

786-110-92

Myths and Facts about Taqleed and Mujtahid

Let us analyse the escalating strong hold of the ‘Mujtahid¹’ over the shia community, by examining their those frightening claims which have been mythicised, soon after the ‘Ghaibat-e-Qubra’ of Imam-e-Zamana^{as}-which replicates the approach of Sunni leaders, who took over the rein of religion, shortly, after Prophet Mohammed^{saw}’s Shahadat and introduced numerous innovations to quench their greed for amassing wealth and building monarchy. Mola Ali^{as} has condemned their tactics ([Duwa-e-Sanam-e-Qurash](#)) and means of adapting ‘Islam’ to satisfy their devious ambitions and cruel desires ([Khutabah to denounce Muftis](#)).

A brief and simple approach has been adapted in view of saving time, for those, who are subjected to tough and busy modern-days living conditions, however, for those with more appetite for knowledge, background details are included in the appendix, references to the books and citation of internet sites. Also the arguments and claims of some of amateur and extreme supporters of ‘Taqleed’, who cannot be taken seriously, are excluded from our discussion but replies to their bewilderment can be found at [The necessity of taqleed](#).

Myth 1:

One’s ‘Amal’² are not accepted without Taqleed!

Generally, the ‘Mujtahids’ say: Al-‘amal bidoon taqleed batil, which translates to ‘**Acts without taqleed are void**’. It is best to do ‘taqleed’ and follow a mujtahid, If one dies without taqleed, then it is doubtful if one’s whole life’s acts of worship will be accepted. Wallahu ‘Alam - And Allah knows best- There are several references, in most of the ‘Rasala, Touzi al Masail’³.

We quote the following statement from Articles of Islamic Acts (Agha Khoei), pages1-2 (ref. 3).

‘It is necessary for a Muslim to believe in the fundamentals of faith (Usool-e-Deen) on the basis of proof and he cannot follow anyone in this respect, i.e., he cannot accept the word of another with regard to the fundamentals without demanding proof. However, in order to act on Islamic code (Faroo-e-Deen) a person must adopt one of the following methods:

- (i) The man concerned should be a Mujtahid himself and should be knowing the Articles of Acts on the basis of Ijtihad and reason;
- (ii) If he is not a jurist himself he should follow a jurist , i.e., he should **act according to the judgement (fatawa) of the jurist without demanding proof**;
- (iii) If he is neither a jurist nor

¹ The person who practices ‘Ijtihad’-use of his own knowledge and perception to issue an edict/decreed on an Islamic issue.

² Act of worship

³ See, for example, Articles of Islamic Acts, Al-Khoei Foundation, ISBN 0-941724-21-2), Pages, 1-5,

a follower (Muqallid)⁴ he should act after taking such precaution that he should become sure of his having performed his religious duty.’

In some books⁵, which are written in support of Taqleed, it is also stated that it is ‘Wajib’ (compulsory) for a non-Mujtahid to follow a well-versed Mujtahid. And in support of their claim, a hadith from **Imam Hazrat Hassan Askari^{as}** is cited: ***‘it is compulsory for people to follow those’Fughha’ who control their personal splendour , strive to safeguard ‘Deen’, refrain from devious desires and who obey Allah^{swt}, Rasool Allah^{saw} and Masomeen^{as}.***

Fact 1:

Now, we analyse the claims made by the Mujtahid⁶, and their supporters, against the Book of Allah^{swt} and Masomeen^{as}’s traditions, by answering the resulting three questions from **Myth no. 1**:

- (1) How ‘Amal⁷’ of a ‘Momin’⁸ are accepted?
- (2) Is it Allah^{swt}’s Obligation to follow a ‘non-masoom’ without demanding a proof?
- (3) What are the true meanings of Hadith of Imam Hazrat **Hassan Askari^{as}**?

(1) How ‘Amal’ of a ‘Momin’ are accepted?

Amal are related with ‘Aman’⁹, according to several traditions of Masomeen^{as} e.g., **Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} said¹⁰**:

‘No act (leading to sin) will be harmful if one has Aman but no deed (of worship) will be beneficial in the absence of Aman. Don’t you see Allah^{swt} Says ‘The reason that prevents them from having their expenditures accepted from them is merely that they have disbelieved in Allah^{swt} and His messenger and do not come to pray except when they are lazy, nor do they spend anything unless they are reluctant (Repentance, 9, verse, 54¹¹)’.

It is narrated from Imam-e-Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} ¹² Amir-ul-Momaneen^{as} has said in many of his^{as} speeches, O people! You better stay within Deen-e-Islam, as it is better to commit a sin in it rather than carrying out good deeds in another religion’

It is narrated from Imam Ali Raza^{as} ¹³ Aman means, recitation from your tongue, its recognition from heart and demonstration of it from those limbs of your body which are related to it.¹⁴

⁴ Those who follow a Mujtahid.

⁵ See, for example, Tofa-tul-Awam, Chapter on Taqleed.

⁶ It should be noted that the concept of following a Mujtahid has been derived from Sunnis, as they follow their four Imams.

⁷ Acts of worship

⁸ A true believer (we are writing this article exclusively for Shian-e-Ali^{as})

⁹ Aman means unconditional compliance with pillars of Deen (Touheed, Justice, Rasolat, Imammat and Day of Judgement).

¹⁰ Tafseer-e-Safi, pp. 209, 252-Syed Imdad

¹¹ English translation by T.B.Irving

¹² Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 337, Hadith, 6 (K.Haqiq, pp10)

¹³ Ann-ul Hiati, Mullah Mohammed Baqir Majlisi, Chater 7.

¹⁴ Aman is not complete until and unless the Willait of Amir-ul-momaneen Ali ibn Abi Talib^{as} is not pronounced in Kalima, Azan, Aqamah and Taushud of Salat, as per the tradition of Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} **‘La Ai**

Imam Mohammed Baqir^{as} said¹⁵: ‘Allah^{swt} Says, I will punish all those who have followed an Imam who was not nominated by Me, regardless of their good deeds and extensive acts of worship but will forgive those who have followed My Just and Divine Imam, regardless of their enormous burden of sins’.

It is also obvious from a famous and ‘Mutafiq-ul-Alay’¹⁶ hadith of Rasool Allah^{saw}, My followers will be divided into 73 sects and all will be directed towards hell fire except ‘one’, meaning all belonging to only one Muslim sect will be rewarded ‘Jannah’. Since there is a broad variation in the practices of worship and indulgence in sins among people in general. Therefore, all regularly as well as irregularly practising worshipers of the ‘one’ Muslim sects will be assured a place in the gardens of paradise. The qualities of their deeds, will, not doubt, distinguish their status in the paradise.

It is now clear from the above discussion that only deeds of the true believers (momin) which will be accepted by Allah^{swt}, here we present a generally agreed hadith of Rasool Allah^{saw} ‘The quality of Deeds depends on the intentions’, this is further emphasised¹⁷ ‘Allah^{swt} awards more on good intention as compared with a mere good practice’

The quality of the deeds or acts of worship, again, depend on the understanding of the faith (Pillars of Deen) and certainly not on the details/procedures through which these acts are performed. Here, we present two traditions of Masomeen^{as} from Usool-e-Kafi¹⁸

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from Yahya ibn al-Mubarak from ‘Abdallah ibn Jubla from ibn Ishaq ibn ‘Ammar from abu ‘Abdallah^{as} who has said the following¹⁹:

"I asked Imam abu ‘Abdallah Reza^{as}, ‘May Allah^{swt} take my soul in service for your cause, I am impressed by my neighbour who regularly offers prayers, gives much charity and very often visits Makka and performs Hajj.’" Imam^{as} asked, "O ibn Ishaq how about his state of ‘Moarafat’ (level of intellect in Deen)?" I then replied, "May Allah^{swt} take my soul in service for your cause, he does not have any wisdom (Moarafat)" "Nothing from what he does will be raised up (to heavens)." Replied Imam^{as}.

We conclude here: Acts of worship are accepted and rewarded based on intentions and knowledge related to pillars of Islam (which are outside the boundaries of Mujtahid-as per their own conditions of Taqleed!)

La Ha Illallah’ and ‘Mohammed ar Rasool Allah^{as}, then you must immediately say ‘Ali Ameer Ul Momaneen^{as}’.

¹⁵ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 85, Hadith, 4 (K.Haqiak, pp9)

¹⁶ Accepted by all Muslim sects.

¹⁷ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 171, Hadith, 2 (K.Masail, pp78)

¹⁸ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 1, Hadith, 19

(2) Is it Allah^{swt}'s Obligation to follow a 'non-masoom' without demanding a proof?

This is certainly a groundless claim based on man-made criteria, fabricated by the architects of the 'Usooli' Fiqh, otherwise Allah^{swt}, (ref. 10) will only accept the acts of worship, which are carried out while following a Divine Imam. However, supporters of Mujtahid may still insist on Ahadith of Imam Hassan Askari^{as} which refers to the time of Imam-e-Zamana^{as}, 'Ghaibat'. However, this tradition does not entitle them to lead their followers without making available the proofs of their decree (e.g. **he should act according to the judgement (fatawa) of the jurist without demanding proof**; ref. 3).

This is discussed below in question no. 3 of Myth 1!

**(3) What are the true meanings of Hadith of Imam Hazrat Hassan Askari^{as}?
'It is compulsory for people to follow those 'Fuqha' who control their personal splendour, strive to safeguard 'Deen', refrain from devious desires and who obey Allah^{swt}, Rasoll Allah^{saw} and Masomeen^{as}.'**

It is a lengthy hadith and only part of it is quoted in support of 'Taqleed', upon reading the complete hadith, one would realise that these meanings in support of 'Taqleed' are derived totally out of context, primarily, all those who issue fatwa do not qualify the merits²⁰ laid out by Imam^{as}, **secondarily, no one is obliged to follow a non-masoom without asking for a proof-which is the condition imposed by the Mujtahid on his 'Muqallid' (complete hadith is given in the Appendix I).**

Here, instead of disputing the authenticity of the above hadith, we present the following traditions from Masomeen^{as} which provide us guidelines for making use of their teachings in all aspects of our lives:

Initially, we analyse the situation when there are conflicting traditions from Masomeen^{as} **(God forbid). It is narrated Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as21}:**
'When a person asked what shall we do when we hear conflicting Ahadith from those who are your^{as} trustworthy (followers)? Imam^{as} said if a hadith is in agreement with the book of Allah^{swt} and sayings of Rasol Allah^{saw}, then accept it otherwise leave it alone'.

Let analyse other ahadith related to 'Ghaibat-e-Imam^{as}':

Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} said : "Whenever it occurs, everyone should stick to what was conveyed to them by the Aemma^{as} before, till you find out who is the Imam (Reappearance of Imam^{as})"²²

²⁰ Since they issue fatwa on all issues including those where clear and explicit traditions of Masomeen^{as} are available.

²¹ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 22, Hadith, 2

²² Baharul Anwar vol.11 p, 671

Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} said : *“When such a time comes and you cannot meet your Imam-e-Zamana^{as}, you should continue to follow the orders from Aamma^{as} which you already have until the reappearance of Imam^{as} is announced or proven.”*²³

In another hadith for the ‘Ghaibat-e-Imam^{as}’

Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} said: *“They must seek out one of you **who narrates our traditions**, who is versed in what is permissible and what is forbidden, who is well-acquainted with our laws and ordinances, and accept him as judge and arbiter, for I appoint him as judge over you. If the ruling which he based on our laws is rejected, this rejection will be tantamount to ignoring the order of Allah^{swt} and rejecting us^{as} is the same as rejecting Allah^{swt}, and this is the same as polytheism.”*²⁴

Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi^{as} said in a reply to Ishaq ibn Ya’qub:

*“As far as newly occurring circumstances are concerned, you should turn (for guidance) **to the narrators of our ahadith**, for they are my proof over you just as I am Allah’s proof.”*²⁵

From the above traditions of Masomeen^{as} and an extract from Imam Hassan Askari^{as}’s tradition (which is used in support of Taqleed), it is clear that one has to consult the narrator of their^{as} Ahadith and then should act according to the tradition of Divine masoom^{as}, and the basis of following ‘Islam laws’ are still the traditions of Masomeen^{as} rather than fatawa of a ‘Mujtahid’.

Mujtahid’s supports at this point usually say, as a matter of fact Mujtahid gives the essence of Masomeen^{as}’s tradition in his fatwa (as a nutshell)! This leads us to Myth no. 2!

Myth 2:

The fatwa of a Mujtahid, in fact, is according to the traditions of Masomeen^{as}!

Fact 2:

This is completely based on perception of a ‘Muqallid’ for his loyalty and blind support for his Mujtahid, without any evidence, since he is denied of his right to asked for further information (Proof, see ref. 3)-according to one of the conditions between a ‘Mujtahid’ and ‘Muqallid’ relationship. However, we present a hadith from **Amir-ul-momaneen^{as}**, *Whoever cites our tradition and does not refer its origin to us, commits an act of cruelty against us.*²⁶ And also

*“Abu ‘Abdallah^{as} said, ‘Beware of the branched-out lies.’ They asked the Imam^{as}, “What is branched-out lies?” The Imam^{as} replied, “It is when you narrate a Hadith of an Imam^{as} without mentioning Imam^{as}’s name”*²⁷

A pro-Taqleed, may still ask here that all the above sayings of Masomeen^{as} are also known to Mujtahid, as they conduct a thorough research and spend their whole lives

²³ Baharul Anwar vol.11 p, 672

²⁴ Furu-e-Kafi, vol. 7, Tehran 1379, p. 412

²⁵ Shaykh at-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, vo. 2, Najaf 1966, p. 283.

²⁶ Nahjul Asrar, Vol 1.

²⁷ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 17, Hadith 12

in analysing Ahadith and issues related to 'Fiqh'! This counter argument leads us to Myth no. 3!

Myth 3:

We follow the best knowledgeable person, 'Marja' who has extensively studied Quran and Ahadith and if he makes a mistake, in his judgement (fatwa), then he will be responsible for his mistake but we will not be penalised for his misjudgement, as we sincerely followed the best available source of knowledge!

Fact 3:

Allah^{swt} says in Quran, No burdened (soul) may bear another's burden: if some over-laden soul should call out for someone else to carry his load, no one would bear any part of it even though they were a near relative. You can only warn those who dread their Lord although (he is) Unseen, and keep up prayer. Anyone who purifies himself, only purifies his own soul. Towards God should remain one's goal²⁸.

It is the responsibility of all of us to acquire knowledge, as we will be judged by our own efforts, we present a hadith of Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} in this regard:

Imam abu 'Abdallah^{as} said, "Allah^{swt} does not accept a deed without good understanding, whereas good understanding cannot be achieved without hard work. The one who attains proper understanding will be guided by it towards good deeds and the one who does not make any effort will not develop any understanding. Is it not a fact that parts of faith comes from other parts?"²⁹

So by leaving pillars of Islam aside and just leaning and relying on a Mujtahid, do not provide any shelter against burden of unaccepted obligatory acts of worship. This is due to the fact that one is following the judgement (Fatwa) of someone who can be right or wrong. If he is, as most of the 'Mujtahid' disagree in various Islamic issues- hence all of them cannot be right, while in conflict, their followers, therefore, will be equally responsible for those act which were carried out on the basis of wrong fatawa!

It is important to note that the process of fatwa derivation is totally forbidden by the Masomeen^{as}:

"I asked from (Imam) abu 'Abdallah^{as}, 'Sometimes, we encounter those issues, related to which we cannot find an answer neither in the book of Allah^{swt} nor in the Ahadith. Can we use our own analysis of the situation (use of analogies) and try to find a solution?'" The Imam^{as} replied, "No, you must not do so. If you would find the correct solution, you will receive no rewards for it and if you derive a wrong

²⁸ Originator, Chapter 35, Verse 18.

²⁹ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 12, Hadith 2

*conclusion then you have forged lies against Allah^{swt}, the most Majestic, the most Glorious."*³⁰

From this point we go to the Myth no 4!

Myth 4:

The supports of 'Taqleed' at this point usually say, 'Mujtahid's' guess is still going to be better than that of a 'layman' so it is better to act on the guess of a better informed 'Mujtahid' who uses an extensive and painstaking path of fatwa derivation!

Fact 4:

The process of issuing a fatawa is based on logic, similarity and speculation, all of these have been forbidden by the Masomeen^{as}.³¹

*Mohammed Ibn Hakam has narrated from Imam Musa-e-Kazim^{a.s.}, that may I be your ransom, we have learned the knowledge of 'deen' from you and we do not feel any need to ask from anyone else. And when we meet with people in public gatherings, they ask questions from us and we are able to reply to them due to Allah^{swt}'s blessing on us because of your kindness. But some times we are asked about those questions for which we have not heard any answers either from you^{a.s.} or from your (masoom) forefathers^{a.s.}. Under these circumstances, we carefully analyse the situation and reply to them accordingly. Imam^{a.s.} said, **Never, never, by Allah^{swt}, oh! ibn Hakam there is certainly destruction in it. Whoever has acted like this has met total destruction! Then said Allah^{swt}'s curse may be upon Abu Hanifa who says, Ali^{as}. says like this, regarding this issue, whereas my ruling is like this-meaning my statement is better than Ali^{a.s.}'s (God forbid), Mohammad bin Hakam said, I told this later to Hasham bin abul Hakam, by Allah^{swt}, I wanted to seek permission (from Imam^{a.s.}) to make use of analogy/similarity in solving issues of 'deen'.***

The use of analogy/perception has been strongly forbidden in other Hadith from Imam-e-Jafar-e-Sadiq^{a.s.}:

I asked from Hazrat Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{a.s.} "The Sunnah, tradition of the holy Prophet^{saw} can not be leaned through analogy. Consider a woman has to make up for her lapsed fast due to menses but it is not obligatory on her to make up for her lapsed prayers under those conditions, whereas Salat is superior to Fast, O Aban, when analogy (process of fatawa extraction) is used, it would only destroy religion."³²

Myth 5:

³⁰ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 19, Hadith 11

³¹ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 19, Hadith 9

³² Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 19, Hadith 15

Mujtahid is specialist of the religious affairs (e.g., several PhDs in various disciplines of religious affairs (i.e., jurisprudence, history, Ahadith) and when you face a problem you consult the specialist related to a specific area of expertise (e.g., for heart bypass- a heart surgeon is consulted, for building design- an architecture is approached)!

Fact 5:

This is an absurd statement in favour of a ‘Mujtahid’ and cannot be supported by any Verse of Quran and tradition of Masomeen^{a.s.}, as the process of fatwa extraction has been forbidden by the Masomeen^{a.s.}. However, the role of an expert cannot be overruled but for only stating the traditions of Masomeen^{a.s.} related to various issues and certainly not for producing their own statements (fatawa).

The above explanation may be considered sufficient in response to Myths no.5, however, in favour of brevity, further discussion on this topic is combined with Myth no 6!

Myth 6:

Taqleed is in human nature, we all follow someone, e.g., as a guardian, as a teacher, and hence we follow the most knowledgeable person in religion, the religious-expert - Maraje!

Fact 6:

In the recognition of an expert, in any discipline of life, one would search for the track record of that expert (his success and failure profile). For example, if one wants to consult a cardiologist or an architecture, he will investigate specialist’s success rate on previous ‘treatments’ or ‘building structures’, after establishing success of his treatment or sound features of the building structures one would take the advice of that expert. But when one looks at the simple issues, which have remained unresolved by the Mujtahid for the last 1400 years, one gets perplexed, particularly when one is asked to just follow without asking for a proof! Those simple issues are, for example, when Salat/fast becomes ‘Qasr’ or in which direction prayers should be offered while travelling-all of the ‘Mujtahid’ are confused and issue different statements, please see details in [Kashaf-ul-Tazad](#).

In brief, the capability of a Mujtahid in deriving a fatawa is far from being an expert. The expert of the Deen is the narrator of Divine laws and only nominated by Allah^{swt}, so the real experts in Islam are our Masomeen^{as}. Therefore, in this context, a Mujtahid may be taken an equivalent to ‘hakeem’³³ who would try to treat a patient through mixing and grinding various tablets in different combinations and strengths, which he has acquired from various pharmacies – The actions of the Mujtahid, are not far, from this example, in his efforts of deriving a fatwa! He takes bits and pieces from various Verses of Quran and traditions of Masomeen^{as} and produces his own statement ‘Fatwa’ (which is also sometimes referred to as nutshell or sugar coated bill

³³ A non-professional and unqualified who practise medicine

for Muqallid-as it eliminates his research for the traditions of Masomeen^{as}). This is obvious from the wordings of a fatwa that it is neither a Verses of Quran nor a Hadith of a Masoom^{as} but rather a sugar coated pill for a busy Muqallid and a source of strangle-hold for the Mujtahid over his followers.

However, the supports of taqleed would still argue that their Mujtahid get inspiration from Imam-e-Zaman^{as} as being in the position of ‘Niab-e-Imam’- lets review this claim in Myth No 7!

Myth 7:

Maraja is the ‘Niab-e-Imam’³⁴ vicegerent of Imam-e-Zaman^{as} specialist of the religious affairs (e.g., several PhDs in various disciplines of religious affairs, i.e., jurisprudence.!

Fact 7:

In a very simplistic way, a second-in-command or a deputy of a person is expected to possess not only similar qualities but also to have the same speciation. For example a heart surgeon’s deputy cannot be a butcher although he may be able to quite comprehensively dissect a human body. Similarly a monkey or an owl can never be appointed as a second-in-command to an eye surgeon-otherwise it’s a recipe for disaster. We Shian-e-Ali^{as} believe that our Masomeen^{as} were the very first and most superior creation, in the form of ‘The Noor’, of Allah^{swt}. On the contrary, human beings, were created from clay and came to this world without any trace of knowledge. We acquired knowledge and gained strength while growing but lost all of them, again, in our later part of lives. As Allah^{swt} Says:

Has not man considered how We created him from a drop of semen? Yet he is an open adversary³⁵!

and

Anyone We grant long life to, We switch around within creation (return to childhood). Will they not use their reason?³⁶

We take a further step to relinquish the remaining doubts regarding the position of a Mujtahid during the occultation of Imam-e-Zaman^{as},

When we take a closer look at the history, we realise that the four ‘representatives’ of Imam-e-Zaman^{as} never ever claim to be ‘Naib-e-Imam’ but were content to be called ‘couriers’ for Masoom Imam^{as}, and one by one, before leaving this world, they appointed their own ‘Naib’ until the last one, who was told **by Imam-e-Zaman^{as}**.

‘ O Ali bin Mohammed Samari, Allah^{swt} may give His best reward to your grieving brothers on your death, which will occur within next six days. Thus, you better

³⁴ Second in command

³⁵ Chapter 36, YA-SIN, Verse 77 (translation by T.B.Irving)

³⁶ Chapter 36, YA-SIN, Verse 68

start packing up and do not nominate your deputy while making your last will. Now the major occultation will take place and Allah^{swt} will not make me reappear until after a long time. This will not happen until people with stone cold hearts will come and fill the earth with cruelty and tyranny. And few among my Shias, will make claims of meeting with me but, whoever claims to see me before the aggression of Safani, he will be a big liar and filthy accuser.

First, we can easily see that there were deputy of representatives of Imam^{as} (four in total) and second, there will be no deputy of any kind until the re-appearance of Imam-e-Zaman^{as}.

So all these ‘Niab-e-Imam’ and even so-called ‘Imam’ are self-selected pretentious titles, without any real meanings and any relevance to and or endorsement of Imam-e-Zaman^{as}. During the early days of ‘major Occultation’, Imam-e-Zaman^{as}’s loyal scholar were quite content with their humble status and titles, i.e., (Mulla Mohammed Baqir Majlasi, Sheikh Yaqub Kulani, Sheikh Sadduq, Syed Murtaza). Any mujtahid, preset or past, can never ever dare to equate himself with the devout services and breadth of knowledge of above mentioned shia scholars.

Final Word - the Solution!

Having said all this, reader may ask what is the solution? How one can find the authentic traditions of Masomeen^{as} relevant to our day-to-day issues?

All the required knowledge, until the Day of Judgement, has been transferred to us by the Masomeen^{as}, any argument creating an element of doubt (i.e., our books were burnt in Baghdad)³⁷ would be against our basic belief that Masomeen^{as} did not leave behind adequate ‘guideline lines’ (traditions) which would be followed by their Shia during the time of major occultation of Imam-e-Zaman^{as}, or all or part of those traditions were lost (Nouzobillah!). Unless we vigorously deny these myths, we are along the lines of Sunnis, who are convinced that Prophet Mohammed^{saw} did not leave behind his vicegerent who would lead his followers after him³⁸.

Having established a firm belief that whatever was required by followers of Rasool Allah^{saw} has been revealed in the Book of Allah^{swt} and Ahadith of Masomeen^{as}, we endeavour to cite traditions of Masomeen^{as} related to the plausible questions which may arise in this context:

Whatever people need is present in Quran and Traditions?

- (1) **Abu ‘Abdallah^{as} has said the following:**

³⁷ Another myth, generally presented while advocating Taqleed-when a Mujtahid is cornered!

³⁸ As per the fabricated tradition, i.e., both Risalat and Kilafat will not remain in Banu Hashim or We the group of Prophets do not leave anything behind, whatever is left belongs to followers etc.

‘Anything, that will, ever, be required by the people is present in the Book of Allah^{swt} and Ahadith (our traditions)³⁹.’

(2) **‘I asked from Imam Musa Kazim^{as}, people say everything is described in Book of Allah^{swt} and traditions of Prophet^{saw}, including those what you narrate to us, Is it so? Imam^{as} replied, indeed, everything is present in the Book of Allah^{swt} and traditions of Prophet^{saw}.⁴⁰**

(3) I heard **Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as}** said the following:

‘I am the son of Prohpet^{saw} and know all about the Book of Allah^{swt}, more than anyone among you, it contains all the facts about the previous generations, as well as, whatever is going to happen until the Day of judgement. It has news about the skies, about the earth, on the heaven and on the hell, what has passed and what is still to come. All of it is clearly visible to me, in a similar way, as my palm is in front of me. As Allah^{swt} Says, all species are well defined in the Quran.⁴¹

Where are those traditions which explain Quran and all issues related to us?

The traditions of Masomeen^{as} are present in our four basic books, Al-Kafi, Manla Yazar alFaqi, Al-Ibtisar and Tahzib-ul-Ahkam. Some of these books have also been translated in other languages, i.e., English, Urdu.

How Can I find an Answer to a matter, without having to spend enormous time and effort?

We have been asked to act on a single tradition of masoom^{as}, and not on a ‘fatwa’ (which could be a mixture of few ahadith) so we can ask for help from those who have knowledge of or can provide a reference to the applicable traditions, this was the ‘norm’ prior to the ‘Taqleed’ and ‘Touzi’ culture (which gradually started to spread from 680 AH)⁴². Shian-e-Ali^{as} before the inception of ‘Taqleed’ and still today, memorise, propagate, preserve and act upon the traditions of Masomeen^{as} through asking for a hadith or its reference.

How I can extract the true meanings from a translation?

³⁹ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 20, Hadith 4

⁴⁰ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 20, Hadith 10

⁴¹ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 20, Hadith 8

⁴² I quote from a famous research work by Allama Baqshi⁴², ‘ A shia scholar, without any doubt, who first used the word ‘Ijtihad’ in the similar meanings as it is used these days was Allama Hilli (died 676 A.H.), who had a chapter title ‘Bab-al-Ijtihad; (Chapter of Ijtihad) in his book called ‘Kitab al-Ma’ārij’.

The true meanings and essence of Masoom's tradition is important, rather than putting emphasis on technicalities of Arabic grammar, see for example:

"I asked abu 'Abdallah^{as}, When I hear a Hadith from you, I like to narrate it without any addition or omission but, sometimes, I cannot recall all your words exactly, Imam^{as} asked, Do you do it on purpose to create doubts in people's minds? I replied, 'no, I do not (have this intention). Imam^{as} asked, 'Do you narrated our Hadith without any addition or omission in its true meanings and essence? I replied, yes, I do. Imam^{as} said " then there is no harm in doing so'"⁴³

And

"I asked (Imam) abu 'Abdallah^{as}, 'I hear your Hadith and I want to narrate to others but I do not remember the exact words when describing to others.' Imam^{as} asked, "Do you do it on purpose?" He said, "No, I do not do it intentionally." The Imam^{as} asked, "Do you keep its real meanings?" He said, "Yes, I keep its real meanings." The Imam^{as} said, " Then it is appropriate."⁴⁴

What If I was given a wrong reference to a Hadith?

"Amir-ul-momaneen^{as} said upon presenting our Hadith, you must mention the name of the person from whom you have originally heard it. Thus, if the Hadith is true then you will get the reward (for narrating it) but if it is false, then he will be held responsible for attributing a lie to us."⁴⁵

"Abu 'Abdallah^{as} said, 'You must write down (Hadith) and spread our knowledge among your brethren. Upon your death, your children will inherit your books. A time will come when people will face chaos and they will find no comfort anywhere else but within these books.'"⁴⁶

⁴³ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 17, Hadith 2

⁴⁴ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 17, Hadith 3

⁴⁵ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 17, Hadith 7

⁴⁶ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 17, Hadith 11

"I said to abu Ja'far^{as}, 'May Allah take my soul in your service, our shaikhs have narrated Hadith from Imam abu Ja'far^{as} and from Imam abu 'Abdallah^{as} and at that time because of fear Taqiyah, concealment was sever. They concealed their books and did not narrate Ahadith from them. When they died their books came to us.'" Can we narrate those Ahadith? The Imam^{as} said, "You may narrate from them because they contain the truth."⁴⁷

What Shall I do when I am faced with the conflicting traditions?

'Rasool Allah^{saw}, said that the sign of Iman is reflected from good deeds and light (of knowledge) is gained from Quran-e-Mohkum, Thus a hadith which is in agreement with the Book of Allah^{swt}, accept it otherwise leave it'

This matter is further explained by Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} when a person asked what shall we do when we hear conflicting Ahadith from those who are your^{as} trustworthy (followers)? Imam^{as} said if a hadith is in agreement with the book of Allah^{swt} and sayings of Rasol Allah^{saw}, then accept it otherwise leave it alone.

Imam^{as} further explained:

When a narrator asked from Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} which hadith should be followed when two ahadith (e.g., Imam Zain-ul-Abadeen a.s. and Imam Mohammed Baqir a.s.) are presented. Imam^{as} replied act on the latter one until you get another hadith from the living masoom Imam^{as} then act on it. Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{as} then said I have asked you to act on the tradition of later Imam^{as} only to protect you from troubles (of rulers). But when there is no fear of harm then act upon any one of them.

In another hadith from Imam-e-Zaman^{as} it is narrated that act on a hadith from a masoom Imam^{as} with the understanding that it is Masoom's tradition but not giving one priority over the other hadith.

Mola Ali^{as} has said⁴⁸, if you do not understand some of our Ahadith leave them for the generations who will come after you (act on those which are relevant to you).

We would like to end this with the following suggestions, and with the hope to receiving your comments on the presented information on Ijtihad and Taqleed.

⁴⁷ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 17, Hadith 15

⁴⁸ Ilul Sharh-Sheikh Saduq, Moqaddamah.

Last Word-the Precaution:

There is absolutely no short cut when it comes to the understanding of religion:

Imam abu ‘Abdallah^{a.s} said, *"Allah^{swt} does not accept a deed without good understanding, whereas good understanding cannot be achieved without hard work. The one who attains proper understanding will be guided by it towards good deeds and the one who does not make any effort will not develop any understanding. Is it not a fact that parts of faith comes from other parts?"⁴⁹*

And

Imam Ali^{as} says, *the sustenance has already being distributed by Allah^{swt} but one is expect to seek knowledge and everyone will be questioned on Knowledge!*

Rasool Allah^{saw} said: *A time will come in the history of my followers, when Quran will be treated as part of the ‘traditions and rituals’, Islam will exist only for the name sake, Muslims will call themselves ‘Muslim’ but they will be far removed from it. Their mosques will be visited but will provide no guidance. The Fuqha⁵⁰ of that time will be the worst of the kind who have ever lived on the earth. Fitney (Troubles) will be initiated by them and will be sprung back at them⁵¹*

So we should try to use our wisdom and try to understand essence of Deen and should never be shepherd by a Mujtahid, rather we should demand the proofs from traditions of Masomeen^{a.s} and make sure we do not fall within the characteristics of that group, which Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{a.s}. has described below:

Ali has narrated from Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Khalid a man asked the meaning of the following *Ait from Imam Jafar-e-Sadiq^{a.s.}, ‘Tahazo ... (9:31).⁵²’ meaning that Christians have deserted Allah^{swt}. in the favour of their scholars and peers, and requested the meaning of this verse. Imam^{a.s.} replied, Christians were not asked to worship their scholars and peers, if they were asked to do so by their priests then Christians would have rejected them. Instead, their peers turned their Halal into Haram and converted their Haram into Halal. They (Christians) followed their priests (did taqleed) and as a result had worshiped them unconsciously.*

⁴⁹ Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 12, Hadith 2

⁵⁰ The religious experts

⁵¹ Ann-ul- Hiat, Chapter on Innovation

⁵² Usool-e-Kafi, Chapter 18, Hadith 1

Appendix I

It is narrated from Imam Hassan Askari^{a.s} that Imam Ali bin Hussain^{a.s} said: When you learn about a scholar who looks like a ‘Alam-e-Deen’, from his appearance, who replies to questions after extensive thinking and taking careful measures and greets with affability and observes humbleness-don’t be simply taken over by these qualities as many people would like to corrupt ‘Deen’ for the sake of worldly benefits, they trick sincere worshiper into their devious web, and rob them from their wealth and once they manage to do so, they get pleasure from their accumulated wealth. However, when you find an ‘Alam’ who refrains from worldly gains and observes religious acts and controls his desires even then do not get trapped in their masquerading manners as there could be many types of ego related desires, hidden underneath! Since an ‘Alam’ keeps away from the unjust wealth but may still be engulfed by other un-Islamic practices.

When you confirm that he is not indulged into any of these, even then be careful and take further precautions before trusting him! Until you yourself, do not verify that his practices are according to his preaches and he has sound knowledge- and these should appreciably be reflected from him. The unwise among them (Alam), however, do more harm to the Deen through their critical mistake than any good even when they intend to act with good intentions. And when you make sure that his wisdom is credible even then do not be deceived by him and see if his wisdom keeps control of his wild and filthy desires and see whether he likes the worldly positions and the tendency to be praised by people. As there are few who would trade their ‘Deen’ for worldly gains but end up losing both of them. Few of them, strive for status, popularity and position at the cost of sacrificing all comforts of their lives.

Allah^{swt} would stop His mercy unto them due to their sins and leave them astray in the darkness. They declare Allah^{swt}’s ‘Hallal’ as Haram and Haram is converted into Hallal. Worldly glory and power glitter their eyes and they do not hesitate to trade the Deen to acquire them. They are the ones who will be severely cursed and punished by Allah^{swt} and there is humiliating wrath of Allah^{swt} awaiting them.

The brave one is that who holds back his desires in obedience of Allah^{swt} and exerts all his energy as per Commands of Allah^{swt}, He firmly believes in the everlasting respect and bounties of the hereafter as compared with the short lived admiration earned in this world. And the pain and grief experienced in the way of Deen-e-Haq, is minuscule

as compared with the pleasures of the garden of paradise. He who has these quality is a 'Mard-e-Kamil' (true believer) and worth following! His all prayers are answered by the Allah^{swt} and his all requests are granted by Him.