



Ayatullah Al-Khonsari
Through Sources of Witnesses

by
Hasan Iedrem

Translated by
Abbas Abu Sa'eedi





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IN THE NAME OF ALLAH

THE COMPASSIONFUL THE COMPASSIONATE



Identity of this book

Title: Sayyid Mohammad Taqi Al-Khonsari

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Translator: Abbas J. Abu saeedi

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Foreword:

There were many requests, whether through letters or phone calls, that had reached Ansariyan Publications from the dearest readers, in which they were all asking for books and leaflets that explain the biography of 'Ulama and well-known scholars who got a preceding rank in the knowledge and reasoning fields.

The matter that has urged this organisation, to study these requests intensively with utmost care, furnishing the faithful readers who have proved their high desire to study the Islamic culture and its characters.

In the time when Ansariyan Publications is presenting the series of "Meeting The Pious", it hopes that it will increasingly seize the satisfaction of our beloved readers and meets their agreement.

May Allah bless us all.

ANSARIYAN PUBLICATIONS...

Introduction

The cultural assault rests on two bases: first, humiliating the original culture, and second, encouraging the successor foreign culture. Through this cultural withdrawal and disgracing the genuine culture, a society may feel to be despised in comparison with the others, heedless of its own culture and its peerless containments of treasures, begging the strangers, and offering its civilization very cheap.

This was the wicked manner adopted by the Pahlavi dynasty, to initiate its vicious policy during its intercourse with the West, which declared it as the deity of civilization and art, even of morals and religion, regarding the Orient as an example and source of rudeness and retardation, or at least to be called 'The Third World'. Unfortunately, that Satanic policy was too efficient, to some extent. Thus the western world and its attitude imagined to be the world of freedom, human rights and the defender of democracy, in the public eye, especially the youth. Yet, the facts became as clear as noonday, and the era of the Islamic resurgence emerged, the era which returned the masses to the pure nature and disposition, to the Holy Qur'an and real dogma and its elements. In spite of the glittering and brilliant victorious achievements occurred due to the Islamic revolution led by Imam Khomeini (Q.S.), notwithstanding the cultural and mental assault can be seen in various

sensitive and important fields, still suffering from the western abnormal effects.

The educational certificates of the West, for example, are seducing many to this time , and the medicine that does not hold eminent and illustrious western marks has actually no effective influence.

Yet, a lot of western evidences are still firmly rooted in our land, meanwhile, the West is still selecting the style of clothes for us, determining the kinds of medals awarded to the winning athletes. Not only that but also we expect it to distribute the literary prizes beloved by all. In any case, is it correct that we regard the West as our unique and lone model and standard? That West whose ill-favoured intention with its void mottos has been known by everyone...with its false claims in defending the democracy and human rights? What are the reasons for such feelings of inferiority towards the 15th A.H. century executioners? It is the West itself that awards its literary prizes to the impolite characters like Salman Rushdi, while it withholds the Moslim genius students from participating in the Olympiad of physics. We, unfortunately, are still looking at that West as our ideal, despite its répulsive and abhorrent policy in regard with apartheid. The Islamic world should seriously collaborate to establish an "Islamic International System",and deprive all connections between it and the western slogans and pretensions to democracy,freedom and human rights.

Can we count, therefore, on the West, while we are witnessing the

catastrophic scenes coming over the Islamic countries , such as: [Bosnia-Herzegovina], [Algeria],[Palestine]? Let those whom the Molims' affairs may concern them know frankly that a quick return to the warm and kind wings of the Holy Qur'an and his intimate patronage is indeed unavoidable. [MEETING THE PIOUS] series is then a practical attempt and earnest endeavour to return to our genuine identity, through the concise biography of Islamic culture stars...those colossi whose scientific horizons may inundate the leaders of other ideological dogmas and well-known thinkers. One of the sensitive questions that disturbs and robs the West's sleep is the serious return of the Islamic nation to its identity...to its leading figures... to those who have paved the way of Islam by their honest contribution.

The "MEETING THE PIOUS" staff has made a pledge to investigate the biographies of seventy glittering stars of the high Islamic sphere, presenting them as lofty shining characters who struggled to rebuild the Islamic civilization.

Qom - Baqiril 'Uloom Research Foundation

Chapter One

The Emigration:

Khonsar, the city of springs:

Khonsar is a beautiful city...a city of the gushing forth springs...It is a deep-rooted city, belonging to times long past in the Persian history. It has been mentioned in the Islamic history as one of the prominent cities of Shi'ites in the middle of Iran, and its religious scholars and 'Ulama performed significant role in spreading and distributing Shi'ism in this region of God.

Khonsar is 2408 metres above sea-level, the matter that have caused it to be a temperate mountainous zone⁽¹⁾.

Amidst that charming nature where the mountains and the copious springs flowing with vitality and vigour, a bloomy and vivid green, pulsates with life...rivulets pushing their ways through the mountains,

(1) This city has been mentioned by Yakoot Al-Hamawi in his famous book "Mo'jamul Buldan" (The Gazettee of Countries) as: "Khanisar" and "Khanesar", which literally means (Cheshmeh) i.e. "a spring" or "a fountain". Thus "Khonsar" means "spring" or "fountain".

filling them up with soft gurgles and limpid, fresh water. While the spring called [Kasoonesh] exceeds the whole world springs with its transparency and beauty, since its water comes down from a height of 300 meters.

The Spring of Invocation:

Ramadhan, the spring of invocations, glorification and Holy Qur'an has emerged, hope sprouts bloomed inside the house of the great Sayyid Asadullah, filling it with a particular warmth of month of Allah, wherein murmurs of Du'as (supplications) being chanted in the vast space, mixed with submissive recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an...Time passing through with a new efflorescent springtime of that year, namely 1267 S.H. (1)

Sayyid Asadullah, like his ancestors, was always trying to commence the prayer of Jama'a with a glorious performance...to be as an overwhelming river that clears the believers' souls, *"purifying them and putting away from them abomination and to cleanse them thoroughly"*..His aromatic sermons pick up the souls of listeners from their bodies' filth exalting them to swim in the shiny space...quenching their thirst from the Qur'anic fresh pure springs. His religious preaching releases spirits from their heavy covers, leading them to the fountain of prosperity,

(1) 1890 A.D.

enabling them to imbibe freshness and pureness peacefully.

Sayyid's spouse stood by the river bank, with deep sorrow for her being unable to share other Moomins in their happiness and joy.

A Newborn approaches:

Undoubtedly, motherhood is the most magnificent technique, a sacred torture that opens an embrasure of hope in the face of the newborn. Indeed, a peerless suffering which may not be assumed except by creatures called "mothers". While Sayyid Asadullah is sitting in a corner in the room, invoking God for the sake of his wife...as she had a difficult labour...He maybe was reciting the surah of "*Maryam*"...a surah that donates its reciter a great deal of peace..."*wherein Maryam invokes Allah...and when the birthpangs surprised her by the trunk of the palmtree, she said:"Would I had died ere this, and become a thing forgotten"*...Hence, the Christ (A.S.) began to open his eyes towards the hope, in the midst of "*the threefold shadows*"...Thus, life is certainly contingent upon mothers' pains...similar to the prophets' passions. A newborn appears, afterwards..The good tidings gets about..It is a male.. and the kind father delivers it, enfolding the child, who was swathed with a snow-white towel, in an affectionate embrace...and began to satisfy himself with warm kisses on its lips and cheeks, thanking God for his grace. Then the father names him, shouting: Mohammad Taqi!

His Pedigree:

The Sayyid is a descendant of a "*good tree, its roots are firm, and its branches are in heaven; it gives its produce every season by the leave of its Lord*".

A pedigree that is rooted in the depth of the history, possessing branches decorated with knowledge, virtue and piety. The compiler of "*Da-iratul Ma'arif*" (The Encyclopaedia) in his treatise titled as "*Adimatul Nadheer*" (The Unrivalled), mentions the Sayyid's pedigree as below: "*He is Sayyid Mohammad Taqi Khonsari son of 'Allama (religious savant) Sayyid Asadullah son of the researcher Sayyid Hasan son of the sublime 'Alim Sayyid Abul Qasim son of the 'Alim Sayyid Hussein son of the outstanding figure Haj Mirza Abul Qasim (Ja'afar)..*", and so until he relates him to the Immaculate Imam Mosa ibn Ja'afar Al-Kadhim (A.S.)⁽¹⁾

His ancestors:

This is a concise passing through some of his ancestors and forefathers:

(1) see: "*Majmoo'eyeh Hikmat*" magazine, vol.I, no.12, pp.12-13, also "*Atharul Hujjah*", vol.I, p.1;3

His fourth forefather: Abul Qasim Ja'afar ibn Hussein, (born 1090 A.H.). He has been known to genius since he was a youngster, and he could perceive the fundamental and intermediate lessons of the Islamic science, while he was not yet pubescent. He used to attend the sermons of 'Allama Majlesi.

He produced many significant and remarkable works, such as: A treatise titled as "*Al-Wujoob Al-'Ayni Li Salat Al-Jum'a*" (The Objective Obligation in Friday Prayer); "*Al-Mandhooma Al-'Arabiyyah*" (The Arabic Poem), and seven other compilation were done by him. Furthermore, Sayyid was a skilled calligraphist, as his handwritten works obviously exhibit that.

He left Isfahan towards Khonsar urged by its people, during the Afghani riot - at the end of the Safavid dunasty -. His third grandfather: Ayatullah Haj Sayyid Hussein, one of the greatest researchers in Islamic teachings, the reason which has imparted a special scientific position to Khonsar during his time. He has educated many famous 'Alims and Mujtahids (religious jurists), and the genius well-known researcher Mirza Qommi was at the head of them, since the latter spent a long time in the city of Khonsar, studying under the supervision of 'Allama Sayyid Hussein.

Indicating his high morals, we mention some of them hereunder.

1. He has never been seen neglecting the Midnight Prayer.
2. He used to read the traditional prayers of 'Ashoora every day.

3. He has also never been watched giving up Jama'a Prayer, and if the said prayer was, by somehow, missed by him as he was for example still at home, he immediately performs it at his home leading his family members by himself.

4. He used to be Imam (a prayer leader) of Friday Prayer which was being performed in the city mosque built particularly for that reason.

5. He always do his best to be near and kind to the poor and needy, and made every effort to carry out their needs and demands.

But as for his second grandfather, the God-fearing Sayyid Abul Qasim, he has attained honourably the highest rank of piety, devoutness and righteousness, which greatly influenced the people around him. He said to be as "*one whose prayers are answered*", and he occasionally showed many charismata and miracles.

He was given a religious authorisation in *Ijtihad* (exertion) by his father, as Sayyid Bahril 'Uloom has granted him one too.

At The School of Theology:

Gradually, the boy grows up...spending his time in this life piecemeal, playing with his equal age companions.

The days passed with far too quickly, and the boy attains the age that enables him to sip from the fountain of knowledge, which is everyone's target to seize the valuable merits of the life.

His sagacity and discernment became evident. Consequently, he started to quaff the knowledge without indulgence, outshining all the other competitors. Yet, his father tried his best to nourish him with noble morals, and thus he corresponded to his father.

He writes the Holy Qur'an:

Then he overshadows his equal age companions..and surpassing them in intellect and sense, flying in the transparent sphere of the spirit, in the vast horizons of the Holy Qur'an..then he dives into the deep ocean of knowledge.

Hence when he learned how to write, he too learned how to script the letters and the words with his beautiful handwriting. There, he eagerly to write the heavenly words accurately and with distinguishing remarks, so that his relation with the Holy Qur'an may become stronger and more fixed, and the other hand, the Holy Qur'an may turn as a luminous banner.

He also determined to grant that magnificent achievement in a masjid, where the bright minarets and the holy sacred place are available.

The days were passing so quick, and Mohammad Taqi continues his hard work beyond description, deprived of feebleness or fatigue.

He looks very pleasant while he goes on with the divine words...word

by word and letter by another...hovering the light worlds, where the aroma and perfume filling those green gardens and paradises, so, the word of the heaven have been scattered inside him, putting forth vivid leaves, by which elevated merits and attitudes become apparent, and a systematic rules dominate his life so straightly. Afterwards, the genius boy accomplishes his significant job within sixty pages, but that trip was extremely tiresome and that task was tediously long, anyhow, the dependant boy had successfully finished it. He then felt a great deal of happiness, and bowed to kiss the Holy Qur'an, thanking the Allah the Exalted for his blessing and support.

Expressing his deep and indescribable gladness and passion that have gushed out from inside him, he embraced the Glorious Qur'an warmly.

The Hawza in Khonsar:

Finally, the school days being folded, but Sayyid Mohammad Taqi was still thirsty and eager to learn more and more so he could quench his thirst.

One day, the son whispers a word in his father's ear: "*I am anxious to be an 'Alim like you, father*"! Here, the kind father's eyes filled with tears of delight and pleasure to watch his little boy wishes to glasp the forefathers' inheritance in the arms in such a high-ranked spirit.

In those days, the Hawza of Khonsar was spending its spledid and

glorious era, by the blessings of those 'Ulama descended from that noble family. Thus, the second brave step was executed by Sayyid Mohammad Taqi, who immediately started drinking from the pure sources of knowledge, when he advanced in great strides, by being acquainted with the whole Arabic grammars, the topics of the Islamic sciences, in addition to a great deal of Fiqh, Usool (principles) and the introductions to high studies, before reaching seventeen years of age.

During that sum of age too, he also had gotten all what he was earning to learn in the Khonsar Hawza, hence, he yearned for the far and vast horizons...for the center of knowledge and the metropolis of Fiqh..for Najaf Ashraf, so he sought the advice of his father, exhibiting his desire and hope before him to leave towards that holy place, looking on the bright side to learn more about the Islamic science in the best way possible.

The Emigration:

A grievous deep silence overcame the house of Sayyid Asadullah. It was the last day, Sayyid Mohammad Taqi is on the alert for a long journey.

The mother of Sayyid was too generous in weeping, and her shedded tears have almost covered her face, it was the tears shedded for the sake of her son's departure. Hence, her only tranquilizer and calming

clement, is that her son has a great desire to rise and reach a higher position of the glory, and that is inevitable. So she preferred a deep silence to be her refuge, while the kind father was watching his dearest son, as if to have a last vision and picture for him and save it inside his memory, in order to remember him whenever he likes.

Then the father moves forward and puts his mild hand on his son's shoulder, then he kisses him passionately on the forehead, which has excessively expressed the fatherly intentions mixed with love and best wishes for the beloved son.

Soon afterward, he recommended him for taking good care of himself, and he furnished him with some common names of his friends, there in Najaf, so that he might not be alone in that distant city. The clever and genius student starts his journey towards the city of Najaf, in a caravan accompanied with many others of his natives who were aiming to pilgrim the holy shrine of Imam Ali (A.S).

Thus the said caravan began its tiresome trip, going across the deserts and the wilderness.

Chapter Two

In the Company with 'Ulama:

Najaf Ashraf:

The hot weather of the new city, Najaf, which usually depends on its topographic relief, does not in any way resemble that of Khonsar, which is, for the most part of it, temperate and got gentle breezes.

There in Khonsar where the high mountains and the gushing forth springs along with the vast green areas, while nothing can be seen here in Najaf, but drought, desert and hot sand.

Nevertheless, Najaf still has a distinctive serenity...A very spacious sphere filled with knowledge and faith. The holy sacred corpse of the bravest hero of Islam, that is to say Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.), is embodied by Najaf aromatic soil, while his immaculate spirit hovers about that pure area.

The boy Sayyid who has just arrived from Khonsar hurried to kiss the surface of the sacred desert...that desert which became honourable with holding the burden of the heaven mission, and witnessed a glorious presence of Islam.

The alleys of the city Najaf, with their swerves and distances that

ultimately meet each other near the holy shrine, are likely similar to arms that embraces the sacred tomb. In fact, it can be called the city of the passing caravans..caravans of lovers of knowledge and Wilayet , or strictly, the harbor of those,"*Those who believed and rely on their Lord*".

Eight centuries...rather eight massive columns of history ones stand up upon this region, taking cognizance of the successive generations; religious scholars, 'Ulama, and the lasting through all time geniuses who have passed by this place or dwelt in it, since Al-Toosi had cleared his luggage here up to now.

Yet, the holy spirit of Imam Ali (A.S.) still illuminating the whole world and inspiring humanity with valor, heroism, knowledge and faith. The city of Ali is actually the city of the entire world at all. There is nothing called 'absence from one's homeland' within the accompaniment of (Ali), whose famous state is still being uttered by many, saying:"*People are either of two kinds: A brother of you in religion, or a similar to you in creation*".

Thus, the thought of being a stranger or away from home has immediately disappeared from Sayyid Mohammad Taqi's mind since the first moment he had cleared his trunks exactly where the abode of hearts is. Instead of that, immortal love and passion penetrated his spirit that have connected and strengthened the two hearts, namely the grandson's and the magnificent grandfather's in common.

It was not long until he could stick his roots through the soil of the

holy city, since his father's recommendations have clearly paved the way for him...the way of knowledge, research and study, there is nothing that pleases a scholar more than a small room, where he can practise his study, enjoy his meal, then retires to his bed, preparing himself for another new day.

So, the lad took wing in the world of science, scooping up fresh water from its pure sources, without satisfaction, connecting the dawn to the noon, and noon to evening, and when darkness stretches out his curtains, he sits and reviews, reconsidering what he has just learned during his daily trip.

With 'Ulama:

Sayyid Mohammad Taqi then saddled up and rode off towards the tremendous height, since he had brought many scientific stages to an end...the stages that qualified him for ascension and sublimity.

He attended the sessions of the Faqih and the great legist researcher Ayatullah Al-Akhoond Al-Khorasani for four years, and has great presence in the lessons of Faqih Mirza Ayatullah Sayyid Mohammad Kadhim Al-Yazdi.

After the demise of these two prominent religious figures, he continued his scientific journey towards Fiqh and Usool (jurisprudence) by means of: Ayatullah Na-eeni, Ayatullah Dhia-ul Din Al-'Iraqi, in

addition to Ayatullah Isfahani.

But that was not satisfactory. He rather began to dive into philosophy ocean with the help of the famous philosopher Ayatullah Sheikh 'Ali Al-Qoochani.

We won't relate more, suffice it to say that Sayyid Mohammad Taqi has found the knowledge springs gushing out inside him, so he indeed overshadowed others honourably.⁽¹⁾

His Ijtihad:

Though his predominance and smartness, Al-Khonsari could not have a license in Ijtihad. Yet, his professor Ayatullah Dhia-ul Din Al-'Iraqi believed that Al-Khonsari must indispensably have the license in Ijtihad, therefore, he sent a license to Al-Khonsari who was then in Iran, through a telegram.

A commendation, for Al-Khonsari's position and rank, along with a distinguishing reference to his religious leadership and chief personality, have been incorporated in the cabled telegram.

The same professor has already licensed Al-Khonsari in narrating Hadiths.

(1) *Atharul Hujjah*, vol.1,p.246, *Tarikhe Qom* pp.252,253.

Chapter Three

On the Acmes of Glory

The remembrance of glory and Jihad epics are mainly considered as a bright era in the life of Al-Khonsari, the struggler. During the foreign invasion followed the first world war, Al-Khonsari was the first figure to comfort and defy it.

Iraq, the Home of Sacred Places:

Peace be upon the holy land, Iraq, peace be upon Noah, and upon the place where his ark has anchored soon after the Flood.

Peace be upon Ali, upon his footmarks in this land.

His niche in Kufa is still stained with his pure blood. Peace be upon the land that had witnessed the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (A.S.), where his tears and guiltless blood were shed.

Peace be upon the land which was present at the scene of capturing Imam Sajjad (A.S.), handcuffed and fettered.

Peace be upon the land which guarded the estrangement of Imam Al-Kadhim (A.S.), and his darksome and murky dungeon, and the broken hearts of his jailors.

Peace be upon the land that watched Imam Al-Jawad (A.S.) while *"Allah was giving him judgement, yet a little child"*...the Imam who became in charge of Imamate, and the world was wholly perplexed and bewildered for his knowledge and strong faith.

Peace be upon the land that has observed the outbreak of the impoverished and oppressed authority...the land that cuddles the steps of Imam Al-Imam Al-Muntadhar (may Allah hasten his glad advent), and touches His blessed feet.

The Shi'a in Iraq:

Iraq, and before the initiation of the first world war, far a long time, was an open field that had witnessed bitter fierce skirmishes and combats between the Safavid and Ottoman empires.

Baghdad and for many times was temporarily occupied by the two powers during an instable period filled with severe wars as a distinctive feature of it, until Sulaiman Qanooni could laid hold of the whole Iraq, and was annexed to the Ottoman Empire once and for all.

The majority of the people seem to be Shi'ite dwelling the southern part of this ancient country.

Owing to political reasons concerned with the cultural basis, the Ottoman empire adopted the Hanafite doctrines. Consequently, many of Ottoman rulers (Sultans) have rudely treated the Shi'ites and the

Ja'afari sect in particular, by expropriating most of their properties, as the Ottoman policy aimed to turkicize the conquered country and popularizing the Hanafite sect all over the land.

Due to their being unfamiliar with the Arabic language, sundry Ottoman rulers in Iraq were in most cases depending on some Shi'ite viziers to coin the Arabic phrases of governmental declarations, whereas the same vizier keeps his position as "*minister without portfolio*".

The mentioned policy was to be said as so unfair with the Si'ites, that lots of the well qualified of them were driven away from any administrative or parliamentary post in the government. Yet they were appointing an Iraqi Sunni representative for the Si'ite regions, such as Kerbala, Amarah or any others.

Contrarily, the Jews and the Christians were enjoying their rights, as well as they have got a representative in the so-called "*The House of Mab'oothan*". (1)

Though the issuance of the 1908 Ottoman constitution which has been considered as a real revolution and public call to freedom and equality between the whole citizens, without exception, nevertheless, the Shi'ites suffered deprivation of their rights as to select their own representative for their own cities.

Kamil Al-Chadurchi expresses the Ottomans' oppression of the Shi'ites, saying: "*The Shi'ites group were being regarded, by the rulers, as a*

(1) *The Ottoman Parliament.*

minority, especially during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hameed. Thus they were generally prevented from being progressed in any vital field. One of the noticeable instances of that policy: The government refused to accept any Shi'ite student who applies for the military academy, and Shi'ites were rarely given a government post, except in case of dire need. Yet many slight obstacles presented by the government to hinder the Shi'ites from entering even the high schools on the plea that they are only Shi'ites".⁽¹⁾

Inferentially, public dissatisfaction among the Shi'ites with that abominable sectarian discrimination cropped up, the fact which increased the feeling to liberate from the Turkish yoke, waiting for an opportunity for revolting against the inequity and tyranny,⁽²⁾

The First World War:

The economical and political competition among the European countries to seize greater power was the main reason to blow up the First World War, which drew the whole world onto the edge of definite destruction.

(1) *Al-Shi'a Wal Dawlah Al-Qawmiyyah, from the documents of Kamil Al-Chadurchi, p.86.*

(2) *There were many battles occurred between the Ottomans and Shi'ite Arab tribes, e.g. Al-Muntafak, Al-Fatlah, Al-Gharraf, Al-Khaza'il. The battle of Al-Najaf and Turks on 1915 was the last of those battles. See: Al-Shi'a Wal Dawlah Al-Qawmiyyah, p.57.*

The wars broke out between the Axis (Germany, Italy and Austria) and the Allies (Great Britain, France, Russia and Japan) while the Ottoman empire fought with the Axis, largely due to the close relations with Germany.

The immediate advance of the German - through the Russian front - compelled the Allies to open a new front in Iran aiming to stop the German's march on the one hand, and to diminish the pressure in the Russian front on the other hand.

The Ottomans moved quickly to discontinue the British advance in Iran, and fierce battles occurred between the contributing parties, for the reason of that, the Allies were forced to open another front in Iraq to reduce the Ottoman pressure and cut the reaching of the reinforcements, besides, to control the oil wells, which is concerned as the most serious and vital matter to continue the military machine.

Consequently, the Fao fortress was occupied by the British forces, then they continued their advance towards the north.

The Shi'ite Attitude:

In fact, the situation was too embarrassing and highly sensitive, since little hopes appeared saying that maybe the British armies would be the only way to end the Ottoman domination of the country. The Shi'ites were suffering dual feel, either to support the (Allies), and thus they

have their own political and juristic reasons, specifically the British campaign held the "Liberation" motto not the "Occupation" one.

Nonetheless, Shi'ites were in a position to remain neutral, avoiding being involved in the current clash since they were not related with the office of mufti in Istanbul, and yet the Ja'afari sect has not been declared as a legal one by the government. In addition to that, a rule which refers that they have to prefer a just non-Moslim to an oppressive Moslim admits them to accept such siding with the Allies.

Anyhow, the Iraqi Shi'ites adopted a splendid attitude completely opposite to that which has been taken up by Sunni followers in standing by the British occupation.

A fatwa for Jihad (Holy War) against occupation was then issued by the late great Marji' (source of imitation) Ayatullah Sayyid Mohammad Kadhim Al-Yazdi, and his son was delegated to contribute to the military operation.

Another fatwa for Jihad has been distributed by Ayatullah Mirza Mohammad Taqi Al-Shirazi, sending his elder son too.

Many other fatwas for sharing Jihad were issued by many remarkable Mujtahids, and thus noticeable number of people embarked on the fronts to fight the occupier. Among those people were: Ayatullah Sayyid Mustafa Al-Kashani with his son Sayyid Abul Qasim, Ayatullah Sheikh Sharia' Al-Isfahani, Ayatullah Ali Damad, Ayatullah Mehdi Al-Haydari, Ayatullah Sa'eed Al-Habboobi, Ayatullah Al-Khalisi, and Sayyid

(Muhsin Al-Hakeem).

While the Mashyakhatul Islam (religious chief of the Moslims), the legal representative of Turkish Mashyakha in Baghdad, drew the line at criticizing the occupier, and instead it went for the new ruler and its aspects were clearly shown in many meetings.

Towards Jihad:

Those days were of Muharram (1st. lunar month)...the days related to Imam Hussein (A.S.), the hero of the freedom, the 'Ulamas' fatwas were increasingly escalating and arousing enthusiasm and zealously for holding back the aggression.

Al-Khonsari, like others, a Hussein spirit flamed inside him with jealousy, so he left out of study and headed for the world of struggle and resistance, loaded up with a rifle and some bullets, and was a man of proud, brave warrior mien.

Al-Khonsari and some other Mujahids (strivers) were a group that was led by Ayatullah Mustafa Al-Kashani.

The combatants' boat flowed on the water of the Tigris and the Euphrates moving towards the confluence of the two rivers, where the city of Basrah is situated.

The Clashes' Fronts:

It is said that in some fronts the number of Mujahids were exceeding the soldiers of the Ottoman regular army, once in a while.

For instance, the Islamic forces centered in Shu'aibah consisted of 7600 Turkish warriors, during the time that the Arab Mujahids were more than 18000.

The Mujahids who were in Qurnah estimated to be around forty thousand, distributed among three fronts:

The heart: centered in Qurnah, led by the 'Alims: Mehdi Al-Haydari, Sheikhu Shari'a Al-Isfahani, Ayatullah Mustafa Al-Kashani, Ali Al-Damad, and Abdul Razzaq Al-Hiloo.

The right flank: centered in Shu'aibah...led by the 'Alims: Mohammad Sa'eed Al-Habboobi, Baqir Haydar and Muhsin Al-Hakeem.

The left flank: centered in Huwayzah - led by the 'Alims: Mehdi Al-Khalisi (with his son Mohammad), Ja'afar Al-Sheikh Radhi, Abdul Kareem Al-Jaza-iri, and Isa Kamalul Din.

Worth mentioning, Mujtahids have exploited guerrilla warfare in addition to the traditional fighting against the British military camps, purposed appropriating ammunition, besides inflicting huge loss on the enemy, and then retreat aback again.

Cheerful Laughter:

They were three persons: Sayyid Abul Qasim Al-Kashani, Al-Khonsari and Sayyid Mohammad Ridha Al-Bakhtiyari, gathered by Jihad relationship, Jihad against an overseas enemy...who has come to confiscate the Islamic lands, to humble man's pride.

Life always exposes the essence of men, and the war itself is a bitter experiment puts the humane self to the test, distinguishes one from the other.

In other words, it draws closely the features of personality. The fortress was under the British mortars fire, and the ground was same as a hell, violent explosions...splintering things to pieces...there were bombs, fires...

An atmosphere of horror filled that place, but Al-Khonsari was laughing cheerfully...

The late Al-Bakhtiyari (Al-Khonsari's comrade) relates:

"We were Inside the trench, and Sayyid (i.e. Al-Khonsari) seemed very happy and was laughing all the time. His comrades became astonished. Sayyid spreaded a sphere filled with security while those moments were indeed crucial and decisive".

In Central Mesopotamia:

Sayyid Mohammad Taqi was in the front lines of the troops, cocking his gun towards the enemy and firing them angrily. Meanwhile, the British warplanes were flying over the Mujahids and streams of lava pouring everywhere, shaking the ground under them, and the Mujahids were being besieged badly, thus the British proved their progressive power. In the same time that was an enough reason to weaken the Mujahids' morale. Soon, the signs of defeat were about to appear among the Mujahids. Yet Mujahids were being much heartened by Al-Kashani and his comrade in Jihad (Al-Khonsari) calling to continue the resistance, saying:

"Running away during the fight is a great sin".

The seige becomes restrictive, and the resistance becomes severer. Martyrs were falling here and there, but the epic of championship still goes on, and Al-Khonsari has nothing to think about but *"one of the two rewards most fair"* victory or martyrdom.

Death comes unto the Mujahids from every side. Here, Al-Khonsari turns his face to his fellows saying:

"Now, since death is surrounding us, it is better to perform ablution and pray the last prayers for Allah..!"

Victory or Defeat:

The British troops, by the leadership of General Towsand?, were besieged in Kut for five months, then surrendered to the Ottoman forces after suffering heavy losses with a nearly estimate of four thousand killed, the most of which were English, and about 12000 Wnglish and Hindu captives.

This bitter defeat forced the Allies to change their armies' direction to Mount Himrin.

The battles lasted about 18 months...while the enemy troops were marking time in the southern parts.

Jihad fatwas and the presence of 'Ulama at the battle fields have considerably increased inflaming the fighting spirit inside the Iraqi people, but the corruptible Ottoman government policy and the Turkish racial discrimination, along with oppressive behaviour towards Shia and exhausting their potential energy...all that led the Allies to pceed ahead through other fronts, which ended by the occupation of Baghdad, while the whole southern parts of Iraq remained in complete resistance.

The End of Jihad:

The synchronous defeat of Baghdad at the same time of other victories gained by the Allies, was a clear announcement of Jihad being ended. So, the popular troops dispersed, resistance and defence barricades were completely empty, and the new actual ruler, the Allies, began to chase after those who have taken part in resistance. Thus a vast campaign to arrest the participators has begun.

An augmenting activity for the spies employed by Great Britain commenced to find the Mujahids and submit them to the authority.

Thus, Ayatullah Al-Khonsari, who was wounded in his leg, was arrested and then driven to the occupation prisons.

All attempts served to set him free became unsuccessful, since the British policy showed its frank and obvious wrath against the non-Arabs Mujahids stubbornly.

Port Basrah:

Many libertarians have been arrested and conveyed to Basrah by the British pending one of their ships to carry them away in one of the British easternmost colonies of Asia.

The ship was intending to go towards Singapore, one of the British

colonies in Indo-China. Al-Khonsari, finally found himself on a strange ship accompanied with many other captives. The large multitude of the captives on that ship obliged its English captain to permit the captives to lie down on the deck of the ship.

Plowing the blue waves of the Gulf, the ship disappeared behind the horizon.

The calm sea added a particular tranquility upon everyone, and the ship which was quivering quietly, seemed to have the characteristic of a mother that is rocking her baby to sleep in its cradle.

The men tightened their eyes on the far horizon, where there was nothing but dumb darkness...The ship was directing to a known target...But unknown to the captives. Days and nights were passing while the ship still cutting its way through the water, through the Journey of Torture, Oppression and Ties...

As soon as the ship entered the equatorial waters, Al-Khonsari felt that his journey is exceedingly resembling that of Imam Sajjad (A.S.) in the caravan of Kerbala, since the only consolation and comfort is patience and praying.

At Singapore:

Now after four months voyage, the ship arrived the Singaporean coasts and the eyes that haven't seen the land all that time, are now

looking at a land called Singapore, where the ships were brought into the attractive harbour and dropped the anchor near the dense jungles of Singapore filled with wild beasts and dangerous snakes.

Singapore is a peninsula almost covered with evergreens trees, situated in the way of the international routes... This peninsula has been bought very low by an Englishman, and gave it as a present to the British Crown, and then it became a very important navigable port in the Far East.

The captives and in spite of the unknown destiny waiting for them, seemed to be very happy. They became weary and sick of *mal de mer*, of solicitude and of sleeplessness. They were about four hundred, and were brought down to this distant land in order to be sure that they will not even think about escape.

Thus, Mujahids have been conveyed to a camp in the middle of a desert (inhabited only by the Koka who were known as cannibal tribes) encircled by barbed wire. Therefore, the camp guards were counting the captives and the missing ones were to be regarded as a certain meal for the Koka.

The Exchange of Culture:

Conditions were unbearable anymore, since the prison and estrangement were more merciless than executioners' faces. So, one

must open a hope hole towards the new environment, relieving the monotony of everyday life.

In the meantime, Ayatullah Al-Khonsari became acquainted with an Indian maharaja who spoke Persian very well, and a series of conversations occurred between both of them, so the maharaja suggested teaching Al-Khonsari the English language, and Al-Khonsari teaches him logic and philosophy in return for that.

An Attitude:

One day Ayatullah Al-Khonsari has been invited to the bureau of the concentration camp officer who realised his scientific rank, especially now, when he could also speak English fluently, a feature which can be utilized in various directions. So, the officer proposed that Al-Khonsari translates a book into the Persian language.

Therefore, Al-Khonsari devoted himself to study the book and thus he was fully acquainted with its contents and aims, reaching the point that this book is a misleading one, and to translate it means laying the foundation of colonization and imperialism in the Indian subcontinent.

Al-Khonsari believed that a man may commit a sin in one of his life periods which is the nature and the instinct of the human beings, but with little suffering and patience the human self may be elevated and becomes purer.

Thus, the devil couldn't overcome Al-Khonsari's clean and spotless soul to co-operate with the religion and humanity enemies. So, he insistently refused to translate that book, answering the call of his stainless principles and immaculate doctrines. This refusal was conveyed to the officer who then threatened to punish him and hence behave severely with every captive, especially him.

But as much as it is concerned with Al-Khonsari, he paid no simple attention to the officer's speech that was filled with menace, since he got Hussein and 'Ashoora firebrand inside him.

The authority then confined his movement more and more, using starvation and other means, but Al-Khonsari's body was becoming thinner day after another, while his faith and morale remained like the deep rooted cedar, unbeatable and ever-living.

The Calm Heart:

It seems that the prison and enstrangement have, to some extent, offered Al-Khonsari a unique opportunity to dive into the thoughts and contemplation.

The environment has its own effective influence on the creatures that live inside it, who at last have no other way but to response to that environment. The life inside the prisons that are surrounded with barbed wire, the sight of the desolate desert, besides the bitter cruel

circumstances there, all those factors were able to change the prisoners into rapacious wolves.

Yet it is indeed a surprising matter to notice that a man can keep his balance even in this arduous times.

Al-Khonsari has really astonished the jailors with his good manners and stability.

One of the jailors aimed to entertain himself by torturing al-Khonsari by loosing a wild animal which has recently entrapped in order to hurt him. As Al-Khonsari himself relates:

"One day when everyone went out and I remained inside the prison alone, I saw the jailor setting a wild animal free towards me. The animal jumped into me, but when I stayed unmoved it retreated again towards the door. Then it repeated that once more, without harming me at all".

The Liberty:

The maharaja who was set free from the prison, didn't forget his close friend Al-Khonsari, so he struggled so much to liberate him in spite of all difficulties, since he was quite aware of the English malice against Al-Khonsari, but he knows too the way to loose him from this wicked place.

Money will guarantee hs freedom and open the locked doors.

That's what happened, when maharaja paid a lot of gold coins to the

camp officer who played his role and signed a small paper which immediately set Al-Khonsari free.

Thus, Al-Khonsari found himself free after four years of capture, torture and vanquishing.

Al-Khonsari embraced his friend maharaja warmly, thanking him and appreciating his great deed, and both friends were shedding hot tears during the time of farewell.

Al-Khonsari was already aboard the ship, cutting its way through the water towards the lovely homeland.

Chapter Four

The Religious Authority

The Return:

Finally, Al-Khonsari returned to his homeland...to his birthplace, in Khonsar.

When he breathes the gentle breeze of Khonsar air, and smells the land where he was born, he sinks to the ground, prostrating in front of Allah, thanking him he is still alive, and the happiness tears gathered in his eyes as bright as the spring rain.

He remained in Khonsar for many months, which were enough to relieve his wounded soul completely, and now he freely is breathing a fresh air, mixed with freedom.

Later, he hears that a center of religious teaching is being constructed in Arak, so he again thinks of emigrating towards the real homeland, the land that cuddles knowledge and science, the suitable land for the thirsty for four years, Al-Khonsari who was eager to quench his ardent passion and thirst.

The Theological Center of Arak:

The late Sheikh Abdul Kareem Al-Ha-iri's hard work in Sultan Abad was the corner-stone of his success in opening a theological center in Arak, in 1293 S.H.(1875 A.D.), and it was not long until it developed increasingly, and numerous 'Alims and scholars were visiting it yearly from all over Iran, among of whom Ayatullah Al-Khonsari was one who has visited it to attend the lessons of Al-Ha-iri and other lessons as well.

Anyhow, the new student drew the attention of his master, and soon was regarded as one of his nearest student and his counselor in (The Board of Giving Decrees).

The Theological Center of Qom:

The center of religious teaching in Arak proved its worthiness and began to compete with other centers for the mastery, while the Iranians were going across hundred miles in the past to continue their study in the Iraqi theological centers.

Through about eight years then, the theological centers of Arak could make good progress and advance to quench the scholars' thirst, warding them off from estrangement, emigration and the travelling

difficulties.

In the year 1301 S.H. (1922 A.D.), Al-Ha-iri who formerly made a vow to pilgrim the Holy Shrine of Hazrat Alawiyyah Fatima Al-Ma'asoomah) daughter of Imam Moosa ibn Ja'afar (A.S.), arrived the holy city of Qom in the company of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari and others, and it lasted for two days. ⁽¹⁾ The whole inhabitants of the city Qom came out to receive them especially Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri, and the guests were hosted by Ayatullah Haj Sheikh Mehdi for several Days.

The long-time thought of originating a theological center in Qom was hovering inside the heads of 'Ulama of Qom, yet the sudden visit of Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri to Qom seemed to be a unique opportunity which will soon become a reality.

Al-Khonsari got main role to incite Ayatullah Ha-iri to establishing the theological center in Qom.

Sayyid Danesh Aashtiyani, a student of (Al-Khonsari), relates: *"I can hardly pretend that Ayatullah Al-Khonsari was a partner of Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri in constructing the theological center in Qom. The only thing I can confess is that Ayatullah Al-Khonsari as far as I know, was the very encouraging one of Ayatullah Ha-iri and could convince him to emigrate to Qom and establish the Hawzah Ilmiyyah there"*.

It wasn't so easy to Ayatullah Ha-iri to leave the recently established

(1) The same distance can be covered today within two hours by a car.

Theological Center of Arak, but in consequence of the constant urging of many requesters, Al-Ha-iri inevitably opened the Holy Qur'an and had God's consultant through a bibliomancy on beginning this hard task, so the Holy verse of Surah of Yousif came into sight which says: "*Then bring me your family all together*". (1)

So, Al-Ha-iri declared officially his conveyance to Qom and gradually the Hawzah of Qom which later became the pioneer in the field of religious studies in the whole Islamic world, was formed.

The Beginning of the Religious Authority:

In the wake of AL-Ha-iri's decease, a great sorrow permeated the whole city of Qom, and thus the Hawzah Ilmiyyah was in mourning because of the departure of its grand founder Ayatullah Sheikh Abdul Kareem Al-Ha-iri.

Reza Khan tried till he was tired to prevent the funeral ceremony to be set up, aiming the end of the Hawzah existence in Qom.

Hence, 'Ulama were seriously tasked with guarding and keeping the entity of the Hawzah, and thus the masses longed for three important students of Ha-iri to lead the Hawzah. They were: Ayatullah Sadr, Ayatullah Hujjat, and Ayatullah Al-Khonsari (who constantly preferred to be aloof from the religious leadership). Anyhow, those critical

(1) *The verse 93.*

attitude didn't last very long, as Sheikh Mohammad As-Sedooq in collaboration with Sheikh Mujtaba Al-'Iraqi and others could put an end to that seclusion, so they all agreed to ask Al-Khonsari carrying on with Al-Ha-iri's lessons. Thus, the remarkable characteristic of Al-Khonsari obviously appeared for the multitude, and how quickly he then became a higher source of imitation. Worth mentioning, the fatwa issued by the late Sayyid Abul Hasan Isfahani in reply to a question by Haj Mohammad (Chai Foroosh) regarding a permission to return to Al-Khonsari in the precautionary cases of law, which was distributed among different classes of the Iranians has consolidated Al-Khonsari's Position as the leading source of imitation in Iran.

The Professorship:

As a matter of fact, Al-Khonsari's lectures were distinguished by capacity of comprehension, accuracy of research and precision of analysis. Al-Khonsari used to answer the questions with deep respect for other, in spite of some weak and poor subjects. So, he always tried to give many simple examples in order to approximate the facts to the askers, and thus he kept the personality of them in the presence of the others.

He followed a particular methodology for teaching Fiqh and Usool (major sources of law), distinguished with simplicity and plainness,

though some subjects were some times, so complicated, the matter which caused his students to listen carefully and interact with his lectures.

Al-Khonsari continued his lessons even during holidays, though he was almost exhausted in his captivity, nevertheless he remained teaching from morning to afternoon with complete activity and vigor.

Al-Khonsari in the Opinion of Others:

Some religious scholars set forth the character of Al-Khonsari's method of teaching as follows:

"When he appears on the minbar (pulpit), one may remember his (Al-Khonsari's) master Sayyid Dhia-ul Din Al-'Iraqi, or sometimes the other master of his, Al-Aakhond Al-Khorasani.

He used to mold his opinions in a scientific accurate form, which have a considerable difficulty and of such perplexity that it was impossible for anyone to understand, except those who have accustomed to his new way of teaching, or those who are well-drilled so they maybe able to deduce and presume".

Some others say:

"Everyone recognize his (Al-Khonsari's) lessons to be rigorous and profound, not easily apprehended by anyone but the well-versed".

Another scholar commented, saying:

"Ayatullah Sayyid Mohammad Taqi Al-Khonsari is indisputably the one who is distinguished with accuracy, since he dives into the essence of a legal issue, crystallizing his sagacious ideas to deduce that issue".

Al-Khonsari's Students:

Since he was in Najaf, Al-Khonsari started to lecture there, thus he owned a lot of students for a long time. Ayatullah Al-Araki, a student of his, narrates in his book titled as [Al-'Ulama Al-Mu'asiroon] - The Contemporary Learned -:

"Most of honourable students of Hawzah, whether Those who dispersed in different cities and became religious leaders, or those who are still dwelling in Qom, are all his (Al-Khonsari's) students in Fiqh, major sources of law, logic and theology. In fact, he was like a flowing river one can taste its freshness through his remarkable talent".

Briefly, most of the late Al-Ha-iri's students joined the lectures of Al-Khonsari and (Hujjat) following the death of the founder of Hawzah of Qom.

Below is a summary of some of Al-Khonsari's students, not to mention those who were both Al-Khonsari's and (Hujjat's) students:

1. Sheikh Mohammad 'Ali Al-'Iraqi (Araki).

2. Sheikh Abdul Jawad Al-Isfahani.
3. Sheikh Mirza Radhi Al-Tabrizi.
- the above have got the exertion degree by Al-Khonsari -
4. Mirza Abul Qasim Danesh Ashtiyani.
5. Sheikh Abul Makarim Rashti.
6. Sayyid Ahmad Khosroshahi.
7. Sayyid Ahmad Khurram Aabadi.
8. Sayyid Jalal Mahallati.
9. Sayyid Hussein Rasooli.
10. Sayyid Shafee' Waheedi.
11. Sheikh Abdul Rahman Gharnaqi.
12. Mirza Abdul Raheem Mudarris.
13. Sheikh 'Ata-ullah Ashrafi Isfahani (the fifth martyr of mihrab -
Prayer niche of the Islamic Revolution - (1))
14. Sayyid Mohammad Baqir Tabataba-i Sultani.
15. Sheikh Ghulam Redha Faqehi.
16. Sheikh Mahroomi Harisani.
17. Sheikh Mohammad Sadooq (shaheed-e mihrab).

(1) *Five of the great mujtahids were martyred in Iran through assassination by the Munafeqeen (hypocrites) band, and they are: martyr Ayatullah Tabataba-i (Tabriz), martyr Ayatullah Madani (Tabriz), martyr Ayatullah Destgheyb (Shiraz), martyr Ayatullah Sadooqi (Yazd), and martyr Ayatullah Ashrafi Isfahani (Kermanshah).*

18.Sayyid Mustafa Al-Khonsari.

19.Sheikh Mehdi Sadiqi.

20.Sayyid Hadi Roohani.

21.Sheikh Mujtaba 'Iraqi.

Al-Khonsari's Works:

His done books are divided into two sorts: 1.Treatises concerned with fiqh issues or annotation in the margins of some books, such as:

a) An annotation on the treatise titled "*Thakheeratul 'Ibad Liyawmil Ma'ad*" by Mirza Mohammad Taqi Shirazi, in Persian, arranged in the form of a question and answer.

b) An annotation on the treatise titled "*Muntakhabul Ahkam*".

c) An annotation on the almanac of Prayers.

d) An annotation on the pilgrimage rites, by Sheikh Murtadha Al-Ansari, in Persian.

e) *Mukhtasarul Ahkam* (summary of religious injunctions).

f) An annotation on "*Al-'Urwatul Wuthqa*" by Ayatullah Sayyid Kadhim Al-Yazdi.

g) An annotation on "*Wasilatun Nejat*" by Ayatullah Abul Hasan Isfahani.

[all the above books have been published, except the latter].

While the second sort of Al-Khonsari's book are likely accounts or exposition of his lectures that have been collected by his students, such as:

a) Lectures in Taharat (ritual purity) arranged by his intelligent student Ayatullah Sheikh Mohammad 'Ali Al-'Iraqi.

b) Lectures in Prayers, which are continual series of his master Al-Ha-iri through (he says - and I say) method, classified by his student the researcher Mujtaba Al-'Iraqi.

With Boroojerdi:

Soon after the demise of the Hawzah founder in Qom, Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri, his genius students Al-Khonsari, Hujjat and Sadr, seemed to get the admiration of everyone. Aiming to extirpate the hopes adopted by the ruling regime then who suffered to demolish the Hawzah structure, the three said 'Alims have agreed to nominate the religious chief of the Moslims, Ayatullah Boroojerdi, who already known for his avoiding reputation or leadership. Subsequently, Boroojerdi agreed to come to Qom in 1323 S.H. (1944 A.D.) after continuous insistence.

Thus the three Marji's seceded from their positions expressing their renunciation and self-denial towards any kind of reputation or fame. So, Ayatullah Sadr gave up leading the prayer in Masjid Ja'mi', while

Al-Khonsari and Hujjat have declared their complete support for the leadership of Boroojerdi. From that time, the Hawzah of Qom witnessed a great flourish in the presence of Boroojerdi, and his wise managing the nation's affairs, which has established an obligatory respect by the government towards Qom as a religious center earns the nation's loyalty.

Chapter Five

The Prayer

Sources of Witnesses:

Speaking about the prayer in the life of Al-Khonsari actually has a special taste. He, as it is said, worships Allah as if he sees him openly. There are no curtains between him and his Lord when he stands towards "*the first House established for the people*". Then his spirit flies into the heaven penetrating the covers, it is, the moment of connection...the connection between the spirit and its Creator.

The prayer becomes a flowing stream where Al-Khonsari washes himself five times a day, until his spirit turns absolutely white.

One day Al-Khonsari has been asked about the state that befalls Him during the prayer, he replied saying:

"When I stand to perform the prayer, I feel as if I am meeting Allah face to face, and speaking to him".⁽¹⁾

(1) *Hawzah Magazine, no.12 - p.28.*

The High Position of the Prayer:

Islam always insisted on the prayer, since it has been regarded as the route of ascent of a believer towards his Lord. It is the Momen's religion column, and any thing beyond it would be accepted by Allah if it has first been accepted.

During the prayer, the essence of man's worshipping Allah and his submission towards him appear evidently. It shows clearly who is the servant and who is the Master and Supreme Being. Who is the creature and who is the Creator. Briefly, it is a real school where man can recognize how to live the martyrdom, so he worships Allah as if he sees him.

Therefore, prayer is in fact, a state of presence and evidence.

A prayer that has no heart presence becomes a mere prayer being performed without ablution.

So, when the jurists refuse to attest a prayer without ablution, in the same time mystics reject it without real presence.

Presence is the essence of the prayer and its sence. It is the spring that washes away the dirtiness of hearts and spirits, enabling them to fly in a heavenly and divine sphere.

Prayer is the moment when one can meet Allah, his beloved, a meeting which one must live with all his members, with all his existence.

The First Night:

As previously said, some scholars have nominated Al-Khonsari as Marji', and his continuing Al-Ha-iri's lectures was the first step, while leading the prayer in Faydhiyyah school has been regarded as the second step.

Let's listen to the narration of Sheikh Mujtaba Al-'Iraqi who relates his memories about the first night for performing the prayer:

"After recommencing Al-Ha-iri's lectures, we thought about a suitable place to perform the prayer under Al-Khonsari's leadership, whereas he was performing it in the quarter (mahalleh Takveh Khoros) in a small mosque. The late Ayatullah Sayyid Ahmad Al-Khonsari used to perform the prayer in two places, in Faydhiyyah school and in Bazaar, so some friends suggested that I go to Sayyid Ahmad to urge him to evacuate one of the places for Sayyid Mohammad Taqi. When he agreed, I chose Faydhiyyah school, and requested him to inaugurate the school with his leading to be an imitation. He agreed on that too. It was indeed a divine blessing night, full of faith and sincerity towards Allah. Al-Khonsari recited holy verses with a submissive voice, until when he reaches, "Thee only we serve; to Thee alone we pray for succour", one can feel that he speaks frankly with Allah, a feeling that was sensed by the whole attendants, and I have heard Ayatullah

Araki mentioning this point in various occasions". (1)

Even those who were known to their intransigent attitude, didn't hesitate to perform the prayer under Al-Khonsari's leadership. (2)

"Occasionally, Sayyid gets there late. In that case, Haj Sayyid Rohullah Al-Khomeini (3) who is one of the Hawzah teachers, acts as a representative of Al-Khonsari".

The Friday Prayer:

Ayatullah Al-Khonsari began to continue the researching lectures of his master regarding "Prayer", so when he reached the subject which is relating with Friday Prayer and according to previous researches regarding the same subject, he got a complete satisfaction that performing the Friday Prayer is indeed [obligatory precaution]. Yet a political smell maybe sensed in issuing such fatwa, which formalizes an important part of his personality, since the Friday Prayer has a serious role in establishing the political structure of Islam.

After a long time of neglecting this essential rite, again it has been performed In 1320 S.H. (1941 A.D.), in the yard of Faydhiyyah school, with the presence of different Imams of Jum'a from different Iranian

(1) *Hawzah Magazine, no.36.* (2) *'Ulama-e Mu'asiroon, p.312.*

(3) *The Late Imam (Quddisah Sirruh).*

cities to attend that holy rite, giving a significant merit to one of the most momentous rites of Islam.

The huge number of performers, urged the organizers to perform the Friday Prayer in Masjid Imam Hasan 'Askari (A.S.).⁽¹⁾

People, then, tasted a wonderful feel of spirituality, and this initiation encouraged many other cities to perform the Friday Prayer.

The Prayer Sermon:

Al-Khonsari, as he always used to, attached greater importance to Prayer as a pillar of Islam religion...since resuscitating Prayer means the resuscitation of the religion in the people's hearts. Therefore, once he invited orators in a gathering and spoke to them saying:

"Allah has bestowed his favours on you by eloquence and fluency. So, these pulpits of you can highly influence the people. Give therefore, the prayer a fair share of your sermons, by specifying a particular orations for it, clarifying its importance and displaying the high rank it owns.

Unfortunately, we are nowadays witnessing that people are no more concerned with the prayer which regrettably has become meaningless and marginal subject in their opinion, paying no simple attention to it".

Wellaway, Al-Khonsari found no one to lend an ear to his sermon or realises his purpose.

(1) An ancient masjid in Qom, built nearly 1000 years ago.

Chapter Six

The Prayer of Rain:

One of the significant events still being related by those who were present at that time, is the Prayer of Rain which was considered as one of Al-Khonsari's charismata.

Iran Under the Occupation Forces:

The occupation forces invaded Iran on 1320 S.H. (1941 A.D.) in the northern and southern parts, synchronously with the complete feebleness of central government, in an attempt to pillage the national wealth. Consequently, a horrible drought wave invaded the country, and aridity covered vast areas. High cost-of-living hysterically rose. Most of the people have been worn down by poverty. Now, that which made things even worse, is the monopoly of the essential materials by the traders and merchants.

The city of Qom was then besieged by thousands of American,

Russian and British soldiers, camping in tents pitched around the city.

Another armed forces centralized their troops in Khak Faraj quarter as high command to control the whole city.

The Aridity:

Qom lacks an incessant river which can suffice it to have the needed water for irrigation. Thus, the dry farming depending on the spring rains which assure a fair greenness, is the common feature of this city.

But on 1323 S.H. (1944 A.D.) the drought invaded Qom and the spring of that year passed without a drop of rain. The soil looked burning and barren. All that, caused disappointment and despair to march into the people's spirits.

It was indeed a spring which has lost its features as a real spring. The farmers were aspiring to the sky to bring down rain, and to a cloud to pass by.

The soil still enfolds the seeds, crying for water.

Ray of Hope:

When the hearts feel great disappointment to ask the earthly means for their sympathy or compassion, they tend upwards, to heaven, the origin of existence and the source of blessing and goodness. The people

of Qom have been known for their extreme loving the Ahlul Bait (A.S.) and deep faith and belief in Allah.

The Mohammadan pure family have taught the Qommis that when there is no chance to find a refuge or seek a shelter, man must search for the only refuge and the peerless shelter. That is Allah.

Supplication is the most effective mean of worshipping since it is the moment when the direct connection between the Creator of the earth and heaven and between man.

Thus, all the hearts gathered and intended to pray, but silently. Anhow, who can transfer this rite into reality Who is the caller whom Allah spoke about saying: "*I am near to answer the call of the caller*".

Ayatullah Araki relates in his diary book concerning that part of time, saying:

"The clouds were passing over the city in the sky without dropping even one droplet of rain. The people then tended to ask the three significant persons, namely Al-Khonsari, Sayyid Sadr and Sayyid Hujjat to beg Allah for them through the Prayer of Rain. But they always hear the same answer from Sadr and Hujjat:

"First perform your duties and pay the levy, and Allah will open the doors of the sky on you granting you his blessings, since when you refuse to pay the rights of the people, Allah will refuse to bestow on you too".

So, when the people became disappointed to have a positive result from Sadr and Hujjat, they tended to Al-Khonsari, and have presented

him with a fait accompli, by posters advertising that Al-Khonsari is intending to perform the Rain Prayer..! But Sayyid declared many times that this is not true, *"I promised no one to do that, and the said prayer has some particular rites and rules which are not available yet"*.

Finally, Al-Khonsari found himself obliged to perform the prayer, as if the destiny pushed him to perform this prayer himself, and so another rite of Islam has been resuscitated after the resuscitation of Salatul Jum'a (Friday Prayer).

In God He Trusts:

Many have regarded the performing of Prayer of Rain by Sayyid Al-Khonsari as a real risk of his reputation corrupting, because what will happen if the Prayer passed without any positive result? Shall not that event shake his position and defame his reputation?

"I am performing my duty", Al-Khonsari replies, *"I am doing that because I am a Moslim and fear not the idle talk"*. Ayatullah Araki was one of those who urged Al-Khonsari not to perform the said Prayer, but he refused to listen to anyone, with no pride or selfishness, but he was doing his job and in God he trusted.

A Conspiracy:

The determined day has come. A wicked conspiracy is being smelled as the Bahaii were distributing rumours among the people that the British - in collaboration with other colonialistic powers - are planning to stabilize their occupation area in the country, attempting to drag the 'Ulama's name through the mire, by forcing them to be involved in armed conflict, and destroying their existence.

Depending on their unique relationship with the occupation forces, they passed some false information on speaking about an imminent popular uprising, and the zero hour will be next Friday. In consequence of that, the supreme command in Qom adopted some security measures, Declaring a state of emergency. The general state sounded dangerous, especially when the time of performing the Prayer of Rain was approaching and determined to be held in a plain area near Khak Faraj where the supreme command have settled down to control the city.

Performing The Prayer:

Large gathering were arriving Khak Faraj where the Prayers of the two feasts used to be performed, in order to participae in the Rain Prayer, holding the prayer rugs, with bare legs, and godly miens.

Twenty thousand Moslems that consist more than two thirds in proportion to the whole inhabitants of Qom, tended to the promised place.

'Ulama were proceeding the gathering putting off their turbans, and with bare legs too. Infants were isolated from their mothers, as a known tradition, and the whole gathering crossed the bridge near Imam Hasan 'Askari (A.S.)'s masjid.

The thirsty throats with one voice shouted "Allah Akbar", inspiring that doomsday has indeed come. That scene was enough to resurrect the dead! The infants were crying asking for their mothers, while the mothers were heart-broken...!

Now the gathering reach the barbed wire, and the soldiers were all in position, waiting for the orders to shoot, while the muzzles of the firearms were directed towards the gathering.

By the barbed wire, the multitude had passed, a murmur of their voices says "Allah Akbar", a strange state that obliged the supreme command to conduct on investigation into the causes of this vast popular movement. Chiefs began to mistrust the Bahaii information about the suspected uprising.

The officers questioned a number of the multitude about the aim of this large march. All the answers were denoting: "*We are praying to God begging him to cause the rain to descend. Ourselves and farms are threatened by drought and destruction*".

It seems that the western individuals who used to treat only with rampant materialism regarding such an answer as ridiculous. Nonetheless, all their suspicions were dispersed and orders were issued to arrest the Bahaist who aroused meaningless disturbance which could cause a horrible carnage.

The Ascension of Prayer:

Athan was raised as: The Prayer, the Prayer, the Prayer.⁽¹⁾

After the call of Allah Akbar, Al-Khonsari stood with complete piety towards Allah, requesting mercy, forgiveness and blessing.

Let's give permission to the valuable book (Riyadhul Salekeen) to describe the performance of the Prayer of Rain:

"The Prayer of Rain is consisted of two Rak'at wherein Imam (the leader of the prayer) recites in the first Rak'at surah of The Opening (Al-Hamd) and another optional surah loudly. Then he repeats Takbeer "Allah Akbar" five times, each time followed by Qonoot accompanied with supplication to beg forgiveness, mercy and heavy rain.

A sixth Takbeer is said, then the performer of the Prayer goes into Roku', then Sojood. When he performs two Sojoods, he stands up again to perform

¹⁾ Athan in the Prayer of Rain is thus said, i.e. repeating the word "The Prayer" three times.

the second Rak'at and does the same actions he did in the first Rak'at except in the number of Takbeers which should be repeated only four times instead of five.

After Tasleem or Salam (salutation) which is the last part of the Prayer, Imam inverts his cloak then he preaches. After that, he turns towards Qiblah and repeats Takbeer a hundred times, then he turns right and says: "La ilahe illa Allah" (there is no deity but Allah) one hundred times, then to the left and repeats: "Subhanallah" (glory be to Allah), then turns his back towards Qiblah facing the people, and says: "Praise belongs to Allah", for another one hundred times.

Worth mentioning, all those supplications and deeds must be said loudly, while the people repeat the same words after Imam but without turning to any direction".

Another Prayer:

There wasn't a cloud in the sky on that day. But Al-Khonsari, who had realized the piety secrets and had for a long time quenched his thirst from the compassion sea of Allah, was sure that the sky would not be miser, and that the mercy of Allah embraces all things, provided that his servan be sincere and truthful with his Lord and Master. Thus Al-Khonsari decided to perform the Prayer again, with lesser multitude

and more sincerity.

Next day, and after ending his lecture, Al-Khonsari declared his decision to his students, and soon they agreed with him. They went to the gardens behind the cemetery, and so the Prayer was performed.

It seems that Al-Khonsari turned his face towards Allah and called him by the same words of his holy grandfather, Imam Zeynul Abedeen (A.S.) which is related in *Al-Sahifa Al-Sajjadiyya*, as follows:

*O God,
water us with rain,
unfold upon us Thy mercy
through Thy copious rain
from the driven clouds,
so that Thy goodly earth may grow
on all horizons!*

*Show kindness to Thy servants
through the ripening of the fruit,
revive Thy land
through the blossoming of the flowers,
and let Thy angels - the noble scribes - be witness
to a beneficial watering from Thee,
lasting in its abundance,
plenty in its flow,
heavy, quick, soon,
through which Thou revivest what has vanished,
bringest forth what is coming,
and providest plentiful foods,
through heaped up, wholesome, productive clouds,
in reverberating layers,
the rain's downpour*

*not without cease,
the lightning's flashes
not without fruit!*

*O God,
give as water
through rain,
helping, productive, fertilizing,
widespread, plentiful, abundant,
bringing back the risen,
restoring the broken!*

*O God,
give us water with a watering through which Thou wilt
make the stone hills pour,
fill the cisterns,
flood the rivers,
make the trees grow,
bring down prices in all lands,
invigorate the beasts and the creatures,
perfect for us the agreeable things of provision,
make grow for us the teats,
and add for us strength to our strength!*

O God,

make not the cloud's shadow over us a burning wind,

allow not its coldness to be cutting,

let not its pouring down upon us be a stoning,

and make not its waters for us bitter!

O God,

bless Muhammad and his Household

*and provide us with the blessings of the heavens and the
earth!*

Thou art powerful over everything!⁽¹⁾

(1) *Al-Sahifa Al-Sajjadiyyah, supplication no. 19.*

The Mockers:

On Sunday evening, the sky was absolutely clear and no trace of clouds appeared at all. The central meteorological office of the supreme command forecasted that the weather would be completely serene and cloudless. Now they began to distribute jokes here and there saying: Beware of flood, you may be drifted...! Hurry to your homes and bring your umbrellas lest you get a wetting in the heavy rain..!

Finally, it rained:

Mr. Rasooli, in his diaries, relates:

"Later on, in the evening, people as usual gathered to perform the prayer behind Ayatullah Al-Khonsari in Faydhiyyah school. I don't remember for what occasion the mourning ceremony was settled at that night, when the late Sheikh Mohammad Taqi Ishraqi stood on the pulpit, to be ready for preaching.. Suddenly it rained heavily, so the ceremony was disrupted.

There was a heavy rain during the night, and lasted for four continuous hours. The dry riverbed which goes across the city of Qom, was filled with water, "and the earth quivered, and swelled and put forth herbs of every joyous kind". The whole city sphere became aromatic by the smell of life and

rain, and then, hope has returned to the believed hearts.

The people, and for a long time, gossiped a lot about that charisma. Poets too, began to compose and write poems regarding Al-Khonsari's charisma and his rank with Allah".

The International News Agencies:

Astonishment prevailed in the Allies camps, and the news spreaded all over the world through various foreign news agencies, like BBC and VOA.

Many were convinced by the divine Power in this world especially the oppressed nations, because of man "*corrupting the earth and destroying the tillage and stock, and God loves not corruption*".

Thus, and after this occasion, many generals of the Allies visited Ayatullah Al-Khonsari, and requested Him to ask Allah eagerly to save the world from wickedness and destructive wars.

Chapter Seven

Exemplary Pilgrimage

It is time now to study another brilliant page of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari's Life. That is to say his performing the pilgrimage to Holy House of God, that pilgrimage which aims to establish the unity between the Moslims and his nation, since unity and monotheism are the real essence of Ibraheemi Pilgrimage.

Abraham's pilgrimage was an exemplary one filled with activity, and that which has been related about his pilgrimage, clarifies obviously its being beautiful as a spiritual journey into the kingdom of Allah.

The Pilgrimage of 'Ulama:

Until 1939 A.D., Iran suffered deprivation of pilgrimage which lasted seven years. The second world war got a fair share in the proportion of the Iranian pilgrims. Anyhow, seven years were enough to urge the thirsty souls to go rushing to the Ancient House. That year was

distinguished by the great number of pilgrims who most of them were 'Ulama from various Iranian cities, villages and town.

For that reason, the same pilgrimage season called as "The Pilgrimage of 'Ulama".

Ayatullah Feydh and Ayatullah Sabzewari were also among the 'Ulama, while Ayatullah AL-Khonsari agreed to participate in this pilgrimage responding to the request of Haj Baqir Bake (bey) - a prominent Bazaar merchant -.

Binding him adieu, Al-Khonsari went ahead towards the Land of Revolution by the onset of Thil Qi'dah 1368 A.H. accompanied by some of his relatives, and his elder son "Mohammad Baqir".

Customarily, the Iranian pilgrimage caravans were passing through Iraq to pilgrim the holy shrines there, in Kerbala, Najaf, Kadhimiyah and Samarrah.

So, Al-Khonsari began to remember the by-gone days here, on this land, his struggle against the British, his comrades who fell in the jihad fields, and the critical days inside the jails.

On the 18th. of Thil Qi'dah, Al-Khonsari left Kadhimiyah towards Syria, and pilgrimed the holy shrine of Sayyidah Zeynab (may God be pleased with her). Then he travelled to Beirut, and arrived there on 20th. of Thil Qi'dah. He was warmly welcomed by 'Ulama and other people. So, he remained there waiting a ship which was about to sail from there for Saudi Arabia. During his stay, Al-Khonsari performed

the Congregational Prayer, and a great multitude have shared him the same prayer.

In the Way to Ihram:

The ship that carried Al-Khonsari and other believers sailed from the Mediterranean coasts on the first of Thil Hijjah Al-Haram, and he whole were murmuring: "*In God's Name shall be its course and its berthing*". (1)

When the ship arrive a place called "Jahfah" - the trysting place for the Syrian during pilgrimage season -, Al-Khonsari then cried: "*Here am I at Thy service O my Lord! Thy will be done*".

So, the whole ship turned white for Ihram garbs...and it looked Like a cloud flowing through the blue of the sea.

On deck, Al-Khonsari sent a message by telegraph to Haj Sadrul Ashraf, the one in charge of pilgrimage caravan, requesting him present aids and easier facilities for the pilgrims.

On the 6th. of Thil Hijjah, the caravan arrived Jeddah...a deep sense of longing for Bekka "*The first House established for the people*" prevailed everyone.

(1) *The Holy Qur'an, 11:42.*

The Outcry of Unity:

When Al-Khonsari arrived Mecca, he accomplished the pilgrimage rites. Then he was invited by the Saudi King Saood - king of Hijaz -, but the general sight of Baqee' cemetery, the holy Sepulchers of Imams of Ahlul Bait (A.S.) casued pangs of passion inside Al-Khonsari's heart which made him disappointed with the Saudi rulers, so he refused to meet the King.

Occasionally, Al-Khonsari arrived Hijaz during the time when a disagreement ocured between Shia and the Sunnis regarding seeing the new moon of Thil Hijjah, so he could put an end for that conflict by bearing witness that he himself has seen the new moon, and it was the first and last time when both Shia and Sunni could perform the Greater pilgrimage simultaneously.

Al-Khonsari perpetually tried to consolidate the relation between the Shia and Sunni brothers, and spread the spirit of unity among them. So he refused for example to perform the Congregational Prayer which was suggested by the Shia, by his leadership, thereto, and he preferred to perform it with the Sunni brothers.

For the second time Al-Khonsari wore Ihram's garb and went out to the wilderness of 'Arafat, where Adam's sin was forgiven by his Lord, *"and He turned towards him"*. Then from there he directed towards Mish'arul Haram to stone the Satan in Mina, then he started to give the

offering. Then the feast followed that when man can obviously express his happiness after performing the divine rites for Allah the Exalted.

After that, the multitude rove seven times round Ka'aba like butterflies which fly round the bulb and rove near the candle. Soon they ran between Safa and Marwa, and then the women circumambulation, and finally stoning Satan for the second time.

Roving with Tears:

Sayyid Sherif Al-Razi i his diaries about Mecca, relates:

"Al-Khonsari seemed different at the night before Eidul Ghadeer. He remained roving round Ka'ba till morning. His roving was mixed with tears. The Holy House was nearly empty of pilgrims, and silence prevailed everywhere, while those who were inside the Holy Mosque went to sleep". (1)

In the Apostle's City:

Pilgrimage would be meaningless without being honoured by pilgriming the Holy Prophet (S.A.) and the Immaculate Imams in Baqee', and the sacred abode of Al-Betool (Hazrat Zahra) (A.S.).

By the end of Thil Hijja, Ayatullah Al-Khonsari travelled to the city

(1) *Atharul Hujjah, vol.I, p.153.*

of the Holy Prophet (S.A.) and was guest of one of the famous Shi'ites named Sayyid Hussein Al-Habboobi. First, he pilgrimed the Holy Tomb of the Holy Prophet (S.A.) and the Immaculate Imams in Baqee', then he turned left and right searching the place for the hidden abode of Hazrat Zahra (A.S.) which is still bringing up many questions. But he returned empty-handed, crying for the loss of one of the two great Thaqaalain. ⁽¹⁾

After this wandering about, Al-Khonsari initiated visiting the Sayyids in their homes, presenting all possible assistance.

Indeed, his abode in Medina was a landmark repaired to, by his lovers who come to visit the Holy Prophet's (S.A.) tomb. For instance, the intimate visit of the Egyptian delegate led by martyr Hasan Al-Banna, the supreme adviser of Ikhwanul Muslimeen Organization. Islamic affairs were discussed in this meeting, and Ayatullah Al-Khonsari showed his cordial hopes that the whole Moslems to be united. In the same meeting Al-Khonsari has declared that the Holy Qur'an's enemies are too weak and infirm, thus all Moslems have to unify their efforts and neglect all disagreement between them. ⁽²⁾

The Egyptian delegate which also was comprising professors and

(1) Referring to the famous tradition related from the Holy Prophet: "I am leaving with you two great things, The Book of Allah, and My Family".

(2) *Majmoo'eyeh Hikmat Magazine, vol.I, no.12, p.44.*

'Ulama from Al-Azhar Mosque, showed their great appreciation of Al-Khonsari's personality and his hearty struggle to find mutual understanding between the whole Islamic sects, especially his explaining the reason why the Shia are prostrating on dust (Turbat), when he said that the Shia, and as an appreciation of all what Imam Hussein (A.S.) has done in the way of Allah to elevate his word, are prostrating on the Husseini Turbat.

Regarding kissing the holy tombs, Al-Khonsari answered: "*It is exactly similar to what our Sunni brothers are doing when they kiss the Holy Qur'an*".

Ayatullah Al-Khonsari did his best to avail the facilities for the pilgrims who pass through Kuwait.

Meeting Al-Hussein (A.S.):

Muharramul Haram drew near...The month of passion, and Al-Khonsari could not bear the travel inconvenience, so he fled to Iraq, eagerly to meet Imam Hussein (A.S.) the leader of the free and the Master of Martyrs.

On 10th. of Safar, Al-Khonsari directed towards Najaf to pilgrim the Unique Hero of Islam Ali bin Abi Talib (A.S.), and there he met Ayatullah Golpaigani.

Now Al-Khonsari didn't disregard to call his religious sons, the Hawzah scholars, and he allotted money to them.

Then Al-Khonsari went to Kadhimiyyah, then Samarra, and inspected the religious scholars there, and granted them every possible aid.

Again he returned to Kerbala. When he reached there it was the anniversary of Arba'een, so he renewed his covenant with his Holy Grandfather Al-Hussein (A.S.).

The Great Reception:

On 27th. Safar, Al-Khonsari returned to his homeland. It was autumn which was about to depart, and the weather got colder. Al-Khonsari intended to arrive his home without the notice of his people, since he didn't like to be received by them in such disturbing weather. Nevertheless, everyone became aware of his arrival and was warmly received in Kermanshah, Nahawand, Malayir and Arak.

On the first of Rabi'ul Awwal, Ayatullah Al-Khonsari arrived Qom which embraced him with hearty reception and a lot of offering were presented.

Chapter Eight

The Virtue

Guarding His Heart:

Ayatullah Araki relates some of his master's virtue saying:

"Some particular virtue that I have noticed in him is his guarding his heart, to prevent him from falling into the evil suggestions, since the heart is subject to wicked concepts and images". (1)

The Memorial of The Master:

In spite of the bitter departure of Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri in the year 1315 S.H. (1936 A.D.), the dearest memorial remained clearly inside his faithful student and oftentimes he related many notions about his master during his lectures. Besides, preventing the people by Reza Khan to perform the funeral ceremony for him, (Al-Ha-iri) had left a panging passion in Al-Khonsari's heart, who continued his loyalty towards his

(1) *Hawzah Magazine*, no.12, p.28.

master. That is because Al-Ha-iri was not a mere master, but a unique spiritual inspirer for his students. So, Al-Khonsari's students suggested that he would better lecture the Book of Salat written by Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri, and was accepted by the student master.

With His Students:

Al-Khonsari was so kind with all his students...so clement towards the, Listening to their opinions and commentaries with complete respect, always trying to make them understand, and to build their personality. While after the lecture, Al-Khonsari changes His position from a master to a mere friend of his students. But in spite of his humble and improved standards of morality, he was highly respected by his students as a master.

Al-Khonsari was always trying his best to improve his students' condition, so he paid them the highest salaries known in those days.

Mr. Al-Ashrafi says: "*Ayatullah Al-Khonsari was very humble, as he proceeded others to salute them, without letting them proceed him to do that*".⁽¹⁾

(1) *Simaye Ferzanegan - Mohammad Reza Mukhtari.*

With The Poor and Needy:

Iran, before, lived in complete state of poverty due to the corrupt policy and morals of its rulers. Casteism was evident everywhere. Most of the people were in deep illiteracy.

Al-Khonsari, who was aware and acquainted with that situation, urged perpetually the rich to help the poor and give the needy what they can.

He (Al-Khonsari) had accepted to be hired to perform prayers and fast for others, in order to s on those who, in his opinion, were indigent. It is said that he spent the rest of his life In doing that deed. Many patients were being treated in the hospitals by a recommendation of him. (1)

Another story told by Mr. Hussein Al-Noori who said: "*Once we intended to visit Ayatullah Al-Khonsari at his home. A beggar asked him a shirt to wear. He immediately went inside and we followed him. We noticed that Sayyid had put off his own shirt and gave it to the beggar, then he sat as usual and began to talk with us regarding our lessons, as if nothing has happened at all..!*".

1) *Majmoo'eyeh Hikmat Magazine, vol.I, no.12, p.40.*

An Adequate Living:

When man realises that he is only a servant of Allah, he begins to establish an adequate living with contentment and peace, and so was Al-Khonsari earning his adequate and simple living by teaching, having the same characteristic of his poor people. Besides, and as a Marji', he prohibited himself to think about selfishness or to improve his life by luxurious living. He had his meals with his servants, joking and have nice conversations with them.

Mr. Al-Ashrafi says: "*Our master used to drink the tea in earthenware pots, and refused our frequent requests to have his tea in glassware pots even once*". (1)

Enjoining The Good:

Al-Khonsari always craved after the best manners to advise others to do some good deeds using the most respectful style and the most kind words.

It is said that once he was sitting with some young men who were beardless. So, he wanted to introduce the beard as an important feature for men, but without impassioning their feelings. He said: "*May Allah*

(1) *Hawzah Magazine, no.36.*

have mercy upon our ancestors who were regarding the beard as a manly pose...!⁽¹⁾

Al-Khonsari's political attitudes sprang from this source.

With the Holy Qur'an:

Once Al-Khonsari has been requested to give one of the attendants the Holy Qur'an thus: "*Is there any Holy Qur'an with your disposal?*",

- A phrase used in Arabic and Persian to honour a person, while requesting something from as a polite style -.

Al-Khonsari then became very angry and said: "*Who am I that the Holy Qur'an be at my disposal? All the people of all ranks are at the Holy Qur'an's disposal, and they must be honoured by that. Really the wicked Satan has talked on behalf of you. Now don't repeat that again..!*".

The Anniversary of the Holy Lady Zaynab (A.S.):

Al-Sherif Al-Razi who was a well-known historian and researcher and who spent most of his life in history, gained access to know that the exact date of death of Sayyidah Zaynab (the daughter of Amirul

(1) *Majmoo'eye Hikmat Magazine, vol.I, no.12, p.24.*

Momeneen Ali A.S.) was on 15th. Rajab 62 A.H. confirmed by fifteen reliable historical reports and documents, and gave his essay to Ayatullah Al-Khonsari who then approved that, and a ceremony for that anniversary was held by Al-Khonsari On 15th. of Rajab 1328 S.H. (1949 A.D.) in Faydhiyyah school after performing the evening prayer. Since then, the mentioned anniversary was being celebrated by the people as formal accasion.

Another Good Attribute :

It is said that, once Al-Khonsari was going home at night with some of his students, when he met a man who recited the verse of wajib sajdah (surah: Sajdah/15; Fussilat/37; Najm/62; Al-'Alaq/19), the matter that forced Al-Khonsari to prostrate immediately as a custom. The man who seemed an insane person, repeated that many times, and yet Al-Khonsari was also repeating his prostration each time, until one of Al-Khonsari's s intended to punish the said man, but Al-Khonsari with his usual behaviour, prevented him to stop the insane from repeating those verses. Maybe Sayyid has enjoyed that very much.

In the Hospital:

No doubt that the first world war has marked its effects on Ayatullah Al-Khonsari during his being arrested and expelled in an island in Singapore. Besides the torture and starvation he suffered. For the last few years of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari's life, it was clear that the past would have arisen again and began to distribute Him seriously, especially his heart. So, he was advised to go to Tehran for better treatment. Thus he travelled to the capital in the autumn of the year 1330 S.H. (1951 A.D.). He stayed there for four months and a half.

His Cultural Activity:

Al-Khonsari insisted that the most essential and important factor that causes the nations to progress towards the right way, is providing children education. He declared that: *"If we assured the children education and trained them perfectly, furnishing them with appropriate environment and faithful and sincere instructors, we will then be confident that our country is marching towards glory and prosperity.*

Otherwise, we will receive nothing but disorder and forfeiture, and a strange generation will come up who will definitely sell his homeland and

religion cheaply".

While through his political view, he criticized the government personell regarding the increasing straying from the right path among the young people especially in relate with religion and the misrepresented distorted picture they have got about Islam.

Ayatullah Al-Khonsari had formally censured the local publishers for distributing impolite and unethical books which are non-Islamic even in the least degree. He then sent a telegram to the prime minister of that time Dr. Mosaddiq, requesting him to appoint a capable man for the Ministry of Culture in his next cabinet, and the latter promised him to do so.

Chapter Nine

The Fatwas of Anger:

The Unveiling of Women:

The visit of the minister of culture (Mirza 'Ali Asghar Khan Hikmat) to Shiraz in 1313 S.H. (1934 A.D.), and the prominent festival held in Shahpoor school Under His supervision, caused an uproar over there.

The audience were surprised on seeing about forty half naked girls on the stage, dancing to the music..!

That was the beginning of the popular uprising..

People in that time, thought that Reza Khan (Shah of Iran) does not have any information or prior notice about that festival. But the said minister confirmed that the festival had been formed by his Excellency the King...!

Yet Ayatullah Sayyid Hussein Qommi had expressed the multitude's impression, when he declared (with tears): "*Islam needs a sacrificer, and I*

am ready to be that sacrificer.."

Then he sent a telegram to Reza Khan asking him to revert to the first situation and annul the law of unveiling the women, threatening with a strongly resistance..!

Circumstances became more critical, and Ayatullah AL-Ha-iri broke his silence for the national interest, so he enjoined his most faithful student Al-Khonsari to lead the demonstration against Shah, and to assist Ayatullah Qommi. Nevertheless, Al-Khonsari needed no provocation, since he was sure that this decision of the government is absolutely going to be disappointed . Al-Khonsari, as Al-Sherif Al-Razi relates, was indeed the only partner of Ayatullah Qommi's struggle against the corrupt projects of hat time government.

Al-Khonsari⁽¹⁾ expressed his attitude about unveiling the women and modernization, in a fatwa:

"There is no doubt that unveiling the women as it is seen nowadays, is positively Haram (illegal), and such indecent deed is really "Enjoining the good and forbidding to do the evil" which is wajib upon everyone lives in this homeland.⁽²⁾

Mohammad Taqi Al-Khonsari

(1) *Atharul Hujjah, vol.I, p.155.*

(2) *Majmoo'eye Hikmat Magazine, vol.I, no.12, p.26.*

Skimming Through The Diary:

Reza Khan was extremely fond of Ataturk and his doctrines, aiming to has Turkey as his examPle and model. Now he began to cast his Policy in the form of medernization. Thus he started with the hat as a beginning, as an expression for the unity of the nation...! He forced 'Ulama to wear the hat too instead of the turbans.

Sheikh Mujtaba Al-'Iraqi relates in his diary:

"In the upper floor of Faydhiyyah school near the library, there were three rooms, one was for Ayatullah Sayyid Mahmood Talqani, one for Ayatullah Al-Gharawi, and the third one was mine. While Sayyid Talqani who was away from Qom, returned, I and Al-Khonsari put an appointment to visit him after the evening prayers.

During our visit, Talqani spoke to Al-Khonsari saying: Reza Khan travelled to the north, and he issued an order that he don't want to notice any turban worn by anyone when he returns from there to Tehran..! Thus the police are attacking anyone who wears the turban, tearing the 'Ulama's cloak and mocking at them..!

He added angrily: Qom is not far from Tehran, since it may be attacked at any moment. Now what are you going to do?

Al-Khonsari smiled and said: That is only a probability, and nothing may happen in Qom. This order may entirely be annulled..!

Actually that order remained inside the fence of Tehran and nothing reached Qom. Later on it was completely neglected...!" (1)

An Auspicious Event:

Soon after the defeat of the German in the second world war, the nations were expecting a new peaceful era after the destruction caused by the war. But Great Britain which was the winner in that war, planted a strange seed inside the Islamic land, in collaboration with the spiteful crusade and the corrupt Zionism. That seed was the state of Israel..! The conflict then has brought out the most complicated problems in the Middle East in the twentieth century. Quds, the first of two Qiblas...The land of Israa, the Night-journey of our

Holy Prophet (S.A.) fell easily in the hand of Islam's enemy, the Jews.

As a matter of fact, the first protest arose from Iran by Ayatullah Kashani, the one who made the British dizzy with his struggle and stable attitude, the man who issued a fatwa to support the Palestineans with arm and money, and to fight against the Jews, bravely.

Al-Khonsari, too, expressed his idea by assisting Ayatullah Kashani and issued many fatwas. Thus, a lot of people rushed volunteering in

(1) *Hawzah Magazine, no.36, p.37.*

jihad, but the government of that time prevented them to do so. Yet some could escape to Palestine secretly and share the Moslims there in the sacred battle against Zionists.

Al-Kashani:

The British couldn't bear the existence of Al-Kashani at all, so he was chased by them immediately after their occupying Iran in 1941 A.D., and was arrested and imprisoned in Falakul Aflak fortress.⁽¹⁾ He was treated cruelly and with savage violence, but in spite of that he still repeated his famous sentence: "*If I remained alive I would struggle to cut the oil, even one drop, from the British...!*".

Anyhow, Al-Kashani was released after 28 months.

He then treated with the oil affair politically as he promised. That was in a time when people were suspecting any 'Alim that enters the policy world.

Worth mentioning here, that Al-Khonsari supported Al-Kashani for a great extent.

1) In Kermanshah city, west of Iran.

The Two Friends:

There were strong ties of friendship between Ayatullah Al-Khonsari and Ayatullah Kashani when they both were in Najaf AShrif studying in its Hawzah, and those ties became stronger during the British occupation of Iraq in the first world war.

Ayatullah Kashani has visited Qom twice, and both times he was Al-Khonsari's guest, while Al-Khonsari was always seeking the help of Kashani to assist various types of people.

Kashani has visited his old friend for many times when the latter was being treated in the hospital. It is clear that Al-Khonsari was sustaining the "Fida-iyyan Islam" organization as a conclusion of this friendly relationship, also the performance of Congregational Prayer in Faydhiyyah school by the leadership of AL-Khonsari, was in fact a trysting-place for the organization's members, in the same time when the relationship Between Boroojerdi and Kashani was without friendliness, and cold, since the former regarded Kashani as an extremist.

Yet, Boroojerdi once sought to visit Kashani especially when the latter was found visiting Al-Khonsari's home, and Boroojerdi went there, while Kashani repeated His visit to Boroojerdi.

A Crucial Fatwa:

The daily newspaper (Bakhtar) in its issue no.452, published Ayatullah Al-Khonsari's fatwa regarding the oil nationalization, under the title:

"Ayatullah Al-Khonsari - the Marji' of all Moslims - issues a fatwa consolidating oil nationalization".

Other details say: *"press reports say that Ayatullah Al-Khonsari, the supreme Marji' has issued a fatwa to supporting the oil nationalization law responding a question reagrding the same subject, in an attempt to stop foreign plundering the national wealth. The full text of the said Marji' words is as below:*

"Bismihi Ta'ala

In the Name of the Exalted Allah

You have asked about our being silent regarding the huge loss in the national right in oil issue. Obviously, your question was not to seek the legal issue in relate with this affair, as it was really a comprehensive question that clarifies the good and evil away from any confusion, which must be removed. I indeed admire and appreciate such questioner who aims to grant legality to laws to be convenient with the Islamic laws.

I would like to relate a story that occurred in the Holy Prophet's time:

- A man died and left many servants and slaves. But before he dies, he set all his slaves free. When he was already buried, the Holy Prophet became aware of the man's will. So he was depressed, and said: If I was there before he was buried, I wouldn't agree to let him be buried in the Moslims' cemetery...!When the Holy Prophet was asked about the reason, he replied: Because he left His family without provision...! -

Now, if the Holy Prophet is to asked about the great national wealth (the black gold - oil) seeing that the incomings are being plundered by the foreigners, in the same time when 14 millions citizens are in meagre living and threatened with starvation, he would certainly be angry, since that does not need a high degree cleverness.

It is treachery to be silent on this matter as the Holy Prophet (S.A.)

says: Whosoever enters upon morning without showing care towards the Moslems, he is absolutely not Moslim nor a believer.

Is there any criterion which can be regarded as more accurate than this?

Is it legal that we see a just and jealous Mujtahid like Aytullah Kashani struggling to help the multitude to have their own wealth, and we satisfy looking only?

I myself do not legalize any excuse to do so.

Mohammad Taqi Mosawi

The Seventeenth Session of the Parliament:

Soon after the victory seized by the National Movement, and the confirmation on oil nationalization in 1329 S.H. (1951 A.D.), and the parliamentary nine items bill was drafted, in 1330 S.H. a parliamentary election was held to form a national assembly that represents the popular desire to have the most properious future.

This event happened synchronously with the end of the 16th. parliament session, when Ayatullah Kashani, who appeared as the leader for the National Movement, did his utmost struggle to have a liberate election.

In the same time, Al-Khonsari was being treated in Tehran for his heart attack, then his meeting with the Bazaar merchants, declaring his standing up for the National Movement and the election, since the merchants were relying on Al-Khonsari's supporting the National Movement for his significant personality.

Yet, a letter was sent by the Bazaar merchants To Al-Khonsari inquiring His idea about the election, and was as following:

"His Holiness Ayatullah Sayyid Mohammad Taqi Al-Khonsari, may God bless his existence,

The country had for years lived under the constitutionalism, whose parliament has the complete choice to issue the laws and rules, and direct

the national policy itself.

It goes without saying, that the whole parliamentary laws are representing the very opinions members of the said parliament. So, if the members are loyal and Islamic, then the laws will be in the interest of the people, compared with the Islamic laws, and vice-versa.

Therefore, we are asking your Holiness to express your idea frankly about the election, and choosing the appropriate men who were distanced by adverse policy for the benefit of the enemies.

Signature:

A Group of Tehran Merchants"

Ayatullah Al-Khonsari's response was as follows:

"Bismihi Ta'ala

I greatly appreciate your sentiment and eligious ideas appeared amidst the lines of your letter, which has come in a very sensitive and critical circumstances the country passing by, while the independence and the religion of our homeland are being threatened.

It is clear that we all must take our share of the election as a legal duty. In addition to that, voting for wicked and inadequate delegates, or overlooking any error is completely considered as Haram, since it is a direct fatal blow to the religion and the country independence, and will be the worst calamity in the country's history. So, whosoever commit that deed is responsible for that before Allah..

20/Azar/1330

11/12/1951

This fatwa had extremely agitated the public feelings all over the country, and more than 150 thousand voters shared in the election, while the former election showed only 40 thousand of voters. Thus, Al-Khonsari's fatwa was the main factor that influenced all the election participation.

Consequently, the 17th. parliamentary session has been formed with the expected aims. About that, Dr. Mosaddiq has declared saying:

"I am now confident that 80% of the elected delegates are real representatives of their nation volition, and their only target is the prosperity of their people".

Yet, it is miserable to witness later, that the same Dr. Mosaddiq becomes the main obstacle in the way of his country progress, opposing the parliament desire in spite of his belief that the parliament desire represents that of the people.

Mosaddiq has proceeded to weaken the parliament attitude and impede and obstruct the progress of the election in the various governorates, but Ayatullah Kashani was not to pass over such gross violations, since he considered the parliament issue as more important than the Oil's which will somehow remain as a by-issue and of secondary importance and it doesn't bear comparison with the National Rule and Public Benefit.

But the errant politicians could undermine Kashani's position

through made-up and false accusations which have been laid against Ayatullah Kashani, the unique representative for the National Movement, and overstated the issue of oil so greatly.

Mosaddiq was planning to expel the religious leadership of the National Movement, and drive a wedge between policy and religion...synchronously with the new imperialism represented by the U.S. policy which aimed to entirely remove Kashani from the political stage, as a price to grant various aid to Iran.

The Last Journey:

The four months Al-Khonsari had spent in the hospital for treatment were of no use to him to recover his health, so he left it while he was still suffering his heart.

The inhabitants of Hamada and its 'Ulama were heedless of Al-Khonsari's sickness, so they ignorantly invited him to visit their city and to spend the summer among them. He accepted their invitation and travelled to Hamadan accompanied with Ayatullah Araki, Ayatullah Akhond Mullah 'Ali Hamadani, and Ayatullah Khomeini (The Late Imam), along with his elder son Ayatullah Sayyid MOhammad Baqir.

On 23rd. of Teer, 1331 S.H. (1952 A.D.) Ayatullah Al-Khonsari left Qom towards Hamadan. After a short stop in Rey. He arrived Hamadan

on 24th. of the same month, where he was warmly welcomed by the inhabitants and many offerings were sacrificed rejoicing at his arrival.

Al-Khonsari was visited by a lot of people and he visited them in their homes too, in spite of his poor health, and led a Congregational Prayer in the city masjid.

At Thy Service, God! :

One day evening while Ayatullah AL-Khonsari put on his white clothes and in his way to Masjid Jami', he had a severe heart attack. So, the doctors hastened to him, and Kashani immediately sent Dr. Mudarresi to try to find out his case. But all attempts were futile...!

The seventh of Thil Hijjah 1371 A.H. emerged, and Al-Khonsari responded to his Lord's call, and thus his pure spirit ascended towards its Creator.⁽¹⁾

We are heavenly, and to heaven we are returning,

We have come from the sea, and to it are going,

We are from there, not from this generation,

From nihilism towards destruction,

"Say: Come", is a verse presenting the right,

To Allah we return, to the height,

(1) *Majmoo'eyeh Hikmat Magazine, vol.I, no.12, p.48.*

So remember your fellows, your provision and the home,
Do remember that we are leaving as we are to doom⁽¹⁾

A Strange Dream:

Meanwhile, AyatUllah Boroojerdi was then in Qom in those blessed nights of Thil Hijjah and was very tired for his continuous searching and writing. When he went to bed, he dreamed that as if Ash-Sherif Murtadha 'Alamil Huda, the student of Sheikh At-ta-ifa Al-Toosi -may Allah have mercy upon him-, is dead and his coffin was brought to Qom. He woke up astonished and inquired himself saying: "*What does that mean..? It is too far between Qom and Al-Murtadha..?*".

In the morning, the calamitous news reached from Hamadan telling the heavenly departure of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari, then Boroojerdi realised the interpretation of his dream.

Ayatullah Boroojerdi always looked after Al-Khonsari, saying his famous words: "*Take good care of Al-Khonsari..Beware not to leave him alone..!*".

(1) *From the poems of Maulana Jalaluddin Mohammad Balkhi Roomi.*

On The Radio:

On Saturday 8th. of Shahrivar 1331 S.H. (1952 A.D.) the news was broadcast on the radio telling the demise of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari. The same day was the death anniversary of the fifth Imam Mohammad Al-Baqir (A.S.), and the whole country showed sorrow and regret for the Loss of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari. So, the government declared that day as a formal occasion, and holy verses of Qur'an were spreaded by radio instead of the daily programmes, besides, a fireworks celebration which was expected to be held on the occasion of Eidul Adh-ha of that year was cancelled.

Hawzah Ilmiyyah was paralysed inside and outside the country for the same occasion. ⁽¹⁾ Many announcements were broadcast by various parties and organizations mourning the late Al-Khonsari.

The Autumn of Grief:

It was a sad autumn in Hamadan. Every eye dropped tears.

Ayatullah Dar'amari poured the water on the sacred corpse, then

(1) Hawzah Ilmiyyah in Najaf also declared one day mourning for the late Al-Khonsari (Q.S.).

enfolded it with white cloth.

It was the month of pilgrimage, where pilgrims were roving round Ka'aba with Ihram white garb, and Al-Khonsari wore white garb too, but he is going to pilgrim in the heaven, his direction.

The motionless corpse was carried on an ambulance which left towards Qom. Many buses were filled with Hamadani people who came to escort the great man to his final resting place.

There was a large crowd that had already collected outside their houses, filling the streets.

The pure body was buried Inside the Holy Shrine of Hazrat Fatima Ma'soomah the daughter of Imam Moosa ibn Ja'afar and the sister of Imam Reza (A.S.).

Ayatullah Boroojerdi was preparing himself to perform the Meyyit prayer for the beloved deceased to be buried beside his master Ayatullah Al-Ha-iri.

Mourning for the Dearest:

Ayatullah Kashani seemed very sad. It was a critical moment.

It reminded Kashani of the friendly mutual days with his old friend and comrade. Al-Khonsari was like a candle which illuminated others way but now it is off.

Kashani then was in Mecca for 'Umra, and to invite the Moslims 'Ulama to the Islamic Unity Conference. He cabled from there as follows:

"I present my utmost grief for the departure of Ayatullah Al-Khonsari (Quddisa Sirruh).

He was indeed a great 'Alim, and a struggler in the way of Allah. He vowed his life to serve the Islamic world and its unity. He represented the real piety and devoutness.

I repeat my condolence, especially to the late's descendants".

In another telegram, Kashani requested the eldest son of Al-Khonsari to perform the funeral ceremony in the seventh day of his father's departure in the Holy Shrine of Hazrat Ma'soomah (A.S.) on behalf of him.

Kashani reached Qom in the ceremony marking the fortieth day of Al-Khonsari's demise to visit his gone comrade.

Mourning the Late:

Ayatullah Araki in his diaries, relates: "*Ayatullah Khomeini was with us in Hamadan. He stayed for a while, then he bade farewell to Ayatullah Al-Khonsari and returned to Qom. But I stayed with Ayatullah Al-Khonsari until he died. In the way between Tehran and Qom I saw Ayatullah Khomeini with a lot of people waiting for us. He cried very much. I saw many people crying and Al-Khonsari's sons too, but Khomeini's crying was yet warmer*".

The Political Fiqh:

Ayatullah Al-Khonsari took good care of the political fiqh, since it is the pillar of the nation's building, and its real identity.

He mixed hard work with knowledge, and transferred his ideas and attitude into practicality.

He struggled against the British with stable soul and deep faith.

He has been imprisoned, expelled and tortured.

His opinion about the Congregational Prayer being wajib, sprang from a deep realisation and knowledge.

Al-Khonsari always remained awake guarding his nation.

His performing the Prayer of Rain and the coming of the Rain later, was a charisma related only to Al-Khonsari.

He supported Fida-yyan Islam bravely and stood against the injustice of the rulers. Also his assisting Kashani in nationalizing oil. Finally his resistance to annul the law of unveiling the women.

Al-Khonsari died. But he left a fruitful inheritance, in jihad, in lectures, examples, unity and supporting others...

Al-Khonsari departed. But he left his loyal student the Late Imam to struggle alone with the savage wolves, until he could blow up the corrupt regime of Shah.

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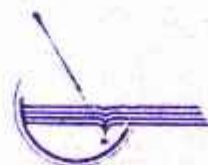
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An Adequate Living:

When man realises that he is only a servant of Allah, he begins to establish an adequate living with contentment and peace, and so was Al-Khonsari earning his adequate and simple living by teaching, having the same characteristic of his poor people. Besides, and as a Marji', he prohibited himself to think about selfishness or to improve his life by luxurious living. He had his meals with his servants, joking and have nice conversations with them.

Mr. Al-Ashrafi says: "*Our master used to drink the tea in earthenware pots, and refused our frequent requests to have his tea in glassware pots even once*".



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