

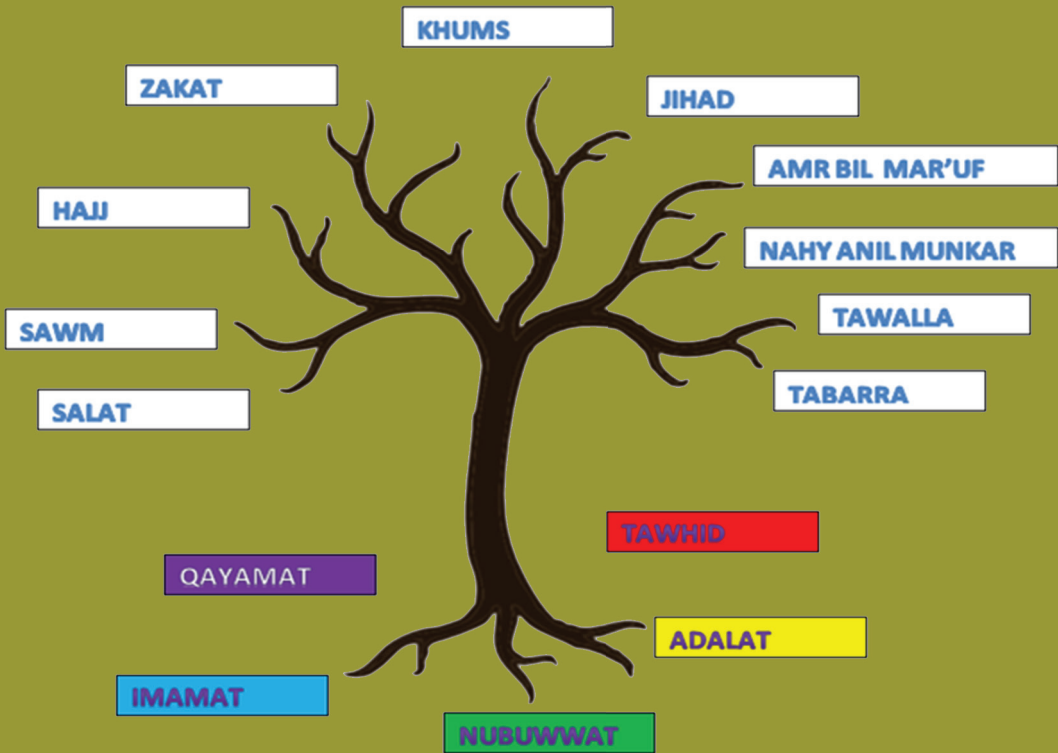
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What a Muslim Should Know and Believe

SAYYID SAEED AKHTAR RIZVI

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WHAT A MUSLIM SHOULD KNOW AND BELIEVE

by:

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PREFACE

The famous scholar, (late) Shaykh Ja‘far Shushtari¹ had written a small booklet, *Manhajū ‘r-rishad*, dealing with some important aspects of the Fundamentals of Religion which every Muslim should know. Later, someone combined it with some other booklets of *fiqh*, and the collection was known as *Majma‘u ‘r-risa’il*, which served as an ‘*amaliyyah*² for a long time.

When after the death of (late) Sayyid Abul-Hasan Isfihani (d. 1365/1946), the Shias of Indian sub-continent (like their brothers in other countries) did *taqleed* of (late) Sayyid Husayn Burujardi (Qum), some ‘ulama translated his ‘*amaliyyah* in Urdu; among them was Sayyid Qamaru ‘z-Zaman, who translated *Majma‘u ‘r-risa’il* with footnotes of Sayyid Burujardi, and named it *Jami‘u ‘l-masa’il*.³

In 1950, (late) Sayyid Khadim Husayn (Faizabad, India)⁴ translated *Manhajū ‘r-rishad* only from *Majma‘u ‘r-risa’il*, and named it *Tuhfatu ‘l-‘ibad*.⁵

When I was writing *Day of Judgement* in 1974, I wanted to include in it some matters explained by late Shaykh Ja‘far Shushtari, because generally those subjects are not found in other ‘*amaliyyas*; but I could find neither book in Dar-es-Salaam.

I left East Africa in August, 1978. But, as Allah willed it, I came back this year in February, for a short visit.

In May, when I was in Mombasa, I found a copy of *Jami‘u ‘l-masa’il* in

1 Died in 1303 AH; Author of the well-known book *Al-Khasa‘isu ‘l-Husayniyyah*.

2 A book containing rules of *fiqh* (jurisprudence; *shari‘ah*), prepared for the use of *muqallidin* (followers) of a *mujtahid* (religious scholar having authority to give rulings on religious problems). The act of following a *mujtahid* is called *taqleed*.

3 It was published by Kutub Khana Husayniyyah, Lahore.

4 Died at Mombasa (Kenya) in 1969.

5 It was published as a Book supplement with the *al-Jawad* (monthly), Varanasi (India) June-July, 1950.

the personal collection of my elder friend and host, Haji Ali Mohammad Jaffer Shariff.⁶ I showed the abovementioned part to him, where the author has enumerated six important things which a child must know and/or do the moment he/she becomes *baligh* (attains maturity); also the various categories of people according to their beliefs and deeds. Haji Ali asked me to translate the two items into English in order that our people may know and benefit from it.

In 1974, I went to Iran for about a week. There was not much time; so I decided to go to Mashhad in the morning, returning to Tehran in the evening. Mr. Dhikiri Omari Kiondo (now Editor of *Sauti ya Bilal*) was then in Tehran, engaged in higher Islamic studies under the patronage of the World Organization For Islamic Services. On their suggestion, Mr. Dhikiri accompanied me for the said *Ziyarat*. At Mashhad airport, I suggested to him that it would be better to go first to Ayatullah Milani's house to pay our respects to him; because then we could stay, upto the last possible moment, in devotion at the holy shrine of the Imam, without any extraneous thought and then proceed to the airport direct from there.

Soon after our arrival at Ayatullah Milani's place, his grandson, Hujjatul-Islam Fazil Milani brought an American brother to me who wanted to enter the fold of true Islam; and requested me to teach the American youth important matters of Shi'ism, so that when he recited *Kalimah*, he would understand what was involved in it and what responsibilities he was taking upon himself.

Hard-pressed though I was for time, I spent more than one and half hour with the young man and he became Shi'a. Understandably, I had to select only very essential Matters to teach him in that short time; and that experience again drew my attention to the six important things mentioned by late Shaykh Ja'far Shushtari.

Since then many brothers engaged in *tabligh* work have asked for a

⁶ He is one of the Founders of the Bilal Muslim Mission; even at this age, he spends all his time in the noble work of *tabligh*.

small booklet giving a list of what they should teach a new convert when he decides to become a Muslim.

Hopefully the first three chapters of this booklet will serve as a guide to those parents whose children are reaching the age of majority, as well as to those missionaries who bring someone into the fold of true Islam. It would show them the minimum that their wards should believe in and act upon the moment they become *baligh* or are converted.

It is not a literal translation. Many fine details have been omitted and the arrangement of subjects has been drastically changed. Also it appeared necessary to elaborate many ideas and add a lot of details here and there to make the topics intelligible to an english reader who is neither well-versed in Islamic theology nor familiar with its terminologies. The list of the major sins and of some *Zaruriyat-e-deen* and *Zaruriyat-e-madhab* have been taken from other books.

As mentioned above, late Ayatullah Burujardi had written footnotes on the original book. While translating, I have followed his footnotes, and, wherever necessary, have changed them to the ruling of Ayatullah Sayyid Abul-Qasim al-Khoui.

This booklet was started at Mombasa on 22nd Sha'ban, 1405 (13th May, 1985); but what with one thing or the other, could not be completed till today, when I have been at Nakuru for about a month. As good luck would have it, my host here Haji Husain A. M. Jaffer happened to have a copy of the above-mentioned *Tuhfatu 'l-'ibad*, and I have now compared this writing with that booklet too.

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ

Presently at
Nakuru (Kenya)
2nd Shawwal, 1405
20th June, 1985.

Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi
Director General,
World Ahlul-Bayt (A.S.) Islamic League,
London

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على
خير خلقه محمد وآله لطاهرين

(1)

THE SEVEN RESPONSIBILITIES

We are not eternal; we have a beginning and an end. Also, we are not self-existing; someone must have created us, must have brought us into being. That Creator is Allah, Who is free from all defects and shortcomings.

Doing a work without any reason or purpose is a defect; we do not like anyone to accuse us of working aimlessly. Obviously Allah too must have created us for some good purpose. He points to this fact when He asks mankind in the Qur'an:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

What! do you then think that We have created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us? (Surah 23, aya 115). So there is a purpose behind our creation.

We come into this world, live a life full of worries and tension and then die. Is this the aim of our life? No; it is the life, not the aim of life; the aim should be different from the life itself.

Are wealth, health and power the aims of life? No; these are the means to support the life; but not its aim. Is acquiring honour, fame and authority purpose of our creations? No; these are various facets of life, and not its purpose. The purpose behind our creation must be something higher than the life itself.

Let us ask the Creator Himself why He has created us. If He tells us, that would be the really authentic and genuine reason. And He, in His mercy, has already told us – without our asking. He says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I have not created the jinn and the human beings except that they should worship Me. (Surah 51, aya 56)

Every man and woman must fulfil the purpose of his or her creation; everyone should submit him or herself to the Will of Allah and worship Him. When we worship Allah, we acknowledge His majesty and power and confess our helplessness and neediness, in a manner prescribed by Him; and we do it with sincere intention and pure heart in obedience to Allah, in order that we may come nearer to Him.

Allah has sent Prophets, appointed Imams, revealed Books and prescribed laws of *shari'ah* in order to guide us to the Right Path, and to teach us the proper way of the divine worship. We must follow their guidance, because it is the only way by which we may attain to the goal of our life, fulfil the purpose of our creation.

Allah, in His mercy, has not ordered minor children or mad persons to fulfil this duty. Only when a child attains majority and is of sound mind, he or she is obligated to follow the above-mentioned divine guidance, i.e. the rules of *shari'ah*.

A boy attains majority (becomes *baligh* بالغ adult) when he reaches the age of fifteen years, or semen is ejaculated from him (in sleep or when he is awake), or pubic hair starts to grow.

A girl attains majority when she is nine years old, or when pubic hair starts to grow.

When a boy or girl attains majority and is sane (i.e. not mad), he or she is called *mukallaf* مكلف (feminine: *mukallafah* مكلفة). We may translate this term as, one who is obligated to follow the rules of *shari'ah*; one who is considered responsible for his/her words and deeds.

As soon as one becomes *mukallaf*, one is responsible for one's belief, words and actions. Before that, generally speaking, one is really neither a believer nor a disbeliever. But a Muslim's child is considered Muslim, and a non-Muslim's child is considered non-Muslim. It is based on the principle of *taba'iyat* (تبعية = following), by which children are governed by the rules that govern their parents.¹

It is incumbent on every person to have correct faith the moment he or she becomes *baligh*. Therefore, for all practical purposes, he/she must acquire correct knowledge of fundamental beliefs - *Usul-e-deen*, roots of religion - long before the expected time of attaining *bulugh* بلوغ (= majority, adulthood).

There are SEVEN things which the *mukallaf* must look into at the moment of his/her attaining majority:

1. Roots of Religion, *Usul-e-deen*;
2. Learning *salat*, (practical - If not learned earlier);
3. If he or she had done anything, during childhood, which makes a *ghusl* compulsory (e.g. had touched a dead body), he or she must do *ghusl* at once in order that his/her *salat* and other such actions may be correct;
4. Learning important rules of *salat* and other obligatory things like *saum*, etc (if not learned earlier);

1 The above statement is based on a general observation. But there are cases of boys of about ten years of age having got enough understanding and intelligence to differentiate falsehood from truth, to distinguish wrong from right; and they have chosen right and truth against wrong and falsehood. Such children are Muslims, and their parents' disbelief would not be held against them. That is why Shaykh Tusi (a.r.) has said that "Responsibility of the boys is of two kinds:

- i. Responsibility to acquire true belief and correct faith - It begins for the boys at the age of ten.
- ii. Responsibility to follow and perform the rules of *shari'ah* - It begins for the boys at the age of fifteen."

The same is the import of the fatwa of Sayyid Kazim Yazdi in *al-Urwatu 'l-wuthqa*, with which all other *Mujtahidin* agree. Sayyid Mohsin al-Hakim had gone a step further. According to him, even if that child's Islam was not based on logical understanding (i.e., he was influenced by some individual or society), it would be acceptable and he would be a Muslim.

5. If there are other people's right due on him or her, they must be repaid to those persons, or they should be requested to forgive him/her;
6. He/she must learn necessary rule of *shari'ah* regarding his/her occupation or profession, (like trade, partnership, employment, rent etc), in order that his/her earnings may be lawful;
7. He/she must know the major sins, in order to avoid them; also other unlawful things, so that he/she may protect him or herself from them.²

The same rules apply to the one who accepts Islam after spending some time in *kufr*.

For a logical explanation of the Roots of Religion, the reader may study my booklet *Islam*.³ But a short description of its most essential aspects is given here. It will be followed by a list of the major sins.

² The original book mentions only six responsibilities, combining the "Knowledge of unlawful things" with the sixth heading. I have listed it separately because of its utmost importance.

³ It has been translated into Italian, Japanese, Thai, Indonesian and Hausa languages, by the World Organisation For Islamic Services (WOFIS), Tehran; and Swahili translation has been published by the Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam.

(2) **USUL-E-DEEN**

Fundamental beliefs are called *Usul-e-deen* أصول الدين, i.e. Roots of Religion. The *Usul-e-deen* are five: Three are *Usul-e-Islam* أصول الإسلام, called Roots of Islam. They are:

1. *Tawhid* التوحيد, Belief in oneness of God;
2. *Nubuwwat* النبوة, Belief in the Prophets;
3. *Qiyamat* المعاد, Belief in the Day of Judgement.

The remaining two *Usul-e-deen* are called *Usul-e-Iman* أصول إيمان, Roots of Faith. They are:

1. *‘Adl* العدل, Justice of God; and
2. *Imamat* الإمامة, the successorship of the Prophet.

A person believing in all five *Usul-e-deen* is called Shi‘a Ithna ‘ashariyah شيعة اثنا عشرية. Such a Shi‘a believes that:

(1) ***Tawhid***: There is only one God - Eternal, Self-sufficient; He has no beginning or end; He is Omnipotent, has power over everything and every affair; He is Omniscient, knows everything, nothing is ever a secret from Him. He has His own discretion in all affairs, does not do anything under compulsion. He is All-perceiving, All-Hearing, All-Seeing and Omnipresent, He sees and hears everything though He has neither eye nor ear. He has no partner or colleague, nor has He any son, daughter or wife. He is neither made nor composed of any material substance. He has no body nor is He confined to a place. He is not afflicted by anything related to body: He is not governed by time, space, change or things like that. He is not visible, He has not been seen, and will never be seen either in this world or the hereafter. His attributes are not separate from His person.

(2) ***‘Adl***: Allah is just; He does not do injustice to any one. He has ordered us to do justice to our fellow creatures - but He Himself treats us not only with justice but with grace. He created us for His worship,

in order that we may attain spiritual perfection through it. That spiritual perfection enables us to reach near to Allah. For this purpose, He has given us freedom of will and choice. When we choose, by our own free will the Straight Path (prescribed by Allah) we are assured in the next world of everlasting happiness and glory by Grace of Allah.

(3) **Nubuwwat**: To show us the Straight Path, Allah has been sending His Representatives to the mankind. They are called *nabii* (نبي) = Prophet) and *rasul* (رسول = messenger). (Plural: أنبياء *anbiya'*; رُسُل *rusul* or مرسلين *mursaleen*).

There came 124,000 prophets and messengers, beginning with Adam (a.s.) and ending with Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). All the prophets were *ma'sum* (معصوم = sinless, infallible; Plural: معصومين *ma'sumeen*). Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam, is the Final Prophet; anybody claiming prophethood after him is liar and imposter.

(4) **Imamat**: To lead the people to the Straight Path, and to preserve the religion of Islam, Allah appointed twelve successors - one after another - of the Prophet of Islam. They are called *Imams*. *Imam* إمام literally means leader. (Plural: أئمة *aimmah* *Imams*; leaders). First of them was Ali son of Abu Talib, and the last one is al-Mahdi (a.s.). All Imams are *ma'sum*.

The names of the twelve Imams are as follows:

1. 'Ali, son of Abu Talib (a.s.).
2. Hasan, son of 'Ali (a.s.).
3. Husayn, son of 'Ali (a.s.).
4. 'Ali Zaynul 'Abideen, son of Husayn (a.s.).
5. Muhammad al-Baqir, son of 'Ali Zaynul 'Abideen (a.s.).
6. Ja'far as-Sadiq, son of Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.).
7. Musa Kazim, son of Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.).
8. 'Ali ar-Ridha, son of Musa al-Kazim (a.s.).
9. Muhammad at-Taqi, son of 'Ali ar-Ridha (a.s.).
10. 'Ali an-Naqi, son of Muhammad at-Taqi (a.s.).
11. Hasan al-Askari, son of 'Ali an-Naqi (a.s.).
12. Muhammad Mahdi, son of Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.).

Imam Mahdi (a.s.), the twelfth Imam, is alive, but is hidden from our eyes by order of Allah. He will re-appear, when Allah allows him, to establish the Kingdom of God on the earth. It will be near the end of the world, when he will establish justice and equity in the world after it had been devastated by Injustice and oppression.

(5) *Qiyamat*: After that will come *Qiyamat*, the day of resurrection, the day of judgement. All people will die; then the whole mankind will be resurrected to face the reckoning of their faith and deed. People having correct belief and doing good deeds will be placed in the paradise; while people having wrong belief will go to the hell.

To know and believe in the above-mentioned *usul-e-deen* is the first and foremost responsibility of a *mukallaf*. As explained just now, neglecting them throws one in ever-lasting punishment of the hell.

If one does not believe in the *usul-e-deen*, then his acts of worship are not accepted by Allah; also he is not entitled to receive *khumus*, *zakah*, *fitrah*, *radd-e-mazalim* and *kaffara*.¹

As described earlier, a minor child of a Muslim parent is treated as Muslim; but as soon as he/she becomes *baligh*, he/she must have the correct belief with firm faith. If at that time he/she was oblivious of these fundamental beliefs, or had doubt about them, it would create a real problem.

Mere verbal confession is not enough. One must have firm belief in heart.

Also, it is very much emphasized in Shi'a Ithna 'ashari faith that one should acquire the knowledge of *usul-e-deen* with proofs and arguments. In this respect we totally differ from the Christians. The Christians say: First believe, then you'll understand. We say: First understand, then believe.

¹ These are various religious monetary dues.

Nevertheless, if one has not learned rational proofs and arguments of *usul-e-deen*, yet firmly believes in them because, let us say, his parents have told him so, he is accepted as a Shi'a Ithna 'ashari. But such a faith is always in a precarious position. He believes in these things because he has confidence in his father and mother. All right. Now suppose in later life he met someone in whose knowledge he had a greater confidence, and that someone told him that there was no God or no twelfth Imam. Would not his belief in One God or the 12th Imam be shaken? Or even destroyed? Therefore, it is essential for the parents to teach their children necessary topics of *usul-e-deen* with rational and logical proofs, so that nobody can mislead them in later days.

(3) MAJOR SINS

Allah says in the Qur'an:

إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

If you avoid great sins which you are forbidden, We will expiate from you your (small) sins and cause you to enter an honourable (place of) entering.
(Surah 4, Verse 31).

Therefore, a *mukallaf* must know which sins are great, so that he/she desists from them. In this way, Allah, in His mercy and according to His promise, will forgive all his minor sins and mistakes.

The following list of the great sins is taken from *Minhajus Saleheen* (of Ayatullah Sayyid Abul Qasim al-Khoui, *Dama Zilluhu*):

1. To believe that Allah has any partner or colleague in His Divinity; to worship someone besides Allah.
2. To lose hope in the mercy of Allah; to believe that Allah would not save him on the day of judgement.
3. To have no fear of Allah; to think that Allah would not punish him for his sins.
4. To misbehave with parents; disobeying them; or injuring their feeling.
5. To kill someone unjustly, i.e. without permission of *shari'ah*.
6. To slander a married woman, accusing her of adultery.
7. To eat an orphan's money or property unlawfully and unjustly.
8. To flee from *jihad* (religious war).
9. To use or eat a thing or money obtained as interest.
10. Fornication and/or adultery.
11. Homosexuality (whether between males or females).
12. Magic, witchcraft.
13. To swear falsely by name of Allah.

14. To neglect prayer (*Salat*) or any other wajib thing.
15. To withhold *zakat*.
16. To give false evidence.
17. To hide (i.e. not to give) true evidence.
18. To drink intoxicant, liquor.
19. Breach of promise.
20. To misbehave with blood-relatives; not doing good to them.
21. To migrate to a place where there might be a danger to religion or to its observance - i.e. where one would not be able to follow the rules of *shari'ah* without hindrance.
22. Theft or robbery.
23. Rejection or denial of what Allah has revealed to the Prophet (s.a.w.a).
24. To tell a lie; even more greivous is a lie against or about Allah, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) or the Imams (a.s.).
25. To eat meat etc. of a dead animal, or of one not slaughtered according to the rules of *shari'ah*.
26. To drink or eat blood.
27. To eat pork, lard or any part of a pig.
28. Gambling.
29. To eat from, or use unlawful earnings; for example, piece of a dead body, or of liquor, or of gambling devices; money received in bribe or by prostitution.
30. Taking bribe for giving a judgement.
31. Not giving full weight or measure to the customer; to sell things with short weight or measure.
32. To hoard food-stuff, i.e., not selling it even when there is shortage in market - waiting for the prices to go higher.
33. To help the oppressors and unjust persons or groups; to incline towards them or to work for them.
34. Not paying *wajib huquq* (except when one is in straitened condition).
35. Pride.
36. Envy (i.e. *hasad*).
37. Extravagance.
38. Not giving any Importance to hajj.

39. Fighting against the Friends of Allah.
40. Music - and it is the sound which is prolonged with variation of tune and crescendo, as is understood by irreligious people. (That is: Music is that sound which irreligious people accept as music).
41. Using instruments of music; listening to instrumental music.
42. *Ghibat*: Backbiting a mu'min by words, signs or actions. That is: To mention or disclose any actually existing physical defect, family disgrace, religious or moral shortcoming or any such defect which the mu'min concerned does not like the people to know; it makes no difference whether that mention is made by words, or actions or signs.
43. *Tuhmat*: To falsely accuse a mu'min of something which is not found in him or he has not done. It is a more heinous sin than *Ghibat*.
44. To abuse, insult or disgrace a mu'min in any other way.
45. To create enmity and mischief between the believers by conveying one's words to the other.
46. To act as pimp; to work as a go-between to gather two persons for unlawful sexual intercourse.
47. To adulterate merchandise, to make it impure or poorer in quality by adding something of less value; to pass on imitations as genuine items.
48. To do a good deed with intention of showing to the people.
49. To repeat small sins.
50. To treat a Sin lightly because "the most greivous sin is that which the doer treats lightly".

The above list gives only the names of the major sins. If anyone wants further details, he/she should consult other books written on this subject.

Many of the above mentioned sins are also crimes punishable under Islamic penal code.

(4)

SOME TERMINOLOGIES EXPLAINED

Unfortunately not all men have remained on right path. As Allah has repeatedly said in the Qur'an, an overwhelming majority has deviated from the true faith.

Accordingly, Islam has divided them in various categories, which are given below:

1. *Muslim* (مُسْلِم): One who believes and affirms that there is only One God, that Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is His Last and Final Prophet and Messenger, and that there is to be a Day of judgement, is called a Muslim. We may also say that anyone who believes in earlier-mentioned *Usul-e-Islam* (i.e. *Tawhid*, *Nubuwwat* and *Qiyamat*) is a Muslim.
2. *Shi'a* شِيعَة: A Muslim who also believes that Ali (a.s.) was the First Imam after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) by appointment of Allah, is called Shi'a.
3. *Shi'a Ithna 'ashari* شِيعَة اثْنَا عَشْرِيَّة: A Muslim who believes in divinely-appointed twelve Imams (mentioned earlier) and in 'Adl of Allah, is named Shi'a Ithna 'ashariyah.
(Ithna 'asher اثْنِي عَشْر = twelve; Ithna 'ashariyah اثْنَا عَشْرِيَّة = the believers in twelve Imams; the twelvers). We may also Say that anyone who believes in the five *usul-e-deen* is a Shi'a Ithna 'ashariyah.
4. *Kafir* كَافِر: If a person does not believe in existence or oneness of God, or the prophethood of the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.) or the Day of Judgement, he is called *kafir* (unbeliever). Plural: *Kuffar* (كُفَّار = unbelievers).

To make our meaning clearer, we shall call them non-Muslims.

Non-Muslims are divided in two main categories:

1. *Mushrik* مشرك: one who ascribes any partner or colleague to God.
Plural: *Mushrikeen* (مشركين polytheists.).
2. *Ahlul-kitab* أهل الكتاب (the people of the book): i.e. the Jews and the Christians.

There are some groups which claim to be Muslims, but they are *kuffar*, and the Shi'a Ithna 'ashari *shari'ah* treats them such. They are as follows:

3. Anyone who rejects, insults or doubts any of the *Zaruriyat-e-deen* (ضروريات دين = the things everyone knows as part of Islam). For example, paradise and hell, 5-times daily prayer and many other things. A person rejecting, doubting or insulting such things is *kafir*, even though he may be reciting *kalimah* a hundred times a day. (See chapter 5 for explanation and some details.)
4. *Ghali* (غَالِي = inordinate); Plural: *Ghulat* (غُلَاة): Anyone who believes that any of the prophets or Imams was god, or that God was incarnated in him, or that any of the Imams were prophet... in short, anyone who assigns to the prophets or Imams a status higher than their true position and status... is called *Ghali*; such a person is *kafir* even if he claims to be Muslim.
5. *Khariji* (خارجي); Plural: *khawarij* (خوارج): Those who separated from 'Ali (a.s.) after the arbitration, claiming that 'Ali (a.s.) had become, God forbid, *kafir*. *Khawarij* are *kuffar* in the eyes of *shari'ah*.
6. *Nasibi* (ناصبي); Plural: *Nawasib* (نواصب): anyone who hates any of the twelve Imams or insult him. *Nasibi* too is *kafir*.
7. Anyone who abuses, or uses foul language, about the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Bibi Fatimah, or any of the Twelve Imams is *kafir*.

There are certain rules governing all the above-mentioned *kuffar*:

1. A *mushrik* is *najis* (نجس unclean). As for the people of the Book (i.e. the Jews and the Christians) opinions differ. The reader should consult the '*amaliyyah* of his *mujtahid*.
2. A non-Muslim man is not allowed to marry a Muslim woman, a non-Muslim woman is not allowed to marry a Muslim man. The only exception is a Christian woman or Jewess marrying a Muslim man in *Mut'ah* form.
3. A non-Muslim cannot inherit from a Muslim - no matter how close their relationship may be.
4. A non-Muslim can not possess a Muslim Slave.
5. An animal slaughtered by a non-Muslim is treated as a dead animal; it is not lawful to eat from that animal.
6. Meat, fat, hide and skin, in possession of a non-Muslim are *najis*, unless one knows that he has got it from a Muslim.
7. It is not *wajib* on Muslims to conduct funeral rites of a non-Muslim.
8. There is a special rule about the last mentioned category of *kafir*, i.e. the one who abuses or uses foul language concerning any of the 14 *Ma'sumeen*. It is *wajib* (compulsory, obligatory) on any Muslim who can do so, to kill him - without any need of referring the case to the *qadi* of *shari'ah*.

There is a panicular kind of *kafir* who is called *Murtadd* (مرتد = apostate), i.e. a person who accepted Islam and then renounced it. The position of *Murtadd* is worse than an original *kafir*. Some imponent rules about *murtadd* are given here.

Murtadd is of two kinds: *Murtadd Fitri* (المرتد الفطري) and *Murtadd Milli* (المرتد الملي).

Murtadd Fitri: A person both (or at least one) of whose parents were Muslims at the time of his conception, and then, he/she, on attaining majority, renounces Islam by his/her own free will.

The rules about *Murtadd Fitri* differ according to the sex of the offender, i.e. there are different rules for males and females.

A male *Murtadd Fitri* is najis; his wife becomes haram, for him, and she will observe *'iddah* of death; even during his life he loses all rights in his property – after repaying his debts the residue will be distributed among his Muslim heirs. And his repentance is not acceptable in this life; according to well-known ruling of the scholars. But Ayatullah al-Khoui says that obviously his repentance is acceptable in the hereafter and to a certain extent in this life too. Accordingly, if he repents he will become *tahir*, and if his former wife agrees he may remarry her in a fresh marriage. In short, he will be treated as a Muslim - but even then he shall not regain possession of his property unless the heirs willingly return it to him. Likewise the sentence of death shall not be waived even after repentance.

If a woman becomes *Murtadd Fitri*, she becomes najis; and haram on her husband, but she does not lose her property. nor is she sentenced to death; and her repentance is accepted. If she refuses to repent, she will be imprisoned.

Murtadd Milli: A person who was not born of a Muslim parent; and accepted Islam after attaining majority and later renounced it.

He should be told to repent. If he repents within three days, his repentance will be accepted. Otherwise he would be killed on the fourth day. His Muslim wife will become *haram* for him, i.e. the marriage will become invalid automatically, and she will have to observe the *'iddah* of divorce if the marriage was consummated; but if he repents during her *'iddah* period, the marriage will continue without there being any need for a new *nikah*.

Murtadd Milli is debarred from managing his property (although he remains its owner). If he repents, he will regain its management; otherwise he will be given his essential requirements from it until he dies; after his death, the property will be divided among his Muslim heirs.

(The readers should consult detailed books of jurisprudence for details of the rules about both types of apostates.)

Now we come to a special category of men whom the Qur'an calls *Munafiq* (منافق = hypocrite); Plural: *Munafiqun* (منافقون). *Munafiq* is a person who professes to accept Islam but in reality does not believe in it.

Such a person is treated as a Muslim in this life: His/her body is *tahir*; he/she may marry with a Muslim spouse; he/she will inherit from his/her Muslim relatives; his/her life, honour and property will get as much protection in law as that of any other Muslim.

But in the hereafter, he/she will be treated as *kafir* or even worse. The Qur'an says:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ ...

Surely the hypocrites are in the lowest rank of the fire... (4:145).

Mu'min (مؤمن = Believer): This nomenclature has various usages:

Often the Qur'an addresses the Muslims with the phrase: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا (O you who believe!); obviously it covers all those who recite the *kalimah*.

At other times, the Holy Book differentiates between *Islam* (إسلام) and *Iman* (إيمان), using the word *Islam* for verbal profession, and *Iman* for the firmly-rooted belief.

In Shi'a traditions and the writings of Shi'a scholars, the word, *mu'min*, is commonly used for a practising *Shi'a Ithna 'ashari*.

(5)

ZARURIYAT-E-DEEN

Every matter which is accepted as part of Islam by most of the Sunni and Shi'a scholars is called *Zaruri-e-deen* ضروري دين (Plural: *Zaruriyat-e-deen* ضروريات دين). It makes no difference whether that matter is proved by the Qur'an, *hadith*, *ijma'* (إجماع consensus) or rational proofs. Also it does not matter whether the subject concerns *Usul-e-deen* or *Furu-e-deen* or Islamic ethics and morality.

Zaruriy-e-madhab ضروري مذهب (Plural: *Zaruriyat-e-madhab* ضروريات مذهب): Every matter which is accepted as part of a *madhab* by most of the 'ulama of that *madhab*. For example, Justice of God and Infallibility of the twelve Imams are among the *Zaruriyat-e-madhab* of the *Shi'a Ithna 'ashari* faith.

Anyone who refutes, rejects or has doubt about any of the *Zaruriyat-e-deen*, becomes *kafir* and unclean although he might be claiming to be a Muslim. Likewise, anyone who refutes, rejects or has doubt about any of the *Zaruriyat-e-madhab-e-Shi'a*, becomes *Sunni*, although he might be claiming to be a *Shi'a* or might be believing in the five *Usul-e-deen*. If they die without repentance, then in the eyes of Allah, the Prophet and the *Shi'as* of Ahlul-bayt, the former is *kafir* and *najis*, and the latter a *Sunni*. The former is called *murtadd* (apostate) from Islam; and the latter a *murtadd* from *Shi'a madhab*.

As mentioned in a preceding chapter, a person who rejects a *Zaruriy-e-deen* or *Zaruriyat-e-madhab*, becomes *murtadd* only if he knows that it is a *Zaruriy-e-deen* or *Zaruriyat-e-madhab*, or if he is a man who cannot be oblivious of this fact – for example, if he is a learned man of religion or has lived in a place where religious discourses are often held.

If a man does not reject openly a *Zaruriy-e-deen* or *Zaruriyat-e-madhab*, but his behaviour shows that he does not believe in it (even if he does

not disclose his disbelief because of fear), then he will be treated as a *murtadd*. For example if he, says insulting things about an Imam and yet professes to believe in him, or insults the Qur'an and yet says that it is incumbent to respect the Qur'an.

Here we mention some of the *Zaruriyat-e-deen* which are accepted by both the Shi'as and the Sunnis to be an integral part of the Islam.

God: There is one God, Ever-living, All-powerful and Eternal. He is All-knowing, All-perceiving. He does whatever He does by His own will. He speaks and is Truthful. He does not enter into any body, needs nothing, and does no evil. It is He Who has created the universe and it is He Who sustains it.

Prophets: It is Wajib to believe in the prophethood of the previous prophets as well as of the Holy Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.). The prophets were free from *kufr* and (with some difference of opinion in details) they were sinless. Also they were free from every such defect in body or character which might create repulsion in people.

The Holy Prophet of Islam ascended to the heavens in *mi'raj*. The Qur'an is the word of Allah; *hadith* is an authentic source of *shari'ah*. The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (s.a.w.a), is the last and final prophet; no prophet is to come after him.

It is wajib to believe in questioning in grave through Munkar and Nakir, and in the squeeze of grave. Angels, the Satan and the jinns do exist.

Day of Judgement: One day the world would come to end; then all people will be resurrected for judgement. The Day of Judgement is a fact and truth; transmigration of soul is a wrong idea. Everyone will get recompense of his/her good or bad deeds. *Mizan* (weighing scale), *Hisab* (reckoning of deeds), *Sirat* (Path, the bridge over the hell) are facts and truth; scrolls of deeds will be given in people's right or left hands. *Shafa'at* (intercession) by the Holy Prophet is a fact and truth. Repentance is wajib. Paradise and hell do exist even now.

Furu'-e-deen: Prayer, fast, *hajj*, *zakah*, *jihad*, enjoining good and prohibiting evil (with all their well-known details, like prayer's *ruku'*, *sajdah*, number of *rak'ah* etc etc.) are wajib.

Ethics: Virtue of truth, patience, contentedness; doing good to parents, relatives and neighbours, evil of lie, back-biting, miserliness and disobedience of parents, besides many other virtuous and evil deeds well-known in Muslim society.

Zaruriyat-e-madhab-e-Shi'a Ithna 'ashari: Some of the *Zaruriyat* of the Shi'a Ithna 'ashari faith are as follows:

God: God does not compel anyone to do a good or bad deed.

Imams: Imams are appointed by Allah. There are only twelve Imams after the Holy Prophet of Islam and they are his true successors; first of them is 'Ali (a.s.) and the last Imam al-Mahdi (a.s.). The twelve Imams and Bibi Fatimah (a.s.) are infallible like the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) from every sin and mistake from the beginning of their life to its end. The twelfth Imam, al-Mahdi, Muhammad son of the 11th Imam Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.), is alive and hidden at present; he will reappear when Allah allows him, before the Day of Judgement, and will establish the kingdom of God on the earth, filling it with justice and equity as it would have been filled of injustice and oppression.

Furu'-e-deen: *Hayya 'ala Khayril 'amal* (حَيِّ عَلَى خَيْرِ الْعَمَلِ) is part of *adhan* and *iqamah*; *'as-salatu khayrum minan nawm* (الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ) is not allowed in *adhan* or *iqamah*; *mut'ah* marriage is lawful; a wife is not entitled to any share in land; as for other immovable properties like buildings or standing trees of a garden, she gets one-eighth (or one-fourth) of its market value, but not the thing itself.

IMPORTANT: All detail given in the chapters 3 (*Usul-e-deen*) and 4 (Major Sins) are among *Zaruriyat-e-deen* or *Zaruriyat-e-madhab*. Here only a few of them have been enumerated as example. There are many more *Zaruriyat* in *Furu'-e-deen* and ethics, for which the readers should consult reference books.

NOTE: These details have been adapted from *Tosha-e-Akherat* of late Syed Rahat Husayn Golpalpuri (ex-Principal of Madrasatul-Waezeen, Lucknow), printed at Mujtabai Press, Patna, no date, pp. 23-29.

(6)

FOURTEEN CATEGORIES OF THE PEOPLE

Shaykh Ja'far Shushtari has divided the people into fourteen categories, according to their knowledge and belief (or lack of knowledge and belief) of *Usul-e-deen*.

First: A person who, before attaining majority, knows the five *Usul-e-deen* with their rational proofs, and sincerely believes in them. Without any doubt such a person is Muslim and *mu'min* in his own rights as soon as he/she becomes *baligh*. (It makes no difference whether he/she can explain those proofs in his own words or not.)

Second: A person who, before attaining majority, sincerely believes in *Usul-e-deen*, because he/she has been so taught by his/her parents or by another trusted person, and then he/she continues on the same belief after becoming *baligh*. According to stronger theological reasons, there is no harm in it. If he continues on the same belief without ever doubting its truth, he shall be treated as a *mu'min* in this world and the hereafter, God willing.

Third: A man acquires true knowledge of *Usul-e-deen* and firmly believes in them. Yet sometimes adverse thoughts or Satanic whisperings come into his mind which he does not like at all – in fact he feels a repulsion towards such thoughts or ideas. There is no defect or deficiency in such a man's faith and belief; the fact that he is pained because of such thoughts is in itself a proof that his faith is strong. The Holy Prophet and Imams - Peace be on them all - have suggested a remedy for it: Whenever he is troubled by such thoughts he should say:

*There is no god except Allah; we believe in Allah and His Messenger;
and there is no power or strength except with Allah.*

Fourth: A person, on attaining majority, began looking into *Usul-e-deen*, and after a few days became sure of its truth, either by rational proofs

or because some trusted person convinced him/her about it. There is no doubt that after acquiring certainty, such a person is *mu'min*. The difficulty arises about the period he /she was engaged in the said research. If he/she dies in that period, he/she shall not be punished in the hereafter. And if, before attaining majority, he was treated as a Muslim – because of *taba'iyat* – others will continue to treat him as Muslim. But it is difficult to adjudge him a Muslim in reality in that period.

Fifth: If a person has not acquired a sincere belief in *Usul-e-deen* before attaining majority – even by teaching of parents or others – and is oblivious of religion and its beliefs on attaining majority, he/she will not be treated as a Muslim; and it is difficult to say that he/she is *tahir*.

It is the responsibility of parents or guardian to teach him/her necessary matters of faith and then guide him to recite *Kalimah*, in order that he/she should become Muslim and *tahir*.

Sixth: A person who knows and believes in all *Usul-e-deen*, but is unable to explain them in his words – like many people in far-off rural areas who cannot describe why God is one, or many people in urban areas who cannot enumerate the positive and negative attributes of Allah – but if you ask them, whether God is Omnipotent, they would say 'Yes'; or whether God can be seen, they would say 'No.' Such people are *mu'min*, and this much knowledge and belief is enough.

Seventh: We know that a man recites *Kalimah* and says that he believes in oneness of God and Messengership of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). But we do not know whether he really believes so. We shall treat such a person as Muslim; we are not obligated to search inside his heart; and we may say about him: 'O Allah! we do not know about him except good, i.e. we know that he is a Muslim.'

But what is his own responsibility about himself? He should ascertain whether his belief is sincere. If not, then he is required to correct his belief and acquire sincere faith.

Eighth: A man recites *Kalimah*; but he realizes that he has doubts about *Tawhid*, *Nubuwwat* of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) or *Qiyamat*. If he expresses his doubt before the people, he shall be treated as *kafir* and *najis*.

If such a man does not disclose his doubt in words, but his action and behaviour show that he has doubt about existence or oneness of God, Prophethood of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) or the day of judgement, then — according to stronger proofs — it is unlawful for a Muslim woman to marry him. And it is *ahwat* to treat him as *najis*, and not to eat an animal slaughtered by him.

Ninth: A man does not have firm belief in existence and oneness of God or in Prophethood of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) or *Qiyamat*; he has only strong inclination towards these things. The question arises what is his own duty in this respect, and what are other Muslims to do about him.

As for himself: If he may acquire firm belief of the above matters, and still neglects to do so, then the rule about him is the same as for the doubter (Seventh category), and he will not be saved on the day of judgement.

But if he cannot be more certain of these matters even after trying his utmost, then he will not be punished on the day of judgement, but he will not be treated as a Muslim in this world.

And it is *ahwat* not to marry him to a Muslim woman, or eat an animal slaughtered by him; he should be treated as *najis*.

Tenth: A child of a Muslim, before attaining majority and before acquiring true belief, became insane, then he will continue to be treated as a Muslim. The same is the law for a child of a non-Muslim who acquired true belief even before attaining majority and then became insane; as well as for a *baligh* person who had true belief and then became insane. All three types of people shall be treated as Muslims.

If a child of a Muslim attained majority and became insane before acquiring correct belief, then he will not be treated as Muslim or *tahir* (unless he had professed to be a Muslim and hidden his lack of belief from others). The same rule applies to a child who, on becoming *baligh*, began looking for true belief but became insane before acquiring correct belief.

Eleventh: *Mustad'afin* among non-Muslims and non-Shi'as. The word, *Mustad'afin* literally means "weak ones". In theological terminology it refers to those people whose belief is not strong, i.e., those whose belief is not based on knowledge and conviction. They are of two types: Those who are oblivious, and the simpletons.

Oblivious are those who have never thought that they should took into or amend their beliefs nor has anyone ever drawn their attention to it.

Simpletons are those who are neither insane, nor do they have knowledge, nor is it possible for them to acquire knowledgeable belief.

Non-Muslim *Mustad'afin*, like the Eskimos of Canada and Pygmies of Zaire. The law about them is as follows: They will be treated as *kafir* in this world; but it is against the divine justice to punish them in the hereafter; of course, they cannot enter the Paradise; they may be placed in *A'raf* (the boundary between the Paradise and the Hell); or they will be given a test on the day of judgement and then sent to the Paradise or Hell, depending on the outcome of that test.

Non-Shi'a *Mustad'afin*: In the hereafter their condition will be similar to the above-mentioned Non-Muslim *Mustad'afin*. But in this world, they will be treated as general Muslims.

Twelfth: Shi'a *Mustad'afin*: In this category are included those who believe in *tawhid* and *nubuwwat*, and accept that 'Ali (a.s.) was the first Imam; but they do not know the names and sequence of the Imams, or do not know what *Imamat* is — provided they are oblivious or simpleton and have not intentionally neglected acquiring this knowledge.

No doubt such people are *tahir* because they believe in *Tawhid*, *Nubuwwat* and *Qiyamat*; also they will not be punished in the hereafter – maybe they would be sent to Paradise too. But the question arises whether in this life they are allowed to enjoy all the rights of a true believer. For example, it is *ahwat* not to give them from *kaffarah* and *radd-e-mazalim*; also they should not be given *zakah* from the shares of poor or *miskin* – although they could be given from the share of “the way of Allah” if a religious benefit depends on it. Possibly they could be given from *fitrah* too.

Thirteenth: The above-mentioned category dealt with those Shi‘a *Mustad’afin* who were either oblivious or simpleton. Now we come to a person who has accepted Shi‘a faith, is not oblivious or simpleton and yet neglects acquiring necessary knowledge of the twelve Imam, does not know their names, sequence or their necessary details.

As mentioned in the twelfth category, such a person is *tahir*, because he believes in Allah, Muhammad and the day of judgement. But it is very difficult to say that he would be saved in the hereafter – especially so if he has no knowledge of the Imam of our times, or does not believe in his life and *ghaybat* (occultation) or in the fact that he is the *Hujjat* (Proof) of Allah over His creatures. The same is the case if he carelessly neglects to acquire this knowledge and belief.

Fourteenth: Apostates: These are the people who accepted true faith and then renounced it. They are called *Murtadd*, and their position is the worst of all; the rules about them are harder than general *Kuffar*. Some details about *murtadd* have been given in the chapter 4 above. Some other important matters are appended below.

(A) Conditions of apostasy:

Five conditions must be fulfilled before a person could be declared a *murtadd*:

1. & 2. He must be baligh and sane;
3. He must be knowing what he is speaking. If a word of *kufr* (disbelief) slips out of his tongue without his having any intention to do so, it would not be held against him.

4. He should be knowing that it is a word of *kufr* and then uses it in that same meaning. If he speaks a word of *kufr*, without knowing its meaning, or uses it in some other lawful meaning, then it would not be held against him. If he knew that it was a word of *kufr* and used it in the same meaning, he would become *murtadd* and *najis*, even if he was not aware of the consequences of his utterance.
5. He should utter word of *kufr* by his own free will. If he was forced to say such words and he did so to save his life (i.e. in *taqiyyah*), then it would not be held against him.

(B) Apostasy may occur through heart, tongue and/or action:

Apostasy through heart: If someone disbelieves after believing, or harbours doubt after being sure.

Apostasy through tongue: When he denies the existence or oneness of Allah, or refutes God's justice or knowledge etc., or tries to show that God's actions are aimless or against wisdom, or rejects any of the *Zaruriyat-e-deen* like prayer, fast, *zakah*, *hajj*, or disparages religion, *qiyamat*, Qur'an or *hadith*.

Note: Some people say in *du'a*, "May Imam Husayn prolong your life", or "May Hazrat 'Abbas increase your sustenance", or "May Ali (a.s.) give you children", or "May a certain *shahid* (martyr) protect you from troubles". The question arises whether it is correct.

Reply: If his real intention is to say that "May you get those benefits by the *barakat* or *wasilah* of those sacred personalities", or "May they intercede with Allah on your behalf so that He gives you children, increase your sustenance or prolong your life", then it is very good. But if he means to say that those personalities are, God forbid, sustainers or creators, then the matter will be really difficult.

Apostasy through action: When someone, say, throws the Qur'an down (with intention to insult it), or with that intention tears it

down, or kicks at it or throws it into a dirty place. The same is the rule if he insults the books of *du'a*, or *hadith*, or the names of Allah.

(C) There are three things which, without any difference of opinion, make a person *kafir*:

- a. Denial of anyone of the *Zaruriyat-e-deen*. Its examples have been given chap. 5 above.
- b. Objecting to any command of Allah. It was this offence because of which Shaytan became *kafir*; otherwise he believed in one God, *Qiyamat* and almost all divine commands; but he objected to one order given by Allah and became *kafir* and accursed. The objection was: Why did you order me to do *sajdah* before Adam while I am superior to him?
- c. To treat any divine order with disdain even if it is *sunnah* law. For example it is *sunnat* that moustache should be trimmed; now if someone disdainfully says: What nonsense is this? Or, what it has got to do with *shari'ah*? he will become *kafir*.

NOTE: Shaykh Ja'far Shushtari has not mentioned *Munafiqin* in this list. But in my view it should be included as the Fifteenth category. The details have been mentioned in chap. 4.

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