H. with the book Munyat al-murid.<sup>15</sup>

50. Sharh Irshad al-'adhhan.

51. Sharh al-'Alfiyyah of al-Shahid al-'Awwal, which is an abridged exposition.

52. Sharh al-'Alfiyyah, a medium exposition.

53. Sharh al-'Alfiyyah, a detailed one.

Al-'Alfiyyah included one thousand issues about the obligations of prayer. The author of al-Dhari`ah has enumerated 31 commentaries on al-'Alfiyyah, the foremost of which being the one written by the author of al-Ma`alim, who was the son of al-Shahid al-Thani, and was dead in 1011 H. After it in importance comes the commentary of Husayn ibn `Abd al-Samad, the father of al-Shaykh alBaha'i, who passed away in 984 H.<sup>16</sup>

54. Sharh al-Nafliyyah of al-Shahid al-'Awwal, dealing with recommendable acts of prayer.

55. Sharh al-Dirayah, which was completed by al Shahid on the fifth of Dhu al-Yijjah 959 H.

56. Sharh al-Man`umah, that was authored by al Shahid himself (al-Man`umah), and was on `ilm al-nahw (grammar).

57. Ghunyat al-qa'idin fi i'ilahat al-muhaddithin.

58. Fatawa al-Sharayi`.

59. Fatawa al-'Irshad.

60. Fatawa al-Mukhtaar.

61. Fawa'd KhulaAt al-rijal.

62. Kashf al-ribah min ahkam al-ghibah: It deals with the issue of backbiting, the narrations about its forbiddance, and how to avoid it. Its compilation was finished on the thirteenth of Safar 949 H., was published several times in Najaf and Iran, and was translated then into Persian.

63. Kitab al-rijal wa al-nasab.

64. Kitab tahqiq al-'iman wa al-'Islam.

65. Kitab al-'ijazat.

66. Mansak al-hajj al-Aghir.

67. Mansak al-hajj al-kabir.

68. Manar al-qa'idin fi asrar ma`alim ahkam al-Din: It is an ethical book, to which al-Shahid has referred in his book Munyat al-murid.<sup>17</sup>

69. Musakkin al-fu'ad `inda faqd al-'ahibbah wa al-'awlad: Which we shall discuss later on.

70. Mubarrid al-'akbad fi mukhtaar Musakkin al fu'ad: Which is an abridgement for the previous book.

71. Mukhtaar al-Khulaah.

72. Man`umah fi al-nahw.

73. Al-Maqa'id al-'illiyyah fi Sharh al-'Alfiyyah: it is the big commentary on al-Shahid al-'Awwal's al-'Alfiyyah. He completed its compilation on the nineteenth of Rabi` al-'Awwal 950 H.

74. Al-Masalik fi sharh Shara'i` al-'Islam: It is counted among the valuable works on the inferential fiqh. In it al Shahid has exposed and commented on the book Shara'i` al-'Islam of al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli (d. 676 H.). The book has drawn the attention of Shi'ah fuqaha', throughout all ages, with al-Shahid's fiqhi opinions being an authority (hujjah) in the Imami fiqh.



It is noteworthy that there were other commentaries on the book al-Sharayi`, the most important of which are: Jawahir al-kalam by the great Shi'ah faqih al-Shaykh Muhammad Husayn al-Najafi, who was known later with the name Sahib al-Jawahir (d. 1266 H). The book consists of 43 volumes, and was published several times.

#### **Musakkin al-Fu'ad `inda Faqd al-'Ahibbah wa al-'Awlad**

The reason behind al-Shahid's compilation of this book lies in the fact that al-Shahid was bereaved with the death of his young children, that no one was left except al-Shaykh Yasan the author of al-Ma'alim. So he compiled an abridged treatise under the above title, stating in it how man should face life hardships and tribulations with forbearance and consolation, particularly during bereavement of the dearest relations and children. Then he abbreviated all this in a book under the title Mubarrid al-'akbad fi mukhtaar Musakkin al-fu'ad, which was published several times in Iran.

Its compilation was finished by al-Shahid on the first of Rajab 954 H., and it was translated into Persian many times, the foremost of which being the one done by al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Hujjati.

#### **Sharh al-Lum`ah**

The book al-Rawah al-bahiyyah fi sharh al-Lum`ah al-Dimashqiyyah, actually occupies the foremost position among the fiqhi books till the present time. It is still regarded the basic curriculum in the theological schools, in the field of the inferential fiqh, of which every knowledge-seeker can never do without.

As explicitly indicated from the title, the book is a commentary written by al-Shahid al-Thani on al-Lum`ah al-Dimashqiyyah of al-Shahid al-'Awwal Muhammad ibn Makki<sup>18</sup> (may Allah be pleased with him). This book is considered the most outstanding work ever compiled by al-Shahid al-Thani, distinguished with accuracy, scrutiny and comprehensiveness.

It has procured the attention of the Imami fuqaha', throughout different eras and times. Contrary to the common belief, the book was not al-Shahid's last work. The origin of this belief may be sought in the fact reported by al-Shaykh al-Hurr al-'Amili In his book Amal al-'amil, when citing the event of al-Shahid's arrest, that was executed "according to him "in a vine orchard in one of Damascus suburbs, while al-Shahid was busy compiling his book al-RawAh al-bahiyyah.

But in fact, the book was authored nine years before his martyrdom, as indicated by al-Shahid himself when stating that the date of finishing its compilation was the night of Saturday 21st of Jumada al-' la 957 H.

The fuqaha' were interested in the book al-Rawah al-bahiyyah to a great extent that many expositions and commentaries were written on it, numbering about a hundred, the fact indicating its extreme importance and scientific value.<sup>19</sup>

#### **Munyat al-Murid**

The full title of the book is Munyat al-murid fi adab al-mufid wa al-mustafid. It is regarded an ethical treatise containing precepts recommending the meritorious morals to be assiduously maintained by the scholar and knowledge-seeker, beside the rules to be followed by the judge



and mufti when issuing a judgement and giving a verdict (fatwa). The book is considered a good turning point on the part of al-Shahid, in respect of the importance of the ethical aspect in the life of the ‘ulama’ and fuqaha’, and its constructive social role.

About it a scholar said:

“... Al-Shahid al-Thani has derived his ethical precepts from the holy Qur’an, Prophetic Sunnah and traditions of Ahl al-Bayt Imams (peace be upon them), to establish sound and proper links between the scholar and his disciple and with common people, beside the relation between the disciple and his teacher, and even the duties and conduct of each of them in the class during learning.”<sup>20</sup>

Hence Munyat al-murid is truly considered a pioneer book in this respect.

The book consists of an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. The introduction deals with the importance of knowledge and knowledge-seeking, in the light of the Qur’an and traditions of the Mu`umun (Infallibles). The first chapter elucidates the functions of both the disciple and teacher, while the second chapter deals with the good manners of the mufti (one giving fatwa), and mustafti (one seeking fatwa or ruling) and the conditions of issuing a fatwa (futura). The third chapter refers to the etiquette of debate and methods of dialogue and conversation, whereas the fourth chapter is designated to exposing the style of writing and compilation. At last comes the conclusion that elucidates the degrees of the legal sciences, and their preliminaries, supported by counsels and aphorisms that are of use for the seekers of religious sciences.

The book’s significance lies in its determining the earmarks of the path ... the path of theological learning, and its role in fixing the objectives, being in itself an extremely vital matter.

Therefore the theological institute appeals to the knowledge-seekers and professors, asking them to study this book and benefit from the knowledge contained in it.<sup>21</sup>

The book was translated into Persian, for the first time in 1369 H., by al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sa`idi al-Khurasani, and was published in Tehran in 1372 H.

Again it was translated in 1376 H. by al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Dehsurkhi al-’IsIfahani, under the title Siraj al-mubtadi’in.

Recently it was translated into Persian in 1400 H., by Dr. Muhammad Baqir Yujjati, which is the best translation. It was reprinted sixteen times, with the translator’s annexing a detailed survey for the biography of the book’s author: al-Shahid al-Thani.

### **Excerpts from Munyat al-Murid**

Following are some excerpts from the book that shed light upon the way of thinking of the most eminent man of knowledge and human thought.

“That he never disdains from learning and benefitting from that who is lower, in position or age or fame or religion or any other knowledge. But he all the time benefits from whoever be of benefit, never being kept by any feeling of superiority due to high post or fame, to get benefit from that unknown to him so as to lose his commerce and his knowledge be decreased, the fact entailing Allah’s abhorrence. It is according to the

tradition reported from the Prophet (Allah's peace and benediction be upon him and his Progeny): Wisdom is the believer's sought request, wherever finding it being its deservant better than any other one."

"That the knowledge-seeker should never attend the class but only when being ritually pure from any hadath (anything invalidating ablution), and khabath (scum or major mischief), cleansed and scented in respect of body and clothes, wearing the best of his garments, intending thus to glorify knowledge..."

In another chapter al-Shahid recommends every knowledge-seeker by saying:

"He has to evade the company of that who keeps his attention away from his request, as leaving it being the most necessary act the knowledge-seeker should do ... and the worst blight of company being loss of life in vain..."

"That he has to treat his shaykh (teacher) as being his real father and spiritual guardian, who is greater than the corporeal father, exaggerating in venerating him in view of observing the right of his parents, and to fulfil and pay the right of bringing him up. Alexander has once asked a boy: What is the matter with you that you dignify your teacher in a way more highly than your father? He replied:

Because the teacher is verily the means for my next life, while my father being the means for my mortal life."

"It is incumbent upon anyone of them attaining any field of knowledge and sort of perfection, to guide his companions and encourage them to hold meetings, be engaged in learning and seeking knowledge, making his sustenance easy for them, telling them about all the benefits he got, rules and novelties in respect of advice and study. Through guiding and leading them to the right path, Allah will verily bless and make his knowledge abundant, illuminating his heart, with being assured of all issues of having plentiful reward of the Almighty Allah, and His kind patronage and grace.

But whenever being miser and depriving them from anything aforementioned, the opposite shall be true, with his knowledge being not confirmed ... and if confirmed it will be barren, unproductive, and with no blessing showered from Allah. This case occurred for a number of the predecessors and those who succeeded them.

He also never be jealous of any of them, or despises him or prides himself on him, never boasting in his ability of comprehension and excelling the others, since he used to be like any other one but then was graced by the Al-mighty Allah. So he has to thank Allah for this favour, begging Him to shower upon him much more, through persisting on being grateful. Being so submissive, attaining full eligibility, with his virtue being so widely known, he would verily rise to a higher rank, and Allah is the warrantor of success."

The book proceeds in this manner in laying down a noble ethical course, indicating a pure spirit and a sublime self-towering up in the spheres of noble-heartedness, till joining the caravan of immortal martyrs.

## Notes

1. Amal al-'amil, Vol. I, p. 85.

2. Rawdat al-jannat, pp. 287-288.
3. Shuhada' al-fadhilah, p. 132.
4. He is one of the personalities of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and was assassinated after its victory. (Translator)
5. Al-'Ulum al-'Islamiyyah, p. 302.
6. Risalat Ibn al-'Awdi (a manuscript).
7. 'Ali al-Dawwani: Mafakhir al-'Islam, Vol. IV, p. 475.
8. Kashkul al-Shaykh al-Baha'i (the introduction).
9. Al-Dhari'ah, Vol. 1, p. 193.
10. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 58.
11. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 433.
12. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 452.
13. Ibid., Vol. V, p. 278.
14. Ibid., Vol. V, p. 278.
15. Ibid., Vol. SI, p. 275.
16. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 296.
17. Muqaddimat Munyat al-murid, by Ridal-Mukhtari.
18. He was martyred in Damascus in 786 H.
19. Al-Dharish, Vol. VI, pp. 90, 98, Vol. SIII, pp. 292, 296.
20. Muhammad Baqir Hujjati: Adab al-ta'lim wa al-ta'aum fi al-'Islam.
21. Al-Aawzah journal, issue No. 29 "1408 H.

## Chapter 3: On the Path to Glory

### Secret of Success

One may wonder sometimes about the secret behind the success of some people, and the way through which they ascended the tops of glory and human perfection.

Going through the biography of many of those everlasting personalities, will lead us to two essential factors behind all the successes and victories in life which are:

#### First: Persevering Endeavour

Wittiness alone or instinctive capabilities endowed by Allah inside the human essence, can never achieve the objectives and goals aspired for by man, as the secret behind every success lies in continuous labour and unstopped strival, beside the traits of man can possess, like forbearance and patience for this purpose.

True, the persevering endeavour, and enduring different hardships and suffering for the sake of attaining to the objectives and aims, being the logical formula prevalent over the human life. Otherwise, resorting to the luxurious and monotonous life will mean indolence and fiasco.

“That who is after a peacock, has to endure the hardships of India,”<sup>1</sup> and “Without torment man can never acquire a treasure.”<sup>2</sup>

True, al-Shahid was an ideal in persevering toil and endeavour, never thinking of rest or resorting to the luxurious life. But all his life was spent in travelling and moving from one country to another, with his only aim being seeking knowledge wherever it to and under whomever it be.

All problems “how abundant they be “could never constitute an impediment curbing him from reaching his objective, as he got past mountains of concerns, spending long years under surveillance and persecution. All these difficulties and hardships could never hinder him from compilation, investigation and study. So al-Shahid managed, throughout his relatively short life, to leave behind all that huge heritage of Islamic sciences and fields of knowledge.

#### Second: Discipline

Having discipline, planning, and investing time properly constitute altogether the second factor for man’s success.

Time, and “in general “age is the real capital in the life of individuals and peoples, as system is the essential factor behind man’s proceeding on his way toward the aspired goal. Discipline and system being further the necessary factor for sovereignty of nations, glory of peoples and innovation of civilizations, while disorder and chaos being the essential cause for continuous failure in the life of nations and individuals.

Every man’s success depends only on the extent of his observance of time and availing of opportunities. When going through the testament of al-’Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) on his deathbed, we shall be obliged to make a halt before the following resounding statement, representing his address to all generations: “I advise you (both) and all my

children and members of my family and everyone whom my writing reaches, to fear Allah, to keep your affairs in order ...”<sup>3</sup>

True, discipline indicates a well-planned progress on the path ... the path of success, glory and attaining the aspired target.

### **Discipline in al-Shahid’s Character**

Ibn al-Awdi used to show strong admiration for al Shahid’s personality, enjoying his company for consecutive seventeen years, being a sufficient period to try his depth and recognize his quiddity. He was so dazzled by al-Shahid’s character that he was prompted to write down a profile of al-Shahid’s biography and day-to-day programmes.

That giant was viewing the day and hour as a great for-tune not to be misused or wasted. Hence al-Shahid used to divide his time, exploiting the hours of day and night in reading, investigation, compilation, recording the conclusions, and worship and beseeching Allah “the Glorified “with confirming his association with Him. Besides giving lectures and educating the disciples, with meeting the necessities of his family, receiving the guests and visitors, giving replies and solutions for their legal questions and inquiries, as well as settling the disputes that might flare up among people.<sup>4</sup>

Al-Shahid used to arrange and organize his time so accurately that he could benefit and invest each and every moment.<sup>5</sup>

This was the reason why al-Shahid has excelled others, attaining the top of perfection through subjugating the time and making use of it as best as possible, the fact indicating the real secret behind his success and genius.

### **His Supernatural Acts**

Human life passes and paces forward according to monotonous material formulas, on which people were accustomed through the limited five senses. But sometimes some supernatural and extraordinary things take place, that excite man’s astonishment and contemplation in the form of a psychological shock produced in one’s heart of hearts.

The phenomenon of miracle and supernaturalism used to be an inseparable fact of the life of all prophethoods, being the means for shaking the souls and awakening the minds from their lethargy, leading them toward truth light.

The era of miracles has passed away with the end of prophethoods, but the Almighty Allah honours His true friends (Awliya’) and devoted bondmen, imparting on them noble acts and favour from His own, due to the sublime status and noble position and spiritual transparency they attained.

This being the difference between miracle and karamah (supernatural act), as miracle is a supernatural and extraordinary matter that occurs in response to challenging and establishing the truth, while karamah being a transient phenomenon that comes into being without any challenge.<sup>6</sup>

If the miracles were phenomena going in line with the process and course of the prophethoods throughout history, then the phenomenon of karamat was, in turn, relevant and connected to those transparent spirits, serene and pure selves and the hearts that are full of faith (iman), piety and godliness.

The extraordinary act (karamah) comes in fact to penetrate the monotony in life, once in the form of a vision like daybreaking or reconnoitring the

future, or as an unusual sense filling the human soul with doubt at the moment of a transparent felicity.

The self-serenity and pure-heartedness attained by al Shahid reached an extent elevating him to the status of Allah's friends among the righteous bondmen of Allah.

### **A Vision**

Al-Shaykh al-Baha'i<sup>7</sup> reports from his father, who was a disciple under al-Shahid (may Allah be pleased with him), that he once upon a morning has visited him (al-Shahid), finding him fully occupied with profound thinking. Thereat he wondered about the reason for his indulgence and sorrow, for which al-Shahid gave the following answer: O brother, I believe in my being the second martyr.

Then al-Shaykh al-Baha'i's father asked him: How is that you be aware of this?

Al-Shahid, movingly, replied: Yesternight, in the world of vision, I saw al-Sayyid al-Murtaza giving a big banquet inviting to it all the Imamiyyah 'ulama'. On entering the place, al-Sayyid al-Murtaza stood to welcome me, asking me to be seated beside Muhammad ibn Makki (al-Shahid al-'Awwal), and so I did. Then I waked up from sleep, never considering myself but a martyr.<sup>8</sup>

### **On the Mediterranean Shores**

It is reported from al-Shaykh al-Baha'i that when his father was once walking with his teacher, al-Shahid, on the Mediterranean shore; suddenly al-Shahid's lineaments were changed as if he were witnessing a disaster before him. When asked by his disciple about the reason behind that, al-Shahid replied: At this place a great man will be verily killed.

In the treatise named Masa'il al-Sayyid Badr al-Din Aasan al-Ausayni, which contained the questions put forth by that Sayyid to al-Shaykh Husayn 'Abd al-Samad (al Shahid's disciple), the following question was cited:<sup>9</sup>

"It is reported that you were once in the company of al-Shahid in Istanbul, whereat he said to you: Soon, a great man will be murdered in this place. Apparently this being a prophecy, as al-Shahid has met his end at the same place, to which he referred, the fact indicating one of his extraordinary (noble) acts (karamah). How far true is that being ascribed to you?

Answer: Yea, true, I have experienced this, as al Shahid has apprised me of the martyrdom of a great man in that place, which being a psychical revelation, since he foretold of what will happen for him in future.

### **Another Extraordinary Act**

Ibn al-'Awdi, his faithful disciple, reports another karamah, that was narrated to him by al-Shahid during his travel to Egypt. Its abstract being that: On the night of Wednesday, the tenth of Rabi' al-'Awwal 960 H., he was at the town of Ramlah. From there he betook himself alone to make pilgrimage to the tombs of prophets at a mosque called al-Jami' al-'Abyad (the White Mosque), that was located at the town suburb. On reaching the mosque, he found its doors closed, with no one being there.

As soon as he placed his hand on the lock, the door was opened, whereat al-Shahid entered and embarked on performing prayers, indulging in

supplication till he devoted himself completely to Allah “the Glorified “forgetting all around it and that he had to travel, with the caravan might leaving him and continuing its proceeding toward Egypt.

When he came to himself, he realized the long time he spent inside the mosque. At that moment he rushed to catch the caravan, but finding no trace for it. Thereat he remained so perplexed, not knowing what to do, and immediately he decided to go after the caravan, hoping to catch it.

After cutting a long way walking, he got tired, and all of a sudden a knight appeared at sight, coming through the dusty road, inviting him to get on (horseback). How quick, the horse took them away, galloping the land and traversing the desert, after which he found himself in the midst of the caravan, among his friends and comrades.

So, al-Shahid got down the horse, and when he turned his face to thank the knight, he saw no one.

A commentary on this event is reported to have been uttered by Ibn al-`Awdi by saying:

“This being another karamah (extraordinary noble act) with which Allah “the Exalted “has endowed al Shahid, that can never be denied, but only by that upon whose heart is rust and whose insight being covered with veils of ignorance and desire. Otherwise, Allah never forgets His godly bondmen.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Making Travel**

Expatriate from homelands for seeking highness, And travel, as five gains are there in travels,

A sorrow relieving, and living earning,

A knowledge, manners and company of a noble man.<sup>11</sup>

Monotony and quietude are usually yoked with sluggishness, as the river’s water keeps on being fresh and tasty as long as it is flowing, but as soon as it stops, it will be converted to a stagnant pool of water. And prison remains more harmful for the human soul, since it fetters and bars it from moving, snatching its feeling of freedom and emancipation.

Prison being four walls that break man’s wings, preventing him from hovering high in the expansive world. And man, spending all his life in the very place he was born in, not knowing or seeing other than it, completely resembles a bird preferring to live inside a cage over roaming through the nice blue space. Such man can never attain greatness, and will verily continue to live on a trivial margin of life.

Hence we see those moving great selves and eminent spirits, yearn for travelling, departure, emigration and setting out in Allah’s land.

### **Al-Shahid’s Travels**

Al-Shahid al-Thani was one among those great men, as moving and travel constituted a notable characteristic in his life. Taking into consideration the means of transport prevalent in his time and travel hardships, we shall realize the man’s strong will and yearning for travel and going away freely.

Al-Shahid has moved among Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Yijaz, Turkey and Palestine, beside his homeland Lebanon. Also he has made visits to a large number of cities and villages including Mays, Karak Noah, Damascus,



Cairo, Makkah, al-Madinah, Karbala', Najaf, Samarra', Ka'imayn, Baghdad, Yillah, Kufah, Quds, Siwas, Oskedar, Azghin, Touqat, Mala'iyyah, Istanbul, and finally Ba'labakk.

Now this question is raised: What are the incentives that prompted al-Shahid to travel? What made him suffer the road difficulties and endure hardship of travel, moving all over the Islamic world?

If anyone intends to fathom this man's depth, what will he find there? Nothing will be found but love and hope. Only these both assets being behind the whole of his bright biography.

Al-Shahid made his travels with trade caravans, accompanying merchants dreaming only of gaining abundant profits, with goods, fortunes and contracting transactions being their only concern, while al-Shahid used to carry his books and papers, with his only objective being (gaining) knowledge and thought and learning. He has devoted himself to Allah, dedicating it entirely for seeking knowledge and paying service to the humanity, the fact for which Allah has favoured him with martyrdom, making him among those whose names being engraved in the history memory for ever.

### **His Memoir**

Al-Shahid might have been distinguished as the only man in his time, to embark on writing down his memoir in a special notebook, recording in it his experiences, day-to-day events he witnessed, and his journeys. This work has had the most effective role in shedding light upon his active and contributive life in general.

He used to initiate his memoir with the following statement: "In the Name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful. All praise belongs to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and benediction be upon the most honourable of messengers and his immaculate Household, and chosen Companions."

Then he would state his birth date, referring to the year in which he learned the Qur'an, 920 H., when he was only nine years. After that he would mention the date of his father's demise, in the middle of the month of Rajab 925 H., and then his travel to Mays for learning till the year 933 H. Finally he would state his visit to Turkey saying:

"Our arrival at the City of Qastantine was on Monday the 17th of Rabi' al-'Awwal 952 H., and the Almighty Allah has graced us with a good and proper house, that was almost the best of the city houses, and accessible to meet all our necessities. After my arrival I remained for 18 days never meeting any of the magnates, then the situation necessitated from me to write a good treatise containing ten valuable researches, each on one of rational and fiqhi arts, and tafsir (exegesis) beside other fields, letting it to reach the hands of the army judge, Muhammad ibn Qutb al-Din ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Qa'i Zadah al-Rumi, who was an honourable, wise, and intelligent man, the best in respect of morals and education and decency. After that he began to view me with great veneration, and I found favour with him, that he most the time was introducing me with flattery to the notable 'ulama'. Throughout all that period, time was opportune for me to hold debates and discussions regarding numerous issues and facts."

In another place he says:



“On the twelfth day of meeting him, he sent me the notebook containing the functions and names of schools, offering me to choose whichever I would like, whether in Sham or Yalab. The condition required from me to select al-Madrasah al-Nuriyyah in Ba`labakk, for conveniences I found in it, and due to appearance of Allah’s ordainment in it in particular. So he wrote me authorization for it, sending me to al-Sultan Sulayman,<sup>12</sup> allotting for me a monthly stipend as stipulated by its endower al-Sultan Nur al-Din al-Shahid.<sup>13</sup>

Al-Shahid stayed in Turkey for three months and a half, during which he roamed over different regions, meeting many scholarly personages.

His travel to Turkey was the main factor behind his emergence as an extremely considerable personality of great worth. Despite the fact that his visit to the great Islamic metropolis, has resulted in his triumphant return to his homeland, but it was “seemingly “the main reason instigating some of the influential persons to think of exterminating and getting rid of him.

Following are some aspects of his travel as referred to by al-Shahid in his memoir.

### **Touqat**

Al-Shahid arrived in the City of Touqat on Friday the 12th of Safar. It was, as described by him, replete with resources, highly populated, with fine weather, of abundant water that rolls down from the hills and mountains surrounding the city.

Northwards, there was a big river flowing inside a spacious valley embracing four hundred villages, and being the only outlet for departing the city. Al-Shahid states that the villages were so adjacent that the onlooker thinks them to be only one village.

Then al-Shahid arrived in another town, being Amasiyyah.<sup>14</sup> In it, as reported by al-Shahid, there was a magnificent construction called (Al-Sultan Bayazid Building),<sup>15</sup> which was seemingly a big hotel for travellers and a great school. The town at that time was governed by alSultan Mu’IIafa, the son of al-Sultan Sulayman al-Qanuni, and it is said that he died at the hands of his father, during the military preparations to confronting Iran, due to the latter’s fear from his son’s ambitions to seize power. That event coincided with the death of Amr Allah “the second son of al-Sultan” “through vague circumstances in the City of Yalab, and it was rumoured then that the father was behind his death too.

Sixteen days were the period in which al-Shahid stayed in Amasiyyah, after which he took the direction of the City of Qastantine.<sup>16</sup>

Along the big valley, al-Shahid has registered his numerous spectacles, infatuated by that enchanting nature, where the heavily entwined forests, overcrowded with all sorts and kinds of trees, flowers and fruits. These included the trees of walnuts, pomegranate, hazelnuts, grapes, apples, peach and pears, beside countless kinds of flowers and roses of miscellaneous shapes and colours.

Moreover, there were pine-trees, osier, ever-green and oak trees, beside other sorts that were never sighted by al Shahid before. He was so dazzled by that region, as he stated in his writings that he has never seen, throughout

his life, scenes prettier than them, with confirming their being natural forests that man had no role in growing them.

Then al-Shahid stood before a giant tree, trying to measure the circumference of its trunk and its height, after which he wrote that its circumference exceeded thirty handspans, estimating its height to be more than two hundred hand-spans.<sup>17</sup>

### Qastantine

Then he reached the City of Istanbul or Qastantine, as stated in his memoir, on the seventeenth of Rabi` al`Awwal 952 H., staying there for 18 days without meeting any of the men of influence. During that period he compiled valuable researches on different arts and sciences, submitting them to the army judge Muhammad ibn Qutb al-Din Qat'i Zadah al-Rumi. It was proved then that al Shahid was too accurate and successful in his choice, as the judge expressed his extreme admiration for his researches, and high respect for al-Shahid's character. After that the two men met each other, holding several dialogues that led to confirm their mutual links, whereat al Shahid offered his keenness to practice teaching in some of the schools. The judge held al-Shahid in high veneration, to the extent that he later on sent him a register containing various official employments and posts, asking him to select whichever he liked, provided that it should be either in Sham or Yalab.

This being a golden opportunity for whoever running after the world and its vanities, as the judge was not an ordinary person, but one of those having good influence and favour near Sulayman al-Qanuni, the most ever powerful monarch of the 'Uthmani Dynasty.

Whereas al-Shahid was never seduced by this temptation, showing abstinence from all worldly lusts, preferring the profession of teaching at al-Nuriyyah School in Ba'ilabakk. Thereat Muhammad Qa'ti Zadah applied the request to al-Sultan Sulayman, who immediately approved it.

### With Abu Ayyub al-'Ansari

During the period he resided in Qastantine, al-Shahid made a visit to the shrine of the honourable Companion Abu Ayyub al-'Ansari,<sup>18</sup> which was outside the city, and a vast shrine was built for him by Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih. There, al-Shahid secluded himself at one corner of the tomb reciting the holy Qur'an, and then an idea stroke his mind of examining his future from the Qur'an, with the hope of finding out what happened to his wife as he has left her while her being pregnant; and as soon as he opened the Qur'an, his auspice was the holy verse:

***"So We gave him tidings of a gentle son."*(37:101)**

He immediately bowed himself to make gratitude prostration to Allah, never forgetting to write down the holy verse, recording the date of that day.

Then he, accompanied by his disciple Ibn al-Awdi, departed Qastantine toward Oskedar on the other side of the strait, whereat he received a letter giving him the good tidings of the birth of a son, whom he gave the name of Muhammad.<sup>19</sup>

Ibn al-Awdi has reported the date of departing Oskedar toward Iraq for making pilgrimage to the holy shrines there, that it was on Monday the 2nd

of Sha'iban, taking the same route they had followed from Sivas<sup>20</sup> to Istanbul.

They reached Sivas on 25th of Sha`ban, and after taking rest, al-Shahid resumed his journey on the second day of the holy Month of RamaAn.

The trip from Oskedar was too hard, as very frigid winds were blowing, with heavy snowfall, and they spent two nights of their travel amongst snow.

### Meeting al-Kulayni

Al-Shahid reports that once upon a night, during his travel, he saw in dream that he visited the great al-Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ya`qub al-Kulayni.<sup>21</sup> Describing his features, as he saw in sleep, he said that he (al-Kulayni) was solemn, of good-featured face, with traits indicating knowledge and honour, and a beard overwhelmed with hoariness.

Then a conversation was held between them about the book al-Kafi, whereat al-Shaykh al-Kulayni expressed his dissatisfaction toward inscribing his book with bad handwriting. But when al-Shahid told him that his book was inscribed by a skillful calligraphist in Damascus, named Zayn al-Din al-Gharabili, who has excellently written it with nice calligraphy, making it in two volumes, there at the signs of delight appeared on al-Shaykh al-Kulayni's face.<sup>22</sup>

After walking for four days, al-Shahid arrived in the Town of Malliyyah, that had a temperate weather, situated close to the origins of the Euphrates. Thereafter he travelled to another town called Azghin, that was located adjacent to the River of Tigris.

### Cities of Iraq

On the fourth of Shawwal 952 H., al-Shahid arrived in the City of Samarra', where being honoured by visiting the shrines of Ahl al-Bayt Imams. Then he betook himself toward Baghdad for making pilgrimage to the shrine of al-Kazimayn (Musa al-Ka'im and Muhammad al-Jawad [A]), and from there he went to the shrine of Salman al-Farsi,<sup>23</sup> and Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman<sup>24</sup> (may Allah be pleased with them), turning then toward Karbala' to visit the holy shrine of al-'Imam al-Husayn (A). From there he went toward Yillah to visit the tomb of al-Qasim<sup>25</sup> ibn al'Imam Musa ibn Ja'far (peace be upon him), and after it to the Kufah. In Dhu al-Qa'dah he ended his travel in the holy city of Najaf, to make pilgrimage to the immortal champion of Islam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (A), where he stayed beside him all the remaining days of Dhu al-Qa'dah, reciting verses from the holy Qur'an.

When going through the memoir and recollections written down by al-Shahid, we come to realize his keenness and insistence on reciting the holy Qur'an all the time, beside finding out his auspice whenever facing any obscurity or trouble, seeking guidance from the first verse (ayah) on the top of the right page. He used to do this after uttering a collect of supplications, opening his heart at a moment of serenity, praying for inspiration from Allah's verses a glimpse of light.

Al-Shahid is reported to have stated in some of his memoir, that, once upon a day, he sought his auspice after reciting a part of the Qur'an near the tomb of al-'Imam, and he was encountered with the holy verse:

***“Then I fled from you, and my Lord vouchsafed me a command and appointed me (of the number) of those sent (by Him).”(26:21)***

From his concern and attaching importance to this respect, it can be concluded that he was suffering in his homeland from the covetousness of the jealous people, and conspiring of the ambitious avaricious persons, among those who never liked to see a personage with the same level of al-Shahid to overshadow and inundate them, in a way that their dwindling and little position be revealed when compared to his giant character.

Then in the middle of Safar 953 H., al-Shahid left Iraq, returning to his homeland, and reached his village (Jub').

### **In Ba'labakk**

The time spent by al-Shahid in Ba'labakk was regarded by him the most pleasant days of his life, since he was fully engaged in teaching, embarking on furnishing and imparting upon the knowledge-seekers among his students and disciples, various fields of knowledge and thoughts.

During that juncture in history, al-Shahid attained the peak of his scholarly and social glory. He turned to be the main religious reference for giving rules and verdicts, for the whole country, giving the followers of each one of the schools of thought, verdicts (fatawa) according to their jurisprudential opinions and theories.

And during his time, Ba'labakk became a significant cultural centre, attracting and drawing the attention of men of knowledge, who began to rush into it from far and near, all over the world.

Ibn al-'Awdi has referred to this era by saying: “I was at his service in those days, and I can never forget that he occupied the highest rank, being the religious authority for mankind, the refuge for all the people, near and far, giving every sect verdicts compliant to its school of thought and creed, teaching the books of all schools of thought, in addition to another lesson he was giving in al-Masjid al'Aam (the main mosque).

So all the town people became quite submissive to him, following his guide and obeying his orders, with faithful affectionate hearts, and good responding and belief, with the establishment of the knowledge movement according to the necessities of time. Besides that, he became a reference for all eminent scholars from the farthest points of the country, attaining sovereignty and mastership while companions increased in number, with the fact that those days turned to be like feasts for them.<sup>26</sup>

### **Notes**

1. Persian poetic lines.
2. Persian poetic lines.
3. Nahj al-balaghah, Letter No. 47.
4. Bughyat al-murid, by Ibn al-Awdi (a manuscript).
5. Rawdat al-jannat, Vol. III.
6. Al-'Ijaz fi Aw' al-'aql wa al-Qur'an, by al-Tabataba'i.
7. Al-Shaykh al-Baha'i (953-1035 H.), was the most eminent of his time 'ulama' with no rival. He was born in Ba'labakk and passed away in Isfahan. He is in origin from Jabal 'Amil. His books on mathematics and astronomy remained for a long time as major

references in these fields. Among his works we can refer to: “Tashrih al-’aflak, “Khulaat al-hisab, and “alKashkul. (Translator)

8. Rawdat al-jannat, Vol. III, p. 383.

9. The original text reads thus: A question: What is the opinion of our master (mawla) about the episode reported from al Shahid al-Thani, that he once passed by a place in Istanbul, accompanied by our master al-Shaykh, whereat he said: A man of importance is soon to be murdered in this place, and then he (al Shahid) was martyred in that very place? Yes, this is done by him (may Allah sanctify his soul), and the poor was addressed by this, and we were told that he was martyred in that same place, and that was what he revealed for himself (may Allah resurrect him with his immaculate Imams) “Shuhada’ alfa’ilah, p. 137.

10. Rawdat al-jannat, Vol. III, p. 255.

11. It is an excerpt from the poetry ascribed to al-’Imam ‘Ali (A).

12. Sulayman al-Qanuni.

13. Risalat Ibn al-’Awdi.

14. It is a small town situated in Minor Asia, in the region of Sivas on the coast of Yashil Irmaç River, containing numerous mosques and schools. It was conquered in 113 H.

15. He was one of Al ‘Uthman monarchs.

16. It was called afterwards with the name Istanbul, and it is called Istanbul at present. (Translator)

17. If we suppose the hand-pan to be 20 cms, so its height will equal forty metres, while the circumference of its trunk equals six metres.

18. He is Khalid ibn Zayd, from Banu al-Najjar, belonging to the Tribe of Khazraj, and was one of the most eminent companions. He was present during ‘Aqabah Allegiance (bay‘ah), taking part in the battles of the first days of Islam. He was known with his bravery, forbearance and having enthusiasm for jihad (holy struggle); when the Messenger (S) migrated, he became his guest on reaching al-Madinah. He was among the soldiers who laid siege around the City of Qastantine in 53 H., during which he died and was buried near the walls of Qastantine. He supported al-’Imam ‘Ali (A), taking his side during his battle with the Kharijites. (Translator)

19. He died during his childhood.

20. It is a Turkish town on the bank of the River of Qazal Irmaç.

21. He is the author of the famous book al-Kafi, one of the Shi’ah main reference books on hadith. He passed away in 329 H.

22. Though the matter is no more than a vision in the world of dreams, but referring to it sheds some light upon al-Shahid’s concern for the thought and theological heritage of the good predecessors.

23. He was dead in 35 H., and was buried in al-Mada’in near Baghdad, which is called Salman Pak or Taq Kisra.

24. He deceased in 36 H.

25. He fled al-Madinah alone, toward the land of Iraq, where he arrived in a village called Bakhamri, (presently al-Qasimiyyah), during the savage onslaught launched by the ‘Abbasid Caliph al-Rashid against the ‘Alawids.

26. Risalat Ibn al-’Awdi (a manuscript).

## Chapter 4: Beams of Sunset

### The Decline

At the time al-Shahid found himself at the climax of glory, he also became face to face with a far-away abyss, as he sensed the presence of suspected moves on the part of the authorities, who imposed a severe surveillance upon him, controlling even his breaths with secret reports being started to be continuously sent to the centre of caliphate, warning against his danger and threat.

In such a conspiracy-harboured sphere, al-Shahid decided to return to his birthplace at that dove-like small village, in 955 H.

Since that date onwards, began the reversed counting for his life. About that epoch Ibn al-Awdi reported by saying: "This date marked the end of times security and safety against misfortunes of life." At that time al-Shahid sought refuge to the house of his sincere disciple in Jizzin,<sup>1</sup> far from sight of people. It is noteworthy that al Shahid, during that critical period in his life, has never left compilation, investigation and research. The works he produced during that period represented the setting beams in his active and productive life.

### The Bloody End

Unfortunately, history has not recorded the details of his unforgettable martyrdom, but a bit of pondering upon some indications and events may shed light on the threads of a machinated conspiracy aimed at exterminating that unparalleled personality. This is true when taking into consideration the political situation prevalent at that time, with the thought basis upon which the Ottoman State relied, and its adopting one of the Islamic schools of thought solely for achieving political goals.<sup>2</sup>

Intending to fathom the issue roots and background of the events that led altogether to al-Shahid's decease, we should go back to a highly indicative incident, on the eve of his travel to Turkey for meeting some of those in authority in the metropolis of caliphate. It was common then that whoever intending to apply for anything, had to produce a certificate from his town judge attesting his application. The judge at that time was Ma`ruf al-Shami in the town of Sida, for whom al-Shahid delegated his disciple Ibn al-`Awdi for apprising him of al-Shahid's intention to visit the capital. Thereat the judge offered Ibn al-`Awdi his service to write an introduction note for al-Shahid, but he was confronted with al-Shahid's refusal, preferring his self-confidence based on his scholarly ability and qualification.<sup>3</sup>

The judge felt as being insulted and injured due to al Shahid's transcending his post as a chain within an administrative system governing the country, considering al Shahid's stand as a blatant challenge against him. Thereat he began to feel the danger threatening him because of the presence of such a personage having that extreme selfconfidence, and thinking in that manner. The situation was even exacerbated when al-Shahid returned triumphantly from the capital, without showing any adulation or flattery to any government official, seeking trust and power from his thought capabilities and scholarly character.



Therefore the judge made up his mind to exterminate and do away with al-Shahid, who, seemingly, realized the tensioned spheres, disclosing this fact to his disciples and followers.

After that, the series of events continued, to exacerbate the situation, and intensify the conflict, and the only episode indicating the outset of the end is the following: Two litigants have filed a case to al-Shahid, in which the sentence was issued in behalf of one of them according to a warrant revealed by Allah. This fact has, of course, caused displeasure inside the heart of the condemned one, and that man<sup>4</sup> might have quite realized the contradiction of the sentence with the thought discipline organizing and administering the State affairs. So he seized the opportunity, rushing to the Judge Ma`ruf al-Shami, who immediately issued his orders to summon al-Shahid to have him interrogated.

Sensing the danger of the critical situation, al-Shahid decided to be away of sights, till the circumstances become ordinary and security prevails.

But Ma`ruf al-Shami, the judge of Sida, never missed such an opportunity, and he urgently sent a telegram to the caliphate capital, saying: "That a heretic man is found in the land of Sham, who has renegaded against the four schools of thought."<sup>5</sup>

This telegram was sufficient to excite the fears of the metropolis of caliphate. Thus, the conditions became so risky and critical, after al-Sultan Sulayman al-Qanuni himself paid special attention to the case. In the meantime, the monarch delegated a special envoy to summon al-Shahid, who got to be aware of the inevitable danger, secretly departing the country with the pilgrims caravan. Then the special envoy arrived in the country for meeting al-Shahid and notifying him the monarch's decision. Being aware of his departure, he followed up al-Shahid's trace, till catching him while being on his way toward the holy Makkah.

Thereat, al-Shahid came to know that no choice was left before him but to go back to the capital, after having knowledge of the wish of al-Sultan Sulayman al-Qanuni, in arranging a thought meeting with Qastantine 'ulama' and fuqaha.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, al-Shahid suggested to the envoy to perform the rites of Hajj before going to the capital, the fact upon which both agreed.

Then the two men took the direction of the caliphate capital, with al-Shahid's full surrender to Allah's will. On his way, he might have remembered that vision he dreamt of in the past, and the time he was sitting beside al-Shahid al-'Awwal Muhammad ibn Makki, who was murdered in almost similar circumstances.

En route to the capital, al-Shahid went along the same road he followed previously, with the same unusual feeling, that filled him with doubt when approaching the Mediterranean shores, starting to recur to his mind.

Herein a meeting was held that raised a big question mark, when they were encountered with some man asking them to stop, whereat a conversation was held between him and the Sultan's envoy about al-Shahid's character.

After that, the man embarked on urging the envoy to slay al-Shahid on the spot, and get rid of him.<sup>7</sup>

This episode cannot be accepted as it is, as the event implies that there was verily an engineered plot, hatched in darkness, particularly that the facts would convict the second strong man in power, being the Prime Minister (Rustam Pasha), who received secret reports indicating that al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din was actively striving to propagating Shi`ism (tashayyu`). So he gave his orders to arrest al-Shahid, and take him guarded to Istanbul. The factor that called for hastening in doing away with al-Shahid so tragically, may be sought in the fact that Rustam Pasha was so afraid of al-Sultan Sulayman al-Qanuni's being influenced by al-Shahid's ideas, and he might have felt this fact through al-Sultan's desire to arrange for a thought debate between al-Shahid and the capital scholars.<sup>8</sup>

Although the reports differed greatly about the reasons entailing the murder of al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din, but all of them "undoubtedly "ascertain that the Ottoman capital was viewing al-Shahid as a danger threatening its very existence, and endangering its security, especially that the Ottoman Emperors were fearing their neighbour on the east.

In this way, al-Shahid became a victim of a dirty conspiracy, without any regard for the most essential rights, being freedom of opinion. The way he was slain should be considered a despoil against every Muslim's freedom and a blatant violation to the sanctity of Islam.

With steady steps, al-Shahid was moving toward his bloody end, contemplating the furious sea waves, in the moment of the last departure. The man, who passed the fifty, realized then that his sun too was falling down toward setting, and the hour of departure was approaching. The eyes watching him were glaring with grudge, awaiting that dreadful moment, and the sea had nothing to give but its angry waves. Meanwhile, al-Shahid advanced toward his fate with confident steps, praying the martyrdom two rak`ahs ... making ablution with blood ... and hovering round about the heavens, leaving behind him a severed head and a body overwhelmed with waves.

Thereafter, his killer set out, carrying the slaughtered head, toward the monarch, Sulayman al-Qanuni, who strongly deplored the crime, giving his orders to execute the killer.<sup>9</sup> His executioners wanted for his sun to set forever, whereas it came out to shine again so soon.

### Notes

1. It is one of the South Lebanon villages, and the birthplace of al-Shahid al-'Awwal (Muhammad ibn Makki). (Translator)

2. The `Uthmani policy adopts the Yanafi school, due to Abu Yanifah's well-known opinion regarding the issue of caliphate. (Translator)

3. It was common at that era, that whoever presenting an application to the capital, he had to bring with him gifts to submit to the men of influence there, and this might have been the reason why al-Shahid refused the judge's introduction note.

4. The event as a whole might be fabricated with the aim of jeopardizing al-Shahid, and putting him in trouble.

5. Shuhada' al-fa'ilah, p. 135, taken from the book Amal al-'amil.

6. Al-Sultan (Sulayman) sent someone for al-Shaykh, saying to him: Bring him alive so that I arrange for a meeting between him and my country 'ulama' to hold a debate. (Shuhada' alfa'dhilah, p. 136).

7. When he completed performing the acts of hajj, he travelled with him to the Land of Romans (Turkey). On reaching it he met a man who inquired him about al-Shaykh, and he



replied: He is a man among the Imamiyyah Shiah 'ulama', I want to send him to the Sultan. The man then asked him: Aren't you afraid that he informs the Sultan that you have failed short of serving him, and annoyed him, being thus the means for causing your death, due to his having supporters who are ready to help and back him. So the preponderant opinion in this case that you kill him and take his head to the Sultan. (Shuhada' al-fa'ililah, p. 136, as reported from Amal al-'amil)

8. Yasan Bey Romlu is reported to have said in his book Ahsan al-tawarikh:

"In 965 H., in the middle of the sovereignty of the King Āahmasb al-Safawi, the possessor of the rational and transmitted (ma`qul and manqul), the holder of both furu` (branches) and u'lul (principles), al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din al-'Amili. The reason that led to his martyrdom was that: A group of the Sunnis have told Rustam Pasha, the great Vizier of al-Sultan Sulayman, the King of Romans, that al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din was claiming ijtihad and many of Shi'ah 'ulama' were frequenting to him, reading to him the Imamiyyah books, with the aim of propagating Shi'ism everywhere. Thereat the Vizier Rustam Pasha sent for al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din, who was then at Makkah. Then they took him to Istanbul, slaying him therein, without consulting or informing al-Sultan." (A`yan al-Shi`ah), Vol. SSSIII, p. 292).

9. That is the one who killed al-Shahid in a place on the sea coast, with the presence of a number of Turkomans who sighted, at that night, some lights descending from the sky and ascending up, so they buried him in that very spot building a dome over him.

Then the murderer took his head to al-Sultan, who disapproved his act, saying to him: I commanded you to bring him alive, while you killed him. Thereat al-Sayyid `Abd al-Rahim al-`Abbasi (a man of honour, who authored the book Ma`ahid al-tan'li'I fi Sharh Abyat al-Talkhi'I), has instigated and convinced the Sultan to execute the man, the act which he did. (Ibid.)

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