

PRACTICAL PATRIOTISM

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**In the Name of Allah
The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful**

Thanks to God the Lord of the worlds
And His blessing be upon Muhammed and his pure
infallible Progeny and his chosen companions.

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Introduction

Dear reader,

After we have discussed the meaning of patriotism and its related concepts and morals, we have to learn how we can realize it in our life. How can we make it part of ourselves, minds, and thoughts? How can we program our minds to work in reliance on the culture of patriotism?

Hereby, we must confirm that the programming of thought and mind to work according to the culture of patriotism, and acknowledging patriotic concepts is not enough or fruitful unless we move into the practical patriotism phase. In other words, we must believe in patriotism theories and morals in a way that they become the guidelines of our life and society.

Therefore, according to my understanding, theoretical patriotism and its related concepts must not remain in the abstract realm of theories. They need to be activated and practiced. This is called practical patriotism.

Sincere Affiliation

Patriotism is affiliation and belongingness. It is affiliated with land and Man. By land, we refer to all the lands of the homeland. As for Man, we refer to all the people of the homeland and components of the society.

There is a related concept to affiliation. The latter cannot be realized without this pivotal concept. It is taking care of the safety of affiliation. This safety is of two sides:

- 1- The first side is the land to which we belong.
- 2- The second side is the Man that needs to belong to a country and society.

The sincerity of affiliation (which is also called patriotism) cannot be achieved without improving the land to which we belong.

We, sometimes, work to achieve the safety of the land, whereas other times, we must take care of the products and results of the land. In other words, the bounties of the land to which we belong are of fundamental significance in our life, including agricultural products, industrial products, and other forms of benefits.

This concern and care is a positive and practical manifestation of expressing one's affiliation to the homeland. It can be found in one's eagerness to achieve the safety of Man's mind, health, environment, and education. This is a form of practical patriotism.

This eagerness cannot be realized unless we invest in the potential of Man. In other words, we must work to link the collaboration of both Man and land to result in great conclusions.

Practical patriotism is parallel to taking care of the homeland. One must feel affiliated with land and its products, Man and his works. We should succeed in relating land and Man together.

Among the necessary features of practical patriotism is working continuously for the development of land and Man. There are short, medium, and long-term results. Short-term results are achieved due to the activation of the collaboration between Man and land. They may be achieved within one year. Others are medium-term results, which may be observed within some years, for example, one century, less, or more. As for long-term results, they may be realized after a long time. In this regard, the time limit cannot be designated unless the nature of the work is clarified.

Activating these positive short, medium, and long-term results is in crucial need of hope.

Hope is a religious, patriotic, and humanitarian necessity. Religiously talking, it is clear in the following verse:

(Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.")⁽¹⁾

In a Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) declares that:

(Thinking well of God is the thing that saves a person, so always think well of God).

Therefore, losing hope in the relationship with God is a great sin. It is a crucial aspect of this relationship. It also constitutes a pivotal part of practical patriotism. All individuals, families, society, and nations must have hope in life.

1- Zumar: 53

Hope is constituted of different levels. The least demanded level of hope is that it must be an activating feature of a person's potential abilities. It must be invested positively in the path of improving one's homeland. As discussed earlier, the results of this investment may be short, medium, and long-term.

As for the short-term hope, it means that the results may be achieved soon, whereas the medium-term hope may grant its results after some years. Concerning the long-term hope, the results may be observed in land and its people, as clarified in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(They have planted so we are eating now; we plant now and later they will eat).

There is another Hadith narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) in which he emphasizes this meaning. Once he told his companions:

(Even if Judgment Day arrives and there is a shoot in your hand, plant it immediately).

It is a reference to the necessity of hope in life and to invest it positively. It must be linked to patriotism. Hope must work in the path of improving homeland, society, and people.

Hope is a humanitarian need. It opens the gate to further possible relations with others, as explained in the following verse:

(O men! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and a female, Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him. Behold, God is all-knowing, all-aware.)⁽¹⁾

1- Hujurat: 13

Thus, one must be beneficial to others: he must serve them as much as he can. We should always remember that our fellow citizens are before others in this regard.

Hope must be the foundation of any relationship with people. We should also work to plant this concept in the life of others.

There are limitless positive results that may be achieved from hope: here we may refer to some of them:

- 1- A hopeful individual has a sense of serenity. He lives a joyful and secure life. These results turn him into a positive element in society.
- 2- He is a determined person at activating his potential abilities and qualification.
- 3- He is eager to further develop his qualifications.

Hope to grant limitless positive results in life. It improves one's relationship with God, society, and people. He becomes an obvious representation of practical patriotism.

In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) declares:

(Hope is mercy upon my nation. Without hope, no mother would ever breastfeed her child, nor any farmer would plant any tree).

Hope forms different kinds of relationships:

- 1- The first is the sacred one: the relationship with God.
- 2- The second is the relationship with the homeland and its people.
- 3- The third one is the relationship with all humanity.

Hope grants happiness and serenity. It provides self-confi-

dence. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Hope is a pleasing companion).

A pleasing companion means that it is a source of happiness, sincerity, and stability.

We are expected to adopt positive hope. It should not benefit oneself only. He must work for the sake of the improvement of the entire society and humanity.

The positive hope must not appeal to this world only: it must also pave the way to the afterlife as well.

In this regard, hope is a fundamental and pivotal aspect of practical patriotism. Any real patriot is expected to plant hope in the hearts and minds of his fellow citizens.

You were the Best Nation

We always emphasize the importance of practical patriotism, because the theoretical part is not functional and has no real effect on everyday life. This is the problem of many people who adopt patriotic slogans: they never render those theories into practice.

Patriotism is, in fact, a practical feature. It is eager to maintain the safety of land, its people, and their rights. Therefore, one of the most significant features of patriotism is to emphasize the unity of people. It must include all the components of society. Unity must be founded upon belongingness to the homeland, and not any other minor identity (with due respect to all the labels and titles, religions, sects, ethnicities, and political parties to which people belong). Practical patriotism may not be achieved without prioritizing the interests of the country.

When people are united and one, they would form a strong nation and homeland. This unity is productive because everyone would feel his responsibility and role to work for the development of his country.

The Quran emphasizes the necessity of a unified society or nation. Part of the society may also form a unified nation as well. This meaning is clear in the story of the daughters of Jethro in the Quran:

(And when he came to the well of Midian, he found there a crowd (nation) of people watering [their flocks], and he found aside from them two women driving back [their flocks]. He said, "What is your circumstance?" They said, "We do not water until the shepherds dispatch [their flocks], and our father is an old man.")⁽¹⁾

1- Qasas: 23

The term “nation” in this verse is a group of people or crowd.

The Quran continuously refers to the importance of the unity of the society, as in the following verse:

(Indeed, this nation of yours is one nation, and I am Your Lord, therefore worship Me)⁽¹⁾.

As explained above, the word nation has a few meanings, including a group of people, a crowd, and the entire society.

All religions emphasize the necessity of adopting both material and metaphysical aspects. In other words, we must link our worldly life with the afterlife. Neither our faith must be detached from our daily life, nor our life-world must be detached from the metaphysical aspects. On this, the word “nation” in the Quran refers to the unity of the society and its collaboration.

Another verse also asserts this idea:

(Indeed, this nation of yours is one nation, and I am Your Lord, therefore fear (befriend) Me)⁽²⁾.

The verse here wants to confirm the necessity of the unity of the society. It must be accompanied by the inner supervision of individuals. Everyone must take care of his land and country (the land that was inherited from him by God). People must have an urging feeling that they must maintain the unity of the society. In other words, this refers to the unity of land and Man, as clarified in this verse:

(Indeed, this nation of yours is one nation, and I am Your Lord, therefore fear (befriend) Me).

1- Anbia: 92

2- Mumunoon: 52

The feeling of inner supervision is the force that urges a person to be responsible. The Quran refers to this meaning in addition to the necessity of social unity. It refers to this condition as “the nation”:

(You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient)⁽¹⁾.

(You are the best nation) refers to one person. It also applies to a group of people and not individuals.

The verse also presents some features of divine supervision. It discusses the ideas inside the mind and how they can be rendered into practice. It also clarifies that the unity of people is a divine requirement. Rejecting this requirement is parallel to disobeying God. “**You are the best nation**” creates further responsibility. It is demanded that society must be united, collaborative, and moralistic. These morals are religious, patriotic, and humanitarian. Such moral values are obvious in the first part of the verse:

(You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah).

The word “right” in the verse is a reference to religious, patriotic, and humanitarian moral values. These values urge us to abide by divine wills and to keep away from prohibitions.

(You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah).

1- Al Emran: 110

This nation is expected to live a moderate life. In other words, it must keep away from extremism and its forms, including sectarianism, racism, and classism. It is the only way to realize practical patriotism.

(Thus, have We made of you a nation justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves)⁽¹⁾.

The nation also means people.

A balanced nation is always a role model; therefore, the Quran designates it to be **(witnesses over nations)**. The verse, then, mentions: **(and the Messenger a witness over yourselves)**.

Among the features of a moderate nation is to be straight in morals and responsible in life. People must work for the unity of the society and they must have inner supervision to prevent any social deterioration, as explained in the following Hadith:

(My Nation will remain well as long as they love each other, present gifts to each other, remain honest with each other, keep away from prohibitions, remain hospitable, keep performing their prayers, and pay their alms (zakat)).

1- Baqara: 143

The Best Nation... The Best People

People and nations are replaceable in the Quran. Therefore, we emphasize the importance of the responsibility of people towards their land and each other so they realize practical patriotism.

Achieving practical patriotism designates a people as the best because it is qualified to carry divine, patriotic, and humanitarian morals, as presented in the following verse:

(You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient)⁽¹⁾.

The term “right” has various meanings, including a good relationship with God, because it is a creational and innate one. It does not undergo specific contexts and conditions. It forms the life and existence of Man.

An individual cannot survive without food, because it is an inbuilt need. However, his relationship with God is a matter of instinct (which is even stronger than inbuilt need), as instructed in the following verse:

(So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most people do not know)⁽²⁾.

We always emphasize that we must link the instinct with the mind, because without clear thinking, it may lead to unclarity

1- Al Emran: 110

2- Rome: 30

in one's relations with his Lord, with others, and with this life and the Hereafter in general.

On the other hand, the mind without instinct is a double-edged sword: it can be used both for virtue and vice.

Thus, in one's relation with God, he is required to depend on both instinct and mind. It is an obvious representation of virtue that forms the type of relationship with God. It can best be realized in one's servitude to God and abiding by His instructions. This is the reason why we highlight the importance of prayer because it represents our relationship with God and the driving force of instinct in this direction.

Therefore, the term "right" in the above-mentioned verse is a reference to one's relationship with God. It is a purifying factor in our life. This justifies the reason why the Prophet and Ahlulbait (peace be upon them) continuously insisted on the importance of prayer in our life.

The majority of the Hadiths in this regard define prayer as a purifying factor, as in the following Hadith:

(If there was a river in front of your door and you would wash five times a day, would there remain any dirt on your body?)

The audience replied: "No". The Prophet stated:

(Prayer is like a flowing river. As long as you pray, your sins in between are forgiven).

In other words, the prayers disinfect our souls and bring us closer to divine heritage, which is patriotism.

The purer an individual is, the more beneficial he becomes to his society. The purer his feelings are, the more responsible he becomes towards his homeland.

Any person is living in the divine gift. He is gifted with unlimited qualifications and abilities, mainly the mind. They must be invested for the good of his people and homeland. Going back to prayer, it is a real activation of Man's inner and outer abilities. Therefore, doing good can turn any nation into the best in the world.

(You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient)⁽¹⁾.

Righteousness is not only a divine matter: it can be adopted in one's relationship with his country and brothers in humanity, especially his fellow citizens.

As we adopt righteousness, we must be aware of the vices, as noted in the verse:

(and forbid what is wrong).

We must assert that one of the most important forms of righteousness (after purifying his soul) is one's sense of responsibility towards his society. This responsibility has two faces:

One is divine and the other is humanitarian and patriotic. It can best be found in the economic field of society, that of charity (zakat):

(and pay obligatory charity)⁽²⁾.

Paying charity is a kind of worship. It is constituted of two kinds of bonds: one with God, and the other with people, especially his fellow citizens.

1- Al Emran: 110

2- Tawba: 71

In summary, anyone has to acknowledge others' rights. These rights include his relationship with God and all other creatures. This subject matter is clarified by Ima Al-Sajad in his book of rights.

Righteousness can be realized depending on one's range of education and knowledge. On the opposite side of the right is the vice. Righteousness is constructive, developmental, and productive, whereas vice is destructive. It has the power to wipe out all the humanitarian, patriotic, and religious images from society. Vice also works on detaching instinct from the mind. It works on detaching faith from the mind and rational thinking.

Vice is always rejected by God, mind, instinct, society, divine religions, humanity, and homeland.

We acknowledge that it is impossible to carry all forms of righteousness and prevent all kinds of vice without belief in God. Standing against unwanted desires and instinct demand an honest bond with the metaphysical powers. One has to be honest with himself, his country, and his society. He must be able to realize practical patriotism. The Quran mentions:

(You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient).

The cornerstone of doing righteousness and preventing vice is having internal supervision. This condition is described in the Quran as "**belief in God**".

In the same context, another verse in the Quran presents another explanation for this issue:

(And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be successful)⁽¹⁾.

This verse presents similar instructions. However, it presents a more general meaning of righteousness.

The addressee is Man. In this regard, anyone who aims to call for righteousness theoretically and practically must start with his fellow citizens.

Righteousness is a wise concept. It includes Man's relationship with all the details of this universe. When he employs his abilities positively for the sake of the improvement of this world, he is realizing the meaning of righteousness. Otherwise, he becomes a manifestation of vice.

The above-mentioned verse provides a wider meaning of righteousness, including advising your brothers in humanity:

(enjoining what is right).

Doing righteousness is not obligatory, yet we must advise others to do good.

(And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be successful).

The results of this work will include the entire nation. Society will be stable, serene, and happy with its people's collaboration. The verse describes them as the following:

(and those will be successful).

Thus, one can realize practical patriotism as expected.

1- Al Emran: 104

Trust: A Necessary Patriotic Feature

Patriotism is the sense of responsibility towards land and Man. It is a responsibility towards every foot of your homeland and every single citizen in your country.

This sense of responsibility requires the realization of the real ground continuously. It must carry moral values in the relationship with others. Anyone who claims to be a patriot must absorb these values so that he forms a tranquil and strong relationship with others. It is the path to strengthening our homeland.

The strength of the homeland comes from adopting a practical form of patriotism. However, it does not mean that we abandon our values when dealing with those who reject such ideas. Every individual deal with others according to the standards and morals he carries.

One of the most important features of patriotism that has the power to link all people together, using trust and affection is the concept of trust. A trustworthy person can easily win the hearts of people. This concept is fundamental in practical patriotism, as well as crucial in the relationship with God.

There is always correspondence between belief in God and practical patriotism. It is obvious in the following verse:

(Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants)⁽¹⁾.

They not only observe the trust but also take care of it. The more this concept is emphasized in society, the more their bonds become stronger. As explained in the verse, one of the features of virtuous people is that they preserve trust in their relationships with others.

1- Momenoon: 8

In this regard, trust is the cornerstone of practical faith. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) comments:

(The best part of faith is trust).

We understand from this statement that faith has different parts, and the most important one is trust. It constitutes the bond between God and his servants, between the members of the society, and between people and their homeland.

Because of the essential position of this concept in society, it is strongly advised to be employed while dealing with every individual, even with those who do not believe in this value, so that we may achieve a strongly patriotic nation. There is a Hadith narrated from the Prophet that states:

(God does not allow breaking three covenants: being trustful to both the righteous and the immoral, fulfillment of the covenant to both the righteous and immoral, and honoring parents whether they were righteous or immoral).

As clarified in the Hadith, trust forms stable social relationships and unity. It must be applied in all cases and to everyone. There is no difference between strangers and relatives, or between those who adopt the same ideology as yours or not. In this regard, the Hadith emphasizes that:

(God does not allow breaking three covenants: being trustful to both the righteous and the immoral, fulfillment of the covenant to both the righteous and immoral, and honoring parents whether they were righteous or immoral).

This Hadith wants us to learn that we should deal with others according to our standards of trust, even though others may be reluctant to adopt this principle. It asks us to be trustful with everyone: **(righteous or immoral).**

Fulfilling covenant to both the righteous and immoral is also a fundamental principle. The other has entrusted you with certain covenants that must be fulfilled. The trust is not necessarily material: it may be moral. For example, if you may promise someone to do something, you should keep your word, as emphasized in the Hadith: **(fulfillment of the covenant to both the righteous and immoral)**.

As for the third part of the Hadith: **(and honoring parents whether they were righteous or immoral)**, it highlights the significance of being honest with the divine trust, as stated in the Quran:

(And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], “ Pshaw!,” and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, “My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.”)⁽¹⁾.

The verse orders us to give unconditioned love to our parents. As for other believers, there are certain conditions:

(But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to me (in love): in the end, the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did)⁽²⁾.

Honoring our parents constitutes an important part of the divine trust.

1- Isra: 23-24

2- Luqman: 15

(God does not allow breaking three covenants: being trustful to both the righteous and the immoral, fulfillment of the covenant to both the righteous and immoral, and honoring parents whether they were righteous or immoral).

Hence, we see that the concept of trust plays a primary role in social relationships. This Hadith also sheds light on primary factors of forming a good society:

First: is the formation of a good family. It is the nucleus of the bigger society. This Hadith insists on having an affectionate relationship with our parents and families.

Second, it shows the necessity of being trustful with all people. We should never betray their financial, economic, and social trust in us.

Third, the Hadith also sheds light on fulfilling the covenant with all the members of the society, regardless of their principles and ideological belongingness.

Because of the fundamental position of trust in social life, it was designated as the cornerstone of belief in God. Religion does not depend on the abundance of prayer, fasting, and worship, as declared in the following Hadith:

(Do not look at the abundance of their prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, righteousness, and worship at night: but look at their will to tell the truth and their trustfulness).

Telling the truth is a form of trust. It concerns both material and moral factors, as clarified in a similar Hadith:

(Do not look at the abundance of the man's prayer and fasting, but look at his will to tell the truth and his trustfulness).

In another Hadith, the Prophet states:

(Do not look at the length of his kneeling and prostration, because he performs them out of habit and if he stops doing them, he will feel empty. You should look at his will, tell the truth, and trust).

It emphasizes that the concept of trust must be realized in social relationships with everyone so that we may achieve practical patriotism.

The school of Ahlulbait (peace be upon them) which is based upon humanitarian Islam, pays great attention to the position of trust in society because it has the power to maintain social peace. One of the Imams stated:

(Befriend God and be trustful to others; even if the murder of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) entrust me with something, I would pay it back to him).

There is another Hadith that has a similar meaning:

(If the murder of Imam Husain (peace be upon him) entrust me with something, I would pay it back to him).

Trustfulness and the unity of the society are common instructions in all divine religions, as stated in the following Hadith:

(God never designated anyone with prophethood without the urge, to tell the truth, and be trustful to both the righteous and immoral).

The above-mentioned Hadiths, all display the features of practical patriotism, which are: moral values, principles, and good culture. We should always adopt these standards and employ them with all people.

The first type of the Hadiths, emphasizes the necessity of being trustful with all people of the society. In this way, we can

educate everyone that having different convictions does not necessarily mean that we should abandon our moral values.

The second type of the Hadiths defies the belief that nationalism proposes differences among people. This belief affects the values that people carry. It leads to the discrimination of others, as in the case when some white people look down upon people of color.

This group of Hadiths defy all these false ideas, as clearly declared in this Hadith:

(Befriend God and be trustful to all white and black people).

This statement urges us to make sure that our relationship with God is the fundamental factor in life, and that God is always supervising our relationship with others.

In this regard, we see that the wise Luqman advises his son:

(Being trustful safeguards your worldly life and the Hereafter. Be trustful to become wealthy).

All the statements of the prophets, Ahlulbait (peace be upon them), and people of wisdom are guidelines for our life, as the one mentioned above. It refers to the happiness of this life and the afterlife.

One of the most obvious manifestations of trustfulness and fulfilling covenant is the relationship with God, maintaining His message, and preserving His successorship, as explained in the Quran:

(We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof: but man undertook it;- He was indeed unjust

and foolish)⁽¹⁾.

The trust that must be maintained in the relationship with God is constituted of the following factors:

First: divine message and Book.

Second: the mind.

Third: Man's abilities and qualifications.

Fourth: knowledge.

Fifth: divine gifts.

I think that whoever is trustful with God, is also trustful with his creatures. Therefore, if we relate this world with the Hereafter, we become righteous. One of the forms of righteousness is practical patriotism.

We always emphasize that whoever loves God, must also love His creation. Therefore, whoever maintains divine trust, is also trustful to others. This condition is naturally reflected in society and social relationships with others.

Love Grows in Humility

The love of others results in a strong united society. It helps them to realize practical patriotism.

Hereby, we refer to some of the aspects that lead to mutual love among people.

In beginning, we must acknowledge that the love of God is the foundation for the love of people. If you have a loving relationship with God, you must also love his creation. You must adopt divine morals when socializing with others.

This condition makes one feel the necessity of social unity. He starts to see himself as a carrier of a sublime message who seeks to improve society and his people. He works on leading others to the goal, which is practical patriotism.

Thus, anyone who loves God and carries a message and a goal must also form his relationship with others upon love. He feels that he is entrusted with a sublime message and the only way to deliver it to others is by employing love.

He must think of all the possible ways that lead him to the hearts of others. His religious, patriotic, and humanitarian mission is beyond the boundaries of tribalism, ethnicism, and racism. His goal is to invite everyone to interact with the concepts and ideas of the message, chiefly among which is the idea of homeland and practical patriotism.

Therefore, the love of God must be accompanied by the love of everyone else. He must feel that he needs others and this need can be fulfilled by love.

However, these ideas must be based upon his pure instinct, relationship with God, and the sublime message that he carries. He must work to invite others to adopt these values as well.

The success of this mission depends on certain features: they must be polarizing to others. One of the most essential features of this mission is humility.

Humility must be the cornerstone upon which one builds his relationship with others. He must acknowledge that they have a common origin and a common destination. He is required to believe in the commonality of land and patriotic values.

Humility is the key to the success of any message. Practical patriotism is a message that needs to be applied in society. It is not part of intellectual luxury or empty slogans. It is a fundamental method that can sublimate and develop society. The Quran comments on this issue:

(So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them on the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him] on)⁽¹⁾.

The Quran replaces humility with mercy. It is a social rule that makes relationships thrive.

Another verse addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). As we all know, he is the most perfect person among the creation. The Quran describes him in the following way:

(By the stars when they fade away! Your fellow man is neither misguided nor astray. Nor does he speak of his whims. It is only a revelation sent down to him. He has been taught by One of mighty power. and great perfection, who once rose to his true form while on the highest point above

1- Al Emran: 159

the horizon, then he approached the Prophet, coming so close, that he was only two arms-lengths away or even less. Then Allah revealed to His servant what He revealed. The Prophet's heart did not doubt what he saw. How can you O pagans then dispute with him regarding what he saw? And he certainly saw that angel descend a second time at the Lote Tree of the most extreme limit near which is the Garden of Eternal Residence while the Lote Tree was overwhelmed with heavenly splendors! The Prophet's sight never wandered, nor did it overreach. He certainly saw some of his Lord's greatest signs)⁽¹⁾.

This great infallible Prophet was the most devoted to his homeland. He once stated:

(By God you are the most loved land to God and the most loved land to me. If your people did not cast me out, I would never leave you).

He also stated:

(The love of homeland is part of faith).

He also loved his people, despite all the harm that they did to him. He was always praying for them:

(My Lord, forgive my people because they know nothing).

He would moan for their wounds, despite their enmity and unbelief in his message. As for the verse, though it addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), it also draws a guideline for everyone else:

(So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So

pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them on the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him] on)

We understand several ideas from this verse:

1- The first is that leniency is a must in social relationships. Otherwise, you would lose all your acquaintances and friends. You will find nobody to whom you may deliver your message, as mentioned in the verse: **(they would have disbanded from about you).**

2- The second idea is mercy:

3- **(So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them on the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him] on)**

Here, mercy has two manifestations:

1- The first (major) mercy was devoted to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). It has educational purposes that he needs to be lenient with others.

2- The second mercy is devoted to Man, as clarified in the following verse:

(And We have not sent you but as a mercy to all the worlds)⁽¹⁾.

It is correspondence with the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(Have mercy to be mercified).

1- Anbia: 107

He also stated:

(The most merciful of you is the closest to God's mercy).

There is also a statement narrated from Christ in which he states:

(Have mercy upon those on earth, you will be mercified by the One in the sky).

This statement was narrated with various dictions.

Therefore, the basic principle of one's socialization with others is humility. It is the key to the heart of people. There is a saying narrated by Imam Ali in which he says: (Behave modesty and you will be like a star in the sky).

Many other Hadiths call for the love of others. There is a guideline to succeed in this mission. The Prophet stated:

(Three things make others love you: humility, spending, and borrowing).

1- First, (humility) is a form of self-education. As believers, the more we feel humility toward God, the more we feel humbled by people.

2- Second, (spending) comes in the same context as the statement (Whoever loves someone, he seeks to present everything to him). It is a meaning of spending. Spending is not necessarily financial: it might be an idea, advice, money, and help. These all are manifestations of spending that is a key to people's hearts, as the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) explained.

3- Third, (borrowing) has two references:

First, borrowing comes after the concept of spending which

includes money, help, or advice. In case you cannot spend these things, you may borrow from others what you have. It is also a path to gaining people's hearts.

Second, not everyone accepts to receive anything from others. He becomes more glad when he borrows his needs. He cannot accept money for free, so he borrows it. In this case, there are also guidelines for those who borrow something from others: for example, they have to pay it back on time, or they should pay it back once their needs are fulfilled. It is also recommended to pay back the thing you borrow with a gift. Unfortunately, the typical case is that when people ask for a loan, for example, they are very polite; when it is time to pay it back, they either deny the loan or postpone it to another time. We should not forget that there are certain conditions in which some people cannot pay back their debt. Here, the Quran recommends:

(And if someone is in hardship, then [let there be] postponement until [a time of] ease. But if you give [from your right as] charity, then it is better for you, if you only knew)⁽¹⁾.

It means that it is better to give him extra time.

Thus, leniency is an educational, spiritual, and moral aspect. Spending has different forms: financial, position, knowledge, and borrowing is an economic aspect that fulfills their financial needs. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Three things bring the love of others: good behavior, good companionship, and humility).

1- Baqara: 280

(**Love**) is the affectionate relationship with each other. The Imam suggests three guidelines:

1- First, according to my understanding, (**good behavior**) means values. It does not refer to compliments, because God describes the Prophet as:

(And indeed, you are of a great moral character)⁽¹⁾.

It means that the Prophet is the carrier of the most sublime humanitarian and religious values. Thus, good behavior (values) is the reason that one may win the hearts of others. In this regard, there is a Hadith that claims: that Islam did not rise but with the good behavior of the Prophet, and money of Khadija (the Prophet's wife), and the courage of Ali.

2- Second, (good companionship) means that you should remain to carry good behavior and values, at home or abroad. It may be achieved by good words or by helping others.

3- Third, (humility): Imam Ali (peace be upon him) insists upon the concept of humility because it is a necessary principle in forming affectionate social bonds among people, societies, and nations. In this regard, humility is the path to realizing practical patriotism.

Other Hadiths replace good companionship with kindness. This is a critical issue because some people refuse to be openly treated with kindness. They think that it is a sign of their weakness. The solution for this condition is that you may treat them kindly without letting them know that. Some people need help but do not want to appear weak before others. Therefore, when you present help to them, do not make them feel that they are vulnerable or weak.

1- Qalam: 4

Loving Faces

When we talk about love and the love of others, we must refer to the features of a loving face. The human face can portray emotions and love to others. It can show the mood of which a person. The best face is a happy face.

The lack of a lenient face gives the impression that this person is arrogant. A frowning face gives negative impressions to others.

A lenient face plays an important role in the empowerment of society. There are several Hadiths in this regard. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

(A happy lenient face wins the love of others).

I refer to the rule again that the one who loves people is also loved by others. One of the features of this type of person is the happy lenient face. It is a sign of the love of others. As a consequence, this leads to the unity of people and encourages them to realize practical patriotism.

A happy face is related to two important aspects:

First: it is religious because it signifies a strong relationship with God. It shows that this individual abides by the divine instructions that encourage people to have a happy face when meeting others.

Thus, it is a divine instruction that shows people obedience to religious requirements.

Moreover, a happy face is a sign of contentment. Such an individual lives in satisfaction with God's will. This topic reminded me of a story in which a man asked a prophet whether God is satisfied with him. When the prophet asked

God about this man, He replied that you go and ask him if he is satisfied with Me. If he is, I am satisfied with him as well.

Therefore, a lenient happy face is a sign of satisfaction. Consequently, satisfaction is always accompanied by peace of mind.

As for the second aspect, it is religious as well, but it is related to society and people. It is a key to the hearts of people.

The loving relationship between people may be religious, humanitarian, and patriotic. It facilitates collaboration among people. However, a key factor in the success of such a relationship is fairness.

Fairness has a wide range of meanings. It can be summarized in the statement of Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Make yourself the standard by which you measure things with others: love for others what you love for yourself, and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do a kindness to others as you love to be the site of kindness).

In other words, treat people the way you love to be treated. This is the minimum range of a good relationship with others. From a practical point of view, it has many manifestations. Unfortunately, some people mistreat those who do kindness to them. They keep asking for more things until they refrain from doing anything else.

A good relationship is key to a strong continuing love among people. It plays a primary role in practical patriotism. It is the factor that cements all people within one front and is willing to do their best for their country.

Proving love is a fundamental feature in our relationship with others. People are sociable and they need each other.

However, they do not show this need and love to others out of arrogance.

Love always needs to be proved practically. People must be willing to present help to each other once needed. Every person may undergo compelling circumstances. Psychologically, socially, and financially, they may need support from others. This meaning is narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in the form of poetry:

**Complaints must be addressed to people of chivalry
So he may calm and heal you from your wounds.**

The process of healing may be done by speaking. The person in adversity may be reminded of other people who have fallen in more severe conditions but overcome them and rose victorious because after all, everything is at the hands of God.

Such a consolation soothes the person in pain because he starts to see that such trials are natural: they have befallen many others before him. He can also feel that God is always by his side and He can fix things.

Accordingly, loving people are always by our sides when we fall into problems. However, such friends are very rare as narrations and statements claim.

To achieve practical patriotism, we must apply such ideas and concepts in our life and relationship with others.

It is a fact that people form a type of relationship with others according to the way others stand with them in times of adversity. This cannot be right, because we must socialize with others according to our standards and not others' reactions.

We are expected to employ our sublime standards, chiefly among which is having a happy face. Patriotism and humani-

tarianism cannot survive if we pay back what others do to us. The primary value that must control our attitudes is the love of others.

Being content with others is a sublime idea that is related to self-education. To clarify this idea further, we may refer to the following verse:

(And [there is a share for] those who came after them, saying, “Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts [any] resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are Kind and Merciful”⁽¹⁾).

Therefore, we must purify our hearts from any form of grudge and enmity towards others.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) presents certain guidelines in this regard:

(There are three steps by which you may win the hearts of people: fairness in relationships with others, presenting consolation in times of adversity, and having a pure heart).

In other words, this Hadith refers to the necessity of purifying one’s heart.

Many other Hadiths clarify that socializing with people demands certain requirements, mainly talking to them according to their understanding and points of interest. You should also help them develop and modify them in a way that becomes useful to them in their daily life. Your speech with others must be beneficial to them and try to keep away from empty useless talks. Such a dialogue empowers social bonds

1- Hashr: 10

among people. Many Hadiths show us the way we must talk to people:

(God's mercy be upon the one who achieves the love of people by talking to them about what they know and keeping away from what they ignore).

This Hadith highlights the importance of brotherhood among people, which is part of practical patriotism.

Practical Love

We always highlight the importance of love among people and how we can use it to get closer to God. It can also improve our patriotic and humanitarian characteristics.

We must be keen on this religious, patriotic, and humanitarian path to work on achieving God's content and the love of others, especially our fellow citizens.

One of the best ways to achieve God's content is to feel the need for God. Religiously, it means servitude to God, which is a key to that sublime goal. As for people, the key to winning their hearts is to show love to them, as some Hadiths advise us on this path: when you love someone, go and tell him that you love him.

Another key factor is to show self-sufficiency and that he does not need anything that is in the possession of people. This plays a great role in finding a place in the heart of people.

We should keep in mind that people are of different kinds. Therefore, we should be cautious to show our self-sufficiency. In other words, we should make them understand that we do not need what they have.

There is a Hadith narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) in this regard. Someone asked the Prophet: "Our beloved Prophet, teach me something that if I do it, God in the sky and people on earth will love me". The Prophet said:

(Crave for what God has, He will love you, and abstain from what people have, they will love you).

Another feature that confirms the affection among people is having an equal stance towards everyone. We should teach

people not to look down upon each other. We should warn them to renounce classism because it feeds our egoism and arrogance. We all know that God despises arrogance.

In the same context, there is a divine Hadith in which God addresses his Prophet:

(Ahmed, My love is linked to the love of the poor. So get closer to the poor and sit beside them so that you may get closer to Me).

This divine instruction to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) aims to teach us that we must deal with everyone equally, especially the poor and needy because these people are psychologically vulnerable more than others. They need support to find themselves in society.

(Ahmed, My love is linked to the love of the poor).

It means that whoever loves Me, God, has to love the poor.

(Ahmed, My love is linked to the love of the poor. So get closer to the poor and sit beside them so that you may get closer to Me).

This Hadith asks us to get closer to the poor. The more we get closer to them, the closer we get to God. It also warns us from falling into the trap of classism.

Here, we must refer to some of the visible traits of practical patriotism. Language plays a primary role in this regard. Love can be expressed by words. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

(Whoever loves something, he keeps mentioning it).

He also clarifies the difference between affection and love. As for affection, it remains at the level of language, whereas

love is manifested in action. He explains:

(Affection is expressed by language, whereas love is expressed practically).

When we claim that we are practical patriots, we have to love our country and people. One of the key factors of love among people is altruism. It is a cornerstone in religious, patriotic, and humanitarian culture.

The origin of love is God because is the creator of love. Then, it must include all other people, especially those who share a common homeland. Within this context, there is a Hadith that claims:

(Religion is love, and love is a religion).

Religion forms the relationship between people and God, whereas love constitutes social relationships among people.

Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) comments on this idea. One of his companions asks him about love and hatred. The Imam replies:

(Belief is nothing but love and hatred).

The love of God and people constitutes faith and belief. Love must also appeal to religious and humanitarian values, whereas hatred is a destroying factor in this field.

If the love of homeland is part of religious and humanitarian values, the love of homeland is, then, inspired by the love of God and Man.

The love of Man means fairness in a relationship. We have to work on soothing others, as declared in the following Hadith:

(God loves the humorous one without using ugly words, who uses his mind for the sake of others, who is patient, and who prays openly).

(Humorous): means the one who is entertaining to others, who smiles all the time. He does his best to make others smile as well while being careful not to speak any bad words. This person who lives in happiness is loved by people and by God.

(Who uses his mind for the sake of others): such an individual is always eager to employ his mind for the good of society. This step contributes to the rise of practical patriotism. He always presents ideas that are progressive for society. He must also be patient because realizing this condition demands time. Meanwhile, he has to improve his relationship with God. This Hadith confirms this idea:

(God loves the humorous one without using ugly words, who uses his mind for the sake of others, who is patient, and who prays openly).

As appears in the Hadith, such a person devotes part of the nighttime to worshipping God and being lonely with Him.

In my estimation, many other Quranic verses insist on the necessity of forming a loving relationship with other people, as the following one:

(And God loves the doer of good)⁽¹⁾.

Doing good may take various forms: it may be by words or by practice. Another verse claims:

(For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean)⁽²⁾.

Repentance is proposed as a solution because there are some mistakes. God wants us to keep away from our mistakes and be cautious not to wrong others.

1- Al Emran: 134

2- Baqara: 222

(Nay.- Those that keep their plighted faith and act aright, - verily Allah loves those who act aright)⁽¹⁾.

Acting right means that he also refrains from wrongdoing to himself and others. The Quran also mentions:

(And God loves the patient)⁽²⁾.

Patience in this verse refers to that condition in which one tolerates the negative attitudes of his people, yet keeps moving and working.

(God loves those who are just)⁽³⁾.

This verse invites us to be just towards others.

Thus, such an individual is the most loved person to God and the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). He seeks to find his relationship with others depending on the love and support of others. This is the way to prove one's practical patriotism and humanity. Once someone asked the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) about the most loved person to him. He replied:

(The most beneficial to people. People are like the children of God; the most loved one to God is he who benefits the children of God and who makes a family happy).

Thus, one may prove his practical patriotism and his devotion to God when he helps people and support them.

1- Al Emran: 76

2- Al Emran: 146

3- Maeda: 42

Patriotic Relationships through Good Neighboring

Patriotism is an interesting and beautiful topic. Practical patriotism, demands belongingness to the country. It also needs the love of others and the love of self-identity. These all cannot be achieved without having a sense of responsibility towards the land which was granted to us by God.

We should deal with our homeland as a site of partnership. The divine wisdom decided that this partnership is between people of different religions, ethnicities, and races.

Practical patriotism means that everyone must have the priority of working for his country (land and Man) without any sort of discrimination. He should always deal with other people as his partners in land and goals.

The concept of homeland signifies land and Man. In other words, people are a necessary part of forming a homeland. They are one big family. In this regard, practical patriotism improves these familial bonds.

Practical patriotism is a path to stronger social bonds. The nucleus of the homeland is any individual in it. Moreover, the nucleus of society is family. These families are constituted of individuals and groups. Therefore, these groups and societies form the bigger nation.

To have a high-quality nucleus and fruit, we must work on improving the quality of the family. When a family lives in isolation, it becomes a weak one. Having sociable bonds with others makes it stronger and proves itself to be a patriot family. Consequently, strong families form a strong society and nation.

Among the necessary features of practical patriotism is the dignity of Man. In other words, the dignity of families and

groups leads to the dignity of the entire homeland.

Good neighboring is a fundamental feature of patriotism. We should note that the concept of the neighbor includes seven houses on each side. Other recommendations claim that forty and seventy houses on each side are also labeled neighbors. In other words, everyone in the city may be called a neighbor.

The result of such an understanding is that all of the city would be related to each other. This is the true meaning of practical patriotism: it means the relation of each individual to other families, and families to the society, and society to the entire nation. On this, Good neighboring is a patriotic and religious demand.

As previously discussed, the existence of Man on earth is part of divine wisdom. God granted this earth to Man to make it his home. The religious rule claims that **(The love of homeland is part of faith)**. Therefore, improving the homeland and its people is a religious recommendation. There are other instructions from the Quran and Hadiths narrated from the Quran that focus on the importance of good neighboring. For instance, the Quran states:

(Worship God, and join not any partners with Him, and do good- to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess: For God loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious)⁽¹⁾.

This verse refers to the most essential features of practical patriotism, mainly the belief in God, which is a creational aspect. The first thing a person must maintain is his relationship with his Creator and Giver. This verse highlights the relation-

1- Nisa: 36

ship with God which naturally leads to the love of homeland, society, and people.

The verse moves to cover the familial bonds. The verse states: **(and do good- to parents)**. Any family is constituted of parents first, and then the children. The verse insists on a good relationship with the parents to achieve one strong family.

The verse also covers the significance of forming strong bonds with our relatives, like uncles, aunts, grandparents, and so on. Then, the focus moves to cover the orphans and the needy: **(kinsfolk, orphans, and those in need)**.

These orphans and needy may be our relatives. They have the prior right to our attention. They may also be our brothers in the homeland. Therefore, any true patriot must be responsible for these people.

The verse expands the light of attention to the neighbors as well:

(neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess: For God loveth not the arrogant, the vainglorious).

All these instructions are accompanied by “doing good”: doing good to the parents, kinfolds, orphans, and those in need. Doing good is not only a psychological and spiritual aspect: it must also include the economic and financial side as well.

As for good neighboring, the neighbor may be a relative and it may also refer to the house next door or the next. In this condition, the Quran insists on doing good to all kinds of neighbors.

This religious heritage shows the significance of social and familial bonds as a path to realizing practical patriotism. The Hadiths of the Prophet and Ahlulbait (peace be upon them) also confirm what has been mentioned in the Quran.

In this regard, the Prophet stated:

(I strongly recommend good neighboring, because it is the order of God).

Because of the great results of good neighboring, God promised amazing rewards for those who do good to their neighbors, as narrated in this Hadith:

(Good neighboring increases your wealth).

There is no doubt that everyone (families and individuals) is willing to be blessed with wealth. This Hadith motivates them to do good to their neighbors for the sake of achieving that wealth.

Another Hadith claims:

(Good neighboring grants longevity).

In other words, by being nice and kind to others, God rewards us with longevity, a wish anyone is eager to realize.

God presented unlimited desired rewards for those who do good to their neighbors. He also considers it part of belief in God, as clear in the following Hadith:

(Doing good to a neighbor is a sign of faith).

Faith here signifies the practical side of religion. Another Hadith confirms this meaning:

(Be kind to your neighbors to be a believer).

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) also stated:

(Gabriel kept recommending to do good to the neighbor until I thought that he is one of my inheritors).

In other words, the neighbor is as important as the members of the family.

Other Hadiths further emphasize the importance of good neighboring. This is a method of confirming one's practical patriotism.

There is a Hadith narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in which he claims:

(Part of good neighboring is to see over the needs of your neighbor).

According to the Hadith, we should be so close to our neighbors in a way that we always present our readiness to support them in any form possible.

These recommendations play a great psychological role in relating people to each other to feel that they are part of one big family. They always feel that God is watching them and that they must make each other happy by presenting any form of support. They must not feel that they are left alone. Consequently, such an individual will be loved by everyone for his willingness to help others.

One of the best descriptions of good neighboring is the one presented by Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Good neighboring is not abstaining from harming our neighbors, but being patient towards their wrongdoing).

We see a gradual improvement of such social bonds: first, we have to inspect and look for the needs of our neighbors to fulfill them. Then, in case there was no kind response, we have to be tolerant of their wrongdoing.

We have presented the Prophetic recommendation of Ahlul-bait to be tolerant towards our neighbors. At the same time, there are also other instructions for the neighbor:

(Whosoever believes in God and the afterlife, must not harm his neighbor).

Islam recommends we tolerate the bad treatment of our neighbors, and at the same time, it advises the neighbor to be kind and peaceful with others, as a condition of believing in God and the afterlife. Anyone who believes in divine instructions and that there will be a Day in which he will be trialed for his actions in this life, would keep away from harming people, especially his neighbor. This issue is of great importance in Islam, to the extent that the Prophet renounces anyone who hurts his neighbor:

(He is not from us whose neighbors are not safe from his harm).

Two groups of Hadiths discuss the concept of good neighboring: for the first group, they clarify the rights of the neighbor, like looking over the needs of the neighbors, not harming them, and being tolerant towards their wrongdoing. Concerning the second group, they instruct us on how we must treat our neighbors. These instructions are humanitarian and organize people's relationships with each other. A real patriot must adopt these guidelines in his life and his relationship with others. In this regard, there is a comprehensive Hadith that presents the rights of the neighbors:

(As for the right of your neighbor, you should protect him in his absence, honor him in his presence, and support him when oppressed; do not look after his slips and cover his mistakes; if he is a person who accepts advice from you, advise him in secret; do not abandon him at times of adversity;

forgive his unintentional mistakes; forgive his wrongdoing; have a dignified relationship with him).

Protection is of two forms: first, physical protection. It means that you should protect his possessions and belongings. The second form is moral protection, like not talking badly about him, not accusing him falsely, or not betraying him.

In case he is present, you should dignify and respect him. **(And support him when oppressed)**. There are two possibilities when he conflicts with someone else: he is the oppressor. In this case, you should support him by forbidding him from what he is doing. The other possibility is that he is oppressed: here, you must stand by his side and do your best to save him from this condition.

(do not look after his slips): this is a basic right of the neighbor. The Quran confirms that people are not infallible. Therefore, they should always go back to God by asking for repentance. Infallibility is a unique feature of the Imams of the progeny of the Prophet. Other people are not beyond committing mistakes. They are open to any possible wrongdoing. The neighbors are the most familiar with each other's problems. Thus, one of the features of good neighboring is not looking after each other's slips and mistakes. When someone commits an unintentional problem, you have to cover it and stop it from being recognized by others. This procedure also contributes to the unity and strength of the society.

If you have a friendly relationship with your neighbor and you can advise him with good words, you proceed with that; otherwise, never tell anyone about it:

(Do not look after his slips and cover his mistakes; if he is a person who accepts advice from you, advise him in secret).

Another feature of good neighboring is also the following:

(Do not abandon him at times of adversity).

You should never leave your neighbor in those difficult exceptional times. Anyone may undergo emotional adversity, like losing a loved one, an economic one, or any other worldly problem. In such times, you should stand by his side and help him. The least you may present to him is a good word and remind him that God is always with us.

(Forgive his unintentional mistakes): anyone may commit certain unintentional mistakes. One of the rights of your neighbor is that when he wrongs you, you do not take any negative stance towards him, especially in exceptional times. Then, the Hadith mentions: **(forgive his wrongdoing)**. If he wrongs you by accusing you for example and then asked you for forgiveness, you must forgive him as part of good neighboring. The Hadith continues: **(have a dignified relationship with him)**. You should check on him, do good to him, be tolerant towards him, and be as supportive to him as possible.

This Hadith is advice to any person who is surrounded by people. It is also a guideline for socializing with others. It shows the path to practical patriotism.

Other Hadiths mention the importance of good neighboring, like the following one:

(If he asks you for help, help him; if he asks for a loan, lend him money; if he is struck with poverty, do not leave him; if he is gifted with some grace, congratulate him; if he gets sick, visit him; if adversity befalls him, sympathize with him; if he dies, attend his procession; do not construct your building higher than his building if you block the wind from passing by him; do not hurt him with the smell of your food unless you give him some of your food).

The Hadith mentions **(If he asks for help, help him)**. It means

that we should always be prepared to present any possible help to our neighbors.

(If he asks for a loan, lend him money): if you can lend him some money, never turn your back on him.

(If he is struck with poverty, do not leave him; if he is gifted with some grace, congratulate him; if he gets sick, visit him; if adversity befalls him, sympathize with him; if he dies, attend his procession).

If your neighbor undergoes difficult financial circumstances, help him. In case he experiences moments of happiness, try to congratulate him. When he gets sick, it is recommended that you visit him, because it plays a great role in improving social bonds. Sometimes, he loses a loved one: you should stand by his side and do your best to sympathize with him.

This Hadith includes ecological instructions:

(do not construct your building higher than his building if you block the wind from passing by him). Good neighboring also includes such minute details. You should be careful not to block from passing by your neighbor's house unless he permits that. This is such a divine morality.

(Do not hurt him with the smell of your food unless you give him some of your food). Among the features of good neighboring is that you give him some of your food.

What has been mentioned is part of religious, humanitarian, and patriotic instructions at good neighboring. We should be responsible towards our neighbors and form strong bonds with them. Such procedures finally result in a strong and united society.

Humane Interaction Depending on Mutual Rights

To achieve comprehensive practical patriotism among people, they should have humane interactions with each other. They should adopt moral values in socializing with others.

Moral values are realized only when people believe in them. Belief improves spirituality. It also encourages people to recognize their capabilities and qualifications and apply them in their daily life.

People are required to be responsible towards each other. This requirement was emphasized by the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(You all are shepherds, and you all are responsible for what you lead).

People are expected to realize this meaning practically because it is one of the for-granted rights of their fellow citizens. It is not an optional aspect: it is a human right that must be maintained in their social life.

Religiously talking, anyone must watch his relationship with God. He must do his best to maintain the divine right of servitude and the successorship that was granted to him. This is the basic that leads to preserving the rights of others, because, as repeatedly emphasized, anyone who loves God must also love His creation.

This instruction is not addressed to one specific individual, but all people. Therefore, when you preserve the rights of others, others will also be keen to preserve your rights. There will be mutuality in preserving rights. It is a social feature that includes everyone in society.

Hence, the more we are eager to respect others' rights, the more we are confirming our abiding by peaceful socializing with others. This is a divine requirement that is emphasized in several Quranic verses, like the following:

(We have not sent you but as a mercy to all the worlds)⁽¹⁾.

In other words, the message that the Prophet carried is mercy to all people. It confirms equality among all people, as explained in this verse:

(O people, We have created you as males and females and established you in nations and tribes to get acquainted with each other; indeed the most blessed by God among you is the most abiding of you; truly God is the most knowledgeable the most informed)⁽²⁾.

(The most blessed by God) means the most who get away from negative social features that may hurt you and others. In the same path, the Prophet emphasized the concept of equality among people:

(You all are from Adam, and Adam is from dust).

He also mentioned:

(The children of Adam are as equal as the teeth of the comb).

It refers to equality among all humanity. This meaning intensifies when it comes to the people of one country, regardless of their religions, ideologies, ethnicities, races, and cultures. These labels go hand in hand to constitute one united nation. In this respect, the leader of humanity after the Prophet, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

1- Anbia: 107

2- Hujurat: 13

(Among the rights of God is that we must preserve each other's rights. They are balanced and mutual: no right can be preserved without preserving others' rights).

These are comprehensive instructions on maintaining the rights of people. Other Hadiths explain how we may realize these rights in daily life.

In a sermon, Imam Ali presents how we may maintain respectable socializing bonds with others:

(With devotion and unity of God, you may preserve the rights of the Muslims. A true Muslim is the one, from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe).

This Hadith explains how you may build a strong bond with God by devotion and manifestation of His succession on the earth. They cannot be realized without the presence of others.

Again, we must mention the meanings of faith and Islam. We have discussed earlier that faith is a matter of instinct. It is part of the creation of Man. Anyone is born with the instinct of believing in God. However, he is required to recognize this instinct by activating his mind and practicing faith in his actions. As for the meaning of the word 'Muslim', it is a label for anyone who is truly devoted to God. The Quranic verse mentions:

(Yes, whoever submits his face to God, while being a doer of goodwill has his reward with his Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve)⁽¹⁾.

The word 'face' here signifies all that is done by a person: his action, behavior, and moves. Islam means devotion to God: any devoted person from any Abrahamic religion. Abraham

1- Baqara: 112

(peace be upon him) is, in fact, the father of all the prophets:

(He has chosen you, and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion; it is the cult of your father Abraham. It is He Who has named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation); that the Messenger may be a witness for you, and ye be witnesses for mankind! So establish regular Prayer, give regular Charity, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector - the Best to protect and the Best to help)⁽¹⁾.

This verse addresses all the prophets that your followers are also devoted to God. Therefore, in this respect, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

(A true Muslim is the one, from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe).

The linguistic harm here is greatly emphasized. It includes many forms, including backbiting, gossip, slander, indecency, and accusation. As for physical harm, it is also forbidden.

This safe socialization is of great importance among people. Because of its significance, Imam Ali described it as a commandment that was designated by God. It is the key to true worship and a devoted relationship with God. He further explains:

(God prioritized the rights of people over His rights. Thus, whoever preserves the right of people, actually preserves the rights of God).

In other words, in all divine religions, the worship of God can never be accomplished without maintaining the rights of people. They are the ones who were appointed as the successors of God who construct the earth. They share one common ground which is called homeland.

1- Haj: 78

As for the master and teacher of Imam Ali, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) explained this issue further:

(Whoever aims to glorify the religion of God, must prioritize the rights of his brothers. Whoever underestimates the rights of his brothers, underestimates his religion).

This Hadith highlights **(the religion of God)**. As Muslims, we admit that all the previous religions are true: the religion of Moses, Jesus, Muhammed, and their divine books. Thus, this instruction is given to all the followers of Abrahamic religions.

Therefore, any follower of any religion must respect the rights of his brothers. Here, we remind ourselves of the statement of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) to his ambassador to Egypt, Malik Al-Ashtar:

(Know that people are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation).

Brotherhood here either refers to the equality of divine religions, or the equality of creation. This Hadith shows the comprehensiveness of rights over all humanity.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also stated:

(You may recognize people by preserving the rights of their brothers. It also shows their closeness to God).

The Imam emphasizes several issues:

- 1- First, he shows that our relationship with God is defined according to the nature of our relationship with others. It is of great significance that shows our closeness to God.
- 2- Second, brotherhood is a general term. It is not limited to one specific label or name: it includes all the people of the country. These rights are practical rather than theoretical.

3- Third, you should always diagnose the priority of their requirements, according to which, you may take steps towards their accomplishments.

Going back to the Hadith:

(You may recognize people by preserving the rights of their brothers. It also shows their closeness to God).

Because of the importance of the relationship between people, we may see two conditions:

1- There may be a feeling of neglect because some people depend on others in preserving those rights. They disregard such rights since they think that others may get the job done. They always justify their neglect.

2- Sometimes, because of the strong and friendly relationship with others, they may neglect their friends' rights unintentionally, because they think that they are not obliged to do their tasks towards their friends. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) comments:

(Do not waste the rights of your brother by misusing your close relationship, because he ceases from being your brother once you waste his rights).

Therefore, we must always be keen to preserve these mutual rights among people. We must depend on the universal rule that was presented by Imam Ali:

(Know that people are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation).

We must also follow this prophetic instruction:

(The children of Adam are as equal as the teeth of a comb).

Some Rights Require Psychological Education

Some rights form the norms of a given society. They are also mutual among all people. They demand humanitarian, religious, and patriotic education because they are part of our life and leave their fingerprints on our psychological status. They must be abided to with conviction, rather than pretension.

Surely there are a set of aspects that may be pretended without any real belief in them. However, those aspects that affect our psychological aspects cannot be performed without belief. This belief cannot be achieved without humanitarian, religious, and patriotic education. It demands self-education as well, as clarified in the following Hadith:

(Any believer is designated with seven rights towards another believer by God: to honor him, to love him from the bottom of his heart, to safeguard his possessions, never backbite him, to visit him when he gets sick, to attend his funeral, and not to say but good things after he dies).

1- First: (to honor him).

Honor and respect are a requirement in the socialization of people with one another. This is part of realizing practical patriotism. We should note that respect is not a superficial or urgent matter. We must understand the motives behind them to reach the desired goal. Superficial honor and respect for others do not demand any sort of self-education, because they may be achieved by pretension. Honest respect requires religious, humanitarian, and patriotic culture.

Honoring and respect spring from several origins:

1- One must comprehend the idea of divine honoring of Man:

(And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference)⁽¹⁾.

2- He has to understand the meaning of divine successorship on earth:

(And when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority")⁽²⁾.

3- The goal of this successorship is to construct the earth. This mission deserves respect and honor.

4- One has to understand that as he was granted the successorship of this earth, others are also his partners in this gift.

5- Others also share a common land, which is called homeland.

When these aspects are comprehended by anyone, he will reach some level of respect and honor, which is a social requirement.

The religious methodology seeks to plant humanity, respect, and honor in society. These features must be absorbed deeply by people so that they may endure as long as possible.

2- **Second:**

(To love him from the bottom of his heart).

Love must be honest and not superficial or a matter of compliment. In our societies, many words include deep meanings, but they become meaningless and empty when they are told by certain people. They only utter the words

1- Asra: 70

2- Baqara: 30

without really believing in them. For example, someone may embrace others when he meets them and welcome them with warm words, but once they leave, he starts backbiting them. This shows that he does not love or respect them. Religious, humanitarian, and patriotic education seeks to teach people the love of others. We should start from the smallest circle until we may change the entire world.

This is, in fact, a divine requirement, because God did not grant this honor to only the citizens of one country, but all humanity.

As discussed earlier, some rights need self-education, training, improvement, and positive feedback. The most sublime guideline in this regard was presented by the Prophet:

(Love for your brother what you love for yourself).

Anyone expects to be loved by others, especially by his fellow citizens. As you wish to be loved by others, you should love others as well.

3- Third:

(To safeguard his possessions).

Society is nothing but one big family. Therefore, the members of this family must sympathize with each other. All people must have this feeling. Sympathy must be the dominant feeling in society: sympathy at times of happiness or grief.

Sympathy is not only a psychological matter; it is much bigger than this. It mainly appeals to the economic side. Many Hadiths urge us to show sympathy in financial aspects because the pain of poverty is beyond tolerance. It has become a universal illness today.

4- Fourth:

(Never backbite him).

One must maintain the respect of others because after all, they are the creation of God and were granted divine succession on earth. Respect here means that you should never mention their negative features, and even further, you should not allow others to do so. This is called 'backbiting'. The Quran presents the idea of backbiting with a horrible metaphor:

(Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it... But fear Allah: For Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful)⁽¹⁾.

Backbiting is similar to eating others' flesh, the flesh of Man who was dignified by God and appointed His successor on earth. He is your partner in your homeland. Therefore, you must maintain his dignity and never mention his name badly, and do not allow others to do so. These recommendations are the most sublime guidelines to have a perfect society.

5- Fifth:

(To visit him when he gets sick).

You should sympathize with others in times of adversity, especially when they get sick. When someone gets sick, he becomes in need of others' help: good words, prayers, and some words that improve his spirit.

Improving the spirit plays a great role in treating illness. Someone may surrender to his illness, whereas another patient stands strongly. The psychological factor has its fingerprint in the process of healing. There is a divine Hadith in this respect that declares:

1- Hujurat: 12

(God declares on Judgement Day: “Son of Adam, I got sick and you did not visit Me” How can I visit You and You are the Lord of the Worlds?” God says: “Didn’t you see one of my servants got sick and you did not visit him? Didn’t you know that if you visited him, you would find Me by his side?”)

God is the source of love. He loves man most at times of his illness and weakness.

6- Sixth:

(To attend his funeral).

You should attend your brother’s funeral. This attendance is a reason that people gather together and mention his good deeds and pray upon him. Some Hadiths claim that the soul of the dead person witnesses those who attend his funeral. It causes joy to him.

7- Seventh:

(And not to say but good things after he dies).

Because of your friendship with others, you will have some details about live each other: you know about the good and bad deeds of each. If you are still alive after his death, you should beware that one of the rights of your brother is not to mention him but with good words. In other words, never mention his bad deeds.

Another Hadith mentions a set of other rights that you must preserve with others as well:

(When you meet him, greet him; when he invites you, accept his invitation; when he asks for some advice, be honest with him; when he sneezes, bless him; when he gets sick, visit him; when he dies, attend his funeral).

1- First:

(When you meet him, greet him).

A mutual greeting is a must. Salam (greeting) is a culture; it is an education, faith, humanity, religion, peace, and virtue.

To confirm that your socializing with others is built upon peace, you should show this by using the words: 'peace be upon you (Salam Alaikum) when you meet others.

Religiously talking, the word Salam is one of the names of God. Thus, when you greet others with this word, it means that you are blessing them with the name of God.

As part of social peace formation, you should greet others with the word 'Salam' once you meet them. When the start is Salam, the rest of the interaction will be built upon peace, away from any form of hostility. A society without hostility is a society that is dominated by affection and the love of others.

2- Second:

(When he invites you, accept his invitation).

To form a strong social bond, people must visit each other continuously. They have to invite each other to their houses to confirm the lovely social relationship between them. Therefore, it is necessary to accept others' invitations.

However, in case you cannot attend the event, at least you must inform the host so that to keep your relationship without any possible gap or weakness.

3- Third:

(When he asks for some advice, be honest with him).

When there is socializing between you and others, you

would have some talks. Sometimes, your friend may ask for some advice. Here, you must be honest with him, because it is a fundamental aspect of the path to individual, familial, social, and national improvement.

Those societies that depend on each others' consultation are developed societies. Therefore, as you want others to speak with you honestly, you should also be honest with others.

4- Fourth:

(When he sneezes, bless him).

This Hadith to highlighting the importance of social traditions. Any place or time has its positive social traditions. One of these traditions is blessing others when they sneeze. It is a form of prayer. In other words, when someone sneezes, you should say: "May God bless you".

This is a summary of the rights of people that must be preserved in society. These rights do not only appeal to one people, ethnicity, race, or ideology; they include everyone.

Act Wisely

One of the fundamental basics upon which we must build our relationships with others is to act wisely. It is a necessary method after recognizing their rights. It means that we should know what to say and act with others.

Wisdom has many definitions. Yet, we may refer to a couple of features:

- 1- First, wisdom means knowing things and the way we must deal with them.
- 2- Second, wisdom means placing things in their proper position.

The second feature is the continuation of the first one. In other words, after recognizing nature things, they must be put in their proper place. This process results in a strong and rational relationship among the people of one society.

Achieving this wisdom produces a collaborative nation because they seek to discover the nature of things and put them in their proper place.

The development of any nation demands the wisdom of placing things in their position; otherwise, chaos would dominate the entire situation and be a cause of the destruction of the homeland, its recourses, and its people.

Therefore, we must always take the concept of 'wisdom' into consideration. One of the features of this concept is knowledge.

Knowledge may be recognized with a host of different terms, chiefly among which is the term 'culture'. Knowledge in general is the information about today's dominant sciences. It is not necessarily specialized knowledge, but any acquaintance with

the mainstream ideas of different fields.

This knowledge, or culture, also signifies getting to know the society and its positive and negative factors. Wisdom plays a primary role in this regard. It qualifies people to take the right decision by placing the correcting factors in the negative places to fix the problems. This process contributes greatly to the development of society. This is the wisdom, despite its various degrees, that we need in our relationships with others.

This concept contributes to the unity of the nation. It, consequently, plays a primary role in the strengthening of the country and its independence.

All divine religions, mainly Islam, seek to create a strong bond between man and God, the prophets and Apostles, and homelands. Such religions are revealed to humanity to transform this love and affection into its practical form. Therefore, God appointed the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) with several missions, as clarified in the Quran:

(Allah did confer a great favor on the believers when He sent among them an apostle from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the Signs of Allah, sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom, while, before that, they had been in manifest error)⁽¹⁾.

The Prophet has some missions, mainly the following:

The first and primary one is to convey the message of God to humanity. We insist on the word 'humanity' because the divine message is designed for all humanity. Yet, some people believe and others do not. Therefore, he is a messenger of

1- Al Emran: 164

God and His moral instructions to all humanity. On the other side, God expects us to respond to the Prophet and agree with his message because by doing so, we can create a better life for ourselves:

(O ye who believe! give your response to Allah and His Messenger, when He calleth you to that which will give you life)⁽¹⁾.

This verse declares that what has been sent to you is a method of life. It also clarifies that this Prophet is not a stranger to you: he is one of you. He is not an angel or Jinn or any other creature. There is no barrier between you and him.

Second, another mission of the Prophet is to create a strong bond between people and divinity. This bond contributes to the purgatory and revival of Man's soul, activates his mind, develops his abilities, and purifies him from any worldly obstacle. The Quran describes this process as 'sanctifying'. The more one turns to God, the more he becomes sanctified.

After this sanctification, the Quran insists on the importance of knowledge, because it is a cornerstone of a respectable life. Knowledge is the guideline for developing society and the life of all people. They can recognize others' rights and their true position in society. The verse declares:

(It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom - although they were before in clear error)⁽²⁾.

This verse shows the sequence of the message: first the method, then the spiritual education, then knowledge.

The knowledge that the Prophet carried to people includes

1- Anfal: 24

2- Juma: 2

all the necessary guidelines for the perfection of people, society, nation, and all humanity.

The Quran always insists that one of the primary missions of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) is to teach people. Therefore, the Prophet once claimed:

(I was not sent but as a teacher).

He also stated:

(I am nothing but a teacher).

The Prophet is a teacher in two senses: first, a teacher of everything in life. Second, he is a teacher of particular concepts, mainly wisdom.

(Allah did confer a great favor on the believers when He sent among them an apostle from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the Signs of Allah, sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom, while, before that, they had been in manifest error).

Scripture means method. After the sanctification of man, he is ready to form a lovely relationship with God and with other people. Here, he needs wisdom: **(and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom).**

The response of people may vary in degree. This variation is the result of one's self-education. Some people are eager to sublimate their life, whereas others do not have such an interest.

The true essence of people may also vary according to certain factors. The following verse declares:

(He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none

will remember except those of understanding)⁽¹⁾.

This is an instruction to people who wish to sublimate their life and practice this perfection, as clear in the verse: **(And say “My Lord, increase my knowledge)⁽²⁾**. Such an effort may be applied in all fields, like sanctification, self-education, internal purification, and cultural aspects. Anyone honest in his efforts towards achieving his goal, which is a religious, cultural, and patriotic relationship with the world, **(has certainly been given much good)**.

Wisdom brings joy because it is related to the purity of the self and its manifestation on the real ground. Therefore, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) describes this feature:

(Whoever discovers wisdom, he cannot wait but to get more of it).

It is similar to what Imam Sajad (peace be upon him) when he described the lovely joyful relationship with God when he stated:

(My God, Who chose an alternative to You after he tasted the sweetness of Your love?)

In other words, whoever tastes the sweetness of the relationship with God, cannot cease getting more of it. This applies to any beautiful thing in life.

In this regard, wisdom is an important factor in internal sanctification. It also occupies a significant position in the process of self-education. It contributes to the construction of life and one's relationship with God.

There is a Hadith that clarifies the importance of wisdom:

1- Baqara: 269

2- Taha: 114

(A word of wisdom is better than the worship of one year).

Wisdom programs worship and encourage people to do it out of understanding. It puts worship in its proper place. Anyone is required to worship God, yet out of knowledge.

Another interpretation of this Hadith (**A word of wisdom is better than the worship of one year**) is that this meaning of wisdom (that of recognizing things and placing them in their proper position) is a form of worship. Furthermore, his work in any field is considered a kind of worship because they are based upon his relationship with God, with his homeland, and with other people. It confirms the practical sides of faith, patriotism, and humanitarianism. Therefore, all his actions and decisions are considered worship.

Wisdom occupies a fundamental position in the Islamic heritage. Many Hadiths show the significance of this concept. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) once stated:

(Wisdom is the guide of a believer).

It means that wisdom leads people to their goals and destination safely.

Linguistically, the word 'guide' is used when someone is misled. In this respect, this Hadith shows that wisdom is the remedy for our misguidance. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) further emphasizes this meaning:

(Take wisdom from whatever container it was).

In other words, you should take wisdom from anyone, whether you know him or not, whether he believes in your religion or not, whether he is from your nationality or not, whether he is from your sect or not, and you may take it even from a hypocrite:

(Take wisdom even from the hypocrites).

Wisdom is repeatedly emphasized due to its role in three major aspects of life, which are mainly three:

- 1- The relationship between Man and God.
- 2- The relationship between Man and his homeland.
- 3- The relationship of people with each other.

The Quran also shows the significance of wisdom in people's lives and how it contributes to the construction of three major aspects of life: God, homeland, and Man. Anyone who finds wisdom must be grateful to God for this gift, and before that, the gift of existence because life is always better than nothingness. We must also be grateful to God for the abilities and qualifications that He gifted to us. Another gift for which we must be thankful to God is that He granted us this earth and made it our home. God must also be thanked for gifting us partners in our homeland. In this regard, the Quran states:

(We gave wisdom to Luqman (saying): 'Give thanks to Allah. He who gives thanks, thanks only for himself, but who-soever is ungrateful, surely, Allah is the Rich, the Praised')⁽¹⁾.

As discussed earlier, the meaning of wisdom is the peaceful relationship between Man and God. This naturally leads to a peaceful relationship with the homeland and other people as well.

There are certain features of wisdom. These features must help us to build our countries. As we all know that in life, there are different stages and levels. This does not mean that there is classism because after all, people are equal, as we read in the Hadith: **(You all are from Adam, and Adam is from dust)**. One of the necessary features of life is the difference among peo-

1- Luqman: 12

ple. For example, a school must have a principal and teachers. In any other field, there must be an employer and employee. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) gives us practical instructions on the best way we may apply wisdom in our life:

(Part of wisdom is that you do not dispute with the one who is above you; do not humiliate who is below you; do not do what is beyond your ability; do not let your tongue oppose your heart; do not allow your speech to contradict your actions; do not speak about what you know not; do not abandon things when they are by your side and do not follow them when they back off).

There is a clear difference between dialogue and dispute. The dispute may lead to unwanted results or dead ends. Therefore, the Imam advises us that we **(do not dispute with the one who is above us)**.

Second, as some people may be superior to you, there might be others who are inferior to you. The Imam instructs us: **(do not humiliate who is below you)**. In other words, those who are socially, financially, or officially inferior to you, never underestimate or humiliate them.

(Do not do what is beyond your ability).

This sentence has two interpretations:

First, do not talk about the thing about which you know nothing.

Second, if you think that you are not capable enough to convey your ideas to others, or you think that others may not respond to you positively, cease doing so.

(Do not let your tongue oppose your heart).

This part is related to sanctification:

(Sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom).

The heart is always related to sanctification and instruction. This instruction urges us to match what is inside our heart and what is uttered with our tongue, because any form of mismatch between the two, signifies that there is a psychological issue, or there may be double standards in our actions.

As for the fifth recommendation, as it is forbidden to have a contradiction between what is there in your heart and what you utter by the tongue, so it is also forbidden to have a contradiction between your speech and what you do in action. As for the previous issue, it may be hidden, because it is a matter of heart, whereas the second is vital to all people. In our societies, for example, this problem is obvious in the career of politicians. The Quran comments on this issue:

(O ye who believe! Why say ye that which ye do not? Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that ye say that which ye do not)⁽¹⁾.

One may lose his value when there are double standards in his action. He would lose the respect of society.

(Do not let your tongue oppose your heart; do not allow your speech to contradict your actions; do not speak about what you know not).

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) declares that:

(Your reply: “I do not know” is half of the knowledge).

It is beautiful for a person to know that he does not know and that he must not answer a question the answer of which

1- Saf: 2-3

he does not know. He is allowed to answer only those questions of which he is completely sure. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) appointed this recommendation as part of wisdom because otherwise, he would fail to place things in their true position.

(Do not abandon things when they are by your side and do not follow them when they back off).

Many people seek certain things, but when the opportunity is there, they refuse them because they want more of it. Later, they regret not taking them. The Imam instructs us that we must make the ultimate use of opportunities; otherwise, we would regret losing the chance.

Thus, we see that wisdom plays a major role in constructing society and developing people. It is a basic part of practical patriotism.

Manifestations of Practical Wisdom

Practical wisdom is part of self-education. Therefore, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

(Part of wisdom is that you do not dispute with the one who is above you; do not humiliate who is below you; do not do what is beyond your ability; do not let your tongue oppose your heart; do not allow your speech to contradict your actions; do not speak about what you know not; do not abandon things when they are by your side and do not follow them when they back off).

The divine requirement, which is conveyed by the Quran, the Prophet, and Imam Ali, is that we must render these religious, humanitarian, and patriotic values into action and adopt them as a method of life. These values can lead the way to build a perfect society, in which there is social security among people.

Thus, the required wisdom has two parts: theoretical and practical. This is clear in the advice of Luqman to his son, in which he insists on the practical side of wisdom:

(Honesty in speech, trustfulness, not interfering in what does not concern you, turning a blind eye, controlling your tongue, and purifying your food).

First: (Honesty in speech).

As discussed earlier, the meaning of wisdom is recognizing the nature of things and then placing them in their proper position. In this concern, honesty in speech requires the discipline of recognizing things and placing them in their proper position. The tongue is a double-edged sword: it can tell the truth or tell a lie. Because of the domination of wisdom over his action, one may be obliged to tell the truth. Otherwise, he may not be able to know the essence of things and, as a

result, fail to place things in their proper position.

At this stage, the tongue would be used to lie, which contributes to the expulsion of practical patriotism. It always requires honesty: honesty with oneself, with one's family, with one's society, and before all, with God because He is the origin of all values.

On this, in his advice to his son, Luqman confirms that honesty is part of wisdom. For further discussion, you may see my book titled *Practical Ethics*. Here, I would mention some of the features of wisdom to the extent that is related to practical patriotism and the theme of this book.

Therefore, honesty of speech means recognizing things and placing them in their proper position.

Second, this honesty strengthens the bond of trust among people. People can never trust a liar. A religious, patriotic, or humanitarian life is built upon honesty in speech. Otherwise, there would be no trust among people. In addition to its being part of religion, honesty occupies a significant position in patriotism. Its lack makes one like many politicians who betray their country: they prioritize their interest over the interest of their homeland and people. They are one of those who say what they do no. The problem is that they deceive people before the election: they present one perfect program, but once they win the election, they do not abide by any of those promises.

Second, (trustfulness).

The divine message wishes all people to live in harmony because it is the path to realizing practical patriotism. This goal can never be achieved without honesty and trustfulness.

In the past, and even in some countries in the world, there

were no banks in which people could save their money. There are many cases in which the banks are deceitful: after they collect the money of people, they declare bankruptcy.

All these problems are the result of a lack of honesty and trustfulness. The chaos that is disturbing many societies comes from the lack of these two concepts. Therefore, the religious method always highlights the importance of these two concepts in society.

Third: (not interfering in what does not concern you).

This statement has more than one interpretation.

As for the first one, anyone is expected to work on self-education first. He cannot guide others while he is misguided. The Quran states:

(O ye who believe! Guard your souls: If ye follow (right) guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who stray. the goal of you all is to Allah. it is He that will show you the truth of all that ye do)⁽¹⁾.

God, then, moves to shed light on one's responsibility towards his family:

(O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones)⁽²⁾.

You should always work on building protection from error, deviation, and negative features. This protection must also be built for your family from falling into the same problems.

Anyone is expected to think of God when he takes any step. He must also think of his country and the dignity of other people when he takes any specific decision or step. Thus, one

1- Maida: 105

2- Tahreem: 6

must watch over himself, his family, and his entire society utilizing wisdom:

(Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in the best way)⁽¹⁾.

This verse clarifies that conviction must not be done with coercion and compulsion. This is also stated by Luqman: **(not interfering in what does not concern you)**.

Here, Luqman means that you should take care of your behavior first, and then move from the closest to the farthest.

In this part of the statement Luqman has another interpretation, which is also classified into two types:

The first type is the human aspect. As for the privacy issues, you should not interfere with them, unless you are asked to do so, because anyone is responsible for his private life. Therefore, Luqman insists on **(not interfering with what does not concern you)**. Otherwise, the results would be negative.

Fourth: (turning a blind eye).

Luqman moves gradually in his practical wisdom until he reaches this point. Turning a blind eye is a religious and humanitarian aspect. You must always respect the privacy of others as you wish to be respected by others. It is also a patriotic feature. Many social problems are the result of unwanted gazes toward others. They make chaos in society and lead to grudges and hostility among people. About this, turning a blind eye is a characteristic of wisdom, as well as patriotism.

Fifth, (controlling your tongue).

1- Nahl: 125

Controlling the tongue has two meanings: first, it means that we must speak friendly with others. We should never wrong others with our words. This is a for-granted feature of a true patriotic individual.

As for the second meaning of controlling the tongue, when you are faced with harmful utterances, there are two options in this regard:

The first condition is to respond in the same way.

The second condition is to hold your tongue.

When you do not respond in the same manner, you are practicing one of the fundamental features of wisdom. It also signifies that you have worked greatly on your self-education. Moreover, it means that your relationship with God is strong because you are following His instruction when you respond to the vice with virtue.

Third, you do not wish to plant any further hostility among people. Therefore, the best response is either to hold your tongue or to remain silent. There is a third option, which is praying to God (May God forgive you).

Sixth: (and purifying your food).

This part of the instruction has two levels as well:

First, it must be Halal (it must not be taken from forbidden sources).

Second, you must not consume much of it.

Bad and unhealthy food leads to problems. It may also be reflected in your behavior. It also affects your relationship with God and consequently, with your homeland.

I would like to conclude this section on wisdom, which is

a pivotal part of practical patriotism, with the statement of Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Whoever is concerned with the afterlife, God would ease his worldly life; whoever fixes his private life, God would fix his public life; whoever fixes his relationship with God, God would fix his relationship with people).

The relationship with God, as stated in the Hadith, must be concerned with this world. The Imam declares that if you fix your tie with God, He will take care of all your life. Then, the Imam states: (whoever fixes his private life, God would fix his public life). This part has been discussed previously. We discussed that internal sanctification is a fundamental aspect of practical patriotism. In this regard, the Quran states:

(Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancor (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord! Thou art indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful)⁽¹⁾.

The absence of “rancor” means that one’s private life is fixed and pure. The more you work on sanctifying your soul and purifying it from any grudge and resentment, God will also fix your public life.

The Imam moves to the third part of social reformation:

(whoever fixes his private life, God would fix his public life; whoever fixes his relationship with God, God would fix his relationship with people).

(whoever fixes his private life, God would fix his public life; whoever fixes his relationship with God, God would fix his relationship with people).

1- Hashr: 10

- 1- First, the spiritual relationship with God has a direct effect on worldly matters.
- 2- Second, self-education has an impact on one's actions and behavior in everyday life.
- 3- It impacts one's relationship with other people: **(God would fix his relationship with people).**

According to my understanding, this reformation must not be mandatory. It must be out of conviction because it would reformulate one's relationship with others, depending on religious, patriotic, and humanitarian values.

Tolerance is Your Tribe

One of the values that are tied strongly with practical patriotism and are of importance to be adopted is the concept of **tolerance**.

Tolerance is a sublime feature because it quilts the love of others, responsibility towards others, and the respect of others.

Tolerance cannot be achieved without acquiring these features. Practical tolerance demands the love of others because after all, they are their partners in the divine successorship of this earth.

The love of others must be present in your behavior. You have to be collaborative with others so that society becomes a productive one. Tolerance must dominate all your socializations. After all, homeland is more important than one individual or a group of people. Therefore, this sense of patriotism brings a set of responsibilities. Anyone who acquires three features has achieved some sort of tolerance: affection, respect for others' rights, and a sense of responsibility.

All the messengers of God were tolerant of people. Anyone who carries the culture of patriotism, and who is concerned with the safety of the homeland must be eager to adopt this feature at all levels of his life.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) considers tolerance a tribe because people love a tolerant person; they respect him, listen to him, dignify him, and stand by his side. Therefore, tolerance is the one feature that creates a united and strong society. The Imam states:

(Tolerance is your tribe).

Other Hadiths claim that tolerance is part of worship and relationship with God. They are related in a sense because tolerance leads to awe and reverence. There is a Hadith that declares:

(Whoever is not a worshipper unless he is tolerant).

Another Hadith tackles tolerance from a social perspective. In every society, there are two opposite streams: one which promotes virtues, whereas the other is against virtues. There are positive streams and negative ones. This Hadith confirms that tolerance improves and supports patriotism. It also facilitates the path to the goal:

(Peace is the fruit of tolerance).

There are also other Hadiths narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) that insist on the practical side of tolerance: **(You must be tolerant towards your brothers)**. In other words, you must be tolerant towards all your fellow citizens and their stances.

The Imam also describes a tolerant as a strong person from the inside. This strength is obvious in his interaction with others. He becomes understanding toward others, which is another manifestation of practical patriotism. Once, someone asked Imam Ali (peace be upon him) about the strongest person in the world. He replied:

(The tolerant).

Many other Hadiths show the significant role tolerance plays in our life. However, we may only refer to those texts that are related to practical patriotism. I may conclude this section with the definition of tolerance which was proposed by Imam

Ali (peace be upon him):

(Not to become angry).

Anger is a primary reason that pushes people to lose their moral values. It is the origin of many negative aspects of society. Therefore, anyone who controls his anger is called a tolerant person. It is one of the best manifestations of practical patriotism.

Moral Character Unites Us

One of the basic principles of practical patriotism is that you realize patriotism in your behavior and actions. Good interaction contributes greatly to the unity of people and plays a role in the strengthening of society. A responsible person does his best to be a perfect carrier of the message and to become a positive player in society.

Good interaction means good behavior. It has a great effect on the unity of the society and the collaboration of people to work on the development of the country. Good behavior encourages a patriot to be as affectionate with others as possible.

Good behavior is not only a routine or simple complimenting others. It is, in fact, a method of life. It urges people to interact with their friends, families, and other people nicely. It makes all their actions special.

All the carriers of messages and reformers are characterized by good manners. Because of the grandeur mission they carry, they cannot succeed unless they become distinct in their manners with others. This is obvious in the biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the extent that the Quran describes him:

(And indeed, you are of a great moral character)⁽¹⁾.

Moral character, good manners, or good behavior is not only a compliment. It must be obvious in action to the extent that one must become a role model for others.

Moral character, generally speaking, is a fundamental factor in one's happiness. He becomes a carrier of a message. He must make everyone else aware of the responsibility they

1- Qalam: 4

hold towards their homeland. Without good manners, he may fail to accomplish his mission.

Such a person is effective in his society due to several reasons:

First, this person is effective because he worked hard on self-education. Second, moral character is an internal feature. It is like a power that springs from the inside. It manifests in one's behavior to make certain changes in society. As for the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), God describes him as:

(And indeed, you are of a great moral character)⁽¹⁾.

This self-education became obvious in his daily life. In another verse, the Quran states:

(Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that ye should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful)⁽²⁾.

It means that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) is anxious over others. It is the result of the love of people. He had educated himself to interact positively with others. He is concerned about you. He always conveys his ideas with calmness, care, and suspense. He is one affectionate merciful Prophet. He does not think of himself: his goal is always the guidance of people and society. He adopted this mission only to grant a happy secure life to others.

Similarly, any other concerned person may share the same feelings. One of the main messages that such individuals may carry to their people is the idea of practical patriotism: it is the

1- Qalam: 4

2- Tawba: 128

result of religious, patriotic, and humanitarian responsibility.

Moral character is the best way to leave an impact on society. On the other hand, any person who lacks such characteristics can never be a positive player in society. The Quran describes this situation:

(So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them on the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him])⁽¹⁾.

Leniency and good character were one of the distinct features of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). He was inseparable from this trait because according to our belief, he is infallible. Moreover, God the Creator of Man ordered all people to follow the infallible Prophet. This does not mean that he must become like other prophets and apostles, but he may become an effective player in his society.

All religious commandments propose good morals as a social issue and a basis for socialization with others. Hereby, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) insists that it contributes to its role in constructing a perfect family and society. He comments:

(You must socialize with the one who wishes to keep away from you, and give the one who deprives you, and forgive the one who wrongs you).

All these devices seek to build strong social relationships and strong social bonds, leading naturally to the construction of a strong homeland.

1- Al Emran: 159

As for the first piece of advice: (You must socialize with the one who wishes to keep away from you). Because of certain misunderstandings among individuals, they may stop interacting with each other. Here, the Prophet insists that you must keep your friendly relationship with those who wish to cut all friendly ties with you. Otherwise, the entire society would disintegrate if people cease socializing with each other because of certain problems. The problem would get even more complicated if both sides keep insisting on their wrongful convictions. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) seeks to propose a remedy to this social illness. If others choose to end their relationship with you, as a carrier of a message, you must follow your good morals and resume your friendly relationship with them.

Secondly: (and give the one who deprives you). This piece of advice is proposed depending on the rule (You all are shepherds, and you all are responsible for what you lead). This rule clarifies that every single person in society must present what he is capable of knowledge, position, money, or any needed things. However, if others deprive you of these things, does it mean that you have to do the same? The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) shows that as long as you hold to your good morals, you should always give them what you can.

As for the third recommendation: (and forgive the one who wrongs you). In any society, people may misbehave with others. They may accuse each other or hurt each other. As a person of good morals, who worked on his self-education and internal sanctification, as a person who carries a religious, humanitarian, and patriotic message, you must always forgive those who wrong you.

The Hadith of the Prophet seeks to clarify that these three

traits are, in fact, divine gifts which must be revealed and granted to others. You should share this beauty with your brothers in your homeland. As a responsible person, you should adopt these characteristics so that you become one of those who practice patriotism in their daily life.

The Right Investment in Moral Character

Practical patriotism requires good manners and unity of people within one society. Moral character occupies a significant place in the path to the development of the country. It improves the social, patriotic, and divine ties.

Because of the crucial position of moral character, we should recognize its two primary forms:

First, it is internal, creational, and natural. We see that there are some people, whose moral character is inseparable from them. It is the origin of their social interaction. It has its roots in their childhood moral education. They do not pretend to have good manners because such an attitude is part of their life. These people must continuously thank God for such a great gift.

Surely we have to thank God for everything, but these concepts are clear in life and social interaction. Moral character is the approximating factor to God, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), and people.

Being grateful must not stop at the level of words and utterances. Gratefulness must be invested as a means of conveying the humanitarian, religious, and patriotic message. A grateful person must use this aspect as a vehicle to deliver the divine plan to all humanity (divine mercy includes all humanity, regardless of their religion and ideology, even those who believe in no religion; God's mercy includes everything and everyone; it also includes all other creatures).

Such an individual must work on delivering the idea of human rights, equality, and justice to all societies. He must employ these concepts in crystallizing the idea of patriotism.

As a reminder, the concept of homeland signifies nothing

without the idea of patriotism. It would become static and lifeless. With patriotism, homeland comes into life. Furthermore, patriotism as a theory is not sufficient: it must be practiced. It must be adopted both as a theory and in practice. Thus, a practical patriot becomes a role model for other people.

The second form of moral character is that it requires education and rehabilitation. Any individual also needs good intentions so that he succeeds in this goal, which is a moral character.

People have the requirements to acquire moral character: capabilities, manners, talent, and willingness. Therefore, anyone who seeks to acquire a moral character has to invest these features in this path.

Anyone who has this motive must love God, and loving God leads naturally to the love of his creation. However, this love must be practiced in daily life. It can be manifested in the form of good manners. This is, in fact, a combination of religious and humanitarian aspects.

I cannot imagine anyone who lives without a homeland. I may be his partner in the homeland. This partnership brings us closer. Thus, the love of God requires moral character. Similarly, the love of people also demands good manners. This also applies to the love of homeland which expects good behavior.

In one's relationship with God, moral character grants reverence and servitude to God. Socializing with others helps us to see ourselves as equal to others and encourages us to do our best to help our country flourish. This is a practical realization of patriotism, which is a requirement.

We are, as a matter of fact, in need of moral character, not as a whim or desire, or because of certain circumstances, or

as the response to a set of benefits. This need must be self-motivational and natural as part of the instinct. Otherwise, it must be the result of self-education. In a conclusion, moral character brings us closer to God, His Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), His Heaven, and His creatures.

Everyone looks for a good reputation. He wants his name mentioned nicely. One of the most effective factors that produce a good reputation is moral character.

By moral character, as discussed earlier, I mean an individual must be good in his manners. It is not a matter of compliments and friendly words; it must be obvious in one's interaction with others: with his neighbors, partners, students, teachers, and so on. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) announces:

(The most loved to me among you, and the closest to me on the Day of Judgement, is the one with the best manners and the most modest).

This Hadith refers to another fundamental feature that contributes to the improvement of social bonds. It is modesty.

Self-denial is a sublime moral status. In other words, he becomes modest in his interaction with others, especially with his fellow citizens. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) insists on the concept of modesty: (and the most modest).

The Quran also encounters this idea:

(VERILY, in the Apostle of God you have a good example for everyone who looks forward to God and the Last Day, and remembers God unceasingly)⁽¹⁾.

1- Ahzab: 21

In the same context, we may understand the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(The most similar of you to me is the best of you in morals).

When the Prophet states: **(The most similar of you to me)**, he means those of you who take him as an example in life. Our relationship with the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) is not a private matter: it is a moral bond.

As discussed earlier, the two principles of faith are the love of God and His Prophet, as explained in a Hadith:

(By God, you are not believers unless God and His Prophet are more loved to you than yourselves, families, and possessions).

Third, the love of homeland is also encountered in the Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(The love of homeland is part of faith).

In another Hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(The most complete belief is the one with the best manners).

Belief is composed of certain degrees. The love of God also consists of various degrees. The degree of belief and love is illustrated by the nature of the response to God and His Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). This applies to the love of homeland. This love is shown through the help we present to our country.

Moral character is not only a concept or abstract theory. It is a practice that must be taken as a method in life. It is part of the details of everyday life. In this regard, the moral character

may consist of four aspects:

First: wisdom. In other words, it is the organization of thoughts. We may also name it mature thought. Religiously speaking, wisdom is a matter of learning, culture, and experience. These three are related to God. After all,

(He gives wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those of understanding)⁽¹⁾.

Thus, knowledge and learning provide a clearer idea about life and society.

Second, chastity. It contributes to organizing the instinct and programming the desires.

Third, power. It may be interpreted as clarity in thoughts, and it may also be understood as correct actions. Power is also obvious in controlling one's temper. A powerful person can manage his anger and prevent himself from wronging others.

Fourth, justice. Justice has its effect on both the inside and outside. As for the inside effect, it balances one's desires and whims, whereas the outside effect, improves socialization with others.

The Quran sheds further light on the concept of justice, as in the following verses:

(Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded)⁽²⁾.

1- Baqara: 269

2- Nahl: 90

God also states:

(O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted)⁽¹⁾.

God also states:

(O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do)⁽²⁾.

God also states:

(And if you judge, judge between them with justice. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly)⁽³⁾.

God also states:

(Give measure and weight with (full) justice;- no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear;- whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the covenant of Allah. thus doth He commands you, that ye may remember)⁽⁴⁾.

God also states:

(And Allah presents an example of two men, one of them

1- Nisa: 135

2- Maida: 8

3- Maida: 42

4- Anam: 152

dumb and unable to do a thing, while he is a burden to his guardian. Wherever he directs him, he brings no good. Is he equal to one who commands justice, while he is on a straight path?)(¹

God also states:

(Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition)(².

God also states:

(And if you punish [an enemy, O believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient)(³.

God also states

(O David! We did indeed make thee a vicegerent on earth: so judge thou between men in truth (and justice): Nor follow thou the lusts (of thy heart), for they will mislead thee from the Path of Allah. for those who wander astray from the Path of Allah, is a Penalty Grievous, for that they forget the Day of Account)(⁴.

God also states:

(So to that [religion of Allah] invite, [O Muhammad], and remain on a right course as you are commanded and do not follow their inclinations but say, "I have believed in what Allah has revealed of the Qur'an, and I have been commanded to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For

1- Nahl: 76

2- Nahl: 90

3- Nahl: 126

4- Sad: 26

us are our deeds and for you your deeds. There is no [need for] argument between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the [final] destination.”⁽¹⁾

God also states:

(And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance)⁽²⁾.

God also states:

(We have already sent Our messengers with clear pieces of evidence and sent down with them the Scripture and the balance that the people may maintain [their affairs] in justice. And We sent down iron, wherein is great military might and benefits for the people, and so that Allah may make evident those who support Him and His messengers unseen. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might)⁽³⁾.

We have discussed a summary of the meaning of moral character that guides us to practical patriotism. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) declares:

(Tame yourselves to abide by good manners, because a believer achieves the level of the true worshipper with good manners).

The believer here signifies all the followers of divine religions. In other words, with good manners, one may be always in the stance of worshipping God.

We all acknowledge that nobody can be like the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), but we must take him as an example in our life. The same applies to Imam Ali

1- Shura: 15

2- Rahman: 9

3- Hadeed: 25

(peace be upon him). The Imam states:

(If we do not seek heaven or any divine reward, or do not fear hell or any divine punishment, we must seek moral character, because it guides us to the path of success).

This success signifies the achievement of success in this world and the Hereafter.

Success also means a smooth and affectionate relationship with people, which is based on wisdom, chastity, power, and justice. These aspects enable us to practice patriotism in our life.

Big-heartedness: A Characteristic of the Prophets

One of the primary features of practical patriotism is big-heartedness. It is also related to the range of one's responsibility: the more one feels responsible, the more big-hearted he becomes.

Generally speaking, one has to interact with people and society, regarding their different cultures, understanding, and religious backgrounds. In other words, one may face people of different tastes and ideologies. Therefore, a sense of responsibility demands big-heartedness.

Big-heartedness means understanding the other. Here, we must understand that there must be mutual understanding. Yet, in the beginning, this bond of understanding must start with the one who adopts patriotism and work on realizing it. He has to embrace the other with all his features.

This does not mean that he has to agree with the other's features, but as long as he believes in his patriotic message, he must also have a sense of responsibility; as long as he seeks to realize his patriotism practically, he needs to recognize the other. The other is also another human being who is a successor of God on earth, a partner in the homeland.

Accordingly, the other must be assimilated. This step must be taken from one side, the one who feels responsible towards his homeland and works for the sake of the unity of his people. The other (despite his complexes and misunderstanding due to certain circumstances) comes to open his arm when he sees he is welcomed and recognized.

In this regard, we insist that the concept of homeland means the unity of land and people. A true patriot must work on the safety of his land and people.

When the other is recognized and assimilated, he would be more open to entering within the same sphere and more willing to interact with patriotic demands, mainly the safety of the homeland and its people.

This responsibility, which is also in need of big-heartedness, also requires another crucial concept: politeness, or as it is termed 'political correctness' by specialists. Big-heartedness is a basic feature of any carrier of the religious, patriotic, and humanitarian message.

These three messages are inseparable and must be bound together. As for belief in divinity, it is a private relationship between an individual and God. He may neglect the rights and existence of other people in his society.

On the other hand, others have neglected the divine presence in their life. They pay no attention to their relationship with God. They only see the presence of their homeland.

There is another group who claim to be humanistic: they neglect both metaphysical and patriotic sides, and pay attention to only humanitarian aspects, if only they succeed.

Religiously speaking, belief in God is inseparable from the love of homeland. It cannot be divorced from Man and his rights. Belief is a very comprehensive concept.

However, problems may arise due to differences in cultures, societies, ideologies, and the depth of responsibility individuals have.

Despite all, a true carrier of the message, who seeks to manifest practical patriotism must have a big heart and be polite with others.

In this regard, the carriers of divine messages, mainly the

prophets, were the politest and politically correct with people. There is a Hadith that states:

(God had preferred the prophets over all other people because of the great politeness they had towards their enemies, and their lovely interaction with their brothers in religion).

We all are required to be united under one religion or divine religions. We must feel belongingness to the wider community of humanity. Our sense of responsibility must encourage us to socialize with everyone, including the followers of other religions and even those who do not believe in any specific religion. After all, belief in God is a matter of instinct; some succeed to discover it, whereas others cannot find it easily.

The carriers of the message, mainly the prophets, have a big heart, even from those who are very distant from their message. In this regard, the Hadith insists that:

(God had preferred the prophets over all other people because of the great politeness they had towards their enemies, and their lovely interaction with their brothers in religion).

The prophets were indeed trying to convey the message of God to people, but the prophets were one of those people. They interacted with their enemies with an open heart, because they felt responsible for them. They are sent as a mercy and reformer to people.

Therefore, any carrier of the message must not mistreat others, despite being the followers of other ideologies. At the same time, he must embrace the beliefs and take special care of them.

The prophets are expected to be like this because they are

true carriers of the divine message. They have a real sense of responsibility. They are very polite with people, even with their enemies.

In the same context, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) declares:

(Being polite with the enemies of God is the best charity for oneself).

Charity guarantees the safety of oneself. It also guarantees the safety of the message he carries. Therefore, a good word with the enemies can overcome all the obstacles in the path of the message.

The prophets are the apprenticed of the divinity and the divine books (mainly the Quran). The basic guideline in this regard is the following verse:

(And speak to people good [words])⁽¹⁾.

The Quran mentions “to people” which signifies everyone, regardless of his religion, sect, ethnicity, race, or ideology.

A true patriot must also be more responsible towards his fellow citizens. This verse expects us to pay special attention to our people even more.

Certain Hadiths explain the meaning to people. They insist that this word includes everyone: believers and non-believers. As for the believers, they must be embraced with a friendly attitude, whereas the non-believers must be treated with politeness.

1- Baqara: 83

Here, we can understand two aspects:

First: the unity of people means the strength of the homeland.

Second: one has to reveal a lovely image of his message. It must not be a matter of theory; it should be also revealed in practice. Politeness is both theory and practice, words and actions.

Religiously speaking, these Hadiths confirm three primary features that any carrier of the message must have:

First: his actions must match his theories so that he succeeds in conveying the message.

Second, one must portray a lovely picture of the nature of his message. In this regard, Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) instructs his followers:

(Be silent advocates of our cause).

Third, is the necessity of tolerance, which is the result of big-heartedness.

The Hadith announces that anyone who does not have these characteristics would fail in conveying his message and cannot accomplish anything. After all, this mission demands these features to deliver the religious, patriotic, and humanitarian message.

(There are three features, without which, no deed is accepted from any worshipper: piety that prevents him from sinning, politeness with which he socializes with people, and tolerance with which he can prevent the harm of an ignorant).

Though the instructions are religious, they are applicable in

all conditions and situations:

(Piety that prevents him from sinning).

It means abiding by the law.

(Politeness with which he socializes with people).

The word 'people' refers to everyone in society.

(And tolerance with which he can prevent the harm of an ignorant).

In this regard, for the sake of the nation's unity, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(The fruit of mind is tolerating people).

This is a guideline to build one united society, regardless of the religious or ideological backgrounds of the people.

Tolerance is the result of recognizing and acknowledging people. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also believes:

(Tolerate people, you will enjoy their company; welcome them with a smiling face, and you will avoid their grudges).

In other words, the more tolerant you are with people, the more brotherly they become to you. This will be even more effective when you always have a smiling face because it cleans their hearts from any negative intentions.

Anyone who seeks to adopt practical patriotism must have a friendly mutual relationship with others. This procedure is not followed only for the sake of the safety of himself, but for the safety of the entire society. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Be polite with people, you will be safe from their wickedness and intrigues).

In other words, the way to protect yourself from the evilness of people is to be polite to them. This is the path to securing the safety of society and strengthening your homeland.

There is another idea in the same context. Though it seems simple, it occupies a crucial position in practical patriotism. It is the idea of empowering the spiritual love between you and others. Politeness and tolerance are important, but spiritual love has its special position in social interactions. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) mentions:

(If you love someone, tell him: “I love you”).

This sentence “I love you” comes from the bottom of the heart without any pretension. It is effective for others. The response will be positive as well. It has the power to remove any grudge from the hearts of people. Hereby, we may refer to the idea of prayer in confirming friendly socialization among people. All the followers of divine religions believe in metaphysics and its related basic concepts: supplication and prayer. Because of the importance of prayer in the religious system, God ordered us to pray for ourselves and others:

(And your Lord says: “Call on Me; I will answer your [Prayer]”⁽¹⁾).

This applies to everyone, to us and others.

The Quran also encourages us to pray for others:

(Say, “What would my Lord care for you if not for your supplication?”⁽²⁾).

In other words, your supplication for each other plays a great role in achieving divine grace. Therefore, it is important to make prayer and supplication of the practical patriotism

1- Ghafir: 60

2- Furqan: 77

culture, because after all, praying for others means that you wish good for others.

The opinion is a Word

Giving opinions and listening to others is a crucial patriotic feature. Here, we must pay attention to the difference between self-confidence and egoism or arrogance.

Anyone has a sense of self-confidence because it contributes to his development and progression. The difference between self-confidence and arrogance may not be clear to some people. To make the meanings more obvious, a self-confident person presents his opinions without any insistence and intransigence or falsifying others. On the other hand, an arrogant person believes that he must always be right and others wrong. He cannot accept any other opinion.

Listening to others' opinions is fundamentally a religious, patriotic, and humanitarian feature. The question to be posed here is what are the features of a person who is willing to accept others' opinions:

He is a self-confident person, rather than an arrogant one. The main difference between the two is that a self-confident individual accepts the most beneficial and applicable idea among others. He does not think that welcoming others' ideas is a form of self-underestimation. On the other hand, an arrogant person does not accept others' opinions, despite their functionality because, as he believes, accepting the suggestions of others underestimates his abilities.

Thus, we always need to present our ideas and have confidence in what we say. After all, a self-confident person does not give any opinion when he is not sure of what he says. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Your reply: “I do not know” is half of the knowledge).

One does not have to give his opinions on every issue, but only about those fields in which he has some knowledge due to some learning, experience, or practice. It means that when he does not have these features, it is better not to present an idea.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Anyone who welcomes different opinions, will diagnose the sites of problems).

In other words, he can diagnose the problems inasmuch as he listens to others' opinions. However, if his ears are deaf to others' suggestions, he is, in fact, a dictator rather than a patriot.

People are not arrogant by nature, but they undergo certain circumstances that affect their personality. There might be a few reasons for this problem, including the following ones:

First, the society. But how does society contribute to the rise of arrogance? When someone presents some ideas, others are expected to discuss them and correct him. They must not deal with him as if he has the only right to speak and they are not allowed to discuss anything with him.

This must be more functional in those systems in which the people at the top adopt the slogan of democracy. They must have an open heart towards others and be willing to listen to others' opinions. A society that does not dare to speak or discuss or correct its leaders will produce a generation of arrogant people. Arrogance starts from a very small point, but it starts to grow as much as there is no obstacle or refusal in its way.

Second, the person who has a goal in his speech. Many people speak, but only the carrier of a religious, patriotic, intellectual, and humanitarian message has a goal in his speech.

On the other hand, when someone does not have any practical message, but only slogans and empty words, his goal would become worldly spoils. When this person achieves his worldly goals, like money, power, or position, he would be overwhelmed by arrogance, because he thinks that he has achieved the only goal he has in life.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) believes that it is necessary to consult a person of mind and intellect, who is responsible for what he says:

(Opinion is a word).

This word is sacred because it conveys a message. This condition improves practical patriotism, which is inseparable from the religious and humanitarian message.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) was asked about the person with the most correct ideas. He stated:

(He is the one who is not deceived by the arrogance created by people, or by worldly promises).

First, he should not be deceived by people and society, and second, he must be honest in his mission and goal (the safety of his homeland).

Such a person must be respected because he gives his opinion without ego. On the other side, an arrogant person cannot see but himself and his goal; he is blind to the good of his people and homeland.

The one who works for the good of others depends on mercy as a method of life. Mercy is the result of love. However,

this love is not always activated.

When love is activated as in life, mercy becomes the basis of all his practices. This is a prophetic feature with which they occupied the hearts of people. Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him and his Household) never compromised between his mission and worldly affairs. Once he stated:

(By God, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, I would never leave this matter until God makes it victorious or I die in its path).

His stance was so fixed because, first, he was sent by God, and second, because (Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that ye should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful)⁽¹⁾. He feels your agonies and pains.

(It grieves him that ye should perish): he loves people. God also loves people. Otherwise, He would never create the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). As the result, (to the Believers is he most kind and merciful). God sent him as a mercy to all the worlds and humanity.

Anyone who seeks to practice patriotism must become merciful so that he is considered a positive player in society. Otherwise, if he was stony-hearted, people would never sympathize with him or follow him.

One of the characteristics of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) was that he was considered mercy for all the creation. The same must apply to his followers. They should follow his traits and manners. Therefore, they were (compassionate toward each other)⁽²⁾.

1- Tawba: 128

2- Fath: 29

The Quran describes the followers of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) as the following:

(Compassionate amongst each other).

It also describes Christ and his followers in this way:

(And We placed in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy)⁽¹⁾.

Accordingly, we are required to have mercy and sympathy in our interaction with others. Otherwise, it is impossible to realize practical patriotism. In this regard, the Quran states:

(Then will he be of those who believe, and enjoin patience, (constancy, and self-restraint), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion)⁽²⁾.

Compassion, as in the verse, is the basis for constructing a safe homeland, Man, and society.

Compassion and mercy need to be a fundamental part of people's life. It should become a mutual sense among all people. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Do a kindness to others so that others do kindness to you).

He also states:

(Be merciful to others so that others become merciful to you).

Mercy is demanded to be practiced by all types and classes of people. It is even more emphasized when you take the control of a position over others. For example, any director of an office has several employees under his supervision. He is expected to be kind to them and never humiliate them. He

1 Hadid: 27

2 Balad: 17

should not exploit this opportunity to quench his inferiority complex.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states: **(I wonder how someone seeks the mercy of the one above him when he does not mercy the one who is below him).**

As mentioned in the example above, the director of the office must also be responsive to someone who is above him. If he seeks his mercy, he must be merciful to his employees.

There is a Hadith narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) in which he seeks to awaken the humanity of people, mainly their love and compassion for others:

(Be merciful to the one who is below you so that the one above you also be merciful to you. Measure his mistakes with yours, and his sins with yours to God, and his need to your mercy with your need to the mercy of your God).

As long as you ask for the mercy and help of God, you must also be merciful and helpful to others. In other words, if you want to guarantee the mercy of God, you should be merciful to people. Another Hadith mentions:

(In the Day of Judgment, God shall mercy those who are merciful to people).

Another Hadith also states:

(Be merciful to those on earth so that you are mercied by the One in Heaven).

This Hadith is narrated many times by different wordings from Christ and the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon them).

Such an instruction is not only about human beings, but everything else. There is a Hadith that states:

(Anyone who mercies even a small bird, God shall be merciful to him on the Day of Judgement).

All these Hadiths are narrated only to emphasize the trait of mercy. They want us to be merciful with others so that we may become real practical patriots.

Kindness Leads to Peace

Practical patriotism is a set of concepts that need to be manifested on the real ground, even at the minimum range. For example, leniency is a manifestation of mercy. It is one of the characteristics of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) which was mentioned in the Quran:

(So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them on the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him])⁽¹⁾.

Leniency is a practical factor rather than a theoretical one. It must be realized in the interaction with others. Another verse reminds the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) to be down to earth with people. Humbleness is a manifestation of mercy and not responding to abuse is also another manifestation of mercy.

The Quran describes this characteristic of the believers as the following:

(And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace)⁽²⁾.

The ignorant in the verse refers to those who ignore humanitarian values, the role of Man in life, and the sanctity of homelands.

1- Al Emran: 159

2- Furqan: 63

One of the manifestations of mercy is leniency. It can be explained as the socialization that is accompanied by compassion.

Therefore, practical patriotism needs to be carried as a mission of constructing societies. One has to be lenient with others. Yet, leniency starts from oneself, then one's relationship with God, and finally with other people and the entire society.

It is universally acknowledged that one loves himself the most. One has to be lenient with himself since he loves himself. In other words, one has to develop himself and work on his qualifications so that he becomes a positive player in society.

Religiously speaking, one has to get inspiration and strength from his relationship with God. He has to work on realizing all types of values, mainly the humanitarian ones.

A true believer must give what he achieves and not keep it to himself. He must be a practical believer who contributes positively to his society.

Leniency must also be present in one's relationship with God. It is a necessary factor that empowers this link. Only the obligatory things must be highlighted. Other acts undergo the willingness of oneself to do them. The goal of this divine relationship must not lead to negative results, because many finally turned their backs on the entire religious system. Thus, even in one's relationship with God, he must have leniency.

Many Hadiths explain this meaning. There is a narration that states:

(Do not delve deep into religion, because God made it easy; so take only what you can perform. God loves a continuous virtuous act though it is a simple one).

We all know that every intellectual field has its specialists and that it is not possible for everyone to be knowledgeable in each field. The same applies to religious affairs. Not everyone can deepen his relationship with God. There are various levels and understandings of religion. The Quran also refers to this condition:

(So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most people do not know)⁽¹⁾.

The masses are not expected to become specialists in religion. They are only required to perform their obligatory worships. Therefore, the Hadith insists that:

(Do not delve deep into religion, because God made it easy).

Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) announced:

(I have come to you with an easy religion).

The Prophet, then, continued:

(Take only what you can perform).

The obligatory worships are easy because God states:

(God does not charge oneself except [with that within] its capacity)⁽²⁾.

There is an emphasis on the fact that one should abide by the range of rituals and worships that are within his capacity.

1- Rome: 30

2- Baqara: 286

The previously mentioned Hadith insists that:

(God loves a continuous virtuous act though it is a simple one).

We may understand from this Hadith that continuity of virtuous acts finally results in some fruits. God does not only want us to do good work but the work that results in tangible fruits that benefit others and society. In other words, small steps that are fruitful are better than big steps that do not lead to any goal. The latter does not follow any specific plan. The doer of such an act moves between different projects without finalizing anything.

A virtuous work must not be inspired by one's whims: it should be inspired by society's needs and people's requirements.

In the same context, once a young man visited Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) and told him that he did hard work in worshipping God. The Imam replied:

(My son, go gently. When God loves a servant, He accepts even the simple acts of worship).

Devotion in acts of worship guarantees their acceptance.

Surely, we all need to improve our relationship with God. It is both a goal and a means: it is a goal because it constructs ourselves further, and it is a means because it enables us to be capable of carrying our message, which is the responsibility towards our homeland and people, regardless of their identity and background.

An honest relationship with God grants mercy and serenity. This mercy must be manifested in our interaction with others.

This interaction may vary to the people with whom we are

in contact: they may be our family or even the wider society. Compassion is a requirement in our social interaction in all conditions. There is a Hadith that clarifies the greatness of this stance:

(When two persons interact with each other, the closer to God is the one with more compassion for his companion).

This Hadith is an instruction to everyone that we should have compassion in all our conditions and all fields of life.

Other Hadiths are more particular. They shed light on the necessity of having compassion for our families:

(If God wants to do kindness to a family, He grants them compassion).

In other words, they become affectionate toward each other. They become more supportive and sympathizing with each other.

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) also wants us to be compassionate with everyone:

(We the prophets were ordered to be polite with people and we were also ordered to perform the obligatory duties).

Politeness is a form of mercy. It can be replaced with compassion. The appendix of this Hadith links politeness with mind and rationality because after all, the mind is the best guide in life:

(And the most rational people are those who are polite to others).

This Hadith refers to the fact that being polite to people grants a secure and united society. This concerns worldly life. As for the afterlife, politeness secures a very sublime level.

Doing good to others rewards the doer with joy:

(Whoever abides by compassion with others, he shall be given the goodness of this world and the Hereafter).

Another Hadith clarifies that:

(Everything has a seal, and the seal of faith is compassion).

In the same context, there is another Hadith narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Every religion has a manner, and the manner of belief is compassion).

Compassion plays a great role in the relationship of a person with others. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) explains:

(Whoever is compassionate, would achieve what he seeks from people).

Compassion has the power to affect people and make them responsive. There is another Hadith narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in this regard:

(Compassion overcomes all obstacles).

Anyone may face certain obstacles in his path, especially if he is a carrier of a humanitarian message. Compassion would facilitate his mission because it opens the gate of the heart. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) refers to this meaning:

(If you want to be dignified, become lenient; and if you want to be humiliated, become bold).

Compassion is powerful enough to keep society from any form of hostility. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) mentioned

this meaning:

(Compassion leads to peace).

Many other instructions highlight the importance of compassion and how effective it is socially. In the commandments of Khidr to Moses, we read the following:

(In the Day of Judgement, God shall mercy the one who was merciful with others in this life).

The reward of compassion in this world will be the mercy of God in the afterlife. therefore, compassion for others is a requirement. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) stated:

(The head of wisdom is compassion. O God, whoever becomes in charge of an affair of my nation and becomes compassionate with people, be merciful to him; and whoever becomes arduous with them, be arduous with him).

Our faith in Islam is humanitarian to everyone. Surely, humans are the main concern of these instructions, but there is also a place for animals. Many Hadiths prevent us from harming animals, as the following one:

(God truly loves compassion and supports it. When you ride weak animals, let them rest; if the land was bare, move to another place, and if it was fresh land, camp in it).

This Hadith shows us the necessity of having compassion for animals. If you ride an animal, after a while, you should let her rest. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) shows us that we have to choose a place in which there is plenty of food and water.

All societies need compassion. Therefore, this concept must be part of practical patriotism.

Adornments of Meanings

Practical patriotism requires direct interaction with society. It demands recognition of others and mutual partnership with all other fellow citizens. There are a set of fundamental instinctual factors that bind people together. They are granted by God so that people feel the need to socialize with others.

Thus, there are many necessary basics for the success of practical patriotism. They are instinctually inbuilt within any human being. However, they need to be discovered, brushed and activated. When they are invested for the sake of improving society and the public good, they flourish continuously.

This progress requires certain qualifications. Some of them are found in others. These are what we call integral stages of development and improvement.

Certain issues need to be highlighted by people so that they become able to carry the religious, patriotic, and humanitarian message. They qualify anyone to be accepted and embraced by society.

Therefore, any carrier of the religious, patriotic, and humanitarian message must do his best to succeed in his mission. However, he needs to pay special attention to certain issues before taking any step. After all, practical patriotism means conveying a message to others. As for those who do not sense the real meaning of patriotism and homeland, they cannot present anything beneficial to others.

As a carrier of this message, he must do his best to acquire as many qualifications as possible to facilitate his success.

In this regard, one of the best important features that contribute to the success of his message is the appropriate appearance or look of an individual. He is best to have a

lovely acceptable appearance so that he becomes even more effective.

Internal beauty and moral values also affect the appearance of a person. Yet, we should note that the look is of primary importance. One must pay attention to his clothes and outfits.

He must socialize with people with the best possible look. This does not have to do anything with well-being: style plays a role here. The style must be acceptable by others as well.

We should always remember that every society has its distinct tastes, culture, traditions, customs, and outfits that are related to its history and civilization. In this regard, one must be at his best appearance when he conveys his patriotic message to society and people.

Here, we must highlight two issues:

First, it is a subjective matter. One must consider the subjective taste of any given society.

Second, any society consists of different intellectual and cultural levels. This means that when people see people who oppose their tastes, they would criticize him and turn their back on him.

Accordingly, one must pay special attention to a good look and appearance, because the carrier of the patriotic message must first enter the hearts of the people so that he succeeds in his mission.

This meaning has been emphasized vastly by religious texts. For example, the Quran addresses all people:

(O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by

excess, for Allah, loveth not the wasters)⁽¹⁾.

We can understand from this verse that it is addressing all the followers of divine religions because it starts with **O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel**. Therefore, the requirement from all people to have a beautiful appearance when they go out in society.

After all, attending places of worship is part of the message. Going to mosques is not an empty move: going to such places means that the individual has certain ideas and messages. If this message is religious, it must also be related to patriotism and humanitarianism.

Attending such places requires a good appearance because you will meet people in these public places. These gatherings are the best place to announce your message. In this regard, the Quran states:

(O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer).

Go there in the best possible appearance, clothes, and outfits. This factor is very effective in socializing positively with people.

This is a good opportunity to refer to an educational aspect. Some interpreters may understand from **beautiful apparel** is a reference to one's children. This meaning also serves the purpose: we should train our children to go to places of worship and mosques. They must strengthen their relationship with God. This contributes to the improvement of one's socialization with others.

The Quran also seeks to modify a previously for-granted idea among the followers of previous divine religions. They

believed that one's relationship with God must lead him to abandon society and his legal desires.

There are various similar trends in other religions. The Quran seeks to reform this idea. It attempts to show that one's relationship with God must finally lead to the improvement of his social bonds with others.

The relationship with God must realize divine successorship on earth. It should lead to the domination of the culture of practical patriotism. Therefore, Islam prohibits abandoning society. One must be responsible enough to work for the public good.

The Quran explains this idea:

(Say: Who hath forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of Allah, which He hath produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He hath provided) for sustenance? Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment. Thus We explain the signs in detail for those who understand)⁽¹⁾.

As a result, having a good appearance is part of respecting divine gifts. The beautiful gifts with which God graced us must not be forbidden. They should be enjoyed within certain frameworks.

(Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment. Thus We explain the signs in detail for those who understand)⁽²⁾.

Surely, belief is an instinctual and creational matter. It exists in every human being. We have reached this conclusion from the following verse:

1- Araf: 32

2- Araf: 32

(So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most people do not know)⁽¹⁾.

Therefore, it is (for those who believe). In other words, it is for all human beings. Another reading of this part is that it refers to the followers of divine religions.

To conclude from both readings, it is for the one who carries a humanitarian message and works for the good of others. Therefore, it is related to this worldly life:

(Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment. Thus We explain the signs in detail for those who understand).

It is a fact that, as believers, we cannot understand this world without the afterlife. Our perception of this world is linked to the afterlife, the day in which we meet God, the day of a physical return to God.

In this regard, in all fields of our life, we should live in this world to its full extent and think of the afterlife as well. Religiously speaking, we cannot be happy in this world without thinking of the afterlife, because this feeling grants us further power and motivation to realize greater goals.

In the light of these humanitarian, patriotic, and religious concepts, there are many Hadiths narrated from the Prophet and Imam Ali (peace be upon them) in this regard.

There are some Hadiths narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) that recommend combing and how beneficial it is. The result of such a recommendation

1- Rome: 30

is having a good look when you socialize with others.

Another Hadith mentions that:

(Indeed God loves the one who meets his believer brother and he is in a good appearance).

In other words, this Hadith motivates us to meet others with an open heart and good look in a way that we are welcomed by others.

Here, we should not forget the recommendation of Imam Ali (peace be upon him): **(Know that people are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation).**

In other words, it refers to the brotherhood of all people based on religion or humanity.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also states:

(Have good apparel when you meet your believer brother as when you meet a stranger who would like to see you in the best appearance possible).

These recommendations do not seek personal benefit, but they emphasize being completely equipped when conveying the message to others.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) is eager to make us understand that we need to be well qualified when socializing with others. We must be in the best appearance possible so that we succeed at conveying the religious and patriotic message. He states:

(The best outfit is the one that makes you socialize with others perfectly and makes you a good look among them).

The first stage is accepting you.

The second stage is to see you in a good look with a clean and nice outfit.

The least benefit you may achieve from such a commitment is that people will not backbite or criticize you. There are many other benefits, mainly a positive response to your patriotic, humanitarian, and religious message.

These steps must be taken so that we all may reach our goal, which is practical patriotism.

“But none is granted it except those who are patient”

In any constructive movement, anyone and any society are expected to be a carrier of the practical patriotism message. Such a person must be big-hearted. In other words, he must be patient, as known in ethics. He should not get angry soon and be tolerant of others.

This is a fundamental issue in all fields of life. Carrying a patriotic culture and working on realizing it in society may face certain obstacles. These problems may arise as a result of nationalism, sectarianism, and political preferences.

Such misconceptions and miscomprehensions require patriotic reformation. All concepts must be replaced with the concept of homeland.

However, many people disagree with this attitude. Such a challenge demands patience and big-heartedness, two primary concepts that contribute to the sublimation of human beings.

Those who lack such patience and political correctness with others are closer to failure. Patience is a pivotal feature of practical patriotism. Certain Hadiths clarify this meaning:

(Whoever is not the patient is not considered perfect. You shall never achieve what you love without tolerating what you despise).

Patience or big-heartedness is a basic humanitarian feature, without which one cannot achieve perfection.

Big-heartedness and patience are the keys to success in all fields of life: learning new professions, education, socializing with others, and so on. Without these features, one becomes closer to failure. Religious texts emphasize that a perfect person must be patient. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(Whoever is not the patient is not considered perfect. You shall never achieve what you love without tolerating what you despise).

After all, success in the relationship with God, society, people, and work depends on patience and big-heartedness. This requirement becomes even greater when you work for the entire society than that yourself.

The Hadith clarifies that:

(You shall never achieve what you love without tolerating what you despise).

In other words, you cannot reach your goal without tolerance. There are many obstacles in the path to the goal.

In socializing with others, you may face certain attitudes that disturb you. In such situations, you must be patient to reach your goal safely.

Gradual development cannot be achieved without patience. The message cannot be realized without tolerance. Success requires many factors, but patience is the field soldier that gets all work done.

Reason is a fundamental aspect of life. The carrier of a practical patriotism message needs to depend on his mind to realize his mission. Besides, he is in great need of patience.

The reason, or mind, is an instinctual and creational feature. Some Hadiths explain:

(Man's mind is his close friend; patience is his secretary; leniency is his father, and patience is one of his best soldiers).

The mind exists since the existence of Man. Yet, it needs to be invested. It should be accompanied by patience and tolerance.

Tolerance may be defined as the stance in which you expect different opposing ideas. Therefore, any carrier of the message must be tolerant towards others.

One of the basic features of carrying the message is leniency. The carrier of the message cannot oblige others to accept it. Conviction is the key here. When you have a true idea, you should convince others with leniency.

The mind produces tolerance and leniency. They are primary features for realizing our ideas and conveying our message.

Practical patriotism requires the detachment of our problems because such problems prevent us from being positive players in society. Religiously speaking, we must believe that only God is capable of overcoming all our problems.

A true believer acknowledges that everything lies at the Hand of God. The trust in God diminishes his pain and encourages him to work even hard for the service of his people and society.

From a patriotic and humanitarian standpoint, do not give negative energy to others. Your message urges you to be patient and big-hearted. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon

him) clarifies this meaning:

(Get rid of your worries with patience and certainty [in God's support]).

Anxiety prevents you from working any further. You should be a positive factor among people. You should realize your message in the real life and become a practical patriot. As long as you believe in your goal and work on achieving it, you will finally reach your destination.

Regarding hope, patience, and achieving the goal, the Quran states:

(And We made from among them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient and [when] they were certain of Our signs)⁽¹⁾.

With patience, they became leaders who guide by God's command.

In the same context, another verse claims:

(But none is granted it except those who are patient, and none is granted it except one having a great portion [of good])⁽²⁾.

(Great portion of good) means sincerity and devotion to the message, whether it is patriotic, religious, or humanitarian. Therefore, one of the main features of the great prophets was patience.

God also addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(Therefore patiently persevere, as did (all) apostles of in-

1- Sajda: 24

2- Fusilat: 35

flexible purpose; and be in no haste about the (Unbelievers). On the day that they see the (Punishment) promised them, (it will be) as if they had not tarried more than an hour in a single day. (Thine but) to proclaim the Message: but shall any be destroyed except those who transgress?)(¹).

All the prophets are people of messages who worked for the realization of human rights and the improvement of societies. God also states in the Quran:

(And be patient, [O Muhammad], and your patience is not but through Allah. And do not grieve over them and do not be in distress over what they conspire)(²).

Greif here means that do not get away from people, despite their opposition. Be patient and trust in God, who continuously supports you.

One of the moral principles of religion is that never leave a place for the hatred of others, even those who disagree with your attitudes.

The carrier of the message is not harmed by the opposition of others, because he has clarity in his mission. God clarifies this idea in the Quran:

(If aught that is good befalls you, it grieves them; but if some misfortune overtakes you, they rejoice at it. But if ye are constant and do right, not the least harm will their cunning do to you; for Allah Compasseth round about all that they do)(³).

Patience requires belief and trust in God. It also needs investing the mind positively produces belief in God and support

1- Ahqaf: 35

2- Nahl: 127

3- Al Emran: 120

for your cause.

There is no doubt that the path to the goal of realizing patriotic, humanitarian, and religious messages is very long. This journey demands big-heartedness and patience in the culture of practical patriotism.

The Most Honorable People are Those Who are Honest in Serious Situations

One of the primary players that contribute to the improvement of practical patriotism is the concept of trust. It empowers social, familial, and individual bonds among all components of different cultural and ideological backgrounds.

People mostly socialize individually. The accumulation of these social relationships contributes to the nature of the entire society and nation. Thus, to realize practical patriotism, we need to educate people to trust others. One of the primary factors that boost trust among people is the concept of honesty.

Honesty is not only related to speech. It has a wider meaning. Speech is indeed the most obvious feature of a person, but other appearances contribute to one's personality. Honesty can also be manifested in emotions. Love of others is an honest expression of respect in social bonds.

One of the requirements of practical patriotism is that everyone must adopt a culture of honesty. It is an internal feature that contributes to the sublimation of individuals. We should notice that this internal feature must also be manifested in practices because any contradiction between feelings and practices signifies the duality of standards.

A lack of honesty of feelings would be obvious in one's practices. The manner of speech, interaction, and even the gaze would expose the real feelings. Therefore, working for the sake of developing the country requires honesty in socializing with others. This concept is the key to mutual trust among people.

Honesty is a universal concept and needs to be practiced in

our socialization with all people. However, this needs to be even further emphasized with our fellow citizens because the responsibility is intensified when it comes to one's homeland. Honesty is a necessary aspect that contributes to building trust, unity, and cooperation among people.

On the opposite side, lack of honesty necessarily leads to destabilization of social status, no matter how long it may take.

Furthermore, a dishonest person lives with pangs of conscience. We should not forget that in deviated societies, people think that honesty is merely a luxurious issue that does not necessarily have to be adopted. What matters for them is that they should win at the expense of all values. Surely, we all acknowledge that patriotic, humanitarian, and religious values demand us to be harmonious, affectionate, and collaborative, and build our social bonds upon trust.

As discussed earlier, trust is achieved only by honesty. Therefore, we always come across this statement that "lies rope is short". Dishonesty will make a gap between people and cause many troubles. When someone does not abide by his statements and values, others will be frustrated. This may lead to enmity, grudges, and hostility among people. The least problem that may arise from this problem is blame and discontent.

Accordingly, there is a Hadith that describes honesty as the following:

(Honesty is survival).

Honesty is a survival factor for individuals and families, without which, they may go astray.

As honesty is demanded in feelings, intentions, and speech, it must also be present in practice. This makes a strong bond

of trust among people. On the opposite front, the absence of honesty in action creates a gap in social bonds, because all slogans and values become worthless and empty.

The separation of utterances and beliefs from practices makes an individual worthless socially. This person cannot be a site of sympathy. People become unwilling to help him or cooperate with him.

Many religious texts warn people about this duality of standards. The Quran shows its disgust towards those who say something but do something else:

(You who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Greatly hateful in the sight of God is that you say what you do not do)⁽¹⁾.

This duality of the standard is among the worst immoral conditions that might dominate one's attitudes. God describes this stance with hatefulness and disgust. It does not simply affect certain individuals, but it may destroy the entire society.

In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(Say good, or keep silent).

Whether you speak honestly or you keep silent. Having double standards in speech and action leads to the demise of God.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) declares:

(Honesty is the brother of justice).

Any society needs equality and justice. As for honesty, it is the brother of justice. As discussed earlier, honesty confirms trustful bonds among people, leading to cooperation and uni-

ty.

An honest person is proud from the inside because he does not fear anything or word that might expose his essence. He is honest both from the inside and outside. Others interact with him with awe and respect, because they found him a person of honesty, morality, and truth both in speech and practice.

In this pertain, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Honesty is pride).

Conversely, a dishonest individual is a worthless, afraid, and unstable person. He does not have any respectable position in society because people do not trust him and discriminate against him.

Religious methodology granted a special position for the concept of honesty. Though someone may think that it may harm him, religions do not compromise at any cost. People sometimes hide the truth because they think that the way to survival is dishonesty. To correct this idea, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Honesty saves you even if you are afraid of it, and lying lets you down even if you think that it protects you).

There are a couple of meanings that we may find:

First, the protection of lying is short-term, because its rope is short.

Second, honesty only can save you. It can also lead you to happiness and peace of mind. As for society, there is a variety of understandings, backgrounds, and requirements. In such an unstable condition, honesty only can save you. It should be applied in all fields of life. It must become an attitude, behavior, and culture. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him)

states:

(Honesty is the reformation of everything).

He also states:

(Lying is the corruption of everything).

There is another beautiful statement from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) when he was asked about the most honorable person. Honorable in society or the Eye of God. The Imam replied:

(Whoever is honest in all conditions).

We may present two interpretations for this Hadith:

First, it refers to any possible condition and situation.

Second, conditions here may signify one's country. The Imam may refer to those who are honest with their country and people. Such a person must be honest in his feelings and intentions with his country. He must also apply this honesty in practices and attitudes. Thus, he can realize practical patriotism in a way that contributes to the creation of one strong and united homeland.

Honesty requires self-education. One has to absorb moral values. He should pay special attention to his relationship with God and belongingness to his homeland. He must also have self-accountability. It is a standard that protects him from going astray. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(An honest speaker is better than honesty itself).

This perfection cannot be attained without self-education. He also states:

(The doer of good is better than the good itself).

We conclude this section with the idea that we began: honesty creates trust. It makes all people collaborative and united. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) explains this meaning:

(Most people whom others believe are those who are honest in speech).

In other words, trust and belief in each other spread inasmuch as honesty is the basis of their lifestyle.

Thus, we see that the concept of honesty plays a great role in achieving others' trust and contributes to the realization of practical patriotism.

The Friend is the Closest Individual

As discussed earlier, honesty is of different levels: honesty in feelings, speech, and practice. It plays a great role in the coexistence and unity of people; the more united society is, the more powerful a homeland becomes.

This coexistence is consisted of different social bonds, like study and work partnerships. Honesty is the basis of maintaining healthy interaction among people.

Such interactions consist of a relationship between two individuals, groups, institutions, governments, scientific centers, cultural centers, sports institutions, and so on.

Such a relationship with others starts with the recognition of others. In a more developed state, this recognition turns into companionship, which may last for some long periods. Concerning practical patriotism, companionship signifies positive cooperation. When it is built upon honesty, it represents practical patriotism. The results become outstanding in a way that serves the public good.

It also signifies that there are numerous qualifications in a specific country. These talents may be found in different offices or workshops. This is more obvious among students. They can improve their qualifications when they absorb the love of country, moral values, and religion.

The same applies to the teachers and professors. When they are devoted to their major and honest in teaching their students, they are manifesting practical patriotism.

There are unlimited examples, but an obvious one is that when a physician takes his humanitarian role, he is practicing patriotism. This can be found in the work of an engineer when he works honestly to present a bright image of his beliefs and convictions.

Such honesty proves good social relationships among people. It also shows the willingness of the society to adopt practical patriotism. This must be a community attitude rather than an individual work. Otherwise, the goal can never be achieved.

As discussed earlier, companionship plays a significant role in proving humanitarian bonds among people. After all, the aim is to take the entire society into a state of practical patriotism.

What has been discussed appeals to the entire society. In other words, it is not an individual state. This is what we call companionship.

The nature of this companionship is revealed after working in a specific office, factory, foundation, and community because, in these places, you are obliged to interact with all the components of the society who come from different cultural and ideological backgrounds. However, to guarantee the unity and harmony of the society, one must choose some friends from the people with whom he interacts.

For further clarity, a friend is a person with whom you share some commonalities in thoughts and goals, with the condition that this bond must not be based on benefits.

The closeness of ideas necessarily leads to psychological closeness, which is a necessary principle for safe interactions. Therefore, the more these bonds mature, the more beneficial the results become. Accordingly, the presence of a friend is of great significance in life.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(The friend is the closest individual).

The significance of this statement lies in the social understanding that one's relatives are the closest individuals to him. Therefore, they are called relatives. Yet, the Imam clarifies that the friend with whom you agree based on findings and goals, and have unified responsibilities are even closer than your relatives. The Imam aims to show that you should do your best to keep him close to you. The results of this bond are not only for individuals, but they benefit the entire society patriotically, religiously, and humanitarian.

Anyone who adopts useful convictions, like realizing patriotic, religious, and humanitarian goals is a reliable person who feels responsible towards his country and people.

His responsibility is further intensified towards his friend because they both share common goals. Therefore, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) describes this friend as an asset for the day of need.

Any individual needs someone to stand by his side. The least he may need is a good honest word. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(The friend is one of the best two assets).

The Imam referred to two assets, because people may look for different assets like money. Therefore, a friend is always needed besides other life necessities.

In another Hadith, the Imam also shows:

(The friend is one of the best two assets; and anyone who does not have a friend, also does not have any asset).

This is part of the divine humanitarian methodology which aims at encouraging people to create strong and good bonds with others. It starts with recognition, then companionship,

and finally friendship with the one who shares common findings and goals.

As encountered earlier, the Imam describes the friend as the closest one and as the best asset. He seeks to show that people are not physically valuable, but their value comes from their principles, education, sophistication, faith, humanity, and patriotism. In this regard, the Imam states:

(Friends are one soul in different bodies).

This closeness comes from the commonalities that they share. They adopt common patriotic, religious, and humanitarian values, which take the lead of the society toward practical patriotism.

To reach this sublime stage of unity in the soul, some requirements need to be achieved. These features are mentioned in the will of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) to one of his companions:

(Befriend the one whose companionship adorns you, whose service protects you; if you ask him for a favor, he helps you; if you tell him something, he believes you; if you do a favor to him, he replies to the favor; if you commit a mistake, he justifies it; if he sees a good deed from you, he will count it; if you ask him for [financial] help, he supports you; if you keep silent, he speaks to you).

Thus, when companionship reaches this level of friendship, they become one soul. This closeness cannot be found in other types of relationships. The friend is the one whose companionship adorns you. Adornment signifies:

First, being a mirror for you.

Second, adds something to you.

Third, does not harm you or any other person.

(Whose service protects you).

Here, service is replaceable with responsibility. There must be mutual responsibility between you and your friend.

(If you ask him for a favor, he helps you).

In other words, the sense of responsibility must be mutual.

(If you tell him something, he believes you).

One of the results of trust is that your friend believes you because honesty forms the foundation of your relationship.

(If you do a favor to him, he replies to the favor).

He becomes a hand to you and others. These instructions also define the nature of the relationship with others as well:

(If you commit a mistake, he justifies it).

This is because nobody is infallible. As the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(All the sons of Adam are heavy doers of mistakes, and the best of them are those who repent).

Therefore, when you commit a mistake, your friend must turn a blind eye to it or justify it.

(If he sees a good deed from you, he will count it).

When he faces some mistakes from you, he ignores them and hides them. Moreover, when he sees some good deeds from you, he spreads the news to everyone.

(If you ask him for [financial] help, he supports you).

He shows his willingness to present any kind of help to you.

(If you keep silent, he speaks to you).

This part means that he feels your emotions without even uttering them. He feels responsible towards you without even asking him.

These instructions are presented to everyone. They want to show the path to the realization of practical patriotism. They seek to build a society that is full of happiness and contentment.

Shaking Hands and its Findings

Among the factors that contribute to the improvement of good social relationships among people is greeting and shaking hands.

As we understand from the patriotic, humanitarian, and religious instructions that greeting (saying Salam) is a basic issue:

Religiously, Salam is one of the names of God.

Patriotically and humanitarian, it signifies peace between you and others. It refers to love, mercy, virtue, compassion, and that you love for your brother what you love for yourself. Therefore, the idea of greeting Salam is a crucial factor that binds all people together.

Besides, there are two other issues to which we must pay attention:

First, greeting Salam and shaking hands is a social norm. socially, it signifies good relationships and special respect.

You should greet everyone. When you walk in the street in any public place, it is beautiful to greet people, though you do not recognize them. You should greet everyone, regardless of his ethnicity, religion, and ideology.

As for shaking hands, socially it means that there is a special relationship between people. Patriotically, it is of crucial importance to abide by those features that approximate people together emotionally. After all, these social bonds are highlighted for the sake of the safety of the country and its people.

Shaking hands improves social and emotional bonds. It must be part of social interaction among people.

Second, religiously if you think that belief in God must be part of your patriotic and humanitarian attitudes, you should be eager to shake hands with others. It must be done among people of the same gender.

Thus, we see that there is an emphasis on shaking hands socially and religiously because it is a sign of good social relationships among people. It is also part of practical faith.

Many Hadiths show the importance of shaking hands because it manifests practical patriotism and compassionate social bonds. One of the Hadiths states:

(When you meet, first greet each other and shake hands).

First, greeting with Salam.

Second, shaking hands, which is a reference to the practical side of the greeting.

(When you meet, first greet each other and shake hands, and when you leave, farewell each other with Salam and shaking hands).

Another Hadith states:

(When you meet, first greet each other and shake hands, and when you leave, pray and ask God for repentance for each other).

From a religious standpoint, prayer and asking God for repentance improves the divine bond between you and God. This instruction does not seek an individual bond with God but links the entire society with divinity.

Therefore, they start their meeting with the name of God, which is Salam. They unconsciously adopt the characteristics of God which are mercy, love, and compassion. They also leave

with a prayer. From a practical faith viewpoint, these concepts grant strength to a person. He feels that he is connected to God. Both the start and end of any interaction are linked to divine features. Such a perspective highlights the importance of good deeds and being responsible to work for the good of the entire society. As for the idea behind prayer and asking God for repentance, it refers to the possibility that in that specific meeting, you may have committed some mistakes.

From patriotic and humanitarian standpoints, these instructions seek to strengthen social bonds. This idea is further intensified with the presence of advice and consultation among people.

Thus, starting socialization with Salam and shaking hands, and ending it with the same practices signifies that there are no negative feelings among people. There is a Hadith that clarifies this meaning:

(Shake hands, because it wipes out any enmity).

Another Hadith states:

(Shaking hands wards off any grudge).

Grudge is a step darker than enmity, because it may cause further harm to others. Shaking hands is like a sterilizer that purifies feelings from any harmful intention. Religiously speaking, it improves the bonds with God.

In this regard, shaking hands is recommended by God. Its doer is rewarded by God, and even further than this, He forgives his sins:

(Any Muslim who meets his brother, shakes his hand, interlocks his fingers with his brother's, their sins shall scatter as the scattering of the leaves of trees in the Fall).

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also clarifies its importance:

(When you meet your brothers, shake hands and show them a smiling and happy face; thus, you shall leave while your sins are forgiven).

We should also remember the advice of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) to Malik Al-Ashtar:

(Know that people are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation).

In other words, brotherhood may be founded on a religious or humanitarian basis.

In the previous Hadith, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) assigns shaking hands as a social necessity for friendly relationships:

(When you meet your brothers, shake hands and show them a smiling and happy face; thus, you shall leave while your sins are forgiven).

This condition shows that there are no hard feelings among people. They give positive energy to everyone. Similarly, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(When a believer shakes the hand of another believer, they leave while their sins are forgiven).

We always emphasize that faith is a creational matter. All people are believers in God because it is part of their instinct.

Because of the importance of shaking hands, it is recommended that you do not pull your hand and let the other end the shaking, because the more you keep shaking, the better you are. Long shaking has its positive sides, as clarified in the following Hadith:

(When shaking hands, the one who keeps shaking is better rewarded than the one who stops. Indeed, their sins keep scattering until they are left with no sin).

This recommended act is taken from the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). It is narrated that:

(When the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) shook someone's hand, he would never stop until the other pulled his hand).

Therefore, we see the importance of shaking hands and the role it plays in conveying the practical patriotism message.

Visiting Each Other is a Confirmation of Good Relationships

Practical patriotism is a set of social practices. It is humanitarian interaction that has moral values. Its findings are preserving the divine trust and the love of the country, which is part of the faith. It is also the respect of Man and his rights. Its goal is the unity of the entire society.

Therefore, we must always shed light on the importance of these factors that contribute to the improvement of social unity and make them responsible for each other.

Preserving the divine trust is not a theoretical issue. It must be practiced on the real ground. The same applies to patriotism: it must not only remain on the theoretical side. It should be practiced. This also applies to all other moral values. Therefore, any idea that contributes to the unity of people is considered part of practical patriotism.

After recognizing each other, there are many ways to develop this recognition into a continuous relationship.

When there are common goals among people, they need to gather together, unite, and consult each other so that they reach their goals. Therefore, it is necessary to visit each other.

From a religious standpoint, such a visit is a form of worship. It is also a patriotic and humanitarian necessity. The requirement in this field is community work rather than the individual.

We should educate people to practice these communal concepts. Otherwise, dictatorships may arise within various ranges. The remedy for this problem is to adopt practical patriotism because it is a culture in which all the people participate.

There are many mechanisms by which we can realize this goal. They are not difficult, but they need to be:

- 1- Recognized.
- 2- Lived and absorbed.
- 3- Practiced on the real ground.

For example, in our societies, people are not used to greeting each other with Salam; rather they use other words.

Here, we are not against any other forms of greetings, but we should clarify that:

First, the word Salam has many meanings which are not found in other forms of greetings.

Second, Salam is of sanctity. It is one simple word but impregnated with unlimited meanings and connotations.

The same applies to the practice of shaking hands. Some people do not pay attention to the importance of this practice, though it carries many meanings.

Religious instructions always shed light on social interaction with others. Such interactions require sympathy and affection. Another necessary factor that improves such close relationships is visiting each other. The goal here is:

First, practicing patriotism concepts.

Second, confirming a friendly relationship with others. It is not a personal issue. Rather, it concerns the entire society. The goal behind all these procedures is the safety of the country and its people. Therefore, visiting others is a beautiful step. However, we must be eager to abide by the etiquette of this social norm.

It is universally acknowledged that every society has its norms

and traditions, to which its people must abide. They must be intermingled with religious, patriotic, and humanitarian concepts as well.

For example, we must be careful to choose the time of visit carefully. We must also consider the place in which we sit when we are in others' houses. In this regard, there is a Hadith that states:

(When you are in someone's place, sit wherever he tells you).

After all, the owner of the place may have certain conditions by which we must abide. The goal of these visits is to strengthen social bonds rather than create aversion. Therefore, we must accept his instructions.

On the other hand, the host is expected to be hospitable. Hospitality may be manifested in certain practices, including greeting the guests warmly with lovely words and expressions. He must be as friendly and welcoming as possible. He should let his guests sit in a proper place.

It is best to note that hospitality is of two forms:

Spiritual, which includes good manners and a smiling face.

Linguistic, which includes a warm welcome and expressing good feelings and intentions to your guests.

Another form is material hospitality. It includes food and beverages. You may serve them with meals or anything else, depending on the time of the visit.

These visits must be based on simplicity, including the form of hospitality. There are many religious instructions showing that it must be within one's ability. The guests must not become a burden on the host. Both parties must put in mind

that the purpose of this practice is to realize certain goals.

In this regard, there is a Hadith that states:

(When your brother visits you, serve him food. If he does not eat, serve him with water; and suggest performing minor ablution).

As for performing ablution, we may understand two meanings here:

First, the guest must be at psychological peace, because performing ablution helps him rest.

Second, from a religious perspective, it is good that the guests get engaged with acts of worship. Some manifestations of worship are being responsible towards others, getting engaged in patriotic ideas, and the way he may serve his people. We should note that hospitality is only a matter of food and beverages. It also includes honoring the guest. It is aligned with belief in God, as clarified in the following Hadith:

(Whoever believes in God and the Afterlife, must honor his guest).

It shows the results of believing in God and the Afterlife.

Many other Quranic verses and Hadiths show the importance of this attitude. After all the goal behind hospitality is to overwhelm society with compassion, unity, and practical patriotism.

What You Have Eaten is Gone and What you have Given Remains

In the previous section, we have discussed the importance of hospitality, the connotations that this step carries, and then play its role in strengthening social bonds.

We have also encountered many instructions that encourage us to be nice to those who visit us because it contributes to social unity. This hospitality transforms into practical steps after further moments of recognition. These are all a path to practical patriotism.

The goal of these instructions is to do good to your brother in the homeland. This kind of brotherhood has other references as well. It signifies brotherhood in humanity and God.

Brotherhood in humanity includes all human beings. As for brotherhood in God, it includes every believer in God. As for the brotherhood in the homeland, it is the most narrow circle among other types.

Logically, the educational endeavor must start from the most narrow circle to the wider one. Anyone who fails to practice patriotic values with his fellow citizens will naturally fail to practice religious and humanitarian values with others. There are exceptions in relationships that are based on benefits because in this case, people do their best to quench their individual needs.

The issue of hospitality occupies a significant position in stabilizing social interactions. Safeguarding these relations is a path to practical patriotism, which is a goal that must be achieved.

There is a significant side of hospitality to which we must pay special attention. Hospitality plays a special role in win-

ning the hearts of others. Here, it is necessary to maintain the continuity of this relationship.

This psychological impact on others is a key to fruitful results. It contributes to collaboration among people to construct a better society.

The next level is feeding. Hospitality may be narrowed down to presenting water only. The host may be more generous by presenting a piece of cake or dessert. The effect of this type of hospitality is great, especially when it is accompanied by spiritual and psychological generosity.

This circle must be broadened to include bigger numbers of people. Other elements play a role in this regard. Feeding others is a primary one. It is public hospitality. The number may vary here, but the best type is when you invite more people, or even welcome newcomers and strangers.

We should note that it is not logical to put ourselves in trouble and do what is beyond our ability. We may invite only a few friends, or we may make a public invitation.

These moves are all part of hospitality, and they may also go beyond that to be termed as generosity. It is very beautiful to activate this feature practically in society.

Generosity is not only limited to feeding people. It includes financial, intellectual, and official support as well. However, the highest form of generosity is presenting oneself for religious, patriotic, and humanitarian goals. This is beautifully explained by a poet:

And being generous with the self is the highest form of generosity.

From a patriotic perspective, in moments of crisis and need,

sacrificing oneself for the sake of the country is the highest form of generosity.

Other manifestations of generosity, like presenting food, and intellectual, official, and financial support are all on the path to achieving practical patriotism.

Feeding people occupies such a significant position in society. However, it should be performed while considering one's abilities. It must also target the vulnerable classes of society, like orphans, needy, and unemployed people. This step contributes to the strengthening of social bonds among people. Generally speaking, people need two primary things:

Role models and safe havens.

As role models, they are inspiring factors that encourage people to do good in society. Concerning safe havens, they are the last refuge, to which people may resort.

Many religious texts highlight the importance of feeding people. They focus on certain classes that need further attention and support. This instruction is not limited to religion: it undergoes humanitarian perspectives.

There is a Hadith narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him) that clarifies the importance of feeding people:

(What you have eaten is gone and what you have given remains).

Giving food to others results in mental joy and happiness.

The needs of society for food may vary from time to time. Sometimes, there may be only a few people who are in grave need of food, whereas other times, hunger dominates the entire society. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(By the God Who has the life of Muhammed in His Hand, whoever sleeps at night while his brother is hungry is a non-believer).

This Hadith may be interpreted in the light of the statement of Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(People are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation).

Brotherhood is built either on a religious or humanitarian basis.

Another Hadith limits the circle even further:

(Anyone who sleeps at night while his neighbor is hungry does not believe in God and his Messenger).

The concept of neighboring is more specific than any other hungry person. The neighbor in the Hadith may refer to any person with different religious, ethnic, racial, and ideological backgrounds.

Moreover, there is an emphasis on some specific classes. The Quran mentions some of them concerning the story of the Prophet and his Household (peace be upon them) when they gave their food to the needy people:

(And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, (Saying), "We feed you for the sake of God alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks")⁽¹⁾.

From the patriotic standpoint, feeding must not be based on individual benefit or encouraged by arrogance or egoism. The verse insists that:

1- Insan: 8-9

(And they feed, for the love of God, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, (Saying), “We feed you for the sake of God alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks).

The sake of God means the public good and the service of Man. Whoever loves God must love His creation as well. Anyone who loves God must feel responsible toward his country and people.

Thus, we see that the concept of feeding plays such a significant role in confirming good social interactions among people, a path that leads to practical patriotism.

Wearing Fragrance Pulls the Hearts

Anyone is required to do his best to get closer to others and to be united with them. He must distinguish himself with certain features that make others love him. However, his intentions must be honest because any pretension blocks others from approaching him. He must work on self-education and work on improving his patriotic, religious, and humanitarian convictions so that he may achieve practical patriotism easily.

The goal that must be common among all people is the prosperity of the homeland. Therefore, a key point to achieving this goal is to be loved by others. He must work on his manners, attitudes, speech, and interaction with others to get closer to them. We should also add to the list the features that have already been discussed in the previous sections.

Here, we should add other important factors that are effective at improving one's social interaction. They are personal hygiene and wearing fragrance.

Wearing fragrance plays an important role in the openness of the heart and serenity. The positive results of this step first overwhelm the one wearing the fragrance and then his surroundings. This is an effective step towards achieving practical patriotism, the primary goal toward which we are moving.

The first requirement of practical patriotism is the openness of the heart. Second, it demands a sense of serenity in the process of social interaction. Third, trust must be the basis of any socialization. Fourth, this interaction demands calmness and open-heartedness. These elements must be accompanied by compassion and sympathy.

Wearing fragrance is an effective element in what has been

mentioned. It occupies such a significant position in social interactions. It improves the quality of the message of those who seek to construct their society and cooperate with others.

As patriotism has a practical side, faith also needs to be practiced. Its effect must be tangible in everyday life. One of the practices that faith encourages is wearing fragrance.

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) paid special attention to fragrances. He normally did not accept any gift, but when the gift was a fragrance, he would accept it wholeheartedly. He also spent a lot of money on purchasing fragrances.

We all know that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) does not need any fragrance because, after all, he is the most morally and physically scented and clean in this world. He is full of mercy, and nothing can compete with the beauty of mercy. It overwhelms the entire creation. The Quran insists on this meaning:

(We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds)⁽¹⁾.

He was wearing fragrance for the sake of others. He sought to grant serenity to others because he has a message to convey. Moreover, he wanted to assign this practice as a tradition in society.

When we read related Hadiths, we find that fragrance is considered both a moral value and a religious tradition.

(Fragrance is a prophetic moral).

Abiding in this practice demands education and attention. In nature, one may not find it an essential issue. However, when he senses its significance, he starts to train himself in this tradition.

1- Anbia: 107

Wearing fragrance is considered part of the moral system because it has a positive effect on others. It is categorized within the same field of the morality of good words, good attitudes, and good socialization. Many Hadiths highlight the importance of this practice:

(One of the manners of the prophets is wearing fragrance).

It is also considered a religious tradition, as obvious in the following Hadith:

(Fragrance is prophetic tradition).

All the prophets and messengers used to wear fragrances. The term 'messengers' refer to the five greatest prophets, who brought gospels and divine books to people. They are Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, and Muhammed (peace be upon them all). They all abided by this tradition. This is one proof that they sought to unify all people around the world.

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) devoted special attention to this tradition, to the extent that some narrations mention that he paid more money on purchasing fragrance than on food. This shows his exaggerated attention to this crucial practice. We understand from this emphasis that there are great benefits that lie behind this tradition.

There is a Hadith that mentions the results of wearing fragrance:

(Fragrance tightens the hearts together).

Another Hadith emphasizes that:

(Fragrance pulls the hearts together).

The purpose here is that the hearts pull together for the sake of one goal, which is the safety of the country and its people.

From a religious standpoint, wearing fragrances has many impacts. This is also clear when we look at this issue from a patriotic perspective. Religiously, this practice grants a sense of serenity which helps one to be more devoted to God at that moment. On the other hand, the Hosts of Heaven are closer to him because of the nice smell he projects at moments of prayer and others.

We should note that, in addition to a physical nice scent, one should consider the importance of a spiritual scent. They both cooperate to serve one purpose. In a narration from Uthman bin Madoon, when he wanted to stop wearing any fragrance anymore, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) told him:

(Do not stop wearing fragrances, because the angels smell the nice smell of the believer; so do not stop it).

Therefore, we see the importance of this practice and the role it plays in bonding people together. The least benefit one may get is that there is no place left for dislike and aversion. This approximate encourages us to cooperate for the public good and practice patriotism on the real ground.

Inner and Outer Purity

Many features contribute to the success of socialization with people. We should always put in mind that it is not a goal, but a means of cooperation, understanding, dialogue, practicing patriotism and improving all fields of society.

After we have discussed the importance of wearing fragrance, it is necessary to shed light on both the inner and outer purity. In other words, cleanliness has two sides: physical and spiritual.

As for physical or outer purity or cleanliness, we may understand it as the absence of dirt or pathogens. There are limitless examples of this case. The lack of hygiene is the result of keeping away from taking a bath after hard work because when the sweat remains on the skin, after a while, a disgusting smell covers the entire body. Lack of physical cleanliness is also obvious in long nails when they become a place for specks of dirt.

Thus, personal hygiene is a necessary element in life. Purity, then, means to wash the body from any dirt. Whereas, from a religious standpoint, it means performing minor or major ablu-tion. We should not that physical or outer purity and cleanliness is effective at deciding the type of relationship one may form with others.

In this regard, the general meaning of purity and cleanliness is that one does not find any dirt or stain on his body or clothes, or he does not smell bad. Therefore, others feel comfortable while interacting with him. We all are eager to be at our best appearance when we meet other. This is the reason why we always look in the mirror before getting out of our house.

This eagerness shows that physical cleanliness plays an

important role in designating the quality of socializing with others. It is also effective psychologically. This positive and necessary element is part of the already discussed concept of 'affection'.

From a religious standpoint, when we are in a state of worshipping God, we feel pure from the inside. We feel that we are closer to Heaven because we escape the narrow jail of the material world to a wide unlimited world of serenity. This is, surely, a form of self-education.

Performing ablution and washing our body has its effect on the inner side of the soul. It is a form of worship that leads to the sublimation of the self. We should note that an individual is a positive player in society since he gets sublimated. He improves his qualification for interacting with others, mainly through dialogue.

When we use the expression of 'inner purity', it refers to social relationships. They should not be built on personal benefits; the aim must be the development of society and cooperation with others. The goal must be the homeland.

Another meaning of inner purity is the absence of hostility towards others. There are different manifestations of this enmity. Some people fall into this trap because of disagreement on certain ideas. After all, this problem undergoes the mental framework of individuals and their ability to understand the opposition.

We should always remember that any human being is a believer in God because belief is a matter of instinct. It is deposited in Man the moment he is born. Thus, divine education requires any believer to form a friendly relationship with others. One of the ways to achieve it is by praying for others because it is a process of inner purification. It cleans

the heart from any kind of enmity. This is clear in the Quranic instruction:

(And [there is a share for] those who came after them, saying, “Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts [any] resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed You are Kind and Merciful”)⁽¹⁾.

We see the transition from an act of worship, which is prayer, to internal purification from any enmity and hostility towards others:

(And put not in our hearts [any] resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed, You are Kind and Merciful”).

There is a request to keep our hearts from any form of resentment toward any human being because after all, all people are believers in God. We also believe that nonhumans are also believers in God, but they cannot utter their belief.

Any carrier of the patriotic message, which is also a religious and humanitarian message, must be pure from any negative feature, like envy, hatred, and so on.

It must be acknowledged that the prophets and messengers are the best people in this regard. The Imams of Ahlulbait (peace be upon them) are also models in this field. We may also refer to many Companions of the Prophet, scholars, and reformers who proved to be role models in the love of others.

The following verse refers to this meaning:

(And he caused rain to descend on you from heaven, to clean you therewith, to remove from you the stain of Satan,

1- Hashr: 10

to strengthen your hearts, and to plant your feet firmly therewith)⁽¹⁾.

This verse encounters the idea of inner and outer purification. The first half of the verse: **(to clean you therewith)** refers to the outer cleanliness, whereas: **(to remove from you the stain of Satan)** is a clear reference to the internal cleanliness. Enmity, envy, jealousy, and others are nothing but the stain of Satan. Therefore, water is a means of inner and outer purification.

We must confirm here that the carriers of the message are the purest among others because their goal is the entire society, as the Quran states:

(Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of 'Imran above all people)⁽²⁾.

As for Ahlulbait (peace be upon them), this meaning is also clear in the following verse:

(God intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O people of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification).

Another interpretation of purification is clarified in the chapter of Tawba when God addressed the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(Of their goods, take alms, that so thou mightiest purify and sanctify them; and pray on their behalf. Verily thy prayers are a source of security for them: And Allah is One Who heareth and knoweth)⁽³⁾.

1- Anfal: 11

2- Al Imran: 33

3- Tawba: 103

(Alms) is worship, (purify) is the outer side, and (sanctify them) is the inner side. All these instructions are proposed to organize our socialization in a brotherly manner with others, as stated in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(You all are from Adam and Adam is from dust).

It is related to another Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(All the children of Adam are as equal as the teeth of a comb).

This brotherhood reminds us of the Hadith of Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(People are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation).

These recommendations are proposed to show us the path to the best form of social interaction with others so that they lead to the safety of the homeland, achieved only through practical patriotism.

Positivity and its Sublime Results

As discussed earlier, among the features of practical patriotism are good socialization, having a smiling face, and wearing fragrance.

Socialization means interacting with people depending on civilian attitudes. Any human being is a civilian in nature because nature tends to socialize with others. He cannot stand loneliness. Therefore, some believe that no individual can live alone, despite the beauty and luxury of the place.

Thus, socialization is required. Yet, it must be built upon certain conditions. One of the most important features of socialization is big-heartedness and politeness. From a religious standpoint, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(My Lord God instructed me to be polite with people, as He instructed me to perform the obligatory acts of worship).

Thus, politeness, big-heartedness, good manners, and good words are necessary features of socialization.

Here, we must refer to two primary aspects:

First, in the process of socializing with people, one must consider the moderate dominant traditions of a given society. He is expected to recognize the moderate dominant traditions. They are a set of social attitudes that form the bonds among people. Therefore, they are necessary to be recognized and acknowledged.

Any carrier of a message is required to have good socialization with others so that he may succeed in his patriotic, humanitarian, and religious mission. They need to cooperate to realize practical patriotism.

Second, kindness with others.

Kindness has different representations. Sometimes, it may be in the form of tolerating others. Other times, it can be seen in the form of doing good to others.

The appeal of the concept of socialization is the entire society rather than a small group of individuals. It may start with a small number of people. It remains developing until it covers the entire society.

Thus, doing kindness to others, or working for the sake of the public good is a fundamental concept in the process of socialization. It contributes to paving the way to practical patriotism because this goal needs all people to be emotionally pulled together.

Naturally, any person is pulled to the doer of kindness. He also feels close to anyone who tolerates his mistakes and is eager to hold his hand. Such a person succeeds to spread the culture of practical patriotism among people because people feel honesty and compassion in his actions.

In essence, this behavior is religious. It has been confirmed by many Quranic verses and Hadiths, like the following:

(For the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth. Thus doth Allah set forth parables)⁽¹⁾.

Generally speaking, there is no place for a negative person in society because he does not have the proper means of socializing with others. He lacks big-heartedness in his attitude.

Any negative person is like a scum that vanishes away. His problem is that he does not look at anything but himself. His egoism blinds him. His only goal is to benefit himself at the

1- Ra'ad: 17

expense of others and his country.

On the other hand, a positive person does good for society, his goals are sublime. He carries a patriotic message and does his best to benefit his homeland and its people. His ideas appeal directly to the heart and purify the minds.

Such an individual works for the good of others. He is a manifestation of the Quranic verse: **(that which is for the good of mankind)**. He is destined to remain and survive as the result of socializing with others depending on social norms and the public good.

Many religious texts mention the concept of the public good as replaceable with the word 'benevolence'. Being benevolent to others means doing good to others. It starts by following straight social norms and then moves to doing kindness to others and doing good to the entire society.

In this regard, many Hadiths refer to the importance of this condition, as the one narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Benevolence is leadership).

This may be applied to both individuals and societies. It means that the person who is benevolent to others, becomes their leader, and the society that is based on benevolence is the leader of other societies. Leadership here is power, sovereignty, immunity, and stability.

Some Hadiths explain the meaning of public good, as the one narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Doing benevolence, aiding others, and hospitality).

(Doing benevolence) means doing some good deeds that are beneficial to others. Then, the Hadith refers to two other conditions:

(Aiding others). In our societies, we always encounter people who are in extreme need of help. They lack some necessary elements of life, without which they cannot survive. Therefore, helping these people is part of the public good that contributes to the stability of society.

(Hospitality). It includes embracing and feeding others. It is not necessarily done for some insistent needs, but they have great psychological benefits.

Thus, these three elements are the key to social and international leadership: (Doing benevolence, aiding others, and hospitality).

Religious texts show that benevolence must be practiced with everyone, because any human being deserves to be the site of benevolence since he is the successor of God on earth, regardless of his ideological background. Some instructions show that it must be practiced with everyone, even those who do not deserve it. After all, people are the creation of God and are dignified by Him.

It is such a great stance when we see this attitude becomes part of your nature, as the Imam stated:

(Train yourself to do beauty, because you will be mentioned beautifully and rewarded greatly).

In other words, train yourself to do good to others for the public benefit. Thus, people will mention your name with compassion. Moreover, God will reward you multiplied.

The Imam (peace be upon him) also states:

(Whoever interacts with people beautifully, they shall reward him accordingly).

Some Hadiths link doing good, kindness, public benefit, and

benevolence with the mind as if the presence of these elements signifies a straight and mature mind. There is a Hadith that states:

(After religion, the top of rationality is doing courtesy to people, and doing good to righteous and immoral people).

These instructions have been proposed to organize strong social bonds that take people to practical patriotism.

From a religious and humanitarian viewpoint, we are required to do good to humans and nonhumans. The public good also includes animals, plants, and the environment. In this regard, there is a Hadith that states:

(Indeed, God loves to see a hot liver quenched. Whoever quenches a hot liver, including animals and others, God shall shadow him with His mercy in the Day when there is no shadow but that of God).

These Hadiths highlight the importance of doing good to the public, including humans and nonhumans. These instructions tend to take us to the sublime goal of practical patriotism.

Good Relationships Emphasize Community Bonds

Socialization with all people of different ideological backgrounds is a necessary feature because of some reasons:

First, anyone needs to live in communities.

Second, any society needs its people to survive.

Third, only the prophets and Messengers can carry messages individually. As for others, they need to cooperate with others. He needs society. The country needs its citizens to cooperate so that they serve their principles, homeland, and goals. This point has been discussed in the Quran:

(Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancor: fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment)⁽¹⁾.

Another verse states:

(Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity)⁽²⁾.

As discussed earlier, benevolence must be performed by all of the community. As clarified in the previous verse, (Let there arise out of you a band of people) who do good in society. Good or benevolence is a set of humanitarian, patriotic, and moral values that appeal to the education of individuals, families, and communities. They also seek to realize human rights and the sublime position of Man that was assigned by God as His successor.

Thus, socialization is a necessary aspect of the development of society. Positive interaction between individuals and society

1- Ma'eda: 2

2- Al Imran: 104

is a fundamental element to achieve a healthy social life.

By positive interaction, we do not only mean the responsibility towards society or to respect public limits, as stated in the Hadith (You all are shepherds, and you are responsible for what you lead). It also means respecting the privacy and personal taste of others. The carrier of a patriotic, religious, and humanitarian message must work to enter the hearts of others. He must sympathize with the personal needs of people.

There are unlimited variations of privacies in this life. Therefore we cannot specify them, but we may give their characteristics. Once recognized, we must tolerate and coexist with them. We should respect others' joy and grief.

The happy moments will not be forgotten. Thus, when you interact with that event, it will leave an everlasting positive impact on the other. On the other hand, when you stand by the side of your friend who is grieving, he will always remember the favor you have done to him. Therefore, sympathizing with others and interacting with their events are of great importance to improve social bonds.

In happy events, we visit our friends, smile, and show our joy, so that others sense our honest feelings. It is also even more effective when you present a gift to your friend at those glad events. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) clarified the importance of giving gifts:

(Give gifts and gain love).

After all, the goal is to bind society together. People need to unite so that they attain a strong homeland.

From a religious standpoint, socialization may be realized in the form of prayer. It may take various manifestations depend-

ing on the social norms of every society. Yet, the one meaning behind prayers in these happy moments is asking God to make this event blessed, virtuous, and joyful.

As for grieving people, it is nice to pay a visit to those stricken by grief and show our condolences. It is necessary to sympathize with others because, from a patriotic viewpoint, all people within a country are one big family. Therefore, when someone grieves, others must stand by his side.

In happy events, we may show our sympathy by presenting gifts, whereas, in sad moments, sympathy is expressed by paying for some of the expenses of the event. Cooperation is necessary for such moments.

We cannot socialize with all people. Yet, with such moves, we should be ready to cooperate with anyone who needs help and support.

Religious instructions always highlight the importance of improving social bonds among people. Many Hadiths show the great results of such positive socialization. The divine reward in the afterlife is also great.

As discussed earlier, sympathizing with others in their happy and sad events in the manner of the one who carries a religious and humanitarian message. This is the moral attitude of the prophets who also carried the patriotic message.

In this regard, we read in history books that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) was always congratulating the happy people and condoling the grief-stricken ones. He presented his condolences by saying:

(May God reward and mercy you).

In this context, the divine reward has many manifestations.

In this world, it may be in the form of financial relief, health, and similar gifts. It may be given in the afterlife by granting a close position to God.

As for the second part of the statement (and mercy you), mercy refers to self-education. In other words, it is a request from God to help you be merciful among each other because there is a rule that the one who mercies people in this world, God shall mercy him in the afterlife:

(Mercy others so that you will be mercified).

There is another Hadith in this regard:

(Mercy those who are on the earth so that the One in the Heaven mercies you).

The Prophet was using this statement when he visited both happy and grief-stricken people:

(May God grant you mercy and shower you with mercy).

In this prayer, we see that there is a request from God to make this happy event merciful because, in such moments, one may make certain decisions that lead to regret in the afterlife. Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) prayed in these words:

(May God grant you mercy).

It is a request from God that He makes this happy event blessed and positive without any harm.

(And shower you with mercy).

In such a prayer, we see that there is a wish to make these happy moments continuous and fruitful. Religious education always seeks to make use of situations to relate them to faith and to link faith with attitudes and morals, one of which is patriotism.

There is also instruction for the moments of grief and the best way to condole your Muslim brother. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(A Muslim's condoling his brother is relief from grief and remembrance of death).

This statement refers to two fundamental issues:

First, there is relief from grief by reciting the Quranic verse:

(We belong to God, and to Him, we shall return)⁽¹⁾.

In this verse, we see two important meanings: faith and reward. The complete verse is the following:

(Who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to God, and indeed to Him we will return." Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided)⁽²⁾.

It is a beautiful idea that in moments of grief and pain, one remembers his origin and end. One should always remember that one day, he will return to the One Who created him. The previous Hadith shows that even in moments of grief and pain, one must hold himself accountable. He should train himself to make the utmost use of his time because it is not refundable.

Therefore, the statement: (We belong to God, and to Him, we shall return) means that we belong to God; He is the One who created us, formed us, and resurrected us from nothingness. Thus, when the journey is finished, we must return to Him. It is a fact that in moments of grief and pain, anyone may become weak. Therefore, it is very useful to remind us of this fact of belongingness to God.

1- Baqara: 156

2- Baqara: 156-7

The second issue in the previous Hadith of Imam Ali is (the remembrance of death). We should remind ourselves that death is the Truth and it happens to everyone. It is beyond the borders of religion and faith. Everyone acknowledges death. Yet, religions provide death with further meanings and show the nature of the afterlife.

In this regard, the Quran addresses the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(You are going to die, and they are going to die)⁽¹⁾.

This verse seeks to confirm that all people are going to die one day, no matter how long they live.

Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) used to condole the grief-stricken people with the following words:

(May God strengthen you, reward your grief, and bless your diseased).

In this prayer, we see that the Imam focuses on three aspects:

First, weakness. When he says: (May God strengthen you), it means that the grieving person feels weak, especially when he loses someone dear to his heart. So the Imam asks God to give him strength. He also wants to teach us that when we seek refuge in God, He will grant us power.

(And reward your grief).

He asks God for rationality. We must submit to the will of God. Then, the result of these findings is divine mercy for the diseased. In other words, when we submit to the wish of God, we will be rewarded and the diseased mercified. Another Hadith presents a similar meaning:

1- Zumar: 30

(Whoever condoles a mournful, he will be given the same reward).

In other words, the same amount of reward that is given to the mournful will also be given to the comforter.

(Who, when disaster strikes them, say, “Indeed we belong to God, and indeed to Him we will return.”).

The reward here is stated:

(Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided).

They will be showered with blessings and mercy. As God prays upon his angels, and as God and the angels pray upon Muhammed, He prays upon the one who submits to the will of God. Moreover, anyone who consoles this grief-stricken person will share the same divine reward.

Another Hadith states:

(Anyone who condoles his believer brother, God shall coat him with the beautiful clothes of dignity on the Judgement Day).

As discussed earlier, faith is a matter of instinct. Every person is a believer in nature, but religions crystalize this faith.

There are also two other statements narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in this regard:

(Condoling grants you, Heaven).

We understand from this Hadith that because of the great result of condolence and the important role it plays in building social bonds, its reward in Heaven.

In addition to the educational side of condolence, it reminds Man of his journey in this life. It also urges him to hold himself

accountable and responsible.

As for the second Hadith, the Imam states:

(Anyone who condoles a bereaved, God shall shadow him with the shade of His Throne in a Day when there is no shade but His).

The Imam urges us to sympathize with others and pay further attention in critical situations. Mercy is a necessary element, but it must be intensified in certain moments, mainly at times of grief.

The divine education always seeks to improve the humanitarian side of people so that they may reach practical patriotism.

Hence, sympathizing with others in times of joy or grief improves social bonds among people. The result is adopting a common patriotic, religious, and humanitarian message to realize practical patriotism.

The Wisest of People is the Most Excusing One

Practical patriotism dominates all fields of life. It has guidelines for everything in life. Here, we seek to keep this methodology on the right track. However, you may face many obstacles in the path of practical patriotism. In this case, when you remember that your goal is more powerful than any challenge and that your destination is realizing practical patriotism, you will feel great joy and power.

Any person may commit certain mistakes while interacting with others. Because of certain pulling factors, one may fail to stand up to the standards he put for himself. After all, Man is not infallible. He is open to committing mistakes in his relationship with God, people, and any other creature in this life. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(All the children of Adam commit mistakes, and the best of them are those who repent).

Generally speaking, all people are prone to mistakes but the Infallible ones. Here, we do not intend to discuss the meaning and dimensions of the mistake. Here, we seek to study social interactions among people and the natural stance of any human to commit mistakes. We need to diagnose the problems and we may solve them.

There are preventive solutions. They protect individuals from falling into mistakes.

Watching one's speech is one of the main reasons that prevent anyone from falling into mistakes. From a social and religious perspective, one must control his utterances so that he becomes safe from committing any form of mistake. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

(I wish I had a neck as long as that of a camel).

We all know that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) is infallible and cannot commit any mistake. Yet, he tends to give a lesson to people that they must consider their speech, decisions, and assessments.

As for the meaning of the above Hadith: (**I wish I had a neck as long as that of a camel**), we know that the neck of the camel is long. Here, the Imam does not us to take the literal meaning, but rather the symbolic one. It means evaluating and assessing the ideas before uttering them.

Therefore, one must always consider his speech, because he may express his ideas wrongly and that leads to mistakes in practice.

Here, we seek to show one's relationship with brothers in society. The priority here is for utterances. After all, the path to community work is individual words and ideas.

However, despite all forms of preventive procedures, one may also commit certain mistakes. He may break some social norms.

Here we may refer to the concept of 'apology'. In any community work, especially patriotic work, we may encounter certain obstacles. These obstacles may have a negative impact on some people psychologically so they may utter irrelevant or improper words and ideas. As a reformative step, they must apologize. To diagnose the problem, one must be objective. This is also a divine requirement, as stated in the Quran:

(You who believe, befriend God and observe your deeds and what you are going to present tomorrow, and befriend God)⁽¹⁾.

As stated, there is a close tomorrow and far tomorrow. As for

1- Hashr: 18

the close tomorrow, it includes constructive steps and ideas religiously, patriotically, and humanitarian. As for the far tomorrow, it is Judgement Day. Once the worldly journey ends, the afterlife journey begins.

From a patriotic perspective, the close tomorrow means holding oneself accountable and considering the virtues and vices in action. Then, the verse mentions: (and befriend God) which means prevention and guard from committing mistakes.

Here, the verse instructs us to protect ourselves from any mistake or slip. And in case the mistake is committed, one must repent if it was towards God and present an apology if it was towards others.

Anyone is open to committing mistakes in practice or interaction. Therefore, presenting an apology is a form of nobility. We should note that the one who is not confident in himself, may think that apology underestimates his social status, whereas the confidence knows that apology adds further social value to him.

There is a Quranic text that emphasizes the importance of apology:

(Rather, man, against himself, will be a witness. Even if he presents his excuses)⁽¹⁾.

In other words, anyone may diagnose his mistakes. The carrier of the message is characterized by having clear standards according to which, he lives in this world.

This is the path of virtuous people who can see true things and confirm them. They can also see mistakes and correct them. If these mistakes were between him and God, they must repent and work to fix them. In case they were committed

1- Qiama: 15

toward other people, they must apologize and correct them as well.

Numerous instructions warn people from falling into the trap of mistakes so that they are not obliged to present any apology, as the following one:

(Beware from committing what obliges you to apologize).

In one of his letters to Harith Al-Hamdani, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) proposes that:

(Beware from doing any act, which obliges its doer to deny or apologize).

When someone commits certain mistakes, he would either deny it or apologize for doing it. In case he apologizes, it means that he is lying. Thus, the best solution is to apologize. We should remember that apology puts the individual in an undesired position, though it is a necessary solution to preserve one's friendship with others.

In another letter to Qathm bin Al-Abas, his governor in Mecca, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Beware from doing what obliges you to apologize. Do not be ungrateful in times of blessing, and do not be a failure in times of adversity. Peace).

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) refers to the two conditions in which mistakes happen: in moments of ungratefulness and in times of failure. For some people, ungratefulness deprives him of his values. Egoism and personal desires overcome his behavior. These two features facilitate the path to disobeying God and opposing social values.

As for times of failure, any individual who is reluctant to self-educate, his failures lead him to be paralyzed by

disappointment. It changes his view towards society into a pessimist one, depriving him of speaking and acting rationally.

When the carrier of the message commits certain mistakes, his patriotic, religious, and humanitarian message may be comprehended in the wrong way. Therefore, he might be described improperly. In this case, to prevent any further misunderstanding, he must apologize so that others may embrace him once again with love and respect.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Accept the apology of your brother, and if does not have any excuse, make one for him).

All these instructions are proposed to strengthen social bonds among people. Therefore, the Imam insists that if the wrongdoer diagnoses his mistake and presents an apology, accept it. In case he does not have an excuse to present, you should find one for him so that your relationship remains strong.

Sometimes, the excuse is unacceptable or illogical. Religious instructions insist that we accept the excuse, regardless of the reason behind it, because when someone presents certain illogical excuses, inside he knows well that it is not true. Yet, when you accept the apology, he will know that you have accepted it out of your generosity and sublimity, and out of your love for your homeland and people. The following Hadith clarifies this meaning:

(Accept the excuse of anyone who apologizes, even if you know that he is lying).

Many Hadiths educate us to be kind and polite to others. We should see our existence is related to the existence of homeland and society. He must have self-confidence and

never collapse when others attack him verbally. The following Hadith refers to this idea:

(If someone curses you from your right and moves to your left and apologizes, so accept it).

In other words, you should never leave any gap between yourself and others.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) gives an incredible lesson on the best manner of socializing and accepting others' apologies. In case he does not apologize, you should tell yourself that he might have an excuse for that. In a letter to his son, Muhammed bin Al-Hanafi, Imam Ali states:

(Do not punish your brother upon suspicion; do not break your relationship with him without admonishment, because he might have an excuse and you are blaming him).

(Do not punish) upon uncertain rumors. (Do not break your relationship with him without admonishment) means never abandoning him without investigating the matter and knowing the truth.

(Because he might have an excuse and you are blaming him).

We do not know others' circumstances and what others are undergoing.

(Accept the excuses of others whether they are true or a lie; you shall be blessed by divine intercession).

If someone fails to accomplish certain missions and presented some excuses, you should accept them whether they are true or not.

They all support the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) when he said:

(My Lord God instructed me to be polite with people, as He instructed me to perform the obligatory acts of worship).

Being polite with people means social unity and the unity of the nation.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also stated:

(The most logical person is the one who accepts the excuses of people most).

Accepting others' excuses is a sign of rationality. It refers to the mental ability of the person.

Another Hadith clarifies the results of accepting others' excuses. It improves social unity. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Accept the excuses of people, you shall enjoy their brotherhood. Embrace them with a smiling face, you shall vanish their grudges).

The more excusing you are, the more your brotherhood endures.

(Embrace them with a smiling face, you shall vanish their grudges).

Smiling is effective at vanishing hostility among people.

All these factors improve the unity of the community. It also facilitates practicing patriotism in life.

Knowledge is More Gathering than Fathers

After the long joyful journey of apology and its related humanitarian and patriotic responsibilities, we reach accepting the apology. It signifies the ability of a person to control himself and realize his culture and education.

An apology requires two fundamental factors so that they can be practiced in society:

1- First, is self-education. Oneself is a vessel that must be filled. It may be left uncontrolled. In this case, it would be filled with desires and whims, mainly egoism. Other times, it can be filled with what is beneficial for people, like moral values, so that they enable people to embrace others.

The apology is a fundamental and necessary concept in the life of society and nations to preserve the survival of civilizations. It can never be dispensed. Any society that lacks an apology, does not have any moral values, and lacks practical humanitarianism.

Anyone is called human when he carries a set of values that confirm his humanity and corresponds with his divine successorship. When he gets away from these features, he is only human in shape rather than essence.

2- Second, is the concept of learning. Any person needs to learn so that he becomes qualified to carry the required values and principles. The more he learns, the more he becomes capable of forgiving others and becoming more polite with people. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) described the necessity of politeness as the following:

(My Lord God instructed me to be polite with people, as He instructed me to perform the obligatory acts of worship).

Thus, anyone who wishes to be a message carrier shows his responsibility toward others, and interacts friendly with his brothers, especially those in his homeland, needs to learn. God insisted much on the necessity of learning and that there is a big difference between a learned person and an ignorant one. A learned person is capable of manifesting faith and its humanistic values.

There is a Quranic verse that shows the difference between knowledge and ignorance:

(Say: “Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receives admonition)⁽¹⁾.

(Those who know) are the ones who learned.

(And those who do not know?) are the ones who did not learn and preferred to remain ignorant.

Anyone who learns can watch himself and perfect his inner sights. He can move on the path of perfection. Afterward, the learned one becomes capable of carrying the message and practicing its details with others, including forgiveness. Forgiveness is the result of learning, self-education, self-denial, social recognition, and comprehension of human nature and how to interact with it and with life in general. The more he learns, the more he becomes capable of activating his moral values and principles in life.

Learning is related to mental abilities to acquire new knowledge. Learning is investing the brain in the right path. Any organ of the body becomes active when used, whereas it becomes weak when left unused. Therefore, the more knowledge you seek, the more active your brain becomes. From a

1- Zumar: 9

religious standpoint, this leads to linking the mind with instinct, confirming the relationship with God. From a societal perspective, this process presents a better picture of others, clarifying the best way to socialize with them.

The human mind is power; it requires learning correct ideas. The more active it is, the more powerful our faith becomes. It also improves our ability to manifest divine successorship on the earth. We can also discover our abilities to invest them for the good of the public. We may also diagnose our negative features and work on fixing them.

The following verse proposes this idea:

(They will only be reminded who are people of understanding)⁽¹⁾.

Reminding is an act of the mind. As for people of understanding, it refers to the heart and instinct. We may also say mind and heart, which are parts of the instinct.

Thus, the mind is activated, benefiting from the heart and instinct. This cannot be achieved without learning, because those who know are constructive, whereas those who do not know are destructive.

Those who know are full of liberality toward their society and people, whereas those who do not know may become a burden on their society. He fails to use the best organ in his body, which is the brain. Therefore, he cannot be equal with the one who knows.

Learning that leads to sublime levels of knowledge has worldly and afterlife results. As for world results, it enables the individual to carry the message and realize divine successorship. Learning makes him more powerful, raising his status

1- Raad: 19

in this world, and in the afterlife as well. This can be achieved when learning collaborates with the mind, heart, and instinct.

With learning, we can use the mind, heart, and instinct. The results will be humanitarianism with faith and patriotism in their practical form.

We see a similar idea in the chapter on Mujadala:

(Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do)⁽¹⁾.

Throughout our discussion, we observed that learning is before faith because our core concern is practical patriotism. From a religious perspective, belief is a matter of instinct: anyone is required to discover this feature inside so that he gets a complete picture of faith.

We understand from the previous verse that God expects Man to activate his abilities for the public good, rather than self-interest. He needs to feel responsible toward his homeland, people, religion, and humanity all over the world. Therefore, the verse explains:

(Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do)⁽²⁾.

Ignorance leads to falling into social and individual traps. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) describes knowledge as survival. It saves people. In other words, it relieves people from all sorts of negative aspects, because knowledge provides a clearer worldview. The Imam announces:

1- Mujadala: 11.

2- Ibid.

(Knowledge saves).

He also states:

(Knowledge guides).

Good usage of the mind shows the way to wisdom. The Imam also describes knowledge as a preventive factor from negative issues:

(Knowledge is a barrier to lesions).

Social issues are lesions and cannot be prevented unless we are learned. For example, the failure to forgive is a lesson. It prevents us from having a friendly relationship with others. Forgiveness leads us to achieve an organized cooperative society. Knowledge requires us to use the mind for the good of the self and society. The Imam gives a clearer idea:

(Knowledge is the candle of the mind).

It means that knowledge makes the mind active rather than idle.

Another crucial aspect of knowledge is that it unites because this feature is present in learning and intellectuality. Therefore, the Imam states:

(Knowledge is more gathering than fathers).

We may call knowledge a beautiful garment: it approaches you to the heart of others. It also covers the drawbacks. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) refers to this meaning:

(Whosoever is covered by the garment of knowledge, his flaws are hidden from people).

All these instructions are proposed so that he can be a constructive agent in society and contributes to the realization

of the divine successorship on earth. He can also succeed at manifesting his principles, mainly practical patriotism.

The Fruit of Knowledge is Work for Life

We have discussed that learning is a fundamental principle that enables individuals to carry the patriotic message and render it into its practical form. In case knowledge remains on the theoretical side, it becomes a burden. It is a divine gift that must be invested practically.

From a religious and patriotic standpoint, one must activate this knowledge for the good of society, homeland, and humanity in general.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) stated:

(Do not render your knowledge into ignorance, and your certainty into doubt).

In other words, when knowledge is not practiced, it remains futile since it cannot change anything in reality.

Knowledge is the goal that sublimates Man. It is a means by which one can serve his community and the entire world. In case this knowledge is not practiced and does not serve any good to society, it becomes equal to ignorance.

(Do not render your knowledge into ignorance, and your certainty into doubt).

This Hadith also means that when someone believes in some ideas, he appoints it as his plan in life. When he reaches the level of certainty, he must be even further motivated. The Imam wants us to activate our abilities and qualifications so that we improve our life. Therefore, he states:

(Do not render your knowledge into ignorance, and your certainty into doubt. When you acquire knowledge, practice it; and when you become certain, proceed).

Knowledge without practice is fruitless. It is only useful when practiced.

(When you acquire knowledge, practice it; and when you become certain, proceed).

One of the obstacles that prevent any person or society from developing is doubt. It paralyzes and holds from progression. It is a negative feature of life. Any individual, especially the learned one, must be positive, constructive, useful, and progressive.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) gives us a clear picture of the learner. He states that the one who learns and acquired real knowledge deserved to be labeled a scholar. He must also be featured with three characteristics:

(A scholar has three signs: knowledge about God, about what He loves, and about what He demises).

The first sign is knowledge about God. It means that he links his mind, heart, and instinct with God. This stance must be rendered into practice in life. It must modify one's relationship with God and Man. He must be keen to preserve the homeland that was granted to him by God.

The second sign is the knowledge about what God loves. We must remember that this creation is founded upon love. There is a divine Hadith that states:

(I was a hidden Gem. I wanted to be acknowledged so I created the creation).

Thus, the basis of creation is love. God created this creation and assigned Man as his successor on the earth. He honored Man by ordering the angels to bow before him. He became God's deputy on the earth. The Quran clarifies this loving rela-

tionship between God and people in the following way:

(He loves them and they love Him)⁽¹⁾.

Hence, a learned person who acquired some true knowledge must practice what he learned lovingly. He must love his homeland and its people. In this manner, we may manifest practical patriotism within the boundaries of God's love and hate. Oppression is the most hated feature of God.

Mercy is the most loveable aspect of God, whereas oppression manifests all kinds of negative features. It is the most hated concept by God. Many Hadiths emphasize this idea:

(Mercy so that you are mercified).

Another Hadith states:

(Mercy those on the earth so that you are mercified by the One in Heaven).

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also stated:

(Any scholar has three signs: intellectuality, tolerance, and silence).

Accordingly, the signs of a scholar are the following:

First: continuity of seeking knowledge. Any scholar needs to add to his knowledge because all things stop at certain points. Therefore, any person needs to keep learning. This is a Quranic religious idea:

(And say: "My Lord, increase my knowledge)⁽²⁾.

Second: tolerance. It is such a beautiful concept that quilts many ideas. It includes humbleness, socialization, coopera-

1- Maida: 54

2- Baqara: 30

tion, flexibility, mercy, sympathy, and empathy.

Third: silence. We understand from silence two ideas here:

First, not interfering with what does not concern us, because knowledge must improve our social status rather than destroy it.

Second, answering only after asking, because one of the most important features of a learned person is that he speaks only when necessary. The more you respect your words, the more others respect you.

Knowledge grants us three results:

First: practicing it.

Second, sincerity in work. Sincerity here means perfection. A learned person is keen to perfect his work. On the opposite front, an unlearned person does not know how to start and when to finish. Therefore, we are required to be perfect in our work.

In another Hadith, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(The worth of any person equals the good he does).

Any individual's goodness is manifested in his work. When he remains in the realm of ideas and concepts, he cannot show his real abilities. Only through work, sincerity is recognized.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) seeks to show that there is one primary religious and humanitarian result that must be achieved. It must be manifested in Man's representation of divine successorship on the earth. He states:

(The fruit of knowledge is to work for life).

Learning can reveal one's abilities and qualifications in con-

structing the earth and life of people.

The works and services that you can present are of colorful varieties because sciences are colorful. They must be acquired because they can manifest one's ability to practice religious, patriotic, and humanitarian ideas. In this regard, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) states:

(Learn what you want to learn. God shall not benefit you from what you acquired until you practice it. indeed, the concern of the scholars is to care, whereas the concern of the ignorants is to speak).

This Hadith shows the link between knowledge, serving one's homeland, and life.

(The concern of the scholars is to care).

It means taking care of their society and people. It means taking care of the homeland and working on the construction of Man positively. It is the best service one can present to his homeland.

(The concern of the ignorants is to speak).

The ignorants are only concerned with speaking which is useless. As a scholar, he seeks to educate others and take care of others. Patronizing others is a feature of a true scholar. He is concerned with people's affairs and issues. He always seeks to educate people intellectually, morally, and humanitarian.

Thus, knowledge is a divine trust that must be maintained. As God entrusted Man with the successorship on this earth, He also entrusted him with knowledge. He granted Man knowledge like that of the prophets. Man must use these abilities and gifts so that he can benefit his people, society, and homeland.

There is a Hadith that states:

(Knowledge is the trust of God on earth. The scholars are entrusted with it. Whoever practices it, he truly maintains it, and whoever does not practice it, is enrolled in the book of traitors).

Practicing knowledge means using it for the good of the society and homeland. We must practice our knowledge so that we prove that we are true practical patriots.

Social Relationships Overwhelmed with Mercy and Forgiveness

Learning has a deep impact on one's manner of thinking and social behavior. Acquiring new knowledge plants a sense of responsibility in one's mind.

We should remember that practical patriotism has a direct relationship with learning. The idea of patriotism is instinctual. The love of the house and neighborhood is instinctual. This love is present whether one learns new knowledge or remains idle. However, rendering the love of homeland into practical patriotism demands learning. Maintaining a strong home and united nation requires learning.

Learning activates the love of homeland into practice. Accordingly, one can work for the good of society, people, and homeland. One can build peace in his socialization with others. This also takes us to the positive impacts of shaking hands with others. It also reminds us of the importance of consulting others. Generally speaking, practical patriotism demands strong social bonds that are built upon love, trust, compassion, and hope.

In this regard, as part of social norms, we see the role greeting and shaking hands play in improving social bonds. The consultation also occupies an important place in social relationships. They are not only simple social norms but also part of the religious educational system.

All these concepts and practices are highlighted by divine instructions. As a reminder, they include greeting, shaking hands, companionship, honesty, and here we may add hugging.

Shaking hands plays a primary role in improving social bonds

because it confirms the depth of humanitarian, patriotic, and religious bonds among people. It also signifies the mutual responsibility people have toward their homeland.

Therefore, there is religious encouragement to shake hands and to add further warmth to it. It is narrated that when the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) shakes hands with others, he would not pull his hand unless the other pulls his.

Anas narrates:

(I have never seen the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) pull his hand unless the other pulls his).

This is what I mean by warmth in handshaking. This is a confirmation of the unity of people and the depth of cooperation, sense of responsibility, compassion, affection, brotherhood, love, and harmony among people in one homeland.

From a religious point of view, the love of homeland is part of faith. This love cannot be honest unless it is a practice in the everyday life. It is called practical patriotism.

However, we should remember that faith is not only the love of homeland: it is organizing a devoting and honest relationship with God. It is a relationship of the spirit, mind, and heart that is manifested in action and behavior. He becomes part of the believers' community. They all cooperate to carry religious and humanitarian concepts, mainly patriotism. Therefore, numerous religious, educational, and humanitarian texts highlight the importance of the concept of hugging.

There is a Hadith narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) in this regard:

(When the believers hug, they are overwhelmed by mercy.

If they keep doing it and they do not intend to acquire any worldly matter but the content of God, they are told: you are forgiven, start anew).

Among the basics of practical patriotism are love, compassion, and mercy among the people of one homeland.

Hugging confirms three spiritual aspects:

The love of God.

The love of the Prophet and his Progeny (peace be upon them all).

The love of homeland.

Therefore, hugging is a factor that maintains divine mercy, because they have mercified each other, depending on the previously mentioned law:

(Mercy so that you are mercified).

Thus, they are overwhelmed by divine mercy, as mentioned in the Hadith:

(Overwhelmed by mercy).

We understand that mercy keeps coming from God until it overwhelms them. This is both a blessing and a responsibility.

It is a blessing because it raises their spiritual and religious level. It is also a responsibility because one is accountable before his society, people, and homeland.

(When the believers hug, they are overwhelmed by mercy. If they keep doing it and they do not intend to acquire any worldly matter but the content of God, they are told: you are forgiven, start anew).

(The content of God) refers to the three basic cornerstones

of faith. They are:

The love of God.

The love of the Prophet and his Progeny (peace be upon them all).

The love of homeland.

It is narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) that he stated:

(You are not true believers unless God and His Messenger are more loved to you than yourself, your possessions, and your children).

Another Hadith states:

(The love of homeland is part of faith).

The requirement is to render this love into practice.

(When the believers hug, they are overwhelmed by mercy. If they keep doing it and they do not intend to acquire any worldly matter but the content of God, they are told: you are forgiven, start anew).

(Worldly affairs) here means that social relationships must be for the sake of the homeland. They must be practiced in the form of practical patriotism. They must seek the public good. They should move in the direction of homeland construction and development (homeland consists of land and Man). It should not appeal to private interests or egoism.

Patriotism must be sublime divine, religious, humanitarian, and patriotic values. Accordingly, greeting, shaking hands, and hugging are all a form of worship. God shall reward those who practice these concepts. Through them, they can achieve forgiveness. The angels shall address them:

(You are forgiven, start anew).

It means that the mistakes that you commit toward your Lord have been forgiven. So, start anew.

Within the same context, about the mercy and forgiveness of God, there is another Hadith that clarifies the importance of hugging:

(Any believer who visits his brother, while he knows his status, God shall register for him one good deed and remove from his records one evil deed. He shall be raised one level. When he knocks at the door, the gates of Heaven open. When they shake hands and hug, God shall shower them with His mercy).

This Hadith was stated in a time when people walked on their feet. Today, we move by car. We may say that with every turn of the wheel, one good deed is enrolled.

(When he knocks at the door, the gates of Heaven open. When they shake hands and hug, God shall shower them with His mercy).

These instructions are proposed only to highlight the importance of social interactions and render them into practice. They seek to improve social bonds among people so that they succeed at constructing their homeland.

Other Hadiths show that shaking hands is used when you visit someone who lives near you, whereas hugging is used for the one who arrives from a journey.

In both cases, it is important to emphasize the significance of these humanitarian, religious, and patriotic bonds among the people of one homeland.

In addition for newcomers, we may hug each other at times

of Eid. There are certain times and moments in which it is recommended to visit each other, especially during religious or national anniversaries. There might be various cultural components in one homeland, yet they share mutual national anniversaries. Thus, they are expected to visit each other at such times.

Eid is a day of celebration. It is a sign of accomplishing certain acts of worship. In Islam, there are two primary Eids: Eid Fitr, which comes after accomplishing the worship of fasting during the month of Ramadan, and Eid Adha, which comes after accomplishing Hajj.

Any person must feel joy after accomplishing this educational, spiritual, humanitarian, and cultural course.

Spiritual and divine instructions urge people to celebrate in such times to further improve their social bonds. They also improve their relationship with God, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), and all people.

Therefore, it is highly recommended that people visit each other at times of Eid, congratulate, pray, and hug each other.

There is a Hadith that instructs us the following:

(When Eid arrives, take a bath, wear the best of your cloth, wear fragrance, visit each other, shake hands, and hug each other).

All these instructions seek to improve socialization among people and to succeed in rendering these ideas into practical patriotism.

The estrangement of a Person from Low Affairs is Chivalrous

As discussed earlier, learning grants some insights and a sense of responsibility. It also encourages an individual to work constructively in life. There is no use in learning without practicing what you have learned. In other words, the results of learning must be self-education and work.

Work is the result of a sense of responsibility. It contributes to the construction of society and its people.

We may describe the person who has this sense of responsibility variously. The best description may be chivalry.

Chivalry is a set of values that are acquired as a result of a sense of responsibility. It means nobility, enthusiasm, courage, valor, and generosity.

Thus, chivalry is the practical sense of responsibility that is a requirement to achieve practical patriotism.

Practical patriotism expects all people to feel responsible and become chivalrous. From a religious standpoint, chivalry is a cornerstone in religious teachings:

(It is We who relate to you, [O Muhammad], their story in truth. Indeed, they were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance)⁽¹⁾.

According to historical sources, they were not in their early ages. They were adults, but they had chivalrous features. They had a sense of responsibility towards their homeland, people, society, and nation. Therefore, the Quran described them as a youth (which is sometimes interchangeable with chivalry in Arabic).

1- Kahf: 13

To some people, the concept of chivalry is unclear. They may perceive it as a reference to naughtiness and lack of values. Such a person does not see himself. He does not have any interest in the public good. He does not have the concern about serving his homeland and people. He does not believe in divine successorship on the earth.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) gives us a clear idea of the meaning of chivalry. He shows all the dimensions of this concept. He states:

(Estrangement of a person from low affairs is chivalrous).

Low affairs are those negative social issues that prevent society from progressing.

Therefore, anyone who is chivalrous must keep away from negative features. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also refers to another side of chivalry:

(There is no garment more beautiful than chivalry).

It means having a sense of responsibility towards one's society and people.

There is another Hadith narrated by Imam Jafar Sadiq (peace be upon him) in which he clarifies the positive sides of this concept. It is narrated that a group of his companions was talking about chivalry. Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) told them:

(What is chivalry?! Do you think that it is about immorality? No, it is about...).

Immorality is the low affairs that affect society.

(What is chivalry?! Do you think that it is about immorality? No, it is about times prepared food, widespread generosity,

a smiling face, known honor, and not harming others. As for what you have described, it is immorality).

The Imam proposed some meanings of chivalry:

First, feeding people. A wealthy person can feed people, mainly the hunger-stricken and needy people, and orphans. Then all types of people. Feeding is a manifestation of chivalry.

Valor and courage are the closest concepts to chivalry. They are also aligned with generosity. When someone is courageous, he must also be generous.

Second, serving people, disregarding their backgrounds is a manifestation of chivalry. This humanitarian tendency must include all people. The Imam clarifies that:

(What is chivalry?! Do you think that it is about immorality? No, it is about times prepared food, widespread generosity).

Widespread generosity is serving people. This service may be realized in various manners. For example, one may use his social and official status to serve others

(Smiling face).

We have encountered this meaning many times throughout this book. Embracing and welcoming others with a smiling face is a necessary socialization feature. The Imam then states:

(Known honor).

This is a feature of those who do not see their private interests. He does not ask for any reward for his chivalrous acts and services. He acts out of his sense of responsibility.

After mentioning the previous features, such a person must be as the following:

(Not harming others).

This person employs all his positive features for the public good and the prosperity of his homeland. He never thinks of harming his homeland and people.

Chivalry is on the opposite side of immorality. An immoral person always works to harm others, because his qualifications lack any form of morality. He does not carry any kind of humanitarian, religious, or patriotic culture. Therefore, he is always expected to harm others.

The Imam (peace be upon him) wants to clarify the distinction between chivalry and immorality by this Hadith:

(What is chivalry?! Do you think that it is about immorality? No, it is about times prepared food, widespread generosity, a smiling face, known honor, and not harming others. As for what you have described, it is immorality).

Harming others is a form of immorality, as described in the Hadith:

(As for what you have described, it is immorality).

Immorality is a deviation from the right path. It is the lack of responsibility towards one's homeland and people.

We also read in a Hadith narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in which he gives another beautiful description of chivalry. According to what the Imam announces, chivalry is about the sublimity of the self as the result of self-education. It is also about high morals, big-heartedness, and forgiving others' mistakes. He can socialize with people, has many friends, and neglect their mistakes. One of the features of chivalry that the Imam highlights is big-heartedness and good neighboring. It is not only about not harming others, but also tolerating their harm.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) clarifies the method of chivalry in these words:

(The system of chivalry is built upon these aspects: forgiving your brothers' mistakes and good neighboring).

The learned are the best person who is qualified to socialize with people and carry the message of practical patriotism to all people. It is necessary to remember that he should not give any idea about what he knows nothing. We always see that some people give opinions on everything, especially on religious topics.

Any person who has achieved some level of knowledge must respect his utterances. He must not talk about the fields in which he has no specialty. Many social issues arising out of the speech of ignorant people. They narrate the ideas of religions and sects in a wrong way.

From a religious standpoint, many Hadiths and Quranic verses prevent us from speaking about those fields in which we are not specialized.

We should be keen to preserve the message of peace. We should also work on realizing practical patriotism in a way that contributes to the construction of social peace.

Whoever Thinks Well shall not Slip

Thinking has a direct impact on the nature of socialization. It contributes to the formation of a unified society. Thinking is the result of a productive mind. There is a mutual relationship between learning and the mind. Learning includes all fields of knowledge and they all are related to the mind. Their success depends on the way we use our minds.

Using the mind properly guarantees progress in all fields of life. It puts Man on the path to perfection. It clarifies the sort of relationship with God, with people, and with the homeland. The mind also designates the way one may use these ideas in a way that they develop his life.

These values contribute to specifying the foundations of the life of an individual, community, and the entire nation.

These values may also be called ethics, virtues, and behavior. What matters is the way we may use them toward constructing society.

The more one carries these values, the more one becomes capable of improving his relationship with God, people and their rights, and homeland. This verse refers to this meaning:

(Look how We have favored [in provision] some of them over others. But the Hereafter is greater in degrees [of difference] and greater in distinction)⁽¹⁾.

The nature of preference is specified according to the sort of interaction between knowledge, mind, and instinct. The resulting religious, humanitarian, and patriotic values and the ability to practice them on the real ground are also considered. Another verse states:

1 Asra: 21

(Look how We have favored [in provision] some of them over others. But the Hereafter is greater in degrees [of difference] and greater in distinction).

The word “Look” in the verse is an insistence on observing and considering this form of perfection. Its weight is appreciated according to the practical values it carries. The verse insists:

(Look how We have favored [in provision] some of them over others. But the Hereafter is greater in degrees [of difference] and greater in distinction).

From a religious perspective, the relationship with God belongs both to this world and the Hereafter. In this world, people’s relationship with each other stops at the moment of death. Their relationship with their homeland ends when they die as well. Yet, their relationship with their homeland endures in case they present something fruitful to it. In jurisprudence, it is called “continuous charity”. Thus, the only enduring relationship is that with God. The preference is specified according to the type of relationship one forms with others and with the homeland.

(Look how We have favored [in provision] some of them over others. But the Hereafter is greater in degrees [of difference] and greater in distinction).

Accordingly, the carriers of the divine message, mainly the prophets and Messengers are the most favored ones. The following verse refers to this meaning:

(Those messengers - some of them We caused to exceed others. Among them were those to whom Allah spoke, and He raised some of them in degree. And We gave Jesus, the Son of Mary, clear proofs, and We supported him with the Pure Spirit. If Allah had willed, those [generations] succeeding them would not have fought each other after the clear

proofs had come to them. But they differed, and some of them believed and some of them disbelieved. And if Allah had willed, they would not have fought each other, but Allah does what He intends)⁽¹⁾.

Thus, any individual who wants to achieve perfection and becomes the carrier of the divine message must realize three factors:

Knowledge, good relationship with others, continuous recognition of the instinct.

These three factors enable any individual to be the carrier of virtues. They qualify him to improve his interaction with others and implant the culture of practical patriotism in his society.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) insists on the importance of virtues in life. Once, he stated:

(Best of means is the good virtues).

The Imam believes that the carrier of the religious, patriotic, and humanitarian message needs certain means with which he can convey his message to others. The best means that facilitate achieving this goal is having good virtues.

Virtuous behavior pulls the hearts of others toward you. It improves the quality of socialization as well. It prevents the annoying voices from being heard.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also states:

(Achieving virtues silences the hostile).

He is left with no opportunity to criticize or attack you.

1- Baqara: 253

We should remember that the opponents are ideologically indoctrinated. They cannot cease attacking you despite all the perfections you might have. As for those neutral people, unclarity can be fixed when you are adorned with virtues in behavior and speech.

The Imam also states:

(Whoever is poor with virtues, his means become weaker).

Those individuals who have weak means, propose false claims, or have double standards in their life. They cannot match their speech with their practices. That is the moment when people recognize their falsity. This is the meaning of the Hadith of the Imam:

(Whoever is poor with virtues, his means become weaker).

It is important to note that the one who carries practical patriotism, practical humanitarianism, and practical faith will face many troubles. In such moments, his true essence reveals to people and recognizes his nature.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) refers to this meaning:

(At the succession of adversity, the virtues of man appear).

Any person who works on self-education must also be keen to improve his virtues and correct his path.

There is another Hadith that classifies virtues into four parts:

(There are four virtues: wisdom, chastity, strength, and justice).

As for the virtue of wisdom, it is the result of a mature mind. Such a mind is productive. However, it must learn to achieve such a level.

Concerning the second virtue, chastity is keeping one's desires and whims inside. Virtue is to respect others and not transgress their boundaries. It is also the respect of divine boundaries as well. Thus, it is controlling wishes and desires in a way that does not harm others.

The third virtue is strength. It is a divine gift. It was granted to Man when created. So, it should be controlled at moments of anger and never be unleashed.

The fourth is justice. It is straightforwardness with others. It must spring from the inside. It should not be the result of certain circumstances. It should not follow momentary emotions.

All these virtues can be found in a statement proposed by Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Whoever prefers others over himself, he deserves the name of virtuous).

Any individual who prefers others over himself can be labeled as virtuous. It is a matter of instinct when someone loves himself. However, when he prefers others over himself, this is the best manifestation of virtue.

Virtues and moral values qualify people to carry the practical patriotism message. They also qualify people to be role models for others.

The Life of an Insightful Heart

The usefulness of knowledge is manifested in the way a person employs what he learned for the construction of himself and his homeland. It must also be used for the improvement of one's mind by building appropriate social interactions.

The construction of the heart is also significant. It means improving the various aspects of oneself. This is where we emphasize the importance of the position of divine religions and their scriptures in life, especially the Quran.

The Quran has a great impact on one's soul, senses, and heart because it springs from the Unseen. Its concepts play a great role in improving the quality of life when practiced daily.

The heart is the site of practicing these concepts. The Quran is the message of God. It is the manifestation of the instructions in this book.

Any human being represents two sides: good and evil. The evil shrinks inasmuch as the good becomes stronger. Well contributes to the construction of society, whereas evil is a destructive factor in the community. Good means mercy and compassion. This is crystal clear in the Quran when it describes the role of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds)⁽¹⁾.

He is a mercy to all humanity.

As discussed, the primary message is mercy. We may find other messages in the Quran, including peace, calling for peace, and practicing peace. This is encountered in the following verse:

1- Anbia: 107

(O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy)⁽¹⁾.

These Quranic instructions seek to purify the heart and taking back to its original position. This is clarified in the statement of Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(Know that this Quran is the advisor that does not deceive, the guide that does not mislead, and the speaker that does not lie. Whoever sits to this Quran, he will not rise but with an increase or decrease: increase in guidance or decrease of blindness).

He is the advisor that does not deceive because it is revealed by the Creator of Man. God created Man because He loves Man and He wants him to be his successor in this universe. Therefore, He cannot deceive him and lead him astray.

Another reason behind the creation of Man is that he is destined to form a community and a nation, and every nation forms a homeland that includes a variety of religions and ethnicities. The divine wish is that they become united, loving, and equal. Therefore, it cannot deceive humanity.

(The guide that does not mislead).

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) is a student of the Quran, which states:

(Who created me and He shall guide me)⁽²⁾.

It means that creating Man without assigning a method for his life is futile. Therefore, the Imam clarifies that the Quran is:

(The guide that does not mislead).

1- Baqara: 208

2- Shoara: 78

He, then, states:

(The speaker does not lie).

When the speaker is a human, he speaks of different worldly affairs. His speech may be true or not. In case the speaker is the Creator of Man, Who wants the ultimate good for him, and He created him to form communities, nations, and homelands, He must be honest.

The Imam, then, insists that we must coexist with this Quran so that it improves our hearts and lives. This cannot be achieved without understanding these values and practicing them in life. It must be the basis of socialization with people in the community.

In the above Hadith, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) considers the one who reads the Quran as if he is speaking to another person. This individual does not lie. The speaker is the Lord God. The result of this dialogue is the increase of the positive features as there is a decrease in the negative characteristics that may blindfold any individual. Therefore, the Imam states:

(Whoever sits to this Quran, he will not rise but with an increase or decrease: increase in guidance or decrease of blindness).

Guidance is clarity in view and thought. It is the clarity that prevents from falling into blindness and ignorance. Leaving the mind aside leads to the negligence of the heart that finally leads to a form of blindness.

Ignorance is destined to lead to darkness. The ignorant cannot see his path. He loses his mission in his society and homeland. Therefore, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) clarifies the role of the heart:

(Know that this Quran is the advisor that does not deceive, the guide that does not mislead, and the speaker that does not lie. Whoever sits to this Quran, he will not rise but with an increase or decrease: increase in guidance or decrease of blindness).

Thus, the contribution of the Quran to the construction of the heart is important. In another Hadith, the Imam announces:

(This Quran has the light, healing of what is in the chests, and life for an insightful heart. It is the light for the walker in the dark).

This Hadith clarifies the importance of the Quran for the heart.

Thus, we see the insistence of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) on interacting with divine books and messages, including the Quran. He clarifies how the Quran plays the role of a guide to individuals, communities, nations, and all humanity.

The Quran is the example for all humanity, as stated in the following Hadith:

(The position of the heart to the body is similar to the position of a leader to his people).

All communities appoint certain individuals as their leaders in all their religious and worldly affairs. It is similar to the position of the heart in the body. It means that all other organs work according to the heart. Thus, when the heart is pure, all other organs also function purely for the good of himself, others, and the homeland.

Say: God is My Lord and Stand Firm

A role model is keen to work on self-education and prepare

himself to carry the humanitarian, patriotic, and religious message to others. He always interacts with society positively.

Being a role model means manifesting the standards and values practically. He should not stay at the conceptual and theoretical level.

This meaning is achieved through the interaction of knowledge, mind, and heart with each other. They must be built upon pure instinct so that they move toward manifesting divine straightforwardness.

Straightforwardness has many levels. It is related to knowledge and its realization. One should be eager to achieve the most sublime one.

Straightforwardness qualifies individuals to render their messages into the practical realm. It best represents practical patriotism, which is a form of responsibility towards the homeland and people

When straightforwardness is practiced on the real ground, it grants its carrier honesty in society. What matters here is that others must be convinced by his message, which is practical patriotism. When people find him trustworthy, they would follow him and adopt his convictions.

Straightforwardness is a key factor for the carriers of patriotic, religious, and social messages to convey their message to others. It is the manifestation of ideas and theories on the real ground.

Standing firm, or straightforwardness, is the divine advice to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household). It quilts all other positive features. It qualified the Prophet to be effective among his people. Therefore, the Quran states:

(So remain on a right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have turned back with you)⁽¹⁾.

It is beyond doubt that if God knew that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) had no straightforwardness, He would never appoint him for this Message. God conveys His humanitarian, patriotic, and religious messages through the Prophet. We should note that religious factors can never be detached from humanitarian ones. When they match, the result is practical patriotism.

Therefore, God addresses His Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household), as well as addressing all other carriers of the message, that straightforwardness is a key factor in being effective among people:

(So remain on a right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have turned back with you)⁽²⁾.

One of the interpretations of **(who turned back with you)** is those who chose to stand firm with you. It also refers to those who seek to purify themselves from double standards.

There is a Hadith narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) that benefits those who seek straightforwardness in their life. Once, a man asked the Prophet about a rope to which he abides. Abiding by rope here means following certain instructions practically rather than theoretically. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) replied:

(Say: my Lord is God and stand firm).

From a religious standpoint, belief is the first principle upon which everything else is built. Then, straightforwardness is

1- Hud: 112

2- Hud: 112

achieved as a result of being faithful.

The relationship with God grants strength and stability to individuals. The following Hadith confirms this fact:

(A believer has strength in his religion and virtue in his straightforwardness).

It means that on his religious side, he has clarity, and his straightforwardness, he has virtue.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Know that God ordered us to stand firm. He hates the protean. Thus, do not move away from righteousness and the guardianship of the people of righteousness over you. Indeed, whoever replaces us with others, he shall perish).

The Imam insists on the necessity of straightforwardness, the opposite of which is the changeability of nature. All people are required to be clear. Therefore, he states:

(Do not move away from righteousness).

All humanity must be righteous. Otherwise, they would be trialed with oppression. It is against human nature because this world is built upon justice and equality, as stated in the law proposed by the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(You all are from Adam, and Adam is from dust).

He also states:

(The sons of Adam are as equal as the teeth of a comb).

The requirement is to practice the two concepts of righteousness and straightforwardness daily. We are also expected to recognize the people of righteousness.

Concepts and values cannot be recognized by people, but people are recognized by values and standards.

Many other Hadiths are narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) concerning the meaning and place of straightforwardness, as the following one:

(straightforwardness is integrity; it leads you to triumph).

(straightforwardness is integrity). It can be applied to individuals, groups, communities, and nations. **(It leads you to triumph)** includes all the components of the society when the culture of integrity is in public.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also states:

(You have to abide by the path of straightforwardness. It grants you dignity and keeps you away from blame).

It means that you will be honorable among your people. They would look at you with awe. You will be able to convey your message and realize your thoughts.

Second, **(keeps you away from blame).** When you are straightforward in your ideas and practice, there is nothing for which you will be blamed. The negative things they speak about you are merely false accusations. Their malicious intentions will be exposed sooner or later.

Thus, there are numerous sayings about the meaning of straightforwardness in the community. They all seek to qualify individuals to carry the message and practice it in their life. In this manner, they will be able to practice patriotism successfully.

Chivalry is Justness and Reformation

One of the cornerstones of straightforwardness is chivalry. It is a necessary feature of a role model in society. Otherwise, he cannot be trusted and followed. Straightforwardness is a practical concept. It is a model to be followed and imitated in practice. Such a person must be chivalrous.

Chivalry is a concept that comprehends all virtues. It is a title for morality. It is a characteristic of a pure heart. It is a public trait. It does not yield to certain individuals or to a specific time and place. It is part of universal morality that springs from instinct.

It is spontaneous. It is the result of respect for the self, others, and God. It quilts many other morals that function in one's socialization with others.

The following verse shows the manifestations of this concept:

(Who restrain anger, and pardon (all) men;- for Allah loves those who do good)⁽¹⁾.

One restrains his anger out of chivalry. He also pardons other, and do good to them. These are the results of chivalry in his heart. It is empty of any negative aspects. There is no malice, harm, hatred, or hostility in his heart. He wants good for others as well as himself.

Many Hadiths are narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in which he describes the meaning of chivalry. He states:

(Chivalry is a label for all other virtues and goodnesses).

He also states:

(Chivalry encourages to do virtuous acts).

1- Al Emran: 134

He states as well:

(The beauty of mind and chivalry distinguish any person).

As proposed by the Imam, using the mind positively distinguishes any person. It also invests the heart in the right path.

Thus, an individual has to seek self-education. It is necessary to convey the message to others successfully. He must work on realizing patriotism practically in a way that achieves the happiness of this world and the afterlife.

It is narrated from Jaber that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household) told a man from the tribe of Thaqeef:

(My brother from Thaqeef. How do you see chivalry?).

He replied: "It is justness and reformation, our beloved Prophet".

(As it is among us).

Justness needs chivalry. It cannot be realized without chivalry. Justness and reformation are interrelated. Thus, they cannot be achieved without chivalry.

It is difficult for any individual to work on reformation unless he reforms himself first. When he achieves self-reformation, he also achieves straightforwardness. That is the moment when all the members of society will be willing to follow him and listen to him.

In the same context, Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) was asked about the meaning of chivalry. He stated:

(It is preserving the religion, honoring the self, openness in speech, during virtuous acts, and winning the hearts of people).

Here, we should note that chivalry is a matter of the heart. The heart always undergoes the effect of the Unseen, which is faith and religion.

(Honoring the self).

It is the respect of oneself or others.

(Openness in speech).

It is the result of self-education. It is a sign that such an individual is not arrogant.

(Enduring virtuous acts).

He does virtuous acts for the sake of others. He maintains others' rights. He is eager to preserve public rights so that he lives in respectable society.

The previous Hadith also refers to one last feature:

(Winning the hearts of others).

This part reminds us of the Hadith stated by the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(My Lord ordered me to tolerate people, as He ordered me to perform obligatory worships).

Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) defines it as **(winning the hearts of people)** whether by a good look, good words, greeting, warm welcome, and hospitality. The love among people confirms their unity. The result will be a strong harmonious society. Thus, they can easily achieve their goal, which is practical patriotism.

Manifestations of Chivalry in Life

We may classify chivalry into two parts:

Chivalry in normal times.

Chivalry in exceptional times.

All these cases have two general dimensions:

Chivalry at home and in travel.

As for chivalry at home, it has a few cornerstones:

1- The first cornerstone is related to the spiritual side of chivalry. It concerns self-education, the confirmation of faith, and the love of God, the result of which is the love of the creation of God, mainly humans. This is clear in the divine books and instructions given to the prophets and Messengers. This applies to the Torah revealed to Moses, the Bible revealed to Christ, and the Quran revealed to Muhammed (peace be upon him and his Household).

Absorbing the meaning of chivalry purifies the soul, educates the self, and plants compassion inside in a way that this individual becomes the source of virtue for others.

Therefore, the first cornerstone of having chivalry at home is self-education and spiritual improvement.

2- The second cornerstone is socializing with others and being present in public places. It is social interaction with others.

Such socialization is built upon moral values that contribute to the construction of society. It helps improve self-education and convey the message to others. In this stage, the love of God, homeland, and others must be realized practically.

This socialization may include meeting others in places of

worship which improve the spiritual side of the community. They confirm the relationship of people with Heaven, the Unseen, and God.

3- The third cornerstone is accompanying virtuous people. However, in the beginning, we must recognize virtue so that we may recognize its people. Virtue is anything that brings good to others in all fields of life. Thus, whoever feels this responsibility and strives to accomplish this mission, is a person of virtue. Accompanying such people is useful. This whole system of thought undergoes the meaning of chivalry.

After accomplishing this mission, any responsible individual feels the need to learn more. The more he learns new things, the more he feels that he has to acquire further knowledge. Learning opens new gates to new realms. Individuals must not lose any opportunity to learn new things, whether in religious or worldly affairs. Then life is built upon humanitarian and religious bases, it is considered worship in all its dimensions.

Because the manifestations of chivalry are limitless, its basis is limitless as well:

- 1- First: self-education.
- 2- Second: socialization with others, especially in places of worship.
- 3- Third, accompanying people of virtue, who seek to spread virtuous acts among people.
- 4- Fourth: is the necessity of learning.

As for chivalry in travel, it includes the following forms:

- 1- First, helping others in all possible forms, especially those who need it. One of the most needed help in travel is feeding others. It is a form of chivalry when you feed people, especially the ill and elderly, who cannot move or go out.

2- Second, in travel, people get tired. It is a chivalrous act when you make an atmosphere of fun (within moral boundaries) so that they enjoy their time.

3- Third, when a group of people travels together, there will be different tastes, attitudes, and manners. It is chivalrous not to oppose others continuously, though you think your idea is the best one.

4- Fourth, travel reveals the real nature of people. In times of travel, you stay for a long time with others, unlike in your city when you meet them only for a few hours. Therefore, you may see positive and negative attitudes of others. It is chivalrous not to tell others about negative aspects you observed in travel. You may only tell others about the good things you saw.

In this regard, there is a Hadith that clarifies this meaning:

(There are two types of chivalry: at home and in travel. As for the chivalry at home, it is reciting the Quran, attending mosques, accompanying virtuous people, and learning jurisprudence. As for chivalry in travel, it is feeding others, having fun in a way that does not oppose God's content, not opposing your companions, and when back home, not informing others about what you saw from your companions).

Reciting the Quran means all divine books. Attending mosques means all places of worship. Accompanying virtuous people means any act that is beneficial for others. Studying jurisprudence means any field of knowledge.

It is chivalrous when your companionship is pleasing to others. Any individual may have many issues or obstacles in his life. He may undergo crushing economic circumstances. So, it is chivalrous to do the following:

1- First, one should not tell others about these issues because they affect their mood. It opposes chivalry.

2- Second, hiding your sickness. When you are sick, it is chivalrous not to tell others about it.

Here, we may mention other chivalrous acts that are part of public morality:

1- First, when others talk to you, you have to pay all your attention and listen to them. When you do not listen to the speaker, it means that you are careless, which is against chivalry. Part of polite socialization with others is to listen to others when they speak to you. The carrier of the message, because he is a role model in society, must be keen to maintain a polite relationship with others.

He must embrace others, listen to them carefully, and ignore their mistakes when done purposefully or unintentionally. When they are committed by mistake, it is necessary to ignore them so that the doer is not embarrassed before others.

2- Second, it is chivalrous to tolerate the intentional mistakes your brothers commit. There are many Hadiths narrated from the Prophet and Ahlulbait (peace be upon them all) in which they emphasize chivalry in our socialization with others. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Hiding your poverty and illness is chivalrous. Ignoring others' mistakes is chivalrous. Listening to your brother is chivalrous. Tolerating the mistakes of your brothers is chivalrous).

It is beautiful to have chivalry as a standard in our attitudes. This benefits the individual himself before others. It contributes to self-education. It motivates the individual to have the same attitudes and standards in both private and public. You should not do some acts in private, which are embarrassing to you when done in public. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) refers to this meaning:

(The entire chivalry is not doing some act in private, which is embarrassing to you when done in public).

He also states:

(By politeness, chivalry is perfected).

He also states:

(By honesty, chivalry is perfected).

He also states:

(By loyalty and honesty, chivalry is perfected for its people).

He also states:

(Part of the perfect chivalry is to forget your rights and remember others' rights over you).

It means that you become flexible concerning your rights, and be firm concerning the rights of others.

The last Hadith in this section, which contributes to the improvement of social bonds among people, is what was narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him):

(The most sublime chivalry is good brothering).

Giving Advice Results in Societal Fruits

As discussed in the previous chapter, chivalry is a necessary feature that must be found in the manner of any carrier of a practical patriotism message. The more chivalrous he is, the more effective he becomes.

Chivalry cannot be realized unless there is a love for others. As discussed earlier, love of others is a necessary aspect of the culture of practical patriotism. When you love others, you wish them reformation and interact with them based on chivalry.

Thus, we may say that the love of others leads to chivalry. When you become a role model in society, you will be keen to practice these values for the sake of your homeland and people.

Any individual can improve his society and homeland since he can use his mind, heart, and instinct.

The concept of improving is derived from love and chivalry. This concept can sometimes be replaced with advice.

A responsible person is keen to cooperate with others and contribute to the improvement of their education, culture, morals, and behavior.

This keenness to improve others positively may be called advice. It springs from one's love and chivalry. It is part of practical patriotism. However, we must pay attention to certain aspects:

First, the pieces of advice that you give others must be clear and comprehensible. They must not be vague or theoretical. They must be practical.

Second, these devices must have been practiced by the

speaker first. It is acknowledged that circumstances differ from one person to another. Yet, there are common issues in society. So, the speaker must be aware of the advice he gives others and must have practiced them already.

Third, he must give these pieces of advice in a calm friendly manner. He must prevent using certain words that create a barrier between him and others.

Fourth, he must be sure that others accept his advice from him. Otherwise, it is preferred not to speak to them. In such a situation, advice becomes a barrier between you and others and further complicates the issues.

When these conditions are guaranteed, you must be as clear and forward as possible so that everyone may understand you.

Moreover, you should address all components of the society, regardless of their backgrounds and labels because this is a divine requirement.

This stance is obvious in all divine messages. They are humanitarian messages that confirm patriotism and the culture of practical patriotism. These divine messages are proposed for the good of people. They are not obligatory.

The mission of any messenger is to convey the message of God to humanity. This is obvious in the following verse:

(I convey unto you the Messages of my Lord and give sincere advice to you. And I know from Allah what you know not)⁽¹⁾.

The message of the Lord God appeals to the improvement of the heart from the worshipping perspective. It also appeals to the mind from a practical viewpoint. It, moreover, appeals to the heart and the mind from moral and behavioral perspectives.

1- Araf: 62

The Message of God is conveyed to humanity employing revelation. Therefore, the verse uses the word 'advise' for this mission:

(I convey unto you the Messages of my Lord and give sincere advice to you. And I know from Allah what you know not).

Another verse states:

(I convey to you the messages of my Lord, and I am to you a trustworthy adviser)⁽¹⁾.

This second verse confirms that the act of advice is divine and the Messenger is the carrier of this mission. He neither decreases nor increases what he was entrusted with. Thus, fellow citizens must be advising toward each other under the conditions mentioned above.

A Hadith from the Prophet clarifies:

(The greatest person in a position to God on the Day of Judgement is the most advising to His creation in this world).

In this context, it refers to practical patriotism:

First, he must practice this mission with all people, disregarding their religion, sect, ethnicity, or race. Advice must be gifted to everyone. Therefore, the Hadith mentions:

(Advising to His creation).

Second, the sense of responsibility and practical patriotism is not limited to one place or time. It is not limited to the people of one's neighborhood, town, city, or state. It must be practiced in all places and times because practical patriotism is universal. We understand this meaning in the above-men-

tioned Hadith:

(The most advising to His creation in this world).

It means those who advise others need to roam around the world. Moving has different manifestations, depending on the time and place of individuals. However, the requirement in this Hadith is to form a strong bond with others and advise them all the time. Advising is the basis of a strong brotherhood. Though it may not be loveable to others, it is their right to be advised. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(Cherish your brother with advice, whether on good matters or bad issues).

In other words, the advice must concern all conditions, whether encouraging them to do virtuous acts or preventing vicious ones.

In another Hadith, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) classifies people into three types:

(Advise your brother, support your acquaintances, and be pleasing to all people).

Brotherhood contributes to the purification of the inside. It makes individuals more acceptable to others. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also states:

(Advise your friends, help your acquaintances, and please all people).

There are many people you know are not your friends but acquaintances. Out of responsibility, you must help them when they need it. Giving advice is also a form of help. Yet, it is a lower level than that of your friends. Therefore, the Imam states:

(Advise your friends, help your acquaintances, and please all people).

Pleasing people is attained by smiling when you meet them.

Any individual who works on improving his education, heart, and mind is an elite and honorable person. He is qualified to advise others and feel responsible for them. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states in this regard:

(Giving advice is a manner of generous people).

In another Hadith, he clarifies that advice is equal to love. When you love for your brother what you love for yourself, you should also advise him on what is good for him. This demands a sense of responsibility and equality among people.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) mentions the fruits of giving advice to others and how it improves the social bonds among people. There are many other necessary results but we may refer to two of them:

First:

(Giving advice fruits love).

In other words, the fruit of advice is love. When people see that you are keen to advise them, they understand that you love them.

Second:

(Giving advice fruits compassion).

The result of advising others is compassion.

Love is composed of different levels, the most sublime of which is the one that is between Man and his Lord. Then, he moves toward the love of other people, who are assigned as

the successors of God on earth.

Compassion composes the relationship between people. Love may be for the Unseen, whereas compassion concerns anything that is in this material world.

In the same context, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(What God assigned people with is to advise according to their capability).

(According to their capability) as I understand, means one's responsibility toward others. The more responsible you are toward your homeland, community, and people, the more advising you must be.

(What God assigned people with is to advise according to their capability and to cooperate to establish righteousness among them).

(Establish righteousness) has deeper meanings. Righteousness has various levels, starting from the sense of equality among people. It is clear in the Quran as well:

(O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted)⁽¹⁾.

We find the same meaning in the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his Household):

(You all belong to Adam and Adam is from dust).

He also stated:

1- Hujurat: 13

(The children of Adam are as equal as the teeth of a comb).

Thus, righteousness, first, demands equality among the people of one homeland. Then, the levels of rights develop according to his comprehension and understanding of his responsibilities.

Another beautiful Hadith narrated by Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in which he states:

(Whoever advises himself is qualified to advise others, and whoever deceives himself, is more deceitful to others).

The first part of the Hadith has been discussed earlier that anyone who advises others, must, first, practice the idea himself. On the other hand, anyone who deceives himself will be deceitful to others, because he gives false ideas to people.

Thus, the concept of advice makes an individual honest with himself and others. This honesty also applies to his homeland, leading him to realize practical patriotism in his life and the life of his fellow citizens.

Hearts Converge with Fairness

In a previous Hadith on straightforwardness, we mentioned the concept of fairness. It is important to shed further light on it. It plays a primary role in the construction and improvement of social relationships. It, first, strengthens one's personality and enables him to develop his socialization with others.

From the outside, straightforwardness means true and right acts. From the inside, it means the ideas and thoughts that one carries with himself in a way that is reflected in his attitudes.

Fairness is a category of straightforwardness. It needs self-education to appear. It demands conviction and comprehension of its necessity in life. Sometimes, certain ideas exist in the mind, but do not appear in attitudes. Self-education encourages individuals to render their ideas and convictions into practices.

We should note that it is impossible to improve and modify our thoughts without the modification of the soul. When we work only on the soul, the results are found only in the emotional side. They lack intellectual aspects. We are required to work on the intellectual and objective aspects and employ our mental abilities so that we may improve the quality of our life.

When both mind and heart cooperate, they can present clarity in sight and transform it into practice.

Practical patriotism cannot be realized without socialization with others. Therefore, certain aspects need to be improved so that we maintain better socialization with others.

Here, we may clarify the difference between justice and fairness. Sometimes, people are keen to realize justice only because it is a social necessity. This keenness does not spring

from conviction. It might be a divine instruction because God expects us to be just and kind to each other. It may also be the result of a law that preserves social rights. Thus, people may realize justice out of obligation and not because they love each other.

On the other hand, fairness is practiced out of conviction because it is the result of self-education and the love of others.

The social image of a fair individual is different from others because his attitudes are based on compassion and sympathy. People respond to his presence and actions positively, because he is keen to realize unity, harmony, and cooperation among the people of one homeland.

As a matter of fact, in the beginning, practical patriotism is an idea. In case it remains in an abstract realm, it cannot be useful. It must be practiced individually so that it becomes an example for others. When it becomes an example, it will be followed by everyone.

As discussed earlier, practical patriotism must be practiced publicly so that it becomes fruitful. It is a good stance when we see that certain individuals carry this idea, but the problem is that there are groups of people who may destroy what they have built.

Therefore, we need public practical patriotism. As for those who only destroy what has been built, they do not love their country. They do not agree with the goals of the carriers of the message of practical patriotism.

Some individuals may carry practical patriotism in the form of abstract ideas and slogans. This is even more negative than the first case. In the first condition, it is clear that these people do not believe in practical patriotism, whereas in the second case, such people always speak of practical patriotism, yet

they do not practice its concepts and ideas.

This is considered the opiate of the masses. It opposes practical patriotism and prevents people from building their country.

Thus, we highlight the importance of fairness in society. We clarified the meaning of practical patriotism which is the love of others. It improves depending on the education of the self and mind. Moreover, it needs further feeders so that it endures as long as possible.

Fairness contributes to the strengthening of love and compassion. When people see you are fair with them and in your actions, they will love you. It leads to the nearness of hearts as well. You will also abide by mutual standards and goals.

No society is free from negative elements. However, fairness plays an important role in fixing such problems. It contributes to the improvement of patriotic and humanitarian bonds.

Here, we may refer to two issues:

First: fairness is a fundamental feature that contributes to the happiness of man. It also grants self-confidence which is necessary for any individual to feel joy and pleasure. Therefore, fairness is fundamental for the acquisition of internal happiness.

Second, fairness is a relative matter. It is related to knowledge, education, position, money, and homeland. In other words, the more individuals are knowledgeable, more powerful, and more wealthy, the more they are required to be fair with others.

In this pertain, we may acquire the culture of patriotism, which is the best fruit one may get as the result of following these moral procedures.

Inner and Outer Cleanliness

The role model must strive to acquire all the necessary qualifications to enable him to carry his message, mainly the message of practical patriotism. He must be close to the hearts of people so that they accept his ideas and instructions.

From a religious, humanitarian, social, and patriotic standpoint, we must shed light on the concept of purity and cleanliness. This concept is necessary from two perspectives:

First: private.

Second: public.

As for the private perspective, it concerns self-education. Cleanliness is a matter of education and awareness. Later, it becomes a nature of one's life. It is also related to one's psychological stance. It determines the level of happiness, joy, and self-confidence.

This concept is necessary for all fields of life, but even more important in realizing the message. Its carrier must be open to all people. In case such a person is not happy and self-confident, he cannot be happy with others as well. He may be unsatisfied with himself because he is not clean.

He is supposed to educate himself to abide by a certain lifestyle, in which he finds happiness. It is necessary for socialization with others.

Cleanliness is an educational matter. It reflects its effect on the inside. For example, Islam insisted on the importance of minor and major ablution, because outer cleanliness impacts inside purity.

It plays a major role in purifying the self and creating a happy life. It is also related to the love of others. It contributes to the

creation of hope, optimism, and open-heartedness.

We cannot find these positive elements in the one who does not pay attention to cleanliness. He may be stricken by pessimism, hopelessness, and detachment from others.

When an individual is keen to maintain cleanliness in his life, he would be effective at conveying his message to others, mainly the message of patriotism.

It is obvious that the truth of the message and its content does not change depending on the look of its carrier, but the psychological side plays a primary role in this regard.

All divine creeds confirm the importance of cleanliness. Moreover, the humanitarian and social fields also highlight the significance of this concept. Thus, anyone who seeks perfection and development of his country must be clean.

We must note that many people think that religion does not care about the look of individuals and that attention is only paid to the inside. This is not true. We acknowledge that the evaluation of people must not be done depending on their look, including the outfit, fragrances, and other accessories. If the evaluation of people is linked to these elements, it signifies that the attitude is not religious or patriotic, or humanitarian.

One must not waste his time on these elements. He must not exaggerate on these matters. However, they must not be neglected entirely. There must be a middle ground. He must be clean and good-looking in a way that he is embraced and respected by society.

Cleanliness contributes to the harmony and cooperation of societies. It improves the quality of socialization among people.

Many religious instructions have been narrated that emphasize the necessity of cleanliness because it contributes to the unity and harmony of society. Some people may think that this side may cast them away from the Lord God, but this is not true.

Asceticism is a religious concept that is misunderstood by many people. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) clarifies its true meaning:

(Asceticism is not owning anything, but nothing owns you).

Nothing must own you but the Lord God, the Creator, and the Owner.

If any worldly matter owns you, you will be its captive. You will follow it unconsciously. It designates your standards and social position. Therefore, you have to remain free and be the carrier of the humanitarian, religious, and patriotic message.

There is a Hadith that states:

(God is pure and He loves the pure. He is clean and He loves cleanliness).

God is the source of purity. Thus, He ordered us to be clean.

Treat All People with Fairness

Advising is one of the main features of practical patriotism. The basis of social relationships is the good of the country. Thus, advising contributes to this goal. After all, the fruit of patriotism is the development of Man, because, without Man, there would be no homeland. Homeland is composed of both land and Man.

After the concept of advice, we should discuss the importance of fairness. It is very beautiful to have the feature of fairness with others. Some seek to clarify the meaning of fairness with the statement 'to love for others what you love for yourself.

Others believe that the idea of fairness includes the interaction between two people only. This attitude makes this concept interactive.

This concept must also be present in trade. The business must sell its goods fairly both in price and quantity. He should not underestimate their rights.

Others believe that fairness is replaceable with justice. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) interprets the following Quranic verse:

(Allah commands justice, the doing of good)⁽¹⁾.

He states:

(Justice is fairness, and doing good is being patronized).

There is no doubt that the statement of the Imam is the closest to reality. According to my understanding, generally speaking, it is doing justice to others concerning those issues that

1- Nahl: 90

were hidden from them.

Every individual has certain rights. These rights are intensified when this individual is a friend. One of the main rights is fairness.

As for the difference between justness and fairness, it is both spiritual and material.

Fairness between people and friends does not depend upon material proof and statistics. It is not a formal matter that must be confirmed on papers and forms.

It is related to advise. It means that when you give a piece of advice to others, you should consider their temporal and spatial, educational, cultural, and ideological circumstances because they all define the form and method of advice.

Many Hadiths highlight the importance of fairness. It is narrated from Imam Ali (peace be upon him) that once he stated:

(Fairness is the best of virtues).

It is a matter of religious uprising. This virtue defines the best possible form of socialization among people. It implants trust in society. Therefore, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) assigns fairness as a factor that binds hearts together. It does not define only social and formal relationships between people. It goes deeper into the relationship of hearts. They form their bonds upon the love of God, country, and Man. This bond finds its path to practical realization. Fairness plays a primary role during this relationship.

First, relationship then trusts, and finally love.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) mentions fairness as a factor that solves any kind of opposition and replaces it with harmony:

(Fairness removes hostility and produces harmony).

Thus, fairness solves any misunderstanding and hostility and replaces them with brotherhood and harmony. A fair person is always embraced by others, regardless of his religion, sect, ethnicity, race, or ideology. Fairness is the key to social acceptance. It does not necessarily mean that there is an agreement, but there is an acceptance.

Therefore, fairness removes any form of hostility. There is another Hadith that announces:

(Fairness binds hearts).

It is a key to the closeness of hearts. Hearts are made to be loved and respected. When this feeling is maintained, there will be mutual trust.

In a third statement, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) proposes that:

(Fairness endures love).

Therefore, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) orders us to:

(Treat all people with fairness).

He wants us to realize the concept of equality between all people. He wants us to follow the universal law: (People are of two kinds: they are either your brother in religion or your equal in creation). Thus he states:

(Treat all people with fairness).

The Imam wants the basis to be harmony, love, and brotherhood in God, religion, country, and humanity.

We all acknowledge that fairness is composed of various levels. The required level is the most elementary one. Yet, if

someone seeks sublimation, he may achieve a level of fairness with people.

He must treat people with fairness and teach them his method with the practice rather than with statements only. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(It is not fair to ask your brothers to be fair).

Accordingly, we see that the concept of fairness is directly related to the idea of patriotism. It contributes to the unity of people who work for their country.

Practical Manifestations of Fairness

As discussed earlier, the concept of fairness has a great impact on the improvement of the unity of people, which leads to the service of the homeland. Without fairness, one cannot achieve brotherhood and trust.

We have also discussed the necessity of this concept in promoting the construction of a homeland, in addition to the construction of patriotic, humanitarian, and religious brotherhood which qualify people to be responsible toward their country.

The best possible manifestation of fairness is through considering others' cultural, educational, and social circumstances. It may develop to include brotherly, patriotic, humanitarian, and religious relationships.

As for fairness, it includes three aspects:

First: fairness in advice, which was discussed earlier.

Second: fairness in a hostile relationship between people. Here, other elements play a role in enhancing its role in social relationships. One of the primary elements is objectivity.

Here, objectivity means to be neutral in our judgments. Friendly, brotherly, familial, official, and any sort of relationship must not affect the objectivity of judgment. It should remain objective at times of hostility and disagreement.

Personal love for certain people must not affect our judgments. Fairness must remain objective and never undergo the effect of these personal issues.

Third: in any disagreement, the origin must be misbehavior on purpose or unintentionally. When this disagreement is between you and others, being fair is the most sublime form

of fairness, because any person is born to love himself. In this regard, once, one of the companions of Imam Kadim (peace be upon him) asked him to give him a piece of advice. The Imam told him:

(Do good to those who you love).

When the man asked for its meaning, the Imam replied:

(Know that yourself is the most loved self to you. So do good to it by abiding by the instructions of God).

Accordingly, oneself is the most loved self to you. When there is a misunderstanding between you and your friend or brother, you should be fair and objective. One must be honest even though the results do not side with him.

(Tell the truth even though it is at your expense).

This demands self-education, strength, and objectivity. These elements impose your love upon others. It enhances brotherhood and friendship between you and others.

Any work that needs to survive must find proper conditions, mainly trust. Thus, fairness is a humanitarian and religious culture that contributes to the construction of a homeland. We should note that this culture is not necessarily found in all people. In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(It is not fair to ask your brothers to be fair).

It means that you should be fair with people, yet do not ask them to be fair. We should work on educating people to have this feature by practice.

One's faith depends on fairness. We can show his honesty by being fair with others, yet we should not order others to be fair with us. This is the first level.

The second level is to be fair to people and at the same time, I know that they will not be fair to me. We should work on binding all abilities and qualifications to achieve our primary goal, which is practical patriotism.

In this regard, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(One of the virtues of a man is to be fair with the one who is not fair with him. And to do good to the one who does evil to him).

It means that when you know that this person is fair with you, the result is mutual respect and rights. However, those who are graduates of the school of faith, humanity, and patriotism are expected to be fair with those who are not fair with them.

The above-mentioned Hadith is composed of two parts:

First, I should be fair with him, though he is not.

The second and higher level, which is also more difficult, is to be fair with those who do evil to me.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) refers to this meaning:

(One of the virtues of a man is to be fair with the one who is not fair with him. And to do good to the one who does evil to him).

Doing good includes all forms of virtue. Yet, in this context, the meaning is more specific. It is fairness.

Religious instructions seek to give this concept educational and spiritual weight. It is a concept that works on self-accounting.

An honest person is fair without being necessarily obliged to do so because he believes in the beauty and significance

of this concept. He believes that this concept contributes to the construction of a homeland and improves his relationship with others.

Accordingly, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) states:

(The fairest person is the one who is fair with others at the expense of himself without any obligatory force).

These Hadith highlight the importance of consciousness. Any faithful patriotic person must have a powerful conscious. The Imam seeks to incite our religious, patriotic, and humanitarian feelings. He wants us to pay attention to a two-sided issue:

First: fairness with those whom you love, like your family, relatives, and friends.

Second: to be fair with everyone else.

The Imam asks us to be fair with all people before we are obliged to do so.

The Imam (peace be upon him) also states:

(Be fair with others at your expense before you are done fairness because the first is more honorable to you and more willing to you Lord).

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) highlights the psychological side of individuals. He expects us to have the strength inside and in such situations.

He states:

(More willing to you Lord).

One's consciousness remains weak unless it is related to God. When the relationship with God is strong and endur-

ing, moral and religious standards are the guiding force in his life. This means that the humanitarian, religious, and patriotic conscious is alive and strong.

This situation leads to a sense of trust in the hearts of people. Such an individual will be fair with all people without any obligatory force. This grants him honor and respect in society. It contributes to the construction of the country through practical patriotism.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) also states:

(Whoever is fair with others at the expense of himself, God shall increase his dignity).

He will be powerful, dignified, and respected among people. It also serves his purpose of practical patriotism.

Only the Clean shall Enter Heaven

After this long beautiful journey, we should remember that pleasure cannot be completely achieved without some kind of hard work. Hardship gives a nice taste to the work. This pleasure makes the message part of our essence.

The homeland and its safety are our prime concern. Carrying this patriotic, religious, and humanitarian message is part of our existence. We cannot live without it, and it cannot be realized without adopting it.

We have trodden upon this path to clarify this idea and realize it in our daily life. We sought to understand the best way to realize practical patriotism.

I wish that specialists enrich this study further by adding to its concepts and ideas.

Patriotism is life, and life requires a plan to be on the right trail. I did my best to find the basis of this path. I sought to arrange and quilt these concepts within one study. I strived to match the culture of patriotism with my personal experiences.

Here, I think that it is necessary to refer to two fundamental issues. I postponed them to this part because of its significance so that it becomes the seal of all the previously discussed concepts.

First, it is cleanliness. Above, I mentioned the concept of hardship and the way all work is accomplished needs hard work. This also applies to divine methodologies, in which hard work is required to realize their instructions:

(And they carry your loads to a land you could not have reached except with difficulty to yourselves. Indeed, your Lord is Kind and Merciful)⁽¹⁾.

Carrying the message of practical patriotism and realizing it in society cannot be achieved without hardship, mingled with joy and happiness.

However, hardship is a necessary factor. It is like when we sow the ground: it is hard work, but we feel joy because we know that we shall gain benefits. It is like a teacher who teaches his students: it is a tiring mission, but when he sees the result of his education, he becomes happy.

Generally speaking, cleanliness is a fundamental concept in this field. A clean person qualifies any individual to be open to others and society. He can convey his message of practical patriotism to people.

A clean person comes to society with an open heart, carrying happiness to everyone. Moreover, cleanliness qualifies any person to convince others of the ideas he adopts.

Cleanliness may also mean religious purity. It is a form of worship that has its effect on the inside, primarily on the heart, spirit, mind, thoughts, feelings, and emotions. We may summarize all these elements with one simple sentence: the love of God and the love of Man are the basis of this life.

The following Hadith confirms the previously mentioned concepts and ideas:

1- Nahl: 7

(God is pure and He loves the pure. He is clean and He loves cleanliness).

Religiously speaking, God is the source of purity. We could not understand the meaning of purity without belief in God and His instructions. Purity, here, refers to both inner and outer purity. This Hadith clarifies that purity is related to the concept of cleanliness. God represents endlessness in this concept. Though God is the Ultimate and Immortal, He still loves the limited human who is pure and clean. He loves such a person because he is close to His creation and is loved by them.

God is keen to see humans loved by each other. Cleanliness is confirmed in several Hadiths, including the following one:

(Clean yourself by all means, because God built Islam upon cleanliness. Only the clean shall enter Heaven).

What matters here is that people get to a level in which they are accepted and embraced by others. Therefore, the Hadith states:

(Clean yourself by all means).

This part may be interpreted as referring to all times, places, and situations. There are different ways of cleaning. The text insists that:

(Clean yourself by all means, because God built Islam upon cleanliness. Only the clean shall enter Heaven).

This encourages any believer in God to follow His instructions and to be loved by Him.

This Hadith also confirms that the cleanliness of the outside affects the purity of the inside:

(Only the clean shall enter Heaven).

This part shows the direct relationship between the outside cleanliness and them inside purity. When these two sides of cleanliness and purity are maintained, the result will be a loving and harmonious society. A similar Hadith also states:

(Clean yourself, because Islam is clean. Only the clean shall enter Heaven).

One of the manifestations of submitting to God is to live a clean life. In this study, I am keen to propose all the concepts that contribute to the improvement of practical patriotism.

In this regard, we see the prophets who were the carriers of divine Messages, who considered the love of the homeland as part of the faith, they were the cleanest individuals on earth. Another Hadith states:

(One of the manners of the prophets is cleaning).

The divine requirement is to appoint cleanliness as worship because devotion to God is built upon cleanliness and purity of the inside and outside. Therefore, there is a Hadith that states:

(God loves the clean worshipper).

Worshipper in the Hadith refers to the person who worships God in all possible ways. Cleanliness may have unlimited varieties. It is the cleanliness of the individual, family, society,

house, and country. The presence of an individual must affect its cleanliness. Thus, many Hadiths explain the necessity of cleaning the house. These Hadiths promise those who keep their houses clean with great divine rewards. These instructions seek to make social harmony and order among people so that they achieve practical patriotism.

Another fundamental concept that must be mentioned here is the concept of intention. It is the threshold of all the previously discussed concepts. Intention, here, is replaceable with the goal, which is the service of the country, rather than oneself. The goal must be achieving practical patriotism. We should always remember that the love of the country is part of our faith. As long as we are believers in God, we should love our country.

Therefore, the intention always plays a primary role in the safety of one's journey to his sublime goal. In case the goal is self-interest, the results will be catastrophic, whereas the intention is the service of the country and content of God, the results will be rewarding and fruitful, leading to practical patriotism.

