

slightest bad impression of him. I don't believe they carried a negative image of him even a single time. This is how I feel.

He was my hope for the future of Islam.

He was my hope to lead the way after me.

There is no God but Allah.

However, Allah willed for him and for us. No one can change the will of God, and we are pleased with what He has willed and predestined.

As for us who are still living in this world—in this very low world, low in every sense of the word, and one sense of it is what we are witnessing now—the best piece of advice for us is a statement made by Imam Ali, peace be upon him, in which he states,

“And for them to be a lesson is better than for them to be a source of pride.”

What I mentioned about this great and blessed one whom we have lost is a source of pride. As for the lesson which he gave us, I told his dear and respected brothers, who are my hope as well, that our dear and precious lost one left many things which are to be proud of. Not only for them as his brothers, but for all his friends and those who saw him even for half an hour, they all have memories of him which they are proud of. However, what is more right than being proud is to learn from him and see his departure as a lesson.

(Addressing the audience):

You, each and every one of you, you elders and youth who lived with him, try to take him as a role model and guide for you. Without a doubt, your first guide is the fourteen infallible leaders of Ahlul-Bayt, peace be upon them, but who represents the Ahlul-Bayt, peace be upon them?

The blessed one whom we have lost represented them, therefore, take him as an exemplar. Take him as a leader. He used to represent them, with the exception of him not having that divine infallibility which Allah exclusively bestowed Ahlul-Bayt with.

Without a doubt, he was at the highest level of being just and upright; thus, make an endeavor to be just as well. He was at a very high level of exhibiting the finest mannerism and ethics—with his friends and foes, with his close ones

and strangers, with those who were humble to him and those who were arrogant. Try to apply to yourselves these impressions you have of him. He was an excellent example of the one who would take advantage of small opportunities in life, let alone the major ones. So try to advantage of the opportunities that exist in the world. The world is an opportunity that can end in an instant and for good, so take advantage of it and don't waste it.

From this perspective (being an opportunity for the human being to achieve completion), the world is a very good place, provided that the human being takes advantage of it. Those who succeeded, where did they succeed, and from what did they take advantage? They succeeded in this world and they made use of this life—just as our dear lost one did.

Imam Al-Kadhem, peace be upon him, states, “Indeed, it is a determination.” He stresses that only through determination one can achieve success. If you are determined, you will certainly succeed. Thus, be determined to learn from the encounters you had with our blessed lost one to apply them to your personal life.

Indeed he lived a blissful life. Amongst the things that he lived was this hadith which states, “A believer's self is burdened by himself, and the people are relieved from him.” He lived this hadith by applying it to his life and actions, during a time when seldom one practices this hadith. Yes indeed, our beloved lost one was a good example of this holy hadith, so you also attempt to become a good example of it. Never burden others for your own sake. Do not even equate others with yourselves in terms of burdening them. Actually, burden yourselves to relieve others in all matters, even in minor things.

I used to remember before and I frequently remember today that he, may Allah elevate his status, used to resemble his grandfather Grand Ayatollah Al-Sayed Mirza Mahdi Al-Shirazi, may Allah elevate his status. I lived with my father nearly twenty years—the last years of his blessed life. He suffered from various illnesses, and due to his old age and illnesses, he was consumed with weakness. However, even so I don't remember he told me,

even a single time, “Bring me water.” He would go so far to this extent so he would not burden others. Sometimes he definitely needed water and would not be able to stand up, but he would still endure difficulty and relieve others to this extent. I am not saying this out of pride, for he had his sources of pride, but let us learn from such figures, for they serve as live examples of Ahlul-Bayt, peace be upon them.

I vividly remember once he had to go up the stairs but he couldn't. He suffered from his leg and experienced severe pain, so he would lean on the walls to his two sides and strain on one leg to lift the other. So I approached him and told him, “Give your hand so it becomes easier for you to go up.” He said leave me, I will try as much as I can to drag myself. If I became completely unable to proceed, I will seek your help. So he would go up two or three stairs, then he would no longer be able to continue so he would give me his hand. After climbing one or two stairs, he would again pull his hand back so as not to burden me.

Allah states, “There was in the messenger of Allah a perfect exemplar for you.” However, we did not see the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, although his history is amongst us, and it serves as a pretext for those who work, and against those who do not. We also did not see Imam Ali, Fatima Al-Zahra, Imam Al-Hassan, or Imam Al-Hussain, peace be upon them all. But the likes of such people were a representation of Ahlul-Bayt. The human being requires a live example, for it is sometimes more effective than sayings and history. Amongst the clear and visible characteristics that the late Ayatollah Al-Sayed Mohammad Redha Al-Shirazi exhibited was that “his self was burdened by himself, and the people were in relief from him.”

I ask the Almighty Allah to accept everyone's deeds—everyone according to his/her intention, action, effort and struggle. May He allow us all to follow righteous leaders in every aspect of our lives so that we all achieve success when we depart this world. And may the peace and blessings of Allah be on our master Muhammad and his pure progeny.



The statement of Grand Ayatollah Sayed Sadiq Al-Shirazi on the passing of Ayatollah Sayed Mohammad Redha Al-Shirazi, may Allah elevate his status

On the occasion of the passing of the scholar of Ahlul-Bayt, peace be upon them, our beloved Ayatollah Sayed Mohammad Redha Al-Shirazi, grand Ayatollah Sayed Sadiq Al-Shirazi made a statement among a group of scholars and believers who

came from Iraq, Syria and the Gulf countries to offer their condolences. The speech was made at his residence in the holy city of Qom on Monday morning, 27 Jumada 1, 1429 AH.

Here's the text of the speech:

To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return

I seek refuge in Allah, the All-Hearing, the Omniscient, from the cursed devil

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

We are once again commemorating the martyrdom of our great leader Fatima Al-Zahra, may the peace of God be upon her. In doing so, we learn to be patient through the tragedies and tribulations that befell her. We ask Allah to give us all the full reward of those who are patient. We ask Allah to not reduce the reward He has prepared for those who have been inflicted with a tragedy due to a word they said or thought they had which goes against the will of God. We come to learn from Ahlul-Bayt, peace be upon them, as they teach us to surrender to and accept what God has willed for us.

I extend my greatest gratitude to all of you who have travelled and come here to console us. I thank all of those who came from outside Iran, or from various cities in Iran, or from the holy city of Qom. I thank you all.

On this occasion, I have two statements to make:

The first is regarding this great and blessed one whom we have lost. He is indeed in bliss now.

The second concerns us who are following the same path.

As for the blessed one whom we have lost, I lived with him since his birth and never did I see anything from him which does not fit those whom the holy Qur'an, along with the narrations of the Prophet and Imams, peace be upon them, describe as "those who believe and do good."

When the messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "I leave amongst you the book of Allah and my progeny," a natural question arose: Is not the Qur'an the book of Allah which contains the laws of Allah, so what is the need for

the Prophet's progeny?

There is more than one answer to this question. One answer is that human beings, on their journey to guidance, need two things: a book and a physical demonstration or illustration of the book.

When Allah says in His book "those who believe and do good," we understand what it means. However, in order for people to be guided they need a demonstration of belief and good deeds. After the holy Prophet, peace be upon him, the embodiment of Allah's book was Imam Ali and Fatima Al-Zahra, peace be upon them and their progeny. Both of them played an important role in demonstrating the teachings of the holy Qur'an. After them, the role models were the eleven Imams from their progeny, peace be upon them all. Today, we are living in the presence of our master and hidden leader Imam Al-Mahdi, peace be upon him and may Allah hasten his reappearance. All of them were true and comprehensive examples who served as pretexts for those who practiced what they taught and against those who abandoned their teachings.

My brother in knowledge and my nephew in blood, Ayatollah Al-Sayed Mohammad Redha Al-Shirazi, may Allah shower his soul with His mercy, had a very visible trait and characteristic. Probably I was the one who most saw this trait in him, and anyone who lived with him or even saw him for half an hour saw this trait in him as well. He personally embodied the true and righteous Muslim individual through his words and lifestyle, through his sight and listening, his calling onto others and heeding their call. Such people who have these traits are rarely found, especially during our time. Whoever was closer to him knew very well how he, may Allah shower his soul with mercy, was a representation of faith and good deeds. How wonderful did he prepare himself throughout his life for such a day.

I believe even those who grew up with him when he was a child and when he went to first and second grade at the Qur'an School of Memorization in Karbala—which was founded by my late big brother Grand Ayatollah Al-Sayed Muhammad Al-Shirazi, may Allah elevate his rank—did not have the