

Spiritual Characteristics of Imam Khomeini (RA)

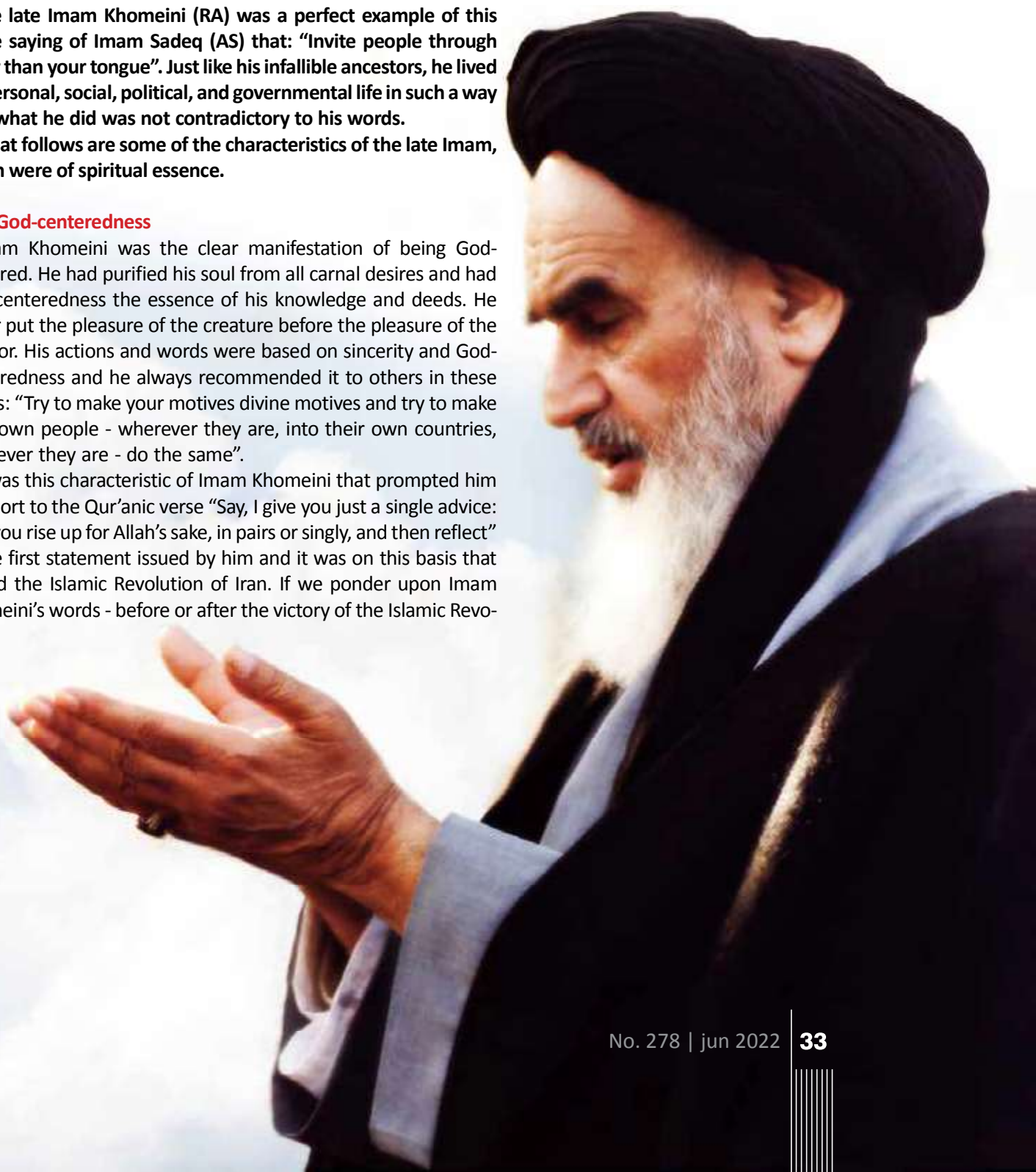
The late Imam Khomeini (RA) was a perfect example of this noble saying of Imam Sadeq (AS) that: "Invite people through other than your tongue". Just like his infallible ancestors, he lived his personal, social, political, and governmental life in such a way that what he did was not contradictory to his words.

What follows are some of the characteristics of the late Imam, which were of spiritual essence.

1 - God-centeredness

Imam Khomeini was the clear manifestation of being God-centered. He had purified his soul from all carnal desires and had God-centeredness the essence of his knowledge and deeds. He never put the pleasure of the creature before the pleasure of the Creator. His actions and words were based on sincerity and God-centeredness and he always recommended it to others in these words: "Try to make your motives divine motives and try to make your own people - wherever they are, into their own countries, wherever they are - do the same".

It was this characteristic of Imam Khomeini that prompted him to resort to the Qur'anic verse "Say, I give you just a single advice: that you rise up for Allah's sake, in pairs or singly, and then reflect" in the first statement issued by him and it was on this basis that he led the Islamic Revolution of Iran. If we ponder upon Imam Khomeini's words - before or after the victory of the Islamic Revo-



lution - we find that the purpose and motivation of his movement and the revolution were nothing except abiding by God Almighty's commands. He repeatedly said that "The universe is the realm of God Almighty", which meant that God is present everywhere and sees man's actions and movements, thoughts, and beliefs.

2 - Submission to Truth

One of the prominent reflections of spirituality in Islam is patience. Humans are always prone to making mistakes and indulging in the wrong for several reasons. 1) Intellectual and scientific limitations; that is, the extent of the diversity and complexity of facts and knowledge in the world and the difficulty of encompassing them all its aspects will lead to human error in adopting the correct thought and procedure. 2) Another reason that human beings make mistakes and slip away is submitting to carnal desires. 3) The third reason for human mistakes is the issue of forgetfulness and unwanted negligence, which arises from mental and spiritual weakness.

In letter 53 of the Nahj al-Balagha addressed to Malik al-Ashtar addressed to Malik al-Ashtar Imam Ali (AS) writes as under:

"This is heavy on the officers; in fact, every right is heavy. Allah lightens it for those who seek the next world and so they endure (hardships) upon themselves and trust on the truthfulness of Allah's promise to them."

One of the outstanding characteristics of Imam Khomeini (RA)

during his lifetime, which should serve as a role model for everyone was his absolute submission to truth. In one of his speeches, the late Imam had said: "If I make a wrong move the nation is obliged to notify me about it and ask me to protect myself (from making mistakes) ... Everyone should observe such issues.

In response to a Time magazine reporter who asked: "Have you ever made a mistake about something?" he said: Only Muhammad, the Messenger of God, and other prophets and imams did not make mistakes, everyone else is prone to making mistakes.

3 - Sharh-e Sadr (Patience)

Sharh-e Sadr (lit. expansion of chest) or patience means the expansion of the power of the soul and the existential capacity of man, in the light of which, he has the capacity to be patient with regard to the occurrence of unforeseen events and avoid haste in making decisions. This quality is granted to

certain special individuals, including the Holy Prophet of Islam (pbuh). In the first verse of chapter 94 of the Holy Qur'an, God Almighty addresses his messenger and says: "Did not we expand your chest? It also narrates the Prophet Moses (AS) asked God Almighty for the expansion of his chest when he was in the Tur Mountain (See Surah Taha, verse 25).

God grants Sharh-e Sadr to whomever He loves. This, too, was one of the lofty qualities of Imam Khomeini (RA) and was so prominent in the life of the Imam that in the face of unfortunate events; such as the incident of June 6, being exiled, the martyrdom of his son Mostafa Khomeini, the conspiracies hatched against Islamic Iran, and eight years of sacred defense, etc., he showed great endurance. One of the Imam's companions says: "When his son Mostafa was martyred, the late Imam bore the incident with great patience and responded by saying (إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ) I hoped that Mostafa would be of benefit to society.

4 - Tranquility and Peacefulness

This is the quality that is the outcome of strong faith and God-wariness and the Holy Qur'an praises the people having this quality in these words: "those who have faith and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah" (Surah Al-Ra'd, verse 27). This was one of the most prominent spiritual qualities of Imam Khomeini. Those who had met him acknowledged the fact that the Imam did not suffer from anx-

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iety for a moment even in face of all the ups and downs in his life.

While returning from Iran, a Christian writer who had met Imam Khomeini described him in these words: Imam Khomeini was a storm, however, there was an absolute calmness and peacefulness within this storm. There was an inanimate and immovable truth within him, but that immobility moved an entire country. In my view, Khomeini is our contemporary Christ.

This fact can be better understood by a brief glance at the life of the Imam.

i - After being released from prison in the year 1964 the Imam said in the Grand Mosque: "By God, I have never been afraid in my life. The night they arrested and were taking me away, they were afraid and I consoled and comforted them." This is a great claim that has been proven many times in practice. He was not a man of exaggeration and that too about himself and by emphasizing and swearing in the name of God Almighty.

ii - Although the Imam was deprived of the blessings of his father in the first months of his life and the blessings of his noble mother at the age of sixteen, none of these sufferings and mourning had a negative effect on the great soul of the Imam; Rather, they made him a strong human being with an independent and stable soul.

iii - He bore the grief of the loss of his son bravely and in his first speech after this incident, he referred to his son's martyrdom as a hidden divine grace and resumed

his teachings the next day.

iv - Another example of the Imam's calmness in the face of adversity was his strange reaction to the martyrdom of Dr. Beheshti and seventy-two of his faithful companions. The shocking news of this tragedy had occupied the minds of the members of the Imam's office who did not know how to convey this news to the Imam. They had even requested his family to remove the radio from his room, but Imam's reaction was: "Put the radio in its place. I have heard the news from one of the foreign radios." More interestingly is that when, Mr. Hashemi Rafsanjanu and his son, Seyyed Ahmad, go to meet the Imam he is the one who consoles them.

5- Trust in God Almighty

God says in the Holy Qur'an: "And whoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him." (Surah Al-Talaq, verse 3). Trust in God Almighty was the most important factor that ensured Imam Khomeini's success in making the Islamic Revolution victorious. The reason for the Imam's steadfastness in all the ups and downs of life was that he had a real trust in the eternal power of the Lord of the world and he had entrusted his heart to God and considered no one effective except Him. And in return, God Almighty supported him and became his greatest support, and made him achieve significant victories.

During his struggles (against the pre-revolution despotic regime of Iran), the Imam proved the profundity of his trust in God Almighty. Addressing the regime and its henchmen, he said: "I

have now prepared my heart for the bayonets of your agents. But I will not be willing to accept coercion and submission to your tyranny. God willing, I will express God's commands at any appropriate time, and as long as I have a pen in my hand, I will expose the acts that are against the interests of the country.

Imam's hope was in God. As a result, difficulties became easy for him. He considered all his successes to be from God Almighty and was never unaware of His help and support even for a moment. The Supreme Leader elaborated on this divine quality of Imam Khomeini (RA) in these words: "The most difficult events did not cause any turmoil in the great ocean of his (Imam Khomeini's) existence. By having full trust in God Almighty, our dear Imam withstood all the problems and sufferings without wavering a bit.

6 - Caution in Practice

Being cautious is emphasized in Islam and that is the reason that Imam Khomeini (RA) was a cautious person and did not do anything without observing the precautionary aspects, and in the meantime, he was extremely careful about financial issues; especially when it came to what is called Beit al-Mal (government treasury) in Islam and made sure that it is spent in the right path.

Some of the books written by the late Imam Khomeini (RA) with regard to spirituality are:

Kashf al-Asrar, Forty Hadiths, Asrar al-Salat, Adab al-Salat, Tafsir Surah Al-Hamd, Jihad-e Akbar, Sharh-e Hadith-e Jonud-e Aql va Jahl.