



SHIA
THE MISUNDERSTOOD
ISLAM

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SHIA

The Misunderstood

ISLAM

**SHEIHU DALHU ABDUL-MUMIN
(Chief of Zango, Tamale)**

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the
Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and
His Holy Household (AS).

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INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All praises be to Allah, the most High. May His peace and blessing be upon the Prophet of Peace and Mercy, Muhammad and his holy household. Allah said in the Holy Qur'an (39:18), *“Those who listen unto the word and follow the best of it; Are those whom Allah hath guided; and those are the men of understanding”*.

Allah, the Almighty as the Creator of the universe has a plan and direction for His creation. For guidance to be a peaceful and successful operation of man on Earth, the Almighty Allah has sent down the Holy Prophets (AS) starting with Prophet Adam (AS) to their seal and final as Prophet Muhammad (SAW) with the religion of Islam meaning “Peace and total submission to the will of Allah, the most High”. Islam therefore is a unique, noble and laudable religion from Allah, the Almighty set for the guidance of mankind at large. It is the ultimate divine guide and solution for life on Earth only on condition that it is sincerely and properly studied, understood and applied. Due to lack of sincerity and commitment for seeking to know and apply the right “Islam”, most people are almost bewildered even among Muslims as to where Islam is. The reason is simple and very clear: Islam these days has been reduced mainly to Shia/Ahlul-Sunnah Sectarian issues. It is by all means one unique practical entity. But reflecting on the real life on the ground, we have several denominations all claiming to be the right Islam. We have indeed a long list of sects with the five (5) prominent ones that have wider world following. They are; the Shia (followers of Imam Ali (AS) and the Household of the Holy Prophet (SAW) at large) and the four (4) Sunni Sects, that is the Hanafiyah – followers of Imam Abu Hanifa, the Malikiyah – followers of Imam

Malik, the Shafieyah – followers of Imam Shafi-e and Hanbaliyah (Wahabiyya) – followers of Imam Hanbal.

However, referring to history, you will realise that the four (4) Sunni sect Imams were either the direct students of the Shia 6th Imam (Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS)) or student of his students. So therefore, how could their sects be accepted and that of their teacher not accepted? What is the basis for such logic? Adding to that, Muslim generations of the first three (3) centuries never followed any of the four (4) Sunni sects. The reason is very clear; these sects were not in existence at the time. Yet, that is what the Muslim Ummah is being summoned to follow today by most Sunni preachers.

A major problem of our Sunni Brothers is that they find it very difficult to accept change even when necessary. They have received first one version of shaky foundation and accepting the Islam of firm foundation later turns to be difficult with all the available facts and proofs. Therefore, they resort to defending their version of Islam by attacking the Shia Islam which is the original Islam with false and baseless allegations. Allah, the Almighty promised in the Holy Qur'an (13:11) that: - *“Verily, Allah does not change what is of the people until they change what is in themselves”*.

Certainly, these five (5) sects cannot all be right; neither can they all be wrong. For if all the five are said to be right then they are but one and not five which is contrary to the reality on the ground since they are five (5). Therefore, one sect must be right or closer to the right with clear proofs and facts not false and baseless allegations. We need to be sincere to ourselves before death comes, to consider searching for the truth by all means. As the wise saying goes, “No matter how long a rock stays in the river; it will never change to a crocodile”. Therefore, no matter how long you stick to a wrong course it can never ever change to a right

course no matter your numbers. We need to sincerely change our approach to Islam and search for the right and correct Islam.

Man, by nature is created with some inborn (natural) instincts that help him to identify the truth and realities as against falsehood. These natural instincts are with man from birth to death. To mention just three of such instincts, we have – (1) The urge of wanting to know, (2) The urge of reaching perfection, and (3) The urge of avoiding danger. These natural instincts push man to research, deep thinking, reflection, sound judgement and comprehensive conclusions. With these powers therefore, man with clear conscience, intellect and sincerity can search and know the right religion and for that matter the right sect since man is a slave to his intellect. If we apply these natural instincts in us correctly, we would surely achieve very high benefits on this Earth and the hereafter. Not only that but to be secured from all dangers and harm both physically and spiritually.

In practical life, man can decide to do or not to do something as a result of the dictates of not only the percentage value of the possibility of the act but also the outcome which is the result of that possibility. The percentage value of a possibility of an act could be very high but not applied because the outcome might not be worthy of the effort; while an act could be done with a very low percentage value of its possibility. This is natural because man wants perfection and avoids danger even in religious issues. Allow me therefore to give the following examples to make the above point clearer. Assuming that there are 5 cups of water before a thirsty person, who is just about to pick one of the cups to drink, and then another person appears and says to him: “be careful, only one of the five cups contains pure and clean water, but the rest are contaminated with killer poison”. However, this person might be seen as a liar. The question however is that, what would be your action had you been the thirsty

person? Will you ignore the message of that person and brand him a liar and drink from any of the five cups? Certainly no, you will surely not ignore him even though the percentage of him telling a lie in his message might be very high. This is because of the possible dangerous value of the Warner seen as a liar against the dangerous outcome of ignoring him which is death dictates the right way of action which is avoidance.

The situation in terms of religious issues must be seen as the same or more serious, because the wrong choice of religion or sect taken will ultimately result in Hell fire which is too great a risk to gamble with. Of course after death, remember there is no coming back to this world to correct our wrong deeds. The chance is but once. Search for the right sect now before death and follow it.

As a matter of fact, by the mercy of Allah, the Almighty on me, I personally made a move for the needed change by travelling to the Holy City of Qum in the Islamic Republic of Iran. There, I studied Islamic Sciences in a very broad and wider scope under great learned and God fearing Islamic Scholars. I got to know that a lot of wrong, false and baseless accusations were directed to the Shia Sect as a result of compound ignorance. Indeed, there are a lot of highly misunderstood Islamic concepts against the Shia Muslims by the Sunni Muslims which when studied from the Shia authentic sources and the Sunni authentic sources will leave no alternative or reservation apart from accepting the Shia concepts as the pure and original Islam.

During my studies in the Islamic Republic of Iran, I got the real practical application of the verse of the Holy Qur'an (2:256) that says: - *"There is no compulsion in religion"*. I was in Iran an Islamic country with 95% of the Muslim population as Shia. I was practicing my faith as a Sunni Muslim with many other Sunni students as well from all over the world with

total freedom in our worship according to our then Sunni Concepts. We had total freedom and access to both the Sunni and Shia books for serious studies, research and references. This is my personal and practical experiences that led me to the understanding that, the negative message given out by some Ahlul-Sunnah wal Jama'at (Wahabiyah)clerics about Shia Islam, are false, baseless and signs of sheer ignorance of the truth. We need therefore, for seeking the truth, to go to the authentic Shia sources themselves through their Books and their Clerics and not the sources of their enemies who do not really have the correct knowledge of the Shia Islam.

After my personal experiences with the Shia sources as being the real and original Islam as directed by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) for Muslims to follow Imam Ali (AS) saying:- *“I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the entrance, he who wants knowledge (city) should come through the entrance”*. This divine saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is giving us a clue that matches with the intellect that if you are going to a house, reaching its entrance, means reaching the house for it is called the entrance because of your passage through it into the house. Therefore, reaching the entrance means reaching the house. For that matter receiving Islam through Imam Ali (AS) means receiving it from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This simply makes it clear that the Shia Islam is the Islam of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) since it has been received through Imam Ali (AS).

After understanding the truth that Shia Islam is the correct Islam, I therefore have no alternative other than to propagate the truth to all seekers of the truth. In one of the divine sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) we have it that:- *“Verily, should Allah guide a person to Islam through you it is better for you than all that is under the sun or better than the world and all that is in it”*.

In fact, while a lot of people have misunderstandings about Shia Islam, some have the opportunity and courage to ask the right persons for answers but others do not ask at all and for that matter remain in darkness. There are several instances where Ahlul-Sunnah wal Jama'at (Wahabiyah) clerics preaching against Shia Islam without any evidence given and when a Shia cleric or student requests for any Islamic or logical evidence or proof, the only answer always is that forget about it or that we are sorry we do not have the facts. We only heard it from our teachers or other preachers. This in fact is very dangerous because we shall all account for our deeds before the Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on the Judgement Day. Therefore, one should be very careful not to be the cause of misleading others away from Islam. What you see depends on where you stand. The Holy Qur'an (17:36) says: *“And pursue not that which you have not the knowledge of; verily the hearing and the sight and the heart, all these shall be questioned about it”*.

I therefore found it absolutely necessary and a divine responsibility to explain the facts and truth about the Shia Islam to all those who want to know the truth. There are several dimensions and areas of discussions of interest to seekers of the truth about Shia.

However, in my experience as a Shia cleric, many serious students and concerned intellectuals have been contacting us with a lot of questions from the misconceptions received from some Ahlul-Sunnah wal Jama'at (Wahabiyah) clerics and their books about Shia. I therefore deem it obligatory to tackle this subject in the form of a Book answering some of these misconceptions for wider benefits to all seekers of the truth.

I know in the course of reading this Book, you might be facing some mixed reactions as a result of the convincing facts that you might be reading for the first time about Shia Islam contrary to your preconceptions. You might be excited or even surprised about the reality

before you. However, all is to encourage you to read more in a diversified and broader manner about Islam at large. Do not be angry, have patience to compare facts, references and contrast for the best and unavoidable conclusion.

It is my humble wish and hope that this Book in hand: “**SHIA: THE MISUNDERSTOOD ISLAM**” which is referring to the Shia of the 12Imams, will add up to the several great Books written by learned Shia clerics with the sole aim of bridging the gap between the Shia Muslims and the Sunni Muslims by way of providing more information and education about the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

We are brothers of the same faith (Islam) with diversified views. Indeed, as Muslims what brings us together are by far greater than what divides us. We are brothers to one another.

Allah, the Almighty says in the Holy Qur’an (21:92): “*Verily, this Ummah of yours is one Ummah and I am your Lord therefore worship me*”. “*And hold fast to the Cord of Allah together and do not be divided*” (Qur’an, 3:103).

May Allah, the most Merciful crown our humble efforts with ultimate success and bless us all with the blessings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Infallible Ahlul-Bait (AS).

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DEFINITION OF SHIA

It is of very great importance to start by first defining the word Shia both literally and technically.

SHIA: Is a word from the Arabic language which literally means FOLLOWERS and HELPERS. Generally it refers to the followers of Imam Ali (AS) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) at large, to the extent that whenever mentioned it is linked to them. It is the same literal meaning that Allah, the Almighty uses in relation to some of the Prophets (AS) in the Holy Qur'an:

- (a) The Holy Qur'an (37:83) says: "*And verily, of his Shia was Ibrahim (AS)*": meaning that Prophet Ibrahim (AS) was a Shia of Prophet Nuhu (AS).
- (b) The Holy Qur'an (28:15) says: "*This (Person) is from his Shia and the other (Person) from his enemy*". Also referring to a person as a Shia to the great Prophet of Allah, Musah (AS).

Technically however, the word Shia means: Any person or group of persons who follow Imam Ali (AS) in fact the 12 Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) and consider them above all companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and believe that they are the immediate Imams and successors chosen by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by the command of Allah. This is in fact the real and actual definition of Shia.

There are however, some people who for reasons best known to them hate the Ahlul-Bait (AS) [The Progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW)] and for that matter always take an antagonistic stand against them on any issue relating to them in Islam. Therefore the word Shia has been given a dark colour in the minds of people as if it is an evil or dangerous name to have. Had it been so, Allah, the Almighty would not have used it in the Holy Qur'an for

His beloved Prophets (AS) as mentioned above. Therefore put aside the usual repeated lies of enemies against Shia that they are disbelievers, they are enemies of Islam and that they do not believe in the Holy Qur'an and Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) but rather believe in Ali (AS) as a Prophet and many other lies. These are all indeed baseless statements without any fact or proof. They only keep on repeating the constant lies created by the earlier enemies of the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW) before them.

The Shias are also called Imamiyah, Ja'fariyah, Ithna-Ashariyah, and Ahlul-Bait (AS). Each of these names relate to the Shia when considered from a particular angle. The Shia is called Imamiyah and Ithna-Ashariyah because of their belief in the twelve Infallible Imams from the progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Ithna-Ashariya is gotten from the Arabic word for twelve in relation to the twelve (12) Infallible Imams (AS).

The Shia is also called Ja'fariyah because of the history and the role played by the 6th Shia Imam (Ja'far Sadiq (AS)) during the time of his Imamate (leadership). The Imam (AS) had a better chance to present Islam in a more relative free era for the spread of Shia as against the other Imams (AS) who operated under severe tyrannical suppression. In fact, during the Imamate of Imam Ja'far (AS), the Umayyad dynasty and the Abbasy dynasty were at war with each another. They completely had forgotten of their historical and traditional attack on the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW). This gave the Imam (AS) a better opportunity to spread Islam far and wide. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS) at the time was able to produce 4,000 highly learned scholars in various fields of knowledge within that period. As a matter of fact, all the great Scholars of those days were the students of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS). They were all quoting and referring to him from far and near. This therefore gave the Shia the name Ja'fariyah.

The Shia are also called Ahlul-Bait (AS), because all the twelve (12) Infallible Imams are from the Household of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and following them means following the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

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THE ORIGIN OF SHIA (OF THE 12 INFALLIBLE IMAMS)

The origin of Shia is one of the areas of differences of views between the Shia and those against them. The diversity of views about the origin of Shia ranges from the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) down to after the martyrdom of Imam Husain (AS) (the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the 3rd Imam of the 12 Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS)).

Below are some of the different views about the Shia origin, of course not from the Shia sources:-

- 1) The first view that says; Shia started after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). To mention some of those who wrote on this view:
 - a) Ibn Khaldoom in his Book (Tarikh Ibn Khaldoom (1956), Vol. 3, Beirut page 364)
 - b) Ahmad Amin in his Book (Fajrul – Islam (1955), Cairo, page 266)
 - c) Dr. Hassan Ibrahim in his Book (Tarikhul – Islam (1935), Vol.1 Cairo, page 371)
 - d) Al-Ya'qubi in his Book (Tarikhul-Ya'qubi (1358 AH) Vol.2, Najaf, page 104)
- 2) The second view that says Shia started during the Caliphate of Othman. This is the view of some historians like Ibn Hazmi and others in the Book of Yahaya Hashim ¹
- 3) The third view that says that Shia started from the Martyrdom of Imam Ali (AS) including the period of the Martyrdom of Imam Husain (AS)².

1Awamilu wa Ahdaf Nashatu Elmul Kalam (1972) Vol.1, Cairo, page 105

2Abdul-Aziz Dawri(1949)Muqaddimatu fi Tarikh Sadril Islam, Cairo, Page 72

These views are in fact politically motivated and contrary to the real, physical and historical facts and evidences available. In fact, no tangible reasons are given to support these views but only signs of hatred against the Shia of the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

Now, let us go through the view of the Shia themselves which fortunately matches with that of some other persons of good intention who are not Shia. According to the Shia, Shiasm started during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and that it was the Holy Prophet (SAW) himself who planted it into the minds of his companions through his several divine sayings exposing the value and position of Imam Ali (AS). These evidences of narrations were not recorded by the Shia narrators only but the Sunni highly trusted narrators also recorded them in their own books.

For instance, regarding the exegesis of Quran 98:7 it is narrated that Jabir bin Abdullah said: “We were in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) when Ali (AS) approached, then said the Holy Prophet (SAW): By the Lord in whose hand is my soul, verily, this [pointing at Ali (AS)] and his SHIA are the successful ones on the Judgement Day”. Then the verse descended: “*Verily, those who believe and do good deeds, it is they who are the best of creatures*”. (98:7)³

Also, we have another narration from Ibn Addi that Ibn Abbas said: “when the verse – Verily, those who believe and do good deeds, it is they who are the best of creatures”, was revealed, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said to Imam Ali (AS): “*They are: You and your SHIA*”. It is also,

³Tafsir Durul Manthur vol.6 by Abdur-Rahman Al-Sayuti, Cairo, Egypt, 1314 A.H pp 370-376; Tafsir Tabari vol. 3 pp 146

recorded by Ibn Mardawi from Imam Ali (AS) who said: the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said to him (Imam Ali (AS): *“Have you not heard the saying of Allah: “Verily, those who believe and do good deeds...; “they are but you and your SHIA”.*

Also Al-Baghdadi mention in his book that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said to Imam Ali (AS) : *“You (Ali) and your Shia are in paradise”*⁴

Therefore, these and other narrations made some scholars to conclude that, the first name of a sect to appear in Islamic history is the “Shia”. “Shia” to the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), was a known name referring to some of his companions like, Abu Zar Al-Gaffari, Ammar bin Yasir, Miqdad Kindi and Salman Al-Faris.

In the history of Islam, we have it recorded that when the verse of the Holy Qur’an (26:214): *“And warn thou thy relatives of nearest kin”*, was given to the Holy Prophet (SAW), the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) called Imam Ali (AS) and instructed him to prepare food for the family of Abdul-Mutalib (the grandfather of Prophet). They were then forty (40) men. After they had finished eating, the Holy Prophet (SAW) addressed them with a historic sermon of Good News of his divine mission calling them all to the path of Allah. He addressed them saying: *“Oh children of Abdul-Mutalib, verily, by Allah I never knew a young person from among the Arabs who brought to his people something better than what I brought to you. Verily, I brought to you the best for this world and the hereafter. Indeed, Allah has instructed me to call you unto Him who amongst you will help me in this divine course for him to become my Brother, Executor of my will and my successor after me?”* It was only the young Ali (AS) who responded and accepted the call of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on

4 Tarikh Bagdad vol. 12 by Al-Bagdadi, pp 289

three consecutive times. Then the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) held the hand of Imam Ali (AS) and said; *“Verily, this is my Brother, the Executioner of my will and my successor amongst you. Therefore listen to him and obey him”*. This historic event can be traced in major Islamic history books⁵.

Ummu Salma (AS) (Wife of the Holy Prophet (SAW)) said: She heard the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying: *“Ali (AS) is with the Truth ; and the Truth with Ali (AS), they will never ever be separated until they meet me in Paradise”*⁶.

Also it is reported in Sunanu Tirmidhi that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“Allah have mercy on Ali (AS) for the Truth follows him wherever he goes”*.⁷

Also in the book Fada-illul Sahaba, by Ahmad bin Hanbal: the Holy Prophet (SAW) promised Imam Ali (AS) that *“Verily you will not be loved except by a mumin(a believer) and you will not be hated except by a hypocrite”* this can also be found in Kitabu Khasa-is Amirul-Mumineen Ali bin Abi Talib (AS) by Imam Hafiz Nasai.

There are a lot of verses of the Holy Qur’an that are also exposing and teaching about the merits and position of Imam Ali (AS) in Islam to the sincere believers. Examples are the verses in chapter 5 of the Holy Qur’an: Al-Maidah, verses 55 and 67.

5 Tarikh Tabari vol. 2 Cairo, Egypt, 1932/1939 pp 216: Tarikh Ibn Athir, vol. 2 Cairo, Egypt 1301 A.H pp 28

6 Tarikh Bagdad vol. 14 by Al-Bagdadi, pp 322,;

7Sunanu Tirmidhi, Manaqib an Rasulullah, Manaqib Ali Ibn Abu Talib No. 3647

- (1) The Holy Qur'an (5:55): *“Verily, your guardian is non else but Allah and His Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and those who believe, those who establish prayer and pay the poor rate, while bowing down in prayer”*.
- (2) The Holy Qur'an (5:67): *“(Oh our Apostle Muhammad (SAW), Deliver what has been sent down unto you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then (it will be as if) you have not delivered his message (at all); and surely Allah will protect you from the (mischief) of men”*.

All the Sunni and the Shia Clerics agree that these verses and many others of the Holy Qur'an descended about Imam Ali (AS). For example, Sayuti in his book: Duurul Manthur, Ar-Razi in his book: Mafatihul Gaib, Zamakhshari in his Book: Al-Kashshaf, Tha'labi in his Tafsir, Attabarasi in his book: Majma' Bayan, and many others. These are just a few examples of the merits and position of Imam Ali (AS) from the main sources of the Islamic references (the Holy Qur'an and Hadith).

Is it possible therefore for all the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to directly hear him mention a lot of merit and position of Imam Ali (AS) on different occasions for them all not to respond to him? Certainly it is not possible for all the companions to disobey the Holy Prophet (SAW) and for that matter the Holy Qur'an by not having relations with Imam Ali (AS). However, having relationship with Imam Ali (AS) in terms of obeying the divine injunctions is what is technically called the Shia of Ali (AS) which indeed the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) introduced to the Ummah.

Surprisingly, among all the names of the Islamic Sects that we have, Shia is the only name that can be found directly in the Holy Qur'an and sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The names of the rest of the sects unfortunately are not mentioned directly as in the

case of Shia in the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith. Why so? If indeed they are the real gate leading to Islam, they should have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith.

The name Ahlul-Sunnah wal Jama'ah (Wahabiyah) is however foreign to the early history of Islam, it is something of recent days. All the known Islamic sects are applying the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in one way or the other in their Islamic life for that matter Sunnah cannot be solely claimed by a section of the Muslim Ummah. It is indeed seen as a "Political" slogan designed to deceive and attract followers to a particular direction as if the rest of the Muslim Ummah do not apply the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW). How would it look like, had a section of the Muslim Ummah name themselves "Ahlul-Qur'an" would that mean that the rest of the Ummah are not of the Qur'an? Certainly not!

The Shia is the real and practical Ahlul-Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in accordance with the Hadith of "thaqalain" (Two weighty things) by adhering to the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Ahlul-Bait (AS). The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "*I am leaving behind among you the two weighty and valuable things: The Book of Allah and my Ahlul-Bait; they shall never separate from each other till they reach me at the Pool*".⁸ It is indeed only the Shia who is of the Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as said by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

⁸ Sahih Muslim vol. 8 pp 25 Hadith No. 2408 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, vol.3 pp 388 Hadith No. 17020

IMAMAH (IMAMATE) AND KHILAFAH (CALIPHATE)

Imamah in the Islamic terminology is an Arabic word which literally means leadership and technically means an overall authority in all religious and worldly affairs in succession to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Al-Imam therefore means the leader who in succession to the Holy Prophet (SAW) has the right to the total ultimate command of the Muslim Ummah in all religious and worldly affairs. The Imam of prayers is not included in the definition for he has no absolute authority over the Ummah.

The Khilafah (Caliphate) and Khalifah (Caliph) means succession and successor respectively. The issue of Imamah (Imamate) and Khilafah (Caliphate) has created and has been the main cause of a lot of problems in the Muslim Ummah and has affected concepts of the Roots and Branches of the Religion of Islam. This finally divided the Muslim Ummah into two major sects, namely the Sunni and the Shia.

- 1) The Sunni: They believe that Abubakar was the first Caliph of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
- 2) The Shia: They believe that Imam Ali (AS) was the first Imam and Caliph of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The Sunni believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) died without appointing a successor to lead the Muslim Ummah after him but left the responsibility in the hands of the Ummah to appoint a caliph themselves.

On the other hand, the Shia Ithna Ashariyyah (The twelve Imams) believes that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by the command of Allah appointed Imam Ali (AS) as his successor and that the appointment of the caliph is only for Allah through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said in a Hadith accepted by all the sects in Islam that: *“My Ummah will shortly break up into seventy-three (73) sects all of which shall be condemned to the Hell fire except one”*⁹(Mishkatul Masabeeh, Biharul Anwar). This is a very fearful and serious divine message to the Ummah from no one else, but the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It is therefore for the seeker of the truth to put in more efforts, patience and with reason as his guide to be able to dig out the truth. This can only be possible if one has the clear view of the fundamental differences before him and putting aside bias and hatred, examines the points with thoughtful mind and praying to Allah for His guidance to the right path.

This division of the Ummah into Shia and Sunni Muslims created a lot of fundamental differences with each side putting forth arguments and reasoning to support itself. However, Allah, the Almighty warn us as Muslims not to divide our religion into sects and arguing among ourselves.

To understand these differences very well we need answers to the following questions:

- (a) Did the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) appoint anyone as his successor or not? If he did so, who was it? If not, why?

⁹ Mishkatul Masabeeh by Al-Khateeb Tabreezi (English Translation by James Rockson vol. 1 pp 45 Biharul Anwar by Allamah Majlesi vol. 28 pp 2-36 Safinatul Bihar vol. 2 by Sheikh Abbass Al-Qummi pp 359-360

- (b) Is it for Allah to appoint a successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) or is it the duty of the Ummah to appoint whomsoever they want to succeed the Prophet (SAW)?
- (c) In case we say the Ummah has the responsibility to appoint a successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), did Allah or the Holy Prophet (SAW) lay down rules and procedures for the appointment or was the Ummah which set their own rules or acted according to the time and opportunity at their disposal? Did they have the right to act as they did?
- (d) Is there any qualification or quality for a successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW)? If so, what are they?
- (e) After the Holy Prophet's death, who was recognised to be the Caliph? Did he possess the qualification and qualities necessary for a caliph?

The Shia View:

According to the Shia, it is Allah, the Almighty who appoints a successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Allah, the Almighty has created man only for His worship and reasonably this can only be achieved through His guidance to what He (Allah) really wants man to do. Therefore, it is incumbent on Allah to appoint a Successor or Imam to guide and lead the Ummah after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It is a mercy and grace from Allah to guide His creatures to the right path for His worship with free will and no compulsion.

From the history of the past Prophets (AS) before the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the Prophets (AS) nominated their successors on the command of Allah without the Ummah having any hand in the nominations. There is no single instance where an Ummah selected a successor to its Prophet at all. For that matter no change in this divine law in the case of the

Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (33:62): *“And you shall never find a change in the Divine tradition of Allah”*.

A Prophet is indeed appointed by Allah to put across the Divine Orders of Allah to His creatures to worship Him, the same way the Imam/Successor to the Prophet (AS) must be appointed by Allah to carry out the work of Allah and must be responsible to Him alone. However, if an Imam/Successor is appointed by the Ummah (people) then they will be the basis of his authority hence he must be loyal to them and not to Allah. He will always act to please the people to maintain his position and for that matter cannot discharge his religious responsibilities as expected by Allah hence the religion of Allah will suffer most.

(1) Qualification of a Successor:

There are two main qualifications for an Imam/Successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

- The Imam/Successor must be the **most superior** person to all the Ummah.
- The Imam/Successor must be an **infallible person** among the Ummah.

(a) **Superior:** According to Shia Islam, just like the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), an Imam or the Successor should be above all the Ummah in virtues, like knowledge, bravery, piety, charity to mention but a few. The Imam must also possess complete knowledge of the Divine Law. In the history of Islam, only Imam Ali (AS) possessed this attributes after the Holy Prophet (SAW) as he himself says: **“Ask me of the secrets of the unseen for I am the inheritor of the knowledge of the Prophets (AS) and the Messengers (AS).”**¹⁰. In another instance he is reported to have said: **“Ask me, ask me, before you loose me”**. Therefore, if

¹⁰ Yanabee-ul Mawaddah by Al-Qundoozi 1/213/017

this high position is therefore given to an inferior and less knowledgeable person when a superior and more knowledgeable is present, then an act against reason and the Divine justice has taken place. For that matter an inferior person does not receive Imamate from Allah leaving a superior person behind.

Some of our Sunni Brothers believe that superiority within the Muslim is in accordance with the sequence of the Caliphate. To them, the first Caliph Abubakar was more superior, the second Caliph Omar then the third Caliph Othman then Ali (AS) the fourth Caliph. This belief is not based on any proof. There are a lot who believed that Imam Ali (AS) was the most superior amongst all the Ahlul-Bait (AS), the companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Muslim Ummah at large.

It is recorded that, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal was once asked by his son about his views on the subject of superiority within the Muslim Ummah. He said: “Abubakar, Omar and Othman”. His son then asked: “And what about Ali Ibn Abi Talib?” He replied: “He is from the Ahlul-Bait (AS). Others cannot be compared with them”.¹¹

Also Ibn Hajar Al-Haytami in his book: As-Sawa-iqul Muhriqah recorded that Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal has said: “There have not come as many hadith with good chain of narrators about the virtues of any of the companions as have been narrated on the virtues of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS)”. Indeed, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the most superior of all the Muslim Ummah is Imam Ali (AS).

(b)**Infallibility:** In the Shia point of view, the second qualification is that an Imam/Successor must be infallible (ma'soom). The role of an Imam in the Muslim Ummah is that, he is the

11 Yanabee-ul Mawaddah by Al-Qundoozi pp 253

reflection of the Holy Prophet (SAW). All the Ummah of Islam turn to him for the correct teachings and explanation of the religion in all its aspects like in belief, legislation, jurisprudence, morals and in fact in all aspects of life. Therefore, taking lessons from the Imam and obeying him are obligatory. If the Imam is fallible it means that he will be committing mistakes and going against the Divine teachings hence misleading the Ummah away from the Divine aim of Allah, the Almighty and the Holy Prophet (SAW). For this reason, the Imam must be infallible.

According to the Holy Qur'an (33:33): *“Allah only desires to keep away abomination from you, oh the Ahlul-Bait, And to purify you a thorough purification”*. This verse is agreed upon by both the Shia and the Sunni that it refers to the Ahlul Bait (AS) and by that they are infallible by all standards.

Ali (AS): The first divinely appointed Caliph and Imam:

In Islam and for that matter all Islamic sects believe that it is an obligation on a Muslim to have a will to be executed after his/her death. It is a general legislation in which the Holy Prophet (SAW) is not an exception. It is recorded in the History of Islam that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had never travelled out of the city of Medina even for a single day without appointing someone to be in charge of Medina in his absence. Therefore, how possible could he finally leave the Ummah without appointing a successor, knowing very well that this could lead to very serious and dangerous deviation?

From the Shia point of view, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) never left the Ummah without appointing a Successor. Accordingly, Imam Ali (AS) was the first divinely appointed Caliph and Imam by the Holy Prophet (SAW) on the orders of Allah, the Almighty.

It is a fact from the Holy Qur'an and authentic Hadith that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had on several occasions declared Imam Ali (AS) as his successor (Caliph). A lot of factual events relating to several verses and Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW) are indicators to this Holy declaration. The following are just a few examples of verses of the Holy Qur'an with their related historic events in relation to the declaration of Imam Ali (AS) as the successor (Caliph) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

- (I) The first event covering the Divine declaration of the caliphate of Imam Ali (AS) by the Holy Prophet (SAW) was in relation to the revelation of the verse of the Holy Qur'an (26:214) that says: *"And warn your nearest kinfolks"*. This Holy verse of the Holy Qur'an ordered the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to call his nearest relations to Islam.

In conforming to this divine order, the Holy Prophet (SAW) instructed Imam Ali (AS) to prepare food and invite the sons of Abdul-Mutalib so that he could use the opportunity to convey to them the divine message of Allah the Almighty. After they had finished taking their meal (feast), the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) addressed them saying: - *"Oh, sons of Abdul-Mutalib! I have brought for you the good of this world and the hereafter, and I have been appointed by the Lord Allah to call you unto Him. Who amongst you will help me in this Divine Course for him to become my Brother, the Executor of my will and my Successor after me?"* No one among all present responded to the three repeated calls by the Holy Prophet (SAW) except Ali (AS) who was by then the youngest of the congregation. The Holy

Prophet (SAW) then finally patted on Imam Ali (AS) and said: *“Verily, this (Ali) is my Brother, the Executor of my will and my Caliph amongst you. Listen to him and obey him”*¹²

Indeed, such an event for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to say, *“Verily, this (Ali) is my Brother, the Executor of my will and Caliph amongst you. Listen to him and obey him”*, had never ever happened in the history of Islam to any other companion of the Holy Prophet (SAW) except Imam Ali (AS) alone. Why? Was it meant for nothing? Certainly no! The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) never acted in vain except what had been revealed to him by Allah, the Almighty. Therefore, all his sayings and actions from the start of his Prophethood to the end are but lessons to teach and guide us to the right path of Allah.

- (II) The second event indicating that Imam Ali (AS) was the first divinely appointed Successor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is in relation to the verses of the Holy Qur’an that reminds Muslims that Imam Ali (AS) was their Master and for that matter their first Caliph after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Allah says in the Holy Qur’an (5:55) that: *“Verily, your Master (Guardian) is only Allah and His messenger and those who believe, those who establish prayers and pay the zakat while bowed in worship. Whoever takes as his Master (Guardian), Allah and His messenger and those who believe, verily, the party of Allah are always the victorious”*.

12 Tarikh Tabari vol. 2 Cairo, Egypt, 1932/1939 pp 216; Tarikh Ibn Athir, vol. 2 Cairo, Egypt 1301 A.H pp 28 ; Gibbon E. The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire vol. 3 pp 94 ; Davenport J. (1869) An Apology for Muhammad and Koran, London England : Irvin Washington,(1783-1859), Mahomet and His Successors (part of the Astor Prose Series) 1905 London, England

This verse has no controversy as to its reference. It has been generally agreed upon by both the Shia and the Sunni Scholars that it was revealed in honour of Imam Ali (AS). From this verse, Allah the Almighty clearly shows that the believers have three Masters (Guardians). Allah, the Almighty, as the first Master (Wali), His Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the second Master (Guardian/Wali) and Imam Ali (AS) as the third Master (Guardian/Wali).

The event relating to the revelation of this Holy verse was narrated by a prominent and pious companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by name Abu-Zarril Gaffari who said, he was one day praying with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) when a beggar came to the Prophet's mosque begging. No one responded to him. The beggar then raised his hands towards heavens and said: *"Oh, Allah be a witness that I came to your Prophet's mosque and no one gave me anything"*. Imam Ali (AS) was praying in the bowing position at that time. He pointed his little finger on which was a ring, towards the beggar who came forward and removed the ring as zakat (sadaqa). This incident in fact occurred in the presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who raised his holy face and hands towards Heaven and prayed: *"Oh Lord! My Brother Moses had begged You to open his breast and to make his work easy for him, to lose the knot of his tongue so that people might understand him, and to appoint from among his relatives his brother as his "Wazir" and to strengthen his back with Haroon and make Haroon his partner in his work. Oh, Allah! You said to Moses, We will strengthen your arm with your brother. No one will now have an access to either of you! Open my breast for me; make my brother Ali as my "Wazir". "Strengthen my back with him"*. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had not yet finished with his prayers when the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) brought the verse: *"Verily, your Master (Guardian) is only Allah and His Messenger and those who believe, those who establish prayers and pay the zakat while*

bowed in worship. Whoever takes as his Master, Allah and His messenger and those who believe, verily, the party of Allah are always the victorious” (Qur’an 5:55).

The content of this verse and the divine prayer of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) requesting Allah to appoint from his Holy family his Brother Ali (AS) as his ‘Wazir’ and to strengthen his back with Imam Ali (AS) shows clearly that Imam Ali (AS) was programmed to be the Master and Guardian of the Muslim Ummah after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) hence the appointed Successor to the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Below are a few references on the event from both the Shia and the Sunni sources:

- Ahkamul – Qur’an, by Al-Jassas Vol.2 page 542-543
- Durrul-Manthur by As-Sayuti Vol. 2, page 293-294
- Tafsir Al-Mizan by Allamah Tabatabai,
- Tafsir Ibn kathir Vol. 2
- Tafsir Kabeer by Fakhruldeen-Razi, Vol. 12, page 26
- Tafsir Kashshaf by Zamakhshari Vol 1, Page 649
- Tafsir At-Tabari Vol. 6 page 186
- Tafsir Qurtabi Vol 6

(ii) There are indeed several events relating to verses of the Holy Qur’an pointing to the Caliphate of Imam Ali (AS). I, only have to give just a few examples that can prepare your mind for wider reading and research for a better understanding and direction for free choice without any doubt left in mind.

The event of “Mubalah” (Mutual Cursing) in the history of Islam which took place in the 9th year of the Hijrah should be seen as one of the indicators for the Caliphate of Imam Ali (AS) after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The event happened when a delegation of fourteen (14) Christians came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from Najran asking him of his opinion about Jesus Christ (AS). The Holy Prophet (SAW) asked them to have a day's rest and to receive their reply on the next day. Indeed, on the next day, Allah, the Almighty revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) the following verses of the Holy Qur'an about the reality of Jesus (AS) from Chapter 3,(Aāl-Imran): *“Verily, the similitude of Jesus with God is as the similitude of Adam. He created him out of dust then said unto him ‘Be’, and he became * The truth is from thy Lord, therefore be not of those of the doubters* And unto him who disputed with thee therein after the knowledge hath come unto thee, Say (O, Muhammad) (unto them) come ye let us summon our sons and your sons, our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves let us invoke and lay the curse of God on the liars!”* (3:59-61).

When the Holy Prophet (SAW) recited the above three verses as answer to their question about Jesus (AS), the Christian delegation rejected the above message of Allah and insisted on their own Christian beliefs. Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) requested from them all including himself to invoke and lay the curse of Allah on the liar on the issue of Jesus Christ (AS) between him and the Christians. They both accepted to come out with their team the next day for the curse of Allah upon the liars. When the time arrived, the Christians decided to hold on waiting to see who would come from the camp of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) for them to know what to do. Suddenly, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) came out of his house carrying Imam Husain (AS) in his arms with Imam Hassan (AS) walking by his side holding his hand, and behind him was Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) (the Prophet's daughter) and behind her Imam Ali (AS). When the Christians saw these five pure and holy personalities, they asked as to who those accompanying the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were. On being told that those were his daughter, her husband and their sons (his

grandchildren) they said: “If he was a liar, he would not have brought his closest relations to suffer the curse of Allah”. They therefore abstained from the proposed prayer for the curse on the liars and rather submitted to a treaty with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The above verse, according to Jabir Ibn Abdullah Al-Ansari, the word ‘our sons’ refers to Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS), the word ‘our women’ refers to Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) and the word ‘ourselves’ refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and Imam Ali (AS). Therefore in this verse of Mubahalah, Imam Ali (AS) has been referred to as ‘the self’ of the Holy Prophet (SAW). It also shows that just as it is clear that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is by far the most superior to all, then from this verse we must understand that Imam Ali (AS) is the most superior after the Holy Prophet (SAW) from among all the companions since he is ‘the self’ of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) according to the words of Allah the most High¹³ . .

(iii) There is yet another event from the Holy Qur’an that shows that Imam Ali (AS) was divinely declared by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as his Successor with orders from Allah, the Almighty. This great event in the History of Islam is called “The declaration of Ghadir Khum”.

The verse of the Holy Qur’an known in Islamic terminology as the verse of ‘Tablig’ (propagation) was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on a Thursday, the 18th of the month of Zul-Hijjah after the Holy Prophet’s (SAW) farewell Hajj at a place called Ghadir-Khum situated between Mecca and Medina. The verse from the chapter of the Holy

13 Tafsir Durul Manthur vol.2 by Abdur-Rahman Al-Sayuti, Cairo, Egypt, 1314 A.H pp 38 ; Asbabul-Nuzool by Al-Wahidi pp 40

Qur'an (Al-Ma-edah, 5:67 says: "O, Messenger! Deliver what has been sent to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message; and Allah will protect you from the people; surely Allah will not guide the unbelieving people".

This verse was revealed when all the teachings of Islam, example: Salat, Fasting, Hajj, Zakat, Jihad, Criminal Laws, etc. had been propagated by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in totality. Therefore, what do you really understand from the content of this verse in relation to great events in the history of Islam?

This verse has indeed very important and implicative components for a thinking mind:- The verse starts with: *"O, Messenger! Deliver what has been sent to you from your Lord;"* meaning that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was delivering this message **from Allah** to the Ummah of Islam **as a Messenger of Allah** and not as a relative to any person. It goes further: *"and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message."* This implies that this particular message is of such great importance that failure to deliver it equates to making what had already been propagated in terms of all the pillars and teachings of Islam from the beginning to the end useless; hence the message of Islam not delivered. The verse also ends with Allah's assurance of protection for the Holy Prophet against the opposing people in delivering this unique and divine message.

However, what is this unique and divine message that equates to Islam being nullified if not delivered to the ummah? Therefore read the following great historic event of Islam attentively, you will surely understand the message.

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was on his way back to Medina after performing his last pilgrimage, the Angel Gabriel brought to the Holy Prophet (SAW) the above verse

from Allah, the Almighty. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) stopped and ordered all the people who had gone ahead to be called back and waited for those who were behind. When all the pilgrims gathered, a pulpit was set up by piling up camel saddles. It was a very hot day and the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the people were all under the scorching sun. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) ascended the pulpit and delivered the following long sermon saying:

Oh people! It seems to me that soon I will be called upon and will respond to the call. I have my responsibility and you have yours; so what do you say? They said "we bear witness that you have conveyed the message, struggled and advised (the nation) ; therefore, may Allah reward you with the best of His rewards". He asked them: "do not you also bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad (SAW) is His servant and messenger, that His Paradise is just, and His hell fire is just, that death is just, that life after death is just, that the hour will undoubtedly approach, and that Allah shall bring the dead to life from their graves? They said; "Yes indeed we do bear witness to all of that". He said; "Oh Mighty Lord! Bear witness that they have". Then he said: "Oh people! Allah is my Master and I am the master (Mawla) of the believers. I have more authority over their lives than they themselves have; therefore, to whomsoever I have been a Mawla, this (Ali (AS)) is his Mawla; O' Lord! Befriend whoever befriend him and be an enemy to whoever takes him as his enemy". Then he said; "O people! I am to precede you and you shall join me at the pool, (of Kawthar) which is wider than the distance from Basra to San'a; it contains as many silver cups as the stars; and I shall ask you when you join me about the two weighty things, how you shall succeed me in faring with them; the greatest weighty thing is the Book of Allah, the Omniscient, the Sublime, one end of which is in Allah's hand and the other in yours; so uphold it so that you may not go astray and your faith shall not suffer any alteration; and the other weighty thing is my Ahlul-Bayt (AS), for the most Gracious has informed me that they both shall never part from each other till they join me at the Pool in Paradise".¹⁴

14Al-Muraja'at, letter 54 : Sawa-iqal Muhriqah by Ibn Hajar Al-Haytami pp 25

From the above Divine and Historic Sermon of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), a lot of very vital issues were mentioned. The Holy Prophet (SAW) informed the audience of his approaching end and then called them to witness that he had faithfully discharged his duties. Among other messages he said: *“Whoever I am a Master to, Ali is his Master”*. In the end he invoked blessing on Ali, saying: *“O Allah! Love him who love Ali, and be the enemy of the enemy of Ali; help him who helps Ali and forsake him who forsakes Ali”*.

The following verse of the Holy Qur’an from the chapter (Al-Ma-eda: 5:3): *“This day I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed my bounty upon you and I have approved Islam as your religion”*; was revealed when the ceremony was over.

This Divine and Historic event clearly shows that because of Imam Ali’s (AS) appointment to the Imamate and Caliphate, the religion of Islam was perfected, the bounty and favour of Allah completed and Islam finally approved by Allah the Almighty as the religion of mankind. This was a unique and great moment of honour to Imam Ali (AS) from Allah, the Almighty through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

On the very ground of this great occasion of the appointment of Imam Ali (AS) as the Successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the believers congratulated Imam Ali (AS) as their Master and Imam after the Holy Prophet (SAW) in the presence of the Holy Prophet himself. We have it in records that poets amongst whom was Hassan Ibn Thabit, the famous poet of the Holy Prophet (SAW) composed a poem praising Imam Ali (AS) saying: *“So he (the Prophet) said to him (Ali): ‘Stand up O Ali! I am pleased to make you Imam and Guide after me’”*.

Abubakar and Omar were among the great companions who were present and summarised the occasion by congratulating Imam Ali (AS) saying: “Congratulation, O son of Abu Talib, within a day you have become my Master and the Master of every believing man and woman”.¹⁵

Oh! Sincere seekers of the truth, ponder over the following Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to understand more about Imam Ali (AS). The Shia are but conforming to the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by following Imam Ali (AS).

(1) From the book: Mawaddatul Qurbaa written by Sayyid Ali Hamadani. We have it that on the authority of Salman Al-Farisi, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“I and Ali were both created from one and the same Noor (Divine Light) from thousands of years before Adam was created, and when Adam was created, that Noor was given a place in his backbone. So we continue to occupy the same place till we were separated in the back of Abdul-Mutalib. Therefore in me is the Prophethood and in Ali is the Caliphate”*.

(2) The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“Verily, Ali is from me and I am from him and no one shall deliver on my behalf except myself or Ali (AS)”*.¹⁶

(3) The Hadithul-Manzillah (Tradition of Rank or Position). During the 7th Islamic Lunar month (Rajab) while leaving for the Battle of Tabook in the 9th year after Hijrah, the Holy

15 Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal vol 4 pp 281 ; Kanzul-Ummal vol. 15 pp 117 ; Kitabul-Ghadir vol. 1 by Allamah Amini, pp 270-283 ;
Tafsir Ibn Kathir vol. 1 ;
Tafsir Kabir by Fakhru-Razi vol. 12 pp 49-50

16 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal Vol. 4 pp 164 ; Sunan Tirmidhi, vol. 5 pp 300 ; Khasa-is Amirul-Mumineen by Nasai pp 88 : Ibn Majah vol. 1:44 : Tirmidhi vol. 6:3716, 3717, 3719.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) left Imam Ali (AS) as his deputy to look after Medina in his absence. Imam Ali (AS) asked the Holy Prophet (SAW): “*Are you leaving me behind?*” The Holy Prophet (SAW) replied, saying to him: “*Oh Ali, are you not satisfied that you have the same position in relation to me as Haroon had to Musah (Moses), except that there is no Prophet after me?*” This means that as Musah left behind Haroon and went to receive the Commandment of Allah, the same way the Holy Prophet (SAW) left behind Imam Ali (AS) as his deputy to look after the affairs of Islam and Muslims in his absence.¹⁷

(4) When chapter Nine (9) of the Holy Qur’an (Al-Bara-aa) was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), to read the chapter to the people of Mecca, the Holy Prophet (SAW) first sent Abubakar to read it before the pagan people of Mecca. Later the Holy Prophet (SAW) under the command of the Almighty Allah sent Imam Ali (AS) to take back the Surah from Abubakar and read it to the Meccans. Abubakar returned to Medina and asked the Holy Prophet (SAW) whether some order was received from Allah against him reading the chapter to the Meccans. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) replied: “*The Angel Gabriel came to me and said that no one shall deliver the message except me or the person who is from me*”.¹⁸

17 Sahih Bukhari vol. 5 Bab Gazwat Tabukpp 129 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 5 BK. 59 Hadith No. 700 : Sahih Muslim vol. 5 Kitab Fada-il Sahaba pp 23; Sahih Muslim BK. 31 Hadith No.5914 : Sunanu Tirmidhi vol. 5 pp 638 : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1 pp 174 : Sunanu Ibn Majah pp 12:Al-Khasa-is by Al-Nasai pp 15-16, :

18 Tafsir Durul Manthur vol.6 by Abdur-Rahman Al-Sayuti, Cairo, Egypt, 1314 A.H pp 209 ; Tafsir At-Tabari vol. 10 pp 47 : Al-Khasa-is by Al-Nasai pp 20 : Sunanu Ibn Majah vol.1 pp 44 : Sunanu Tirmidhi vol. 5 pp 300

(5)The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the Entrance, whoever wants the city should pass through the Entrance”*.¹⁹

(6)The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“To love Ali is faith and to hate him is disbelieve”*.²⁰

(7)In another Hadith, we have the Holy Prophet (SAW) saying: *“Ali (AS) is with the Truth and the Truth is with Ali (AS); it turns with him wherever he turns”*.²¹. [(a) .

(8)The Holy Prophet Muhammad said: *“Ali (AS) is with the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Qur’an is with Ali, they will never separate till they meet me at the pool (Paradise)”*.²²

(9)The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“Any person who insults Ali has insulted me, and who insulted me has insulted Allah, and whosoever insults Allah ends in Hell fire”*.²³.

19 Mustadrak ala Sahi-hain by Al-Hakim vol. 3 pp 126-127 : Tarikh Bagdad vol. 11 pp 49-50 : Tarikh Ibn Kathir vol. 7 pp 358 : Jami Tirmidhi vol. 6, Hadith No. 3723

20 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1 pp 84,95,128 : Sahih Muslim vol. 1 BK 1 Hadith No. 0141: Sahih Muslim vol. 1, Kitabul- Iman, : Jami-Tirmidhi vol. 6 Hadith No.3736: Sahih Tirmidhi 2:301 : Sunanu Nasai 2:271

21 Tarikh Bagdad 14:321, ; Tarikh Madinatu Damishq 42:449, ; Kanzul-Ummal vol. 5, ; Al-Manaqib by Al-Khateeb Al-Khawarizmi pp 56

22 Al-Mujamul-Sagiri by Sayuti 1/255 : Al-Mujamul-Awsat by At-Tabari 5/455; Hadith 4877

23 Al-Mustadrakal Hakim, 3/121 ; Kanzul-Ummal 11/602 Hadith 32903

(Quran 53:3-4) “And he (Prophet Muhammad (SAW)) speaks not of his own desire. It is but revelation that is revealed”

Reflecting and pondering with clear conscience over each of the above Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) concerning Imam Ali (AS), will lead to the understanding that these Hadiths are to explain to the believers the unique and noble position of Imam Ali (AS) in relation to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Islam. None of the companions was ever described and honoured by the Holy Prophet (SAW) like Imam Ali (AS). But why? All were in preparation of the grounds for the Divine declaration of his leadership as Caliph after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), hence the great declaration; the Holy Qur’an (Al-Ma-edah, 5:67 says: “O, Messenger! Deliver what has been sent to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message; and Allah will protect you from the people; surely Allah will not guide the unbelieving people”.

Infact, the message of Islam without the declaration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) for his Successor (Caliph) after him would be like building a very large and beautiful house with everything in it without a door leading into the house. This will really render the house useless because the absence of the door into the house makes it useless.

Indeed, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the City of Knowledge and Ali (AS) is the Door to it. For that matter, in the above analogy the Holy Prophet (SAW) is the “house” and Imam Ali (AS) is the “door”!!

Therefore dear seekers of truth, in the light of the points made above it will be beneficial for one to ponder about this verse in the Holy Quran Chapter 2, verse 189 where Allah; the Al-

mighty makes entering houses by their doors as a way or means to the ultimate success. He (the Al-mighty) says; *“it is not righteousness that you should enter the houses at their backs, but righteousness is that one should guide (against evil); and **gointo the houses by their doors** and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, that you may be successful”*.

Oh Allah, allow us to enter your house (MUHAMMAD (SAW)) through its door (ALI (AS)) so that we may be successful as you promise and indeed your promise does not fail. Ameen.

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THE PROGENY OF IMAM ALI (AS) AND FATIMAH (AS) ARE THE PROGENY OF THE HOLY PROPHET (SAW)

It is one of the misunderstood concepts in Islam that, that Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) did not leave behind a male child but rather left behind Fatimah (AS) while children as progeny generally are linked through their fathers not mothers. Therefore, the Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) are the children of their father Imam Ali (SA) and not the Holy Prophet (SAW).

This misconception existed as far back in the Muslim history to the Abbasy Caliph Haruna Rashid when he summoned the seventh Ahlul-Bait (AS) Imam [Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS)] for questions and answers that included this very topic. Therefore, for better clarification and understanding of the misconception, I quote the exact event that took place from the authentic sources as follows:

From the Book of Allamah At-Tabrisi Abu Mansoor Ahmad Ibn Ali: Al-Ehtijaj Vol. 2 and the Book Uyunul Akhbari Rida Vol. 1 of Sheikh Sadooq who was one of the greatest scholars of the Shia faith in the 4th Century A.H. under the topic: **The answers of Imam Musah Ibn Ja'far Al-Kazim (AS) to the questions of Haruna Rashid.**

The following questions and answers are recorded:-

Harun: “You permitted all people to link you to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and they even address you saying, Oh children of the Messenger of Allah (SAW), while you are indeed only the children of Ali (AS), verily, a child is linked to his father and Fatimah (AS)

was only a container and the Holy Prophet (SAW) was your grandfather through your mother (Fatimah)?”

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): “Had the Holy Prophet (SAW) been resurrected and he requested the hand of your daughter for marriage, would you have accepted giving him?”

Harun: “Glory is to Allah! Why would I not give him? I would have boasted over the Arabs, non-Arabs and even the Quraish for that”.

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): “But the Holy Prophet (SAW) would not request a marriage from me and I would not marry any of my daughters to him”

Harun: “Why?”

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): “Verily, he gave birth to me and did not give birth to you”.

Harun: “Well done! But, how do you say, you are the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and he never left a male child behind? Give me your proofs on this matter, oh son of Ali (AS) from the Holy Qur'an since you claim to have detail of everything; referring to the verse of the Holy Qur'an (An-Aam: 38): *“We have not omitted anything from the Book”*.

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): “Do you permit me to give the answer?”

Harun: “Do so!”

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): “I seek refuge from Allah against the accursed Shaitan; In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (An-Aam: 84 – 85): *“and from his offspring, David and Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron*

– thus do we reward the virtuous – and Zachariah, John, Jesus and Elias – each of them among the righteous”. “Then who was the father of Jesus?”

Harun: “Jesus had no father!”

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): Allah (SWT) linked Jesus (AS) to the progeny of the Holy Prophets (SAW) through his mother, Mary (AS). So similarly, Allah has also linked us to the offspring of the Holy Prophet (SAW) through our mother Fatimah (AS). Do you need more?”

Harun: “Go on!”

Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS): Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (Aal-Imran: 61): “*Should anyone argue with you concerning him (Jesus) after the knowledge that has come to you, say, come! Let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then let us pray earnestly and call down Allah’s curse upon the liars*”.

No one has ever claimed that the Holy Prophet (SAW) had included him or her in the supplication contest with the Christians of Najran from the above verse except Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS), Fatimah (AS), Al-Hassan (AS) and Al-Husain (AS). All Muslims, unanimously agree that “Our Sons” from the verse only refer to the Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS), “Our Women” refers to Fatimah (AS) and “Ourselves” to Imam Ali (AS).

Harun: “Oh Musah, you have done well!”

Upon all the facts given by Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS) to Harun Rashid, he [Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS)] was denied his freedom of association for no crime done and was kept in chains and transferred from prison to prison under severe oppression until finally poisoned by

Harun Rashid and died in the prison as a martyr. Today, the same oppression, injustice and denial of rights of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is however reflecting on their Shia world over for fear of the truth. May Allah have mercy on us all!

From the above discussions between Imam Musah Al-Kazim (AS) and Harun Rashid, it has been proven from the Holy Qur'an that Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS) are the sons of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and for that matter all the descendants of Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) are the progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

There are other evidences to show that the descendants of Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) are the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW) from the Books of Tradition:

(1) Imam Fakhrudden Razi, in respect to the verses of the Holy Qur'an (An-Aam: 84-85): *“and from his offspring, David and Solomon, Ayub, Joseph, Moses and Aaron – thus do we reward the virtuous – and Zachariah, John, Jesus and Elias – each of them among the righteous”*, says that these verses prove that Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS) are the progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). ²⁴Since in these verses Allah has authenticated Jesus (AS) as the progeny of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and Jesus (AS) had no father, this relationship is from the side of his mother, Mary (AS). In the same manner, Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS) are truly the progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) through their mother Sayyidah Fatimah (AS).

(2) Ibn Abi Hadeed in his Sharhe Nahjul Balagah has quoted the same verses (An-Aam: 84-85) arguing that Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS) are from the side of their mother [Sayyidah Fatimah (AS)], the sons of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in the same way that Allah in

24 Tafsir Kabir vol. 4 by Fakhrudden Ar-Razi

the Holy Qur'an has included Jesus Christ (AS) in the progeny of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) from the side of his mother (Mary (AS))

(3) Ibn Abbas, reported that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“Allah created the progeny of every Prophet from his own backbone but my progeny was created from the backbone of Ali (AS)”*.²⁵

(4) Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal in his Musnad, Khatib Khawarazmi in his book, Al-manaqib and Suleiman Hanafi in the book, Yanabee-ul-Mawaddah quote the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as saying: *“These my two sons (Hassan and Husain) are two flowers in this world, and both of them are Imams (leaders) whether they are Imam openly or silently sitting at home”*.

(5) The second Caliph Omar bin Khattab said: *“I heard the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying that “on the day of judgement, every ancestry will be disconnected except my generation, and every generation of a daughter is from the father’s side except the generation of Fatimah (AS) which links with me as I am their father and ancestor”*.²⁶

(6) Ibn Hajar and Allamah Ganji report in their books that Imam Ali (AS) visited the Holy Prophet (SAW) and met Abbas with the Holy Prophet (SAW). He said ‘Salam’(greetings) to the Holy Prophet (SAW), the Holy Prophet (SAW) replied the ‘Salam’, stood up, embraced

25 Kifayul-Talib by Muhammad bin Yusuf Shafi-ee (Allamah Ganji) : Sawa-eqe Muhriqah by Ibn Hajar Makki pp 74,94

26 Kifayul-Talib by Muhammad bin Yusuf Shafi-ee (Allamah Ganji)

Imam Ali (AS), kissed his face and seated him on his right side. Then Abbas said to the Holy Prophet (SAW): “Do you love him?” then the Holy Prophet (SAW) replied: “Oh Uncle! By Allah, Allah loves him more than my love for him. Verily, Allah created the progeny of every Prophet from his backbone, but created my progeny from the backbone of this man(pointing at Imam Ali (AS)).²⁷

In my opinion, no one in the world can be so much proud of his ancestral lineage as the Ahlul-Bait (AS).They are the descendants of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) through Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) and Imam Ali (AS).

The argument presented above is quite reasonable, convincing and irrefutable. Therefore, let us all put a stop to false propaganda against the Ahlul-Bait (AS) and the Shia for that matter and seek and follow the truth for our own salvation.

27 Kifayul-Talib by Muhammad bin Yusuf Shafi-ee (Allamah Ganji) : Sawa-eqe Muhriqah by Ibn Hajar Makki

THE 12 INFALLIBLE IMAMS OF THE AHLUL-BAIT (AS)

The Ahlul-Bait (AS), according to the Holy Qur'an are sinless and infallible. Allah, the Almighty designated them for the leadership and guidance of the Ummah at large. From the Holy Qur'an, chapter (Al-Ahzab) verse 33, Allah says: *"Verily, Allah desires to keep away abomination from you, the Ahlul-Bait and to purify you thorough purification (33:33).*

The Shia follow and take Islamic Teachings from the purified Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as directed by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). On several occasions, the Holy Prophet (SAW) mentioned the names and number of the Imams of the Holy Ahlul-Bait (AS) after him as Twelve (12).

Al-Qanduzi recorded that a Jew by name A'tel came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and said: "Oh Muhammad I ask you on issues disturbing to me, if you answer me, I will embrace Islam at your hands". The Holy Prophet (SAW) replied: *"You can ask oh Abu Ammarah"*. Then he asked his questions and the Holy Prophet (SAW) answering till he said: "You have spoken the truth". Then he said: "Tell me who will be your 'Wasi'?" (Executor of your will)? For every Prophet has a Wasi (Executor) and verily Prophet Musah Ibn Imran (AS) made Yushau Ibn Nun (AS) his 'Wasi'". Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *"My Wasi (Executor) is Ali Ibn Abi Talib, after him my two grandsons, Al-Hassan and Al-Husain then followed by nine (9) Imams from the lineage of Al-Husain"*. He then said: "Oh, Muhammad, mention their names to me". Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *"When Al-Husain passes away, comes his son Ali, then his son Muhammad, then his son Ja'far, then his son Musah, then his son Ali, then his son Muhammad, then his son Ali, then his son Al-Hassan, then his son*

Muhammad Al-Mahdi, they are twelve together". Then the author said: "The Jew converted to Islam and praised Allah for being guided".²⁸

Interestingly, the word Imam or Imamah is repeated only twelve (12) times in the Holy Quran. Why? Could this be a coincidence? Never, Glory be to Allah, and may He increase us in faith. In case the reader wants to refer, we provide the chapters and their verses in Table 1.0 where he/she can find the word "Imam/Imamah" as used in the Holy Quran.

Table 1.0: The Twelve (12) Places Where "Imam/Imamah" can be found in the Quran

1	Al-Baqarah - 2:124	5	Al-Isra - 17:71	9	Al-Qasas - 28:41
2	At-Taubah -9:12	6	Al-Anbiyah - 21:73	10	As-Sajdah-32:24
3	Hud - 11:17	7	Al-Furqan -25:74	11	Yasin - 36:12
4	Hijr - 15:79	8	Al-Qasas -28:5	12	Al-Ahqaf - 46:12

A Brief History of the Twelve (12) Imams:

- **The 1st Imam: Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib (AS),** (Amirul-Mu'mineen). He was born on the 13th Rajab inside the Ka'ba. He became Imam on the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on 28th Safar, 11 A.H. Imam Ali (AS) was struck with a poisoned sword by Abdul-Rahman Ibn Muljim while leading prayers in the mosque of Kufa (Iraq) on the 19th of Ramadan died 2 days later on the 21st Ramadan 40 A.H. and was buried at Najaf (Iraq).
- **The 2nd Imam: Imam Al-Hassan Ibn Ali (AS)** (Al-Mujtaba), son of Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib. He was born on the 15th Ramadan 3 A.H. at Medina and died of poison on the 7th or 28th Safar, 50 A.H. at Medina.

28 Yanabee-ul Mawaddah vol. 3 by Al-Qunduzi Al-Hanafi pp 99

- **The 3rd Imam: Imam Al-Husain Ibn Ali (AS)** (The Master of Martyrs) son of Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib (AS). He was born on the 3rd of Sha'ban 4 A.H. at Medina. He was martyred with his sons, relatives and companions on the 10th Muharram 61 A.H. at Karbala (Iraq) on the orders of Yazid Ibn Ma'awiyah.
- **The 4th Imam: Imam Ali Ibn Al-Husain (AS)** (Zainul-Arbideen), son of Imam Husain (AS). He was born on the 5th Sha'ban 38 A.H. and died of poison on the 25th Muharram 94 A.H. or 95 A.H. at Medina.
- **The 5th Imam: Imam Muhammad Ibn Ali (AS)** (Al-Baqir), son of Imam Zainul-Arbideen (AS). He was born on the 1st Rajab 57 A.H. at Medina and died of poison on the 7th of Zul-Hijjah 114 A.H. at Medina.
- **The 6th Imam: Imam Ja'far Ibn Muhammad (AS)** (As-Sadiq), son of Imam Al-Baqir (AS). He was born on the 17th Rabiul-Awal 83 A.H. at Medina and died there of poison on 25th Sha'wal 148 A.H.
- **The 7th Imam: Imam Musah Ibn Ja'far (AS)** (Al-Kazim), son of Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq (AS). He was born on the 7th Safar 129 A.H. and died of poison on the 25th Rajab 183 A.H. in the prison of Haroona Rashid (the 5th Abbasid Caliph) and was buried at Al-Kazimiyah (Iraq).
- **The 8th Imam: Imam Ali Ibn Musah (AS)** (Ar-Rida), son of Imam of Musah Kazim (AS). He was born at Medina on the 11th Zil-Qidah 148 A.H. and died of poison on the 17th Safar 203 A.H. at Mashhad (Iran).),
- **The 9th Imam: Imam Muhammad Ibn Ali (AS)** (At-Taqi) Son of Imam Ali Ar-Rida (AS). He was born on the 10th Rajab 195 A.H. at Medina and died of poison at Bagdad on the 30th Zil-Qidah 220 A.H. and was buried at Al-Kazimiyah (Iraq).
- **The 10th Imam: Imam Ali Ibn Muhammad (AS)** (Al-Hadi), son of Imam Muhammad At-Taqi (AS). He was born on the 5th Rajab 212 A.H. at Medina and died of poison at Samarra (Iraq) on the 3rd Rajab 254 A.H.

- **The 11th Imam: Imam Al-Hassan Ibn Ali (AS)** (Al-Askari), son of Imam Ali Al-Hadi (AS). He was born on the 8th of Rabiul-Thani 232 A.H. at Medina and died of poison at Samarra on the 8th Rabiul-Awal 260 A.H.
- **The 12th Imam: Imam Muhammad Al-Mahdi (AS)**, son of Imam Al-Hassan Al-Askari (AS). He was born on the 15th Sha'ban 255 A.H. at Samarra. He is the present and living Imam but in occultation and will only appear when Allah wishes him to establish the Kingdom of Allah on Earth with justice and equity. He is also called Al-Hujjah (The Proof), Sahibu-Zaman (The Master of the time) and Sahibul-Amr (The owner of the Divine Authority).

These are the twelve (12) infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) who the Shia believe in and strictly follow for the application of the real teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

From the book, "Ahzab wa Awrad", by Sayyid Maulana Shiekh Ahmed Tijani (RA) of the Tijaniyyah Sufi Order. One finds that, he made Tawassul (seeking Allah through an Intermediary) under the topic "Qasidatu Tawassul" with the same Twelve (12) infallible Imams of the Prophet's (SAW) household. Thus, it is obvious that Shiekh Ahmad Tijani was a spiritual believer and follower of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) but might have practiced taqiyyah. Therefore to the best of my understanding, this action of Shiekh Ahmad Tijani is an endorsement of the Shia sect.

In the Books of Traditions, there are a lot of recordings in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) mentioned on several different occasions the 12 Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS). Read below just a few more of his sayings with regards to the twelve (12) Imams in Islam:

(1) *“The Religion (Islam) will remain dignified only with the twelve (12) Caliphs and all of them shall come from the Quraish”*.²⁹.

(2) *“I am the Master of the Prophets and Ali is the Master of the ‘Wasiyeen’ (Caliphs) and verily, the ‘Awsiya-ee’ (my Caliphs) after me are twelve (12), their first is Ali (AS) and their last is Al-Mahdi (AS)”*³⁰.

(3) Narrated by Salman Al-Farisi who said, that he entered to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) when he saw Imam Husain (AS) on his laps and the Holy Prophet (SAW) kissing him and saying: *“You are a Master, son of a Master, and you are a leader, son of a leader, and you are a proof, son of a proof and you are the father of the nine (9) proofs and the 9th of them is their Riser”*³¹.

These Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) can only be seen in their total application from the Shia Islam of the twelve (12) Imams. No other place within the Muslim sects conforms and reflects this Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) of the 12 Imams after

29 Sahih Bukhari vol. 9 BK 89 Hadith No. 329 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 4 Kitabul-Ahkam pp 165,; Sahih Muslim BK 20 Hadith No. 4480-4483 : Sahih Muslim vol. 6 Kitabul-Imarat, pp 3, : Sunanu Abi Dawud BK31 Hadith No. 4262-4267 : Sunanu Abi Dawud vol. 3, Kitabul-Mahdi pp 106 : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol 5 pp 89-90,92-101.

30 Yanabee-ul Mawaddah vol. 3 by Al-Qunduzi Al-Hanafi

31 Yanabee-ul Mawaddah vol. 3 by Al-Qunduzi Al-Hanafi pp 168 : Arjahul-Matalib by Amristari pp 448

him apart from the Shia Sect alone. Why? Are we not all supposed to follow the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW)?

A point of interest is that every aspect of Islam is well calculated to the extent that the concept of the 12 Imams though might look strange to some cannot be separated away from the Prophethood. It should be seen as the complete shadow and reflection of the Prophethood.

In a well known Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), we have been warned not to salute the Holy Prophet (SAW) with a defective and mutilated salutation (Salatul-Batra). This is the salutation of some Muslims: "Oh Allah shower blessings upon Muhammad" without mentioning his Ahlul-Bait (AS). Allah is perfect and accepts nothing but what is perfect. Therefore every complete and perfect salat (salutation) to the Holy Prophet (SAW) goes with the name of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his Ahlul-Bait (AS) inclusively like the "Salaat Ibrahimiya" and "Salaatul Faatihi".

In the Book "Sunanul-Daraqutni" it is recorded that Abu Mas-ud Al-Ansari reported that the Holy Prophet (SAW) has said that: *"the prayer (Salaat) of one who never asks blessings on me and my Ahlul-Bait (AS), will never be accepted by God"*.

Also Ibn Hajar recorded that, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has said: *"Every Dua (supplication) is screened (Mahjub) from being heard till blessing is asked on Muhammad (SAW) and his Ahlul-Bait (AS)"*³².

In fact, all these are indications that Salaat to the Holy Prophet (SAW) without mentioning the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is not valid. The question is, why only the Ahlul-Bait (AS) and not any

32 As-Sawa-eqe Muhriqah by Ibn Hajar

other group of persons? We need to open up, think, reflect and change our approach to Islam for a better understanding and for that matter the ultimate salvation from the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

There is generally accepted Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW) that says, *“When you recite one salaah to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his Ahlul-Bait (AS), Allah gives you ten(10) salaah. When you recite 10 salaah, Allah gives you 100 salaah and when you recite 1000, you have a seat in Paradise with the Holy Prophet (SAW)”*. Do you care to know why?

It is interesting to know that, a complete and perfect salaah has the name of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) mentioned in it. It starts always with “Allahumma Salli.... or Rabbi Salli.....” The point of reference here is the Arabic word Salli (صل). In the Islamic numerology, each of the Arabic alphabets has a numerical value of its own. Therefore, the word صل (Salli) $\implies 30 = ل, 90 = ص$; **sums up to: $90 + 30 = 120$** . The sum 120 is seen as 12 and zero which means, the 12 Imams and a constant of zero. Therefore, when you recite Salaah to the Holy Prophet (SAW) once including the Ahlul-Bait (AS) (the 12 Imams), you have one (1) Salaah and the constant zero which is equal to one and zero thus ten (10). When you recite 10 Salaah to the Holy Prophet (SAW) including the Ahlul-Bait (AS) (the 12 Imams) you have 10 and the constant zero which gives you 10 and zero which is equal to hundred (100). This goes on with the 100 salaah giving you 100 and zero which is equal to 1,000. Therefore, salaah to the Holy Prophet (SAW) without the Ahlul-Bait (AS) (the 12 Imams) being mentioned means zero hence no salaah in the sight of Allah is recorded at all!

In fact, it was my spiritual parent who explained to me some inner and deeper understanding linking the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in relation to the structure of the salaah to the Holy Prophet (SAW). The real details of this lesson cannot be expressed in this Book; therefore the above signal can be enough for the people of thinking and understanding.

Indeed, the 12 Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) are the highest signs of Allah on earth after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). May Allah, for the sake of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) increase us all in the pure love of the Ahlul-Bait (AS), Amen!

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THE ISLAMIC UMMAH BREAKING INTO SEVENTY-THREE (73)

SECTS

In a well known Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) which has been accepted by all the Islamic sects though with some differences in wordings but giving the same meaning

that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“My Ummah will shortly break up into seventy-three (73) sects, all of which shall be condemned except one”*³³.

To the best of my understanding, all sincere believers and seekers of the truth must make endless efforts to search for the right sect that shall not be condemned for the sake of peace and their own salvation. It is indeed, important for one to make good use of his/her intellect and reason to guide him or her to the truth. It is not just a matter of picking up a sect because Mr. ‘A’ or ‘B’ is on that sect and for that matter makes it the right and the truthful path to follow. As in one of the wise sayings of Imam Ali (AS), he said: “The truth is not known by looking at people (men), rather seek to know the truth, then you will know the people of the truth or those who follow the truth”. So when you understand and know the truth then you will automatically identify the truthful ones and those on the falsehoods. According to the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW), it is only one sect that will not be condemned for that matter shall be the right path.

On many occasions, in conversation with some of my Sunni brothers, on this Hadith of the Ummah dividing into 73 sects with only one sect to be on the right path, they always hastily conclude that they (the Ahlul-Sunnah) are the right sects. This is however without any evidence given to support this claim. However, the Hadith clearly states that only one out of the 73 sects is right, not more than one sect. But in the case of the Ahlul-Sunnah claim, take note, there are at least four (4) Sects (Hanafiyah, Malikiyah, Shafi-eyah, and Hanbaliyah) not one. I hope however, that we are not leading to an issue similar to the concept of Trinity in some Christian belief where they claim three (3) is equal to one.

33Mishkatul Masabeeh by Tabrizi, : Biharul Anwarr by Allamah Majlesi vol. 28 : Safinatul Bihar Vol. 2

I made a personal and thorough research on the subject matter of knowing the right path to following in Islam. I came to the ultimate conclusion that the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is the only right path conforming to the numerous evidences from the Holy Qur'an and the authentic Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The proofs provided by the followers of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) are comprehensive and consistent without arbitrarily isolating any claim without reason, or proof based on Allah's command, the Holy Prophet's (SAW) direct explanation and rationality to satisfy any honest and sincere seeker for the truth.

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FOLLOWING THE AHLUL-BAIT (AS) IS AN ISLAMIC OBLIGATION

It is an Islamic obligation upon the whole Muslim Ummah of the Holy Prophet of Islam Muhammad (SAW) to love and follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS). This is in total obedience and submission to the command of Allah, the Almighty and the teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). The 12 Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) were divinely programmed to lead the Muslim Ummah to the highest level both spiritually and materially.

Each one of the 12 Imams therefore is a divine school of learning to educate the Ummah spiritually and materially from a lower stage to the higher stage until we reach as an Ummah to the 12th Imam (Imam Mahdi (AS)) where man is expected to have reached the highest stage possible on earth.

The Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW) has completely presented Islam as directed by Allah to the Ummah with the detailed explanations and the right application of every aspect of his teachings through the hands of the Imams, starting with Imam Ali (AS) to Imam Al-Mahdi (AS) carry the Ummah from stage to stage in perfection with the divine guidance and his own permission and approval.

Love and Following of the Ahlul-Bait (As)

There are three verses among others in the Holy Quran that gives clear indication that it is obligatory to Love and follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as a unique way to Allah, the Almighty. From the revelational order of the Holy Quran, Chapter Sad was the 38th chapter revealed, Chapter Al-Furqan was the 42nd revealed and Chapter Ash-shuraa was the 47th revealed. In these chapters Allah, the Almighty says:-

- i. The Chapter (Sad) verse 86-87:- *Say (Muhammad); I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood) nor am I of those who affect: it is nothing but a reminder to the nations”*.
*The Chapter (Al-Anam) verse 90:- *Say (Muhammad); I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood),: it is nothing but a reminder to the nations”*.
- ii. The Chapter (Al-Furqan) verse 57:- *“Say (Muhammad); I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood) except that he who will, may take the way to his Lord” (25:57)*
- iii. The Chapter (Ash-shura) verse 23:- *“Say (Muhammad); I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood) except the love of (my) relatives (Ahlul-Bait)”*.

Each of the above three verses is of two parts as follows:

The First Verse (i): -

- A. *“Say (Muhammad); I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood).*
- B. *: it is nothing but a reminder to the nations”*.

Meaning:- (reference to A): possible payment to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and

(reference to B): *“it is nothing but a reminder to the nations”*

The Second verse (ii):

- A. *“Say (Muhammad), I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood)”*
- C. *“Except that he who will, may take the way to his Lord”*.

Meaning:- (reference to A): Possible payment to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and

(reference to C): *“Except that he who will, may take the way to his Lord”*

The third verse(iii):

A. *“Say (Muhammad), I demand not of you any payment for it (the toil for the Prophethood)”*

D. *“Except the love of (my) relatives (Ahlul-Bait)”*.

Logically, in a situation where we have $A + B = A + C = A + D$, we can conveniently conclude that $B=C=D$. This means that from the three verses above the D which is: **The love for the Ahlul-Bait (AS)** is the explanation and final meaning for the B and C which are: **The reminder to the nations and the way to Allah, the Almighty.**

Therefore, from the above mentioned three verses of the Holy Quran, one can understand that, the possible **“Payment” to the Holy Prophet** for the toil for Prophethood is but **the love for the Ahlul-Bait (AS)** which is also the reminder to the nations and the way to Allah, the Almighty.

These verses of the Holy Qur’an are directing the Muslim Ummah to have affection and show kindness to the pure progeny (Ahlul-Bait (AS)) of the Holy Prophet (SAW). The Mawaddah (affection and love) from the Muslim Ummah to the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is the only and only reward and payment for the message of the Holy Prophet (SAW) as directed by Allah, the Almighty. Therefore, be aware that Mawaddah is by far bigger than love, for it entails **love and following**. Failing to love and follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) means going against the dictates of Allah, the Al-mighty hence going astray and this is forbidden to every

sincere believer. The Shia have no fault in extending love to and following the Ahlul-Bait (AS) since we have it recorded in the Books of Tradition that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

A: *“Oh Ali, you are a Master in this world and a Master in the hereafter. Whoever loves you has loved me, and whoever hates you, hates me. Your lover is the lover of Allah, and your hater is the hater of Allah, and woe is unto one who detests you”*³⁴..

B: Further the Holy Prophet(SAW) says: *“To love Ali is faith, and to hate him is hypocrisy”*³⁵

The Shia should not be blamed for loving a person (Ali (AS)) about whom the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“By God, tomorrow I shall give the standard to a man who loves God and His Messenger and whom God and His Messenger love. One who is constant in fighting and does not flee until the victory is achieved. And it is in his hands that God will give victory”*.³⁶.

34 Mustadrak Al-Hakim Vol. 3 pp 128 : Yanabee-ul Mawaddah pp 205

35 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1 pp 95 ,128 : Fada-ilul Sahaba vol. 2 by Ahmad bin Hanbal pp 563-564 : Sahih Muslim BK 1 Hadith No. 0141 : Sahih Muslim vol 1. pp 48 : Kanzul-Ummal vol. 15 pp 105

36 Sahih Bukhar vol. 4 BK 52 Hadith No. 253 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 5 BK 57 Hadith No. 51 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 Kitabul-Jihad, Babul Dua Nabi and in Vol 3, Kitabul Magazi, Babul Gazwatul Khaibar : Sahih Muslim BK 19, Hadith No. 4450 : Sahih Muslim vol. 7 Babul Fada-ilul Ali bin Abu Talib (AS) pp 120

In relation to the Quranic verse (42:23): *“Say, I do not ask you of any reward(in return for my prophethood) except to love my near kin.And if anyone earns any good We shall give him an increase of good (in return for it)”*

Ibn Abbas narrated that when the verse was revealed, the companions asked: Oh! The messenger of Allah! Who are those near of kin whose love Allah has made obligatory on us? Upon that the Prophet (SAW) said: *“Ali, Fatima, and their two sons”*. He (SAW) repeated this sentence thrice.³⁷

The following are also statements of the Holy Prophet (SAW) on the merits of loving the Ahlul-Bait (AS):-

1. *“And behold he who dies with love of the family of Muhammad is forgiven”*
2. *“And more! The one who dies with the love of the family of Muhammad has died repented”*.
3. *“Lo! He who dies with love of the family of Muhammad has died as a believer with a complete belief”*.
4. *“And no doubt! The one who dies with the love of the family of Muhammad, the angel of death gives him the glad tidings of paradise, and so do the two angels who will question him (Munkar and Nakeer).*
5. *“And verily who dies with love of the family of Muhammad, will be led towards the paradise as the bride is led to the house of her husband”*.
6. *“Behold! And he who dies with the love of the family of Muhammad, for him there will open two gates in his grave towards the paradise”*.

37Tafsir al-Kabir by Fakhr-al-Din Razi, Tafsir al-Tha’labi, Tafsir al-Tabari, Tafsir al-Qurtubi, Tafsir Kashaf, Tafsir al-Baidhawi, Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Sawa-iq al-muhriqah by Ibn Hajar Haythami

7. *“And verily he, who dies with the love of the family of Muhammad, has died on Sunnah”.*
8. *“And no doubt! The one, who dies with hate of the family of Muhammad, will arrive on the day of judgement while it is printed on his forehead that he is desperate from the mercy of Allah”.*
9. *“Behold! He, who dies with the hate of the family of Muhammad, has died unbeliever”.*
10. *“And verily he, who dies with the hate of the family of Muhammad (AS), will never smell the scent of paradise”.*³⁸
11. *“....Love me fo your love for Allah and love my Ahlul-Bait(AS) for your love for me”*³⁹

Still on the love of the Ahlul-Bait(AS), the Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

- A. *“Verily Allah has dedicated my wage(of prophethood) to love of my Ahlul-Bait(AS) and I shall question you about it on the day of judgement”*⁴⁰
- B. *“I advice you to be kind to my Ahlul-Bait(AS) for verily I will dispute you about them on the day of Judgement and whoever I dispute him shall enter the fire”. He (SAW) also said; one who regards me by regarding my Ahlul-Bait(AS), he has taken a promise from Allah(to enter paradise).*⁴¹

38Tafsir al-Kabir by Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Tafsir al-Kashaf by al-Zamakhshari, Tafsir al-Kabir by al-Tha’labi

39 Sahih Tirmidhi 5:622 Hadith No. 3789

40Dhakha’ir al-Uqba by Muhibbuddeen al-Tabari, *al-Sirah by al-Mala*

41Tabaqat by Ibn Sa’d, al-Sirah by al-Mala, al-Sawa-iq al-Muhriqah by Hajar al-Haythami

- C. *“He who loves me and loves these two: Al-Hassan (AS) and Al-Hussain (AS) and loves their father (AS) and mother (AS), he will be with me in paradise”*.⁴².
- D. *“I and my Ahlul-Bait (AS), are a tree in paradise whose branches came to this world (Dunyaa). Thus whoso will, may choose a path unto his Lord (by taking a branch and reaching to the stem in paradise)”*.⁴³

In line with the above merits about the Ahlul-Bait (AS), Imam Shafi-ee expressed his love and praised the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in his famous poem saying: “Oh Ahlul-Bait of the Messenger of Allah, love for you, is an obligation from Allah, revealed in the Qur’an. It suffices as the greatest honour on you, that he who does not salute you, has no prayer”.

Indeed, it is a special honour only and only to the Ahlul-Bait (AS) that all Muslims must salute them in the daily salaah (in Tashahud). The love for Ali (AS) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) at large, represent in general the love for the messenger of Allah, Muhammad (SAW). We need to know the extent of love for the Ahlul-Bait (AS) expected from us all as Muslims. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“None of you will be a true believer till I become more beloved for him than his children, father and all people”*⁴⁴.

On this basis therefore, it is obligatory on every Muslim to deeply and sincerely love the Ahlul-Bait (AS) more than any other person whatsoever!

42 Sahih al-Tirmizi vol.6, Numbers: 3769, 3783, Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Fada-il al-Sahaba by Ahmad Ibn Hanbal vol. 2, al-Sawa-iq al-Muhriqah by Ibn Hajar al-Haythami

43 Al-Tabaqat by Ibn Sa’d, Sharafal-Nubuwwah by al-Tabari, al-sawa-iq al-Muhriqah

44 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 BK 2 No. 13 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 Babul Hubbu Rasul minal-Iman pp 9 : Sahih Muslim vol. 1 Babu Wujub Muhabbatu Rasul pp 49

The Holy Prophet (SAW) Left behind the Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS)

The Hadith Al-Thaqalain:

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), from the known and recorded Books of Hadith has left behind for the Muslim Ummah, the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS). He said: *"I am leaving behind among you two precious things; the Book of Allah and my Ahlul-Bait. As long as you adhere to them you will never go astray after me. So do not go ahead of them for then you shall perish and do not fall short of them, for then you shall perish. Do not teach them for they are more knowledgeable than you"*. In some other narrations he added that, "Allah, the Subtle, the Aware has told me that the two (the Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait) verily will never separate until they meet me at the pond (Paradise)".

This Hadith has been recorded widely in the Books of Traditions from both the Shia and the Sunni sources.⁴⁵ These include : Sahih Muslim Kitabul Fada-il Sahaba, Babu Fada-il Ali Ibn Abu Talib(AS) 4:873, : Sunanu Tirmidhi, Kitabu Manaqib, Babu Manaqib Ahlul-Bayt (AS) 5:622, : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, 3:14,24, 5:181,189 : Al-Mustadrak ala Sahihain,3:109-110, : Al-Matalibu Aliya by Ibn Hajir, 4:65

45 Sahih Muslim BK 31 Hadith No. 5920, 5923 :Sahih Muslim Kitabul Fada-il Sahaba, Babu Fada-il Ali Ibn Abu Talib(AS) 4:873, :Jami-Tirmidhi vol. 6 Chapter 31 Hadith No. 3786-3789 : Sunanu Tirmidhi, Kitabu Manaqib, Babu Manaqib Ahlul-Bayt (AS) 5:622, : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, 3:14,24, 5:181,189 : Al-Mustadrak ala Sahihain,3:109-110, : Al-Matalibu Aliya by Ibn Hajir, 4:65

From the list of references above, one can understand with no doubt whatsoever that the Islamic Ummah is fully aware of this hadith (Hadith Al-Thaqalain). The content of the Hadith is well understood; the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had left behind for our guidance only the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS). Unfortunately, not all the Muslim Ummah is working with and applying this Hadith. Only the Shia of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) are those adhering in totality to this divine command of the Holy Prophet (SAW) by following and applying the teachings of the Ahlul-Bait (AS). However, by the message of this Hadith, following the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is obligatory upon all Muslims for salvation.

Some of the Ahlul-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah (Wahabiyah) Brothers on hearsay without checking the authenticity of the sources when preaching (propagating) misquote over and over again this Hadith Al-thaqalain by saying that: "the Holy Prophet (SAW) left behind the Qur'an and the Sunnah" instead of saying "the Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS)".

In fact, out of research one will realise that in all the "Ahlul-Sunnah Sihahul Sitta" (The six Authenticated Books of Hadith) you can never ever get the record of a Hadith, saying that the Holy Prophet (SAW) left behind "the Qur'an and the Sunnah". But rather he left behind for us the Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as recorded even from the Sunni Books.

It is indeed an Islamic obligation upon all Muslims to follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in all aspect of Islam and failure to follow those means practicing not Islam but rather going astray.

Hadith As-Safinah (The Ark):

With reference to the Hadith As-Safinah (The Ark), the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said: *"The similitude of my Ahlul-Bait (my Household) among you is that of*

the Ark of Prophet Noah: Whoever embarks upon it is saved and whoever lags behind is drowned."⁴⁶

It is indeed clear from the above Hadith that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) made it compulsory for all believers to follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) for their own salvation. From the Hadith, likening the Ahlul-Bait (AS) with the Ark of Prophet Noah (AS) implies that whoever resorts to the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in matters related to all aspect of the Religion will certainly be saved from the hell fire. Also whoever lags behind them means seeking shelter during the flood with a mountain for safety leaving the Ark of salvation and will eventually be drowned and destroyed. Therefore following the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is obligatory for it saves from darkness of ignorance, going astray and the wrath of Allah which cannot be escaped in any other way.

The Hadith of Protection by the Stars

There is yet another Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that makes it compulsory for the Ummah to follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) for salvation. The Holy Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: *"The stars protect the inhabitants of the Earth against drowning, and my Ahlul-Bait protects my Ummah against disagreement and division in religious matters. If a tribe among the Arabs differ regarding the Commandments of Allah, the Almighty from then, they will all then differ and become the party of Satan"*⁴⁷. This Hadith is very clear and

46 Mustadrak Al-Hakim 2:343,3:151 : As-sawa-iqul Muhriqah by Ibn Hajar pp184 : Tarikh Khulafa by As-Sayuti pp 209, : Kanzul-Ummal vol 7 pp 95, : Tarikh Bagdadi 12:901, : Fada-il Sahaba by Ahmad bin Hanbal, 2:785

47 Mustadrak ala Sahihain vol. 3 by Al-Hakim pp 149, Gayatul Maram vol. 3 pp 137

direct so it does not need any comment to understand that it is obligatory for the Muslim Ummah to follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) and no one else.

The Hadith of the City of Knowledge

The Hadith of the City of Knowledge is a well known and very popular Hadith among all Muslims. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: *“I am the City of Knowledge and Ali is the Entrance, he who wants the City must pass through the Entrance”*⁴⁸.

This Hadith is another clear declaration by the Holy Prophet (SAW) indicating the Muslim Ummah the road to tread in all religious matters for safety. It is enough as a Hadith in identifying to the Muslim Ummah as to whom to follow as a matter of obligation after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The knowledgeable person is preferable to follow than the ignorant. Allah, the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an chapter Az-Zumar (39:9) *“Say (Oh Muhammad) can those who know be equal to those who do not know?”*

And again chapter Yunus (10:35) *“Is He who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed or he who himself go not aright unless he is guided? What has befallen you? How (ill) you judge?”* They can never ever be equal. Therefore, to follow Imam Ali (AS) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) for that matter is the right path for the sincere believers and seekers of truth.

I could remember an interesting event that took place between a friend of mine and his colleagues in my hometown, Tamale. They were exchanging views on Islamic issues as

48 Mustadrak ala Sahihain vol. 3 by Al-Hakim pp 126-127 : Tarikh Bagdadi vol 11 pp 49-50, : Tarikh Ibn Kathir vol. 7 pp 358 : Tirmidhi vol. 6 Hadith No. 3723

friends and at a stage, they unfortunately diverted to attacks and insults to the Shia Sect, saying Shia are kuffars (disbelievers) and for that matter not Muslims. However, without giving any reason for this evil stand against fellow Muslims (Shia). All along, my friend was quiet and not making any comments against the Shia; then one of his colleagues questioned him for his silence. He intelligently replied by saying, “I fear to comment against the Shia Muslims because their gate of entrance to Islam was established by the Holy Prophet (SAW) referring to the Hadith “*I am the City of Knowledge and Ali is the Entrance*”, the Shia follow Imam Ali (AS) into Islam as their gate created by the Holy Prophet (SAW) for that matter insulting them might be an insult to the Holy Prophet (SAW). However, he then asked his colleagues, so long as we are not Shia, who is the establisher of our gate into Islam? This question ended their seating for the day. Afterwards, he visited me and narrated the above event to me. We had detailed discussions about the Ahlul-Bait (AS) with fruitful results.

Allah says in the Holy Qur’an (Al-Baqarah: 189) “*And come into houses through their entrances*”. So it is clear that following the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is a divine command from Allah through the Holy Prophet (SAW) hence compulsory on all Muslims to follow.

There are also other occasions where the Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

(a): “*Oh Ali, you will explain to my Ummah issues that they disagree in after me*”⁴⁹.

(b): Referring to Imam Ali (AS), the Holy Prophet (SAW) said, “*Verily, this is my Brother, the Executor of my will and my Caliph after me, listen to him and obey him*”⁵⁰

49Kanzul-Ummal vol 11 pp 615, Hadith No.32983

The Declaration of the Four Sunni Imams

The following views and declarations of the four (4) Sunni Imams are also indications pointing to the fact that following the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is obligatory upon all believers.

- (a) The saying of Imam Abu Hanifah: “Had it not been for the two years, Nu’man (Abu Hanifah) would have perished”. Referring to the two years that he studied at the hands of the 6th Imam of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) (Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS)).
- (b) The saying of Imam Malik who also ever studied under Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS) said: “No eye has sighted, and no ear has heard, and no heart has ever thought of a human being more knowledgeable and more jurisprudential than Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS)”
- (c) The poem of Imam Shafi-ee regarding the merits of the Ahlul-Bait (AS): “Oh, the Ahlul-Bait of the Messenger of Allah, your love is an obligation from Allah revealed in the Qur'an, it is enough honour for you that he, who does not salute you, has no prayer”.
- (d) The saying of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal: “No one among the companions has more correctly reported virtues about him/her as those ascribed to Ali (AS)”.

However, the Holy Prophet of Islam summarised everything in the following divine promise to Imam Ali (AS) that: *“Verily, you will not be loved except by a mumin (believer), and you will not be hated except by a hypocrite”*⁵¹.

50 Kanzul-Ummal vol 15 pp 15, : Tarikh Ibn Asakir vol.1 pp 85, : Siratul-Halbiyah vol. 1 pp 311

51 Fada-il Sahaba vol. 2 by Ahmad bin Hanbal, pp 570 Hadith No. 961, : Sahih Muslim, vol. 1 Kitabul-Iman, pp 184, Hadith No. 131, : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1 pp 84, : Sunanu Ibn Majah, Babu Fada-il As-haba Rasulullahi 1: 54 Hadith No. 114

Therefore love for Imam Ali (AS) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) by the above sayings of the Holy Prophet (AS) indicates and distinguishes a sincere believer from a hypocrite.

Indeed, from the foregoing proves , no one, apart from the Ahlul-Bait (AS) has any clear evidence from the Holy Quran or any Hadith of the Holy Prophet(SAW) compelling the Umma to follow him. They (Ahlul-Bait (AS)) surely are the light of guidance after the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Therefore, it is only and only the Ahlul-Bait (AS) who has the divine right to be followed as repeatedly instructed on several different occasions by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). (Quran 53:3-4) *“And he (Prophet Muhammad(SAW)) speaks not of his own desire. It is but revelation that is revealed.”*

In fact, failing to love and follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is a clear sign of hypocrisy. May Allah, the Merciful increase us love and following to the Ahlul-Bait (AS)! Amen.

THE SHIA SOURCES OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT

According to the Shia Islam, any sound and reasonable understanding about Islam depends on four (4) sources namely: (A) The Holy Qur'an, (B) The Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW), (C) Intellect (D) Consensus.

The Holy Qur'an

It is the first and most important source of the Shia Islamic thought. It is the revelation of Allah upon the Holy Prophet (SAW) with details of everything for the guidance of man and the jinn on earth. It is the message of Allah which is completely protected by Allah from any defect as stated in the Holy Qur'an 15:9: "Verily, we have sent down the Reminder (the Holy Qur'an) and verily to us is its protection".

"There shall not come to it falsehood from before it nor from behind it" (Qur'an 41:42).

With all the differences among all the Islamic Schools of Thought, the Holy Qur'an is unique and with the same contents in the hands of all Muslims the world over.

The Sunnah

The second most important sources of the Shia Islamic thought are the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This Sunnah refers to three issues in relations to the Holy Prophet (SAW): (I) The Sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). (ii) The Deeds of the Holy Prophet (SAW). (iii) The Endorsement of the Holy Prophet (SAW) to any action. To this effect, Allah, the Almighty in the Holy Qur'an says: (a) *"Indeed, there is for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern of conduct"* (33:21). (b) *"Your companion (That is*

Prophet Muhammad) errs not nor is he led astray, And he speaks not of his own inclination” (53:2 – 3). (c) *“And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he prevents you, be away from it”* (59:7).

Also, from the authentic Hadith of Al-Thaqalain in which the Holy Prophet (SAW) has said, he left behind for the Ummah of Islam, two (2) valuable things of which if we adhere to will not go astray; **the Book of Allah** and **the Ahlul-Bait (AS)**. Therefore, giving authority to the teachings of the 12 infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as a whole to be a sub-set and extension of the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

The Intellect

The third reliable source of the Shia Islamic thought is the intellect. It is the internal Proof of Allah in man aiding him to the understanding of his Creator and worships Him accordingly. It serves as a light in darkness exposing out what is not clear by the power of reason. There is a constant relationship between the intellect and the divine revelation of Allah and there is never a contradiction between the two. Therefore, with the aid of the **intellect**, the Roots and Branches of the religion are better understood.

The Consensus

The fourth source of the Shia Islamic thought is the consensus of the Ulama on condition that it leads to the reflection and exposure of the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Infallible Imams.

However, to the Shia stance, the intellect and the consensus are not independent proofs by themselves but rather seen as light exposing the real Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and clearing out doubts for a sound and reliable conclusion.

Therefore, the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Infallibles (the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS)) are the main and direct sources of Islamic thought having no doubts and mistakes.

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Sabeel-e-Sakina

THE SHIA FAITH

This topic (The Shia Faith) is very vital to be mentioned among other topics because of some repeated baseless statements directed against the Shia with regards to faith. We commonly hear some Ahlul-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah (Wahabiyah) clerics saying that the Shia Ulama are highly knowledgeable with deep faith but the only problem with them (Shia) is their "Aqidah" (faith). Meaning what? The 'Aqidah' (faith) of the Shia is nothing but following and adhering to the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as directed by the Holy Prophet (SAW). So what makes it a problem? It is clear that is baseless hatred and deep ignorance of the Shia faith.

From the Islamic history, Muslims with all their sectarian differences are highly united on several areas. Muslims (Shia and Sunnis) all believe in the existence of Allah, that He is one and Single, believe in all the Prophets (AS) and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the seal of all the Prophets (AS). Muslims all have, and believe in one Holy Qur'an as the last testament of Allah to the world at large. Also face the same Qiblah for their daily prayers. Indeed, the common grounds amongst Muslims (Shia and Sunnis) are far greater than the areas of disagreement, for we are but one Ummah (people) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Towards understanding the Shia faith, according to the Shia school of thought, the religion of Islam is divided into three (3) sectors. (A) The Root of the religion, (B) The Branches of the religion, and (C) the Islamic moral behaviour. Whoever therefore, believes in the root of the religion of Islam as faith, acts (practices) by the Branches of the religion in worship and beautifies himself with the moral behaviour of the religion in all his relations is said to be

Islamized and will surely be successful in this world and the hereafter. Let us now look into the three sectors of Islam one after another.

The Root of the Religion

This refers to the aspect of faith in the religion of Islam. It consists of five major topics which are as follows:

The Oneness of Allah (At-Tawhid)

The Shia Muslim believes as well as any other Sunni Muslim, in the existence and oneness of Allah the Almighty. That He (Allah) is but one, single and that there is no deity worthy of worship than Him. He has no partners whatsoever. In fact, there is none like Him. He is best described in the Holy Qur'an, chapter 112 (Al-Ikhlās) saying: *“In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. ﷻ Say, He Allah is one (alone) ﷻ Allah, the Needless ﷻ He begetteth not nor is He begotten ﷻ and there is none like unto Him”*.

This is an acceptable fundamental concept of all Muslims. Therefore, whoever says and commits to the ‘Shahadah’:- “There is no deity except Allah and Muhammad is His messenger” is a Muslim and for that matter we are all Muslims at all cause for we all believe in the ‘Shahadah’.

The Justice of Allah (Al-Adl)

Allah is just, He does not cheat any of His creatures (servants) as confirmed in the Holy Qur'an in (a) (:10:44): *“Verily, Allah does not any injustice to people, but men to their (own)*

selves do injustice". (b)4: 40): *"Verily, Allah does not injustice (even) to the weight of an atom"*.

Allah, the Almighty is a Merciful Lord who does not act contrary to wisdom. All His actions are for the benefits of creation, but man in some cases is ignorant of the rationale of the actions.

With regards to Islamic faith (Aqidah), Muslims all over are divided into three Schools of faith. (I) Imamiyah (II) Asha-irah and (III) Mutazilah. The Shia belongs to the Imamiyah School of faith and the Sunnis belong to either Al-Asha-irah or Al-Mutazilah schools of faith.

There is some diversity with regards to the concept of faith within the three schools of faith. For instance on the attributes of Allah, the Imamiyah and the Mutazilah believe that Allah's attributes are not distinct from His essence whereas Asha-irah believes that Allah has eternal attributes different from His essence such as knowledge, sight, speech etc. by which He knows, sees and speaks.

Also Quranic expressions such as Allah's hands and face are interpreted by the Imamiyah and Mutazilah to mean Allah's power, grace, and essence and so on. But Asha-irah hold that they are real attributes whose precise nature is unknown just like the sitting of Allah on His Throne.

On the issue of 'Seeing Allah', Asha-irah holds that seeing Allah in the hereafter is a reality though we cannot understand the manner of it. However, the Imamiyah and the Mutazilah believe that Allah cannot literally be seen since this will imply that He is corporeal and limited.

The Imamiyah however emphasises so much on the justice of Allah among His attributes while the Sunni Asha-irah faith believes that, there is no correct measure for right and wrong. To the Asha-irah, what is done by Allah, the Almighty or instructed His servants to do is what is meant by right and for that matter justice. Right or justice has no real justification in practical life of man for man by nature cannot identify right or wrong. It is only Allah that can justify right or wrong. Therefore, had Allah asked us to kill innocent people or cheat, these acts would have been right and just. If He (Allah) decided to put all Prophets (AS) and all sincere believers into the Hell fire this act would have been justice by nature. Asha-irah also believes that man has no free will in his actions whatsoever; it is Allah, the Almighty who creates all the deeds of man. Therefore, man is compelled or forced to do his deeds and has no free choice whatsoever. This concept, in Islamic terminology is referred to as 'Jabru' (compulsion).

However, the Shia, contrary to the Asha-irah believes that there is a clear difference between justice and injustice in real and practical life. There are correct measures for right and wrong by nature built in man by Allah. Moreover, Allah, the Almighty instructed us to be just and not to cheat any person even our enemies. The Shia also believes that man is created a free being and can choose to do or not to do what he intends. Therefore, man is not compelled or forced in his deeds; he is responsible for his deeds.

The other Sunni School of Mutazilah faith believes in total freedom for man in all his deeds. This means that Allah, the Almighty in totality has no hands and no control in the deeds of man. The Shia however, disagrees and says, man by nature has a limit despite his free will. Indeed, Allah has the total and complete control over the whole universe, but He does not impose his will on man to act.

To understand the real stand of the Shia on the concept of Man, his Deeds and the Justice of Allah, the sixth (6th) Imam of the Shia faith (Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS)) has a well known message saying: "Neither compulsion nor total freedom but the issue is between the two". That is to explain that man with regards to his deeds is neither on total compulsion to act nor on total unlimited freedom to do whatever he wants. He (man) is but between the two limits. Allah will not ask man on issues that are out of his limits but will surely ask him on those within his limits and capabilities. To the Shia, however, this topic of the Justice of Allah (Al-Adl) is not one of the main roots of faith but rather as a sub root under Tawhid in the Shia sect.

The Prophethood (An-Nubuwwah)

Allah, the Almighty created man for a purpose. He says in the Holy Qur'an (Az-Zariya: 56): "*And I created not, the Jinn and the Humans but that they may worship me*". The purpose therefore for creating man is to worship Allah for man's perfection and salvation on earth and the hereafter in Paradise.

This cannot be achieved except through the guidance of His selected, noble and purified servants known as the Prophets (AS). Allah, the Almighty sends His divine revelations for the guidance of man through the Prophets (AS). He clearly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an that, He never left a people of a place without a guide. Qur'an (Yunus: 47): "*And for every people (was sent) an Apostle*".

From the Islamic traditional Books it is known that, the number of the Prophets (AS) sent is one hundred and twenty-four thousand (124,000). The first of them all is Prophet Adam (AS) and the last and seal of them all is the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Amongst these Prophets

are the five (5) owners of resolution namely; (I) Prophet Nuhu (AS), (ii) Prophet Ibrahim (AS), (iii) Prophet Musah (AS), (IV) Prophet Issah (AS), and (v) Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The unique understanding of Prophet hood on the part of the Shia faith is that all the Prophets (AS) are infallible (Ma'soom) before and after Prophet hood. The Shia generally, has a very high belief, love and respect for all the Prophets (AS) and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Ahlul-Bait (AS) in particular.

The Imamate

It is the belief of the Shia that, Imamate is the continuation of the Prophethood. Just as Prophethood is a mercy and blessing from Allah, the Almighty, Imamate is also a source of mercy and blessing to man. To every epoch therefore, there is an Imam representing the Holy Prophet (SAW) in guiding and directing the Ummah to salvation in this world and the hereafter. The Imams from the Shia point of view are twelve (12) and infallible and have divine knowledge of the Holy Qur'an inherited from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal narrated in his Book from Jabir Ibn Samrat that he heard the Holy Prophet (SAW) say: *“There shall be for this Ummah after me, twelve (12) Caliphs”*.

The 12 infallible Imams are the 12 Caliphs mentioned by the Holy Prophet (SAW). The 12th Imam is the Mahdi (AS), the divine saviour of the world. In the Books of Tradition:- “Sunanu Abi Dawud and Ibn Mājah. It is recorded that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“Al-Mahdi is from my Ahlul-Bait from the progeny of Fatimah”*.⁵²

52 Sunanu Abi Dawud BK 31 Hadith No. 4271 : Ibn Majah vol. 5 Hadith No. 4086

The Hereafter (Al-Ma-ad)

This refers to the giving back of life to man in the hereafter after death from this world for the ultimate divine justice to take place (Judgement). It is the Shia Muslim faith and for that matter the faith of all Muslims that whosoever does good or bad deeds no matter how small or big on the earth before death, shall be rewarded or punished accordingly. The good deeds shall be rewarded with paradise and the bad deeds punished with hell fire.

There are two main stations before paradise or hell known as the grave and judgement day. After death, the first station is the grave where every person shall be questioned on what he/she did on earth before death. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“The grave is either pit of Hell fire or a fountain of Paradise”*. The next stage after the grave is the judgement day where all shall be assembled with all classes of witnesses to render accounts on their lives on earth before death. Allah, the Almighty mentions in the Holy Qur'an with regards to the issue of Al-ma-ad (judgement day) in several verses; just to mention a few:

(1) Qur'an (Al-Imran: 184): *“Every soul shall taste death; and verily ye shall be paid in full your recompenses on the Day of Resurrection; and whoso is removed away from the (Hell) fire and admitted into Paradise, has indeed gained his objects; and the life of this world is not, but a provision of vanity”*.

(2) Qur'an (Al-Hajj: 6 – 7): *“This is because verily Allah, He is the reality, and because verily He gives life unto the dead, and because verily He, over all things has power. And that the Hour (of Resurrection) is coming there is no doubt therein and that Allah will raise up those in the graves”*.

(3) Qur'an (Az-Zilzal: 6 – 8): *“On that Day shall come out people (from their graves) in (scattered) groups, to be shown their own deeds. Then he who hath done an atom’s weight of good shall see it. And he who hath done an atom’s weight of evil shall see it”*.

Therefore, believing in Allah, the Almighty and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) ultimately means believing in what the Holy Qur'an says about resurrection, the Paradise and the Hell fire. Otherwise, it will mean doubt in Allah and the Holy Prophet (SAW) and for that matter not being a Muslim but a disbeliever. All Muslims believe in the final return to Allah, the Almighty for accountability, this is what is meant by ‘Al-ma-ad’.

The three topics [(1) The Oneness of Allah: Tawhid, (2) The Prophethood: An-Nubuwah, and (3) The Hereafter: Al-ma-ad) out of the five main topics in relation to the root of the religion as mentioned above are common concepts running in all the Islamic Schools of Thought. The other two topics [(1) The Justice of Allah: Al-Adl, and (2) The Imamate] are solely the concepts of the Shia sect based on references from the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The Branches of the Religion

Islam is a complete way of life, according to the Shia School of Thought; the Branches of the religion are the areas that cover all aspects of life of man before birth to after death in relation to his actions and reactions over all his practical deeds. Most ordinary men usually cannot understand on their own effort in details all the Islamic legislation mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Holy Infallibles, the Consensus and the Intellect without depending on a highly qualified learned cleric (Mujtahid). Allah, the Merciful for that matter simplified and made it easy and possible to depend on, and imitate from a qualified Mujtahid for the

aspect of the Branches of the religion unlike the Roots of the religion where man must not imitate or depend on any person but has to use the intellect for understanding as mentioned before.

The Branches of the religion, from the Shia point of view are many, but the most important and prominent are the following ten (10):

- 1) Prayers (Salaat)
- 2) Fasting
- 3) Khoms (1/5 alms)
- 4) Zakat
- 5) Pilgrimage (Hajj)
- 6) Jihad in and for the course of Allah
- 7) Encouraging Good
- 8) Discouraging Bad
- 9) Tawalla (Helping and Supporting the men of Allah)
- 10) Tabarra (Cutting off links with the enemies of Allah)

However, there are other Branches as well, like buying and selling, Marriage, Divorce, Governance, Politics, Economics, Judiciary, Health, Media and many other areas that have much to do with life at large. Islam indeed has answers to every aspect of life of the individual as well as the society legislatively.

For detail knowledge or understanding of the Shia faith on any aspect of the Branches of the religion mentioned above, references could be made to the voluminous Shia Jurisprudential Books and Senior Shia Clerics available. These days there are authentic Shia websites that provide deep knowledge for seekers of the truth.

The Islamic Moral Behaviour

To the Shia point of view, Islam and morality are linked together as one. It is seen as an important pillar for the propagation of the Islamic religion. Islam in fact emphasises dearly on the moral behaviour of man and the society to the extent that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) made the purpose of his Prophet hood as for completion of moral perfection; saying: *“Verily, I was sent to complete moral perfection” (Hadith)*.

In the Holy Qur'an (Al-Qalam: 4), Allah, the Almighty praises the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) with praises that had never ever been said to any person before and after the Holy Prophet (SAW) for his unique and perfect morals, saying: *“And most certainly you stand on sublime morality”*.

The individual and social life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is a total reflection of the Islamic moral behaviour that must be emulated by all sound and clean hearted beings. It is clear that in Islam, with Islamic moral conduct, what is Halal and recommended is strictly observed and what is Haram and forbidden is obviously avoided all are but signs of morality. Therefore, for an ultimate salvation for life on earth here and the hereafter, one must have faith in the roots of the religion, apply in deeds the branches of the religion and cap it all with Islamic morals. These are the three (3) linking components of the religion of Islam in accordance with the Shia School of Thought.

Now from all that has been presented above on the Shia faith, one will realise that, the fundamental faith in Islam are unique among all the Muslim Ummah (Shia and Sunni). All Muslims believe unanimously in the following: - One existing Allah, the divine books, the Prophets and Messengers of Allah, the Angels, the Resurrection and judgement day for

accountability, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the final of all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah with the only Holy Qur'an as the only existing Holy Qur'an for all Muslims the world over and also praying facing only one direction called Qibla.

However, the different schools of thought are the result of different understanding of the fundamentals of the Islamic faith. The Shia indeed takes the understanding of the concept of Islamic faith from the Infallible Holy Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in accordance with the orders of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Therefore, there is no cause for alarm!

MISCONCEPTIONS AGAINST THE SHIA

Indeed, there are a lot of lies and misconceptions repeatedly directed against the Shia Islam with hidden motives. Among the main reasons for such propaganda against the Shia School of thought is to create discord, enmity and deepen disunity among Muslims. From the Islamic moral point of view however, a sincere and God fearing person, when speaking or writing on religious faith and sects must first of all search for the truth with proofs and not

just imitating those before him blindly and fall in their mistakes and wrong doing against others ending up in dragging the Muslim Ummah into more compound ignorance, discord and antagonism.

I personally, from the Shia enemy sources, heard and read some of these lies and misconceptions against Shia that led me to conduct series of intensive researches for the truth which ended up with very positive and amazing results in favour of the Shia sect. The following are some of the general lies and misconceptions commonly propagated against the Shia from non-Shia camps with the real truth of the matter hidden.

- ❖ Shiasm is a Persian (Iranian) Religion
- ❖ Abu Talib died a Disbeliever (Kafir)?
- ❖ Shia and the Sahaba (Companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW))
- ❖ Shia and the Holy Qur'an
- ❖ Shia and Taqiyyah
- ❖ Shia and Mut'ah (Temporary Marriage)
- ❖ Weeping and crying for the dead

Shiasm is a Persian (Iranian) Religion

This is false and baseless propagation against Shia Islam emanating from sheer jealousy of the historic Persian - Shia effort in the defence of preserving the original Islam and the continued victory and success of the Islamic Revolution of Iran which has a Shia majority. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the good people of Iran in this modern world, with no doubt among Islamic nations have set up a noble, laudable and unique records in international politics, governance, science and modern technology proving to the world at large that Islam is not only theological but also a befitting system of Government for all

nations. This by all means could serve as a source of envy and worry to some who do not share the same religious ideological faith with Shia Iran.

However, Shia Islam is wrongly linked to Persian religion for any of the following three (3) possible major reasons:

- (i) Some of the leading Shia Scholars are Persians
- (ii) Imam Husain (AS) (the 3rd Shia Holy Imam) married from Persian people, and
- (iii) Majority of the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Persian speaking people) are Shia.

In fact, none of the three (3) major reasons mentioned above is strictly limited to the Shia Islam alone. The same from the historic point of view is reflected on the Sunni Islam having relations with the Persians too. It is a simple logic that the law binding equals in what is accepted or not accepted must be one and the same. Therefore, if having relations with Persians makes Shia Islam Persian religion then the Sunni Islam too is a Persian religion for the same reason. However, let us go through each of the three (3) possible major reasons given above to prove that the Sunni Islam is equally linked with the Persian people not only the Shia Islam.

- (i) The first reason: - Some of the leading Shia Scholars are Persians. It is true and the same goes for the Sunni Scholars too because their leading scholars are Persians.

The following are just a few examples of great Sunni scholars who are Persians by origin:

- 1) Imam Abu Hanifa Nu'manu Ibn Thabit: (Wafayatul-A'yan Vol. 5, Manaqib Abi Hanifa Vol. 1).

- 2) Imam Shafi-eMuhammad Ibn Iddiris: (Al-intiqau by Al-Qurtabi, Ma'rifatul Sunani wal Aathar by Baihaqi Vol. 1, Imam Sadiq by Asad Haydar Vol. 3).
- 3) Imam Malik Ibn Anas Ibn Malik: (Imam Sadiq by Asad Haydar Vol. 2, Al-intiqau by Al-Qurtubi).
- 4) Al-BukhariMuhammadIbn Ismail Ibn Ibrahim: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 1).
- 5) Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjaj Nisaburi: (WafayatulA'yan Vol. 3).
- 6) Tirmizi Muhammad Ibn Issah (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4).
- 7) Ibn MajahMuhammad Ibn Yazid Al-Qazvin, (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4).
- 8) Nasa-ee Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Shuaib: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4).
- 9) Abu Dawud Suleimana Ibn Ash-asha: (Wafayutul A'yan Vol. 4).
- 10) At-TabariMuhammad Ibn Jarir: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4).
- 11) Al-Hakim Nisaburi: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4).
- 12) Fahrudeen Ar-RaziMuhammad Ibn Omar: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4)
- 13) Muhammad Al-GazaliMuhammad Ibn Muhammad: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 4)
- 14) Al-Baihaki Abu Bakar Ibn Husain: (Wafayatul A'yan Vol. 1).

In fact, apart from the leading Sunni Scholars mentioned above as few examples, most of the Sunni narrators of the traditional Hadith are Persians as well.

Below are some few examples also:

- 1) Mujahid ibn Jabir
- 2) Attau Ibn Abi Ribah
- 3) Sa-eed Ibn Zubair
- 4) Al-Laith Ibn Sa-ad
- 5) Rabi-atu Ra'yi (A Teacher to Imam Malik).

Nevertheless, Sunni concept at all course has a great link with the Persian even Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahab of the Wahabi Sect (Ahlul-Sunna wal Jama'ah) was nursed and trained by Persians in Kurdistan, Hamadan, Isfahan and Qum as recorded in some books like: Zu-ama-ul Islah by Ahmad Amin.

Now from the above list, it is clear that not only the Shia who are linked with the Persian people but the Sunni also. Therefore, judge for yourself the basis of this accusation against Shia as being Persian.

(ii)The second reason: - Imam Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib (AS) married Sharbaanu (Salafah), who was the daughter of a Persian King (King Yazgard).. If this is the reason for linking Shia Islam to the Persians then the same cause is with the Sunni Islam.

Muhammad Ibn Abubakar (son of the first Caliph who had been brought up by Imam Ali (AS)) and Abdullah Ibn Omar (son of the second Caliph) also got married to the daughters of the same Persian King as Imam Husain (AS).They are all children of caliphs. These marriages happened during the Caliphate of Omar when the sahaba returned from war with Persian prisoners of war including three daughters of the Persian King. Omar ordered them to be sold but Imam Ali (AS) objected and said in Islam the daughters of Kings who are prisoners of war are treated special with dignity hence he (Imam Ali (AS)) gave one of the daughters to the son of Abubakar as wife, one to the son of Omar and the third to his son Imam Husain (AS). The wife of the son of Abubakar gave birth to a son named Qasim Faqih [Father of Umme Farwah who was the mother of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS)], the wife of the son of Omar gave birth also to a son named Salim and that of the wife of Imam Husain (AS) gave birth to a son too named Zainul-Aabideen (the Fourth Shia Imam)⁵³.

Therefore, if the marriage of Imam Husain (AS) to the daughter of a Persian king is to link Shia to Persians then logically that of the Sunni Islam must be more linked because of the two sons of the two “Sunni Caliphs” as against a son of a “Shia Caliph”. We seek refuge in Allah against such thoughts.

53 Wafayatul-Ayan by Ibn Khalkan 1:455

However, even though some of the mothers of the Imams (AS) of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) are Arabs, there are among Arabs who distance themselves from the Ahlul-Bait (AS). Why? It is a question to those who speak or write without reflecting first to consider and answer.

(iii)The third reason: - Majority of the Iranian (Persian Speaking people) are Shia. It is a clear fact that currently in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Government and majority of the people are Shia Muslims.

In the Islamic history of Iran before the 10th Century, Shia in Iran were the minority and the Sunni generally were majority with the Hanafiyah Sunni sect having more followers in many big towns of Iran.

A historic event took place in the 10th Century that changed the equation in favour of the Shia and that was during the reign of an Iranian king by name Muhammad Khuda Bandy who embraced Islam on the Hanafiya Sunni Islamic sectarian view. At a time, the King in his marital life was personally confronted with a problem related to the Islamic legislative law of divorce of three times. As a King, he called on all the leading Islamic clerics of the various Sunni sects for a solution. Unfortunately, they all disagreed with one another on the Islamic legislative law of divorce. It took them a very long period of time without reaching any acceptable and agreeable Islamic solution. The King became more desperate for he was in high tension to put his home in order but only to realize that all the leading clerics of the various Sunni Sects failed to provide the needed Islamic solution but rather increased in disagreement and disapproving of each other's view.

In this situation however, one of the ministers reminded the King of some of the Shia clerics of the time prominent among whom was Allamah Hilly. The Sunni clerics instantly rejected the

name of Allamah Hilly and said to the King that the Shia Islamic sect is wrong and for that matter not to invite any Shia cleric. The King replied to them that “let us invite Allamah Hilly and see his view since you failed and disapproved of one another”.

Allamah Hilly was invited from Najaf (Iraq) and a big meeting was organised for the occasion. All were seated waiting for the arrival of the guest, Allamah Hilly. On his arrival, at the entrance of the big hall, Allamah Hilly carried along his sandals in his hands into the meeting hall saying: “Assalamu alaikum” meaning peace be upon you all” and sat near the king without knowing him before. By this action of Allamah Hilly however, the Sunni clerics seized the opportunity to demean him before the King and the people, saying to the King: “Didn’t we mention to you not to invite him? The Shia clerics are not intelligent people at all”. The King replied to them saying: “Ask him for the rationale of all that he has done”. Then, Allamah Hilly was questioned from among the people: “Why did you not observe the traditional norms and did not even respect the King?” It was in accordance with the official regulations of entering the King’s palace that, one must bow down and prostrate on the ground before the King as sign of respect for the King. Allamah Hilly replied saying: “the Holy Prophet of Islam Muhammad (SAW) was a King and people used to say “Assalamu alaikum” to him. Also, from the Shia and the Sunni point of view, it is not permissible to prostrate to anyone apart from Allah, the Almighty.

Then they asked again: “Why did you sit near the King?” He replied: “There was no any other empty space for sitting apart from where I sat”. They asked him again: “Why did you carry your sandals along into the sitting place?” Allamah Hilly replied: “People used to say that during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) a Shafi-ee sect follower used to steal sandals at gatherings and I don’t want my sandals to be stolen”. The whole crowd made “Takbir”

(Allahu Akbar), laughed and said: “Imam Shafi-ee and the followers were not there at the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW)”. He said: “It might have been a Hanbali sect follower”. They replied: “Imam Hanbali was not also there at the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW)”.

He said” “Oh, it might have been Maliki sect follower”. They said: “Neither Imam Maliki was there too”. He said: “then it must have been Hanafi sect follower”. “It couldn’t be, because Imam Abu Hanifa was not there at the time either”.

Then at this junction, Allamah Hilly addressed them all saying: “If all your Imams and their sects were not at the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from where did you get them? And what are your proofs for following them and they did not even see the Holy Prophet (SAW)? You refuse to follow and take from the Ahlul-Bait (AS), whom the Holy Prophet (SAW) instructed us to follow and take our guidance from. Therefore, follow the Ahlul-Bait (AS) for your own salvation!”

After the address of Allamah Hilly, the King then asked him for an Islamic solution to the divorce problem which he (Allamah Hilly) provided to the satisfaction of all present with proofs from the Holy Qur'an and befitting explanation from the Infallible Holy Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS). A lot of other sectarian questions were asked; Allamah Hilly provided satisfactory answers to them as well with convincing proofs. The King, his respected elders and most of the people present were overwhelmingly surprised at what they heard and saw for themselves. They were in fact extremely satisfied and convinced and for that matter left their various sects and changed to the Shia Sect. The King then encouraged people to have direct contact with the Shia clerics without any hindrances for debates, questions and solutions. By so doing, a lot of the people ended up by having direct contact to the Shia

sources resulting to the Shia faith being more clearly understood hence shifted from being the minority to the vast majority in Iran.⁵⁴

From all that has been mentioned above, it becomes clear that the propaganda that Shiasm is a Persian religion and not Islamic is really false and baseless. The intention behind this fabrication is just to deliberately link Shia with what is evil and not acceptable with some amount of rejection by people to distance them away from this noble and Holy Sect of Islam (Shiasm).

However, the real fact and the truth is that Shiasm is the original Islam which has been highly misunderstood. The Holy Prophet (SAW), who speaks not of his own desire, left behind for the Muslim Ummah the Holy Quran and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) to follow as by the well known hadith of “thaqalain” in the books of tradition. May Allah have mercy on us all.

54 Tarikh Ibn Al-Ward vol. 2:381, : Hiwar ma’l mosu-at al-wahabiy hawlal Shia imamiyyah by Sheikh Muhammad Shawki Haddad

Abu Talib died a Disbeliever (Kafir)?

This is one of the false propaganda used against Shia Islam by attacking the personality of Abu Talib, the father of Imam Ali (AS), [The 1st of the Shia Infallible and Holy Imams]. Before Islam, the Arabs were highly divided and very wicked to one another. They were always at war with one another and to them, war was the only answer to every issue of differences. Through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), Islam came and liberated them from darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge and civilization.

After the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW), the history of Muslims was never straight. The companions (Shia) of Imam Ali (AS) faced a lot of persecution and killing due to envy against the honour and merits of the Imam (AS) (the 1st Infallible Imam of Shia).

However, the lie that Abu Talib died a disbeliever neither existed during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) nor the time of the Sahaba but only started during the time of the Abbasy Caliph Abu Ja'far Mansoor when many from the Ahlul Bait (AS) followers were widely against him. To calm down the opposition against him and to win their sympathy, the lie that Abu Talib died a disbeliever was politically motivated to give the impression that the Abbasy Caliph were the progeny of the uncle of the Holy Prophet (SAW) [Abbas] who accepted Islam as against their opponent, the progeny of the Uncle (Abu Talib) who did not accept Islam and died a disbeliever. It was therefore, purely political and to serve the tyrannical interest of the ruling Abbasy Caliph (Abu Ja'far Mansoor) who was highly against the Shia.

Some of the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) claim and propagated that Abu Talib died a disbeliever without real and sincere analysis to know the truth. Some even went to the extent

of saying that the assistance Abu Talib gave to the Holy Prophet (SAW) was only because of the uncle – nephew relationship between them and nothing more.

In fact, all those claiming that Abu Talib died a disbeliever, in proving their claim, repeatedly used three verses of the Holy Qur'an linked with the following Hadith:-

(1) Reported on the authority of Abul-Yaman that Shuaib reported from Az-Zahri said: Sa-eed Ibn Musaiyab reported that his father said: *“When Abu-Talib was about to die, the Holy Prophet (SAW) came to him and met Abu Jahal and Abdullah Ibn Abi Omaiyah Ibn Mughira then said: Oh my uncle! Say “Lā ilaha illallah”. A word that I will use as a proof for you before Allah. Then Abu Jahal and Abdullah Ibn Abi Omaiyah said: “Do you want to leave the faith of Abdul-Mutalib?” The Holy Prophet (SAW) said repeatedly the word to him and they also kept on repeating their statement until Abu Talib said his last statement: on the faith of Abdul-Mutalib and refused to say: ‘Lā ilaha illallah’. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: by God, I shall request forgiveness for you so long as I am not forbidden to do that”. Then Allah revealed: “It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the idolaters” (Qur'an: 9:113). “Verily, you cannot guide whomsoever you like, but God guides whomsoever He pleases” (Qur'an28:57).⁵⁵*

Pondering over the above Hadith with searching eye reveals the following facts:

- (a) Sa-eed Ibn Musaiyab is the only and single person who reported this Hadith and he is a known enemy against Imam Ali (AS) and his father (Abu Talib) therefore, cannot be used as evidence in saying that Abu Talib died a disbeliever.

55 Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Tafsir fi Al-Qasas, 6:18 :Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 BK 23 Hadith No. 442 : Sahih Muslim BK 1 Hadith No. 0036-0038.

- (b) Ibn Hadid in the Sharhu of Nahjul Balagah Vol. 1 described Sa-ed Ibn Musaiyab as someone always against Imam Ali (AS) and Omar Ibn Ali (AS) called him a hypocrite; all with evidences.
- (c) The above Hadith shows that the two verses: (i) *“It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the idolaters”* (Qur'an: 9:113) and (ii) *“Verily, you cannot guide whomsoever you like, but God guides whomsoever He pleases”* (Qur'an9:57), were revealed together at the death of Abu Talib. This is technically and historically impossible! When you go through the sequence of the revelations of the chapters and verses of the Holy Qur'an, you will realise that the second verse (: 28:57) was revealed to the Holy Prophet (SAW) in Mecca. And about ten years after the death of Abu Talib, then the first verse (9:113) was revealed to the Holy Prophet (SAW) in Medina as the last revealed chapter of the Holy Qur'an.⁵⁶ Therefore, the first verse (9:113) was revealed when Abu Talib was already ten (10) years dead. So, where did the Holy Prophet (SAW) meet him for the said encounter in the Hadith?
- (d) Adding to the above fact; there are a number of Hadith from the Sunni sources contradicting the Hadith in question on the causes of the revelation of the verse (At-Tauba: 113). That the verse was not revealed on Abu Talib but rather on the father of the Holy Prophet (SAW) or the mother of the Holy Prophet (SAW) or a man from the companion of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Below are the Hadith

- (i) The Hadith referring to the revelation of the verse about the father of the Holy Prophet (SAW):- Recorded by At-Tabari that Ibn Abbas said: “Verily, the Prophet (SAW) wanted to

⁵⁶Kashshaf vol.2, : Tafsir Qurtubi vol. 8, : Tafsir Itqan vol. 1

request forgiveness for his father and Allah prohibited him from doing so by His words: *“It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the idolaters”*⁵⁷

(ii) The Hadith referring to the verse revealed about the mother of the Holy Prophet (SAW); Ibn Abbas said: “Verily, when the Holy Prophet (SAW) was returning from the battle of Tabuk, He performed Umura (Mini Hajj) then went to the grave of his mother, then requested from his Lord to seek for forgiveness for her (his mother) and was denied the permission then the verse was revealed: *“It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the idolaters”*.”⁵⁸

(iii) The Hadith referring to the verse about a man among the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW):- narrated by Qatada who said:- A man from among the companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Oh Prophet of Allah (SAW): Among our parents are those who exhibit good relations with neighbours, good judgement, ease tension and discharge responsibilities; can’t we seek forgiveness for them? Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “By God, I would have sought forgiveness for my father just as Prophet Ibrahim (AS) requested for his father, and then the verse (9:11) was revealed *“It is not for the Prophet and those that believe to seek forgiveness for the idolaters”*.”⁵⁹

57 Durul-Manthur, vol. 3:505

58 Tafsir Jamiul-Bayan by At-Tabari vol. 11:31

59 Tafsir Jamiul-Bayan by At-Tabari vol. 11:31

Now, which is which? Was the verse actually revealed on Abu Talib or the father or mother of the Holy Prophet (SAW) or a man among the companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW)? However, if evidences contradict one another, they surely lose their authenticity and value.

(2)The second so-called evidence used repeatedly in support of the claim that Abu Talib died a disbeliever is the verse of the Holy Qur'an (6:26): *“They prohibit others from him, and they (themselves) keep far away from him, they only destroy their own selves, and (yet) they perceive (it) not”*.

In explaining the above verse, it was recorded that: Habib Ibn Abi Thabit reported that he heard Ibn Abbas said: “Verily, the verse was revealed against Abu Talib”, he prohibits others from harming the messenger of Allah (SAW) and he keeps away from embracing Islam”.⁶⁰

Also in Tafsir Al-Qurtabi in explaining the verse it is recorded that, the Holy Prophet (SAW) one day went to the Ka’ba to pray, when he started with the prayers, Abu Jahal (may the curse of Allah be upon him) said: “who will spoil the prayer of this man for him?” Then Ibn Zab’ari filled the stomach of an animal with blood and poured it over the face of the Holy Prophet (SAW). On hearing this, Abu Talib reacted and took revenge for the Holy Prophet (SAW). Then the verse (6:26): *“They prohibit others from him and they (themselves) keep far away from him”*, was revealed.

Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said to Abu Talib: “Oh my Uncle, a verse was revealed on you: He said, what is it? The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “You prevent the Quraish to harm me

60 Tarikhul Tabari vol. 1:110, : Tafsir Ibn Kathir, vol. 2:131, : Tafsir Ibn Juzi vol. 2:6, : Tafsir Al-Khazin vol. 2:106

but you refuse to believe in me?” Then Abu Talib said: “By God they can never ever reach you with all their numbers until I am buried in the soil.....”

Pondering over the Hadith reveal the following facts:

It is indeed not possible for the said verse (6:26) to have been revealed in relation to Abu Talib for a number of reasons:

(A) Habid Ibn Abi Thabit is the only single person who reported this Hadith and no other person apart from him. Therefore, it is not possible to trace what he reports elsewhere. It is one of the created Hadith linking the name of Ibn Abbas to give it some amount of credibility.

(b) Habib Ibn Abi Thabit has been described by Great Scholars like Ibn Habban, Ibn Khazima and some others as a known cheat and a fraud.⁶¹ Therefore his Hadith is of no value at all.

(c) The very Ibn Abbas whom Habib Ibn Thabit reported to have heard the Hadith from contradicts him (Habib Ibn Thabit) in other Hadith that the verse was revealed against the disbelievers who were prohibiting people from believing in the Holy Prophet (SAW) and distancing themselves from him and not Abu Talib who was rather helping and defending the Prophet (SAW).⁶²

The real fact is that, Abu Talib never advised others to stay away from the Holy Prophet (SAW). Even many of those who accused him of not saying “Laa ilaaha illallah” confess that

61 Tahzibul-Tahzib vol. 2:179 translation of Habib bin Abi Thabit

62 Tafsir Tabari vol 5:71, : Durul Manthur, vol 3:15

he helped the Holy Prophet (SAW) during those days of tribulation of the young Islam with all his means.

(d)The verse “*They prohibit others from him and they (themselves) keep far away from him*” is from Qur’an(6:26)

The chapter (An-am) of which this verse is inclusive was revealed in full at once not in bits.⁶³From the Hadith of Habib Ibn Thabit mentioned earlier, this verse was revealed on Abu Talib when **he was alive** and the Holy Prophet (SAW) mentioned it to him (Abu Talib) directly.

However, from what was recorded in the Books of Bukhari and Muslim concerning this verse: “*Verily, you cannot guide whomsoever you like, but God guides whomsoever He pleases*” also said to have been revealed on Abu Talib **after his death** is from Quran (28:56).

Technically, it is impossible for the two verses above(6:26 and 28:56) to have been revealed both on Abu Talib. The first verse (6:26) was revealed when Abu Talib was alive and that the Holy Prophet (SAW) was said to have even spoken to him and said: “Oh my uncle, a verse was revealed on you”. He said, ‘what is it?’ The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “You prevent the Quraish from harming me, but you refuse to believe in me?” Then Abu Talib said: ‘By God they can never ever reach you with all their numbers until I am buried in soil.....’ The second verse (28:56) was revealed after his death.

63 Tafsir Qurtabi vol.6 382-383, : Tafsir Ibn Kathir vol. 2:126, : Durul Manthur, vol. 3:2, : Tafsir Shaukani vol. 3:91-92

From the sequential arrangement of the revelation of the chapters of the Holy Qur'an revealed to the Holy Prophet (SAW), (Al-Qasas) was the 49th chapter revealed whilst (An-am) was the 55th chapter revealed with 5 chapters between them as shown below:

Table 2: Revelational and Traditional Order of the Holy Qur'an

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Sabeel-e-Sakina

Revelational Order	Traditional Order	Name of Chapter	Location of Revelation	Revelational Order	Traditional Order	Name of Chapters	Location of Revelation
1	96	Al-Alaq	Mecca	54	15	Al-Hijr	Mecca
2	68	Al-Qalam	Mecca	55*	6	Al-Anam	Mecca
3	73	Al-Muzzamil	Mecca	56	37	As-Saafat	Mecca
4	74	Al-Muddathir	Mecca	57	31	Luqman	Mecca
5	1	Al-Fatiha	Mecca	58	34	Saba	Mecca
6	111	Al-Masad	Mecca	59	39	Az-Zumar	Mecca
7	81	Al-Takwir	Mecca	60	40	Al-Ghafir	Mecca
8	87	Al-Ala	Mecca	61	41	Fussilat	Mecca
9	92	Al-Lail	Mecca	62	42	As-Shura	Mecca
10	89	Al-Fajr	Mecca	63	43	Az-Zukhruf	Mecca
11	93	Ad-Duha	Mecca	64	44	Ad-Dukhan	Mecca
12	94	Al-Inshirah	Mecca	65	45	Al-Jathiyah	Mecca
13	103	Al-Asr	Mecca	66	46	Al-Ahqaf	Mecca
14	100	Al-Adiyat	Mecca	67	51	Adh-Dhariyat	Mecca
15	108	Al-Kauthar	Mecca	68	88	Al-Ghashiyah	Mecca
16	102	At-Takathur	Mecca	69	18	Al-Kahf	Mecca
17	107	Al-Ma-uun	Mecca	70	16	An-Naml	Mecca
18	109	Al-Kafiroon	Mecca	71	71	Nuh	Mecca
19	105	Al-Fil	Mecca	72	14	Ibrahim	Mecca
20	113	Al-Falaq	Mecca	73	21	Al-Anbiyah	Mecca
21	114	Al-Nas	Mecca	74	23	Al-Mominoon	Mecca
22	112	Al-Ikhlash	Mecca	75	32	As-Sajda	Mecca
23	53	An-Najim	Mecca	76	52	At-Tur	Mecca
24	80	Abasa	Mecca	77	67	Al-Mulk	Mecca
25	97	Al-Qadr	Mecca	78	69	Al-Haaqa	Mecca
26	91	Ash-Shams	Mecca	79	70	Al-Maarij	Mecca
27	85	Al-Burooj	Mecca	80	78	An-Naba	Mecca
28	95	At-Tin	Mecca	81	79	An-Naziat	Mecca
29	106	Qaf	Mecca	82	82	Al-Infitar	Mecca
30	101	Al-Qaria	Mecca	83	84	Al-Inshiqaq	Mecca
31	75	Al-Qiyama	Mecca	84	30	Ar-Room	Mecca
32	104	Al-Humaza	Mecca	85	29	Al-Ankaboot	Mecca
33	77	Al-Mursalat	Mecca	86	83	Al-Mutaffifin	Mecca
34	50	Qaf	Mecca	87	2	Al-Baqara	Madina
35	90	Al-Balad	Mecca	88	8	Al-Anfal	Madina
36	86	At-Tariq	Mecca	89	3	Arl-Imran	Madina
37	54	Al-Qamar	Mecca	90	33	Al-Ahzab	Madina
38	38	Sad	Mecca	91	60	Al-Mumtahina	Madina
39	7	Al-Araf	Mecca	92	4	An-Nisa	Madina
40	72	Al-Jin	Mecca	93	99	Al-Zalzala	Madina
41	36	Yasin	Mecca	94	57	Al-Hadid	Madina
42	25	Al-Furqan	Mecca	95	47	Muhammad	Madina
43	35	Fatir	Mecca	96	13	Ar-Rad	Madina
44	19	Maryam	Mecca	97	55	Ar-Rahman	Madina
45	20	Taha	Mecca	98	76	Al-Insan	Madina
46	56	Al-Waqia	Mecca	99	65	At-Talaq	Madina
47	26	Ash-Shams	Mecca	100	98	Al-Bayyina	Madina
48	27	An-Naml	Mecca	101	59	Al-Hashr	Madina
49*	28	Al-Qasas	Mecca	102	24	An-Noor	Madina
50	17	Al-Isra	Mecca	103	22	Al-Hajj	Madina
51	10	Yunus	Mecca	104	63	Al-Munafiqoon	Madina
52	11	Hud	Mecca	105	58	Al-Mujadila	Madina
53	12	Yusuf	Mecca	106	49	Al-Hujraat	Madina

References:

- 1) Al-Itqan in Ulum al-Qur'an by Imam Jalaluddin Sayuti
- 2) Tamhid in Ulumul-Qur'an by Mohammed Hadi Ma'rifati
- 3) The History of the Qur'an by Allamah Abu Abd Allah al-Zanjani
- 4) Chronological Order of Qur'anic Surahs by Kevin P. Edgecomb
- 5) Qur'an Chapters and their Chronological Sequence of Revelation (International Community of Submitters (ICS)).

Table 3: Revelational Order

Position of Chapter	Name of Chapter
*49th	*Al-Qasas
50 th	Al-Isra'
51 st	Yunus
52 nd	Hud
53 rd	Yusif
54 th	Al-Hijr
*55th	*Al-An-am
*113th	*At-Taubah

Now, from the foregoing facts, the verse (Al-Qasas: 28:56) was revealed after Abu Talib's death and that was long after the alleged verse (An-am: 6:26) in which the Holy Prophet (SAW) was said to have spoken to Abu Talib about a verse revealed about him. This is crystal clear that it was not possible to have happened because by that time, Abu Talib had been long buried in his grave. So, where did the Holy Prophet (SAW) speak to him? in his grave? Or where?

In fact, there is a wise saying that "What wisdom hides away, intelligence exposes it". Therefore, the Qur'anic verses and the Hadith mentioned were wisely arranged to hide the truth about Abu Talib due to envy and hatred as a result of dirty politics, but with the help of the intellect and sincerity, the facts are exposed that Abu Talib did not die a disbeliever but rather died a sincere and committed believer in Islam. There is no doubt that the saying that Abu Talib died a disbeliever was in real fact a political agenda designed by the tyrannical Abbasy Caliphs of the time who were mad for political power and wealth.

The stand of the Holy Prophet (SAW) towards Abu Talib was very positive and so special. The Holy prophet (SAW) loved, respected and praised Abu Talib throughout his life time. Therefore, it is impossible to separate the life of Abu Talib and the history of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

It is recorded in the Books (Al-Kamil by Ibn Athir, Vol. 2:21, History of Tabari vol. 2., History of Ibn Asakeer vol. 1, Sirah of Ibn Hisham vol. 2) that the Holy Prophet (SAW) stated that: "*The Quraish never had me until the death of Abu Talib*". Also the Holy

Prophet (SAW) is recorded to have named the year that Abu Talib and Khadija (The Prophets' wife) died as the year of sadness⁶⁴.

Why don't we mention such values of Abu Talib? Is it possible for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to love, respect and praise a disbeliever to such an extent? The Holy Prophet (SAW) indeed loves and hates only in Allah. Therefore his love and respect of Abu Talib indicates that he was but a believer hiding his faith for the higher interest of Islam at large.

It is recorded in the Book: (Sharhu Nahjul Balagah by Ibn Hadid), that when Abu Talib died, Imam Ali (AS) came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and mentioned to him about the death. The Holy Prophet (SAW) felt very sad about the death; then said to Imam Ali (AS): *"take charge, bath him and after putting him on his bed, you call me in"*. When all that was completed and the Holy Prophet (SAW) was called in, he praised and thanked Abu Talib for nursing, caring and helping him to success. Saying *"you have indeed acted kindly to your next of kin, may you be well rewarded, O Uncle."*⁶⁵(). The Holy Prophet (SAW) after all the praises and thanks followed him to his burial place, stood over his grave and prayed saying: *"By God at all cost, I shall seek forgiveness for you and by God I shall intercede in your favour an intercession that will surprise both man and jinn"*. This was the then prayer for the dead in Mecca because the present prayer for the dead was not revealed before the Hijra to Madina.

64Tarikh Ya'quubi Vol. 1:354:, Wafat Khadija and Abi Talib

65 Sharhu Nahjul Balagha by Ibn Hadid,: Dala il Al-Nubuwa vol. 2 by Baihaqi: Al-Isaba vol. 4,: TarikhYaqubi, vol. 2

Abu Talib, among his children, had four male children: Talib, Ja'far, Aqeel and Ali (AS). At the time of his death, Ja'far and Ali were the only Muslims among his children. Ja'far by then was on a hijira mission in Habasha (Ethiopia), leaving at home, Talib, Aqeel and Ali (AS). The only Muslim among the three children at home by then was Ali (AS). The Holy Prophet (SAW) therefore, instructing Imam Ali (AS) a Muslim to be in charge of Abu Talib's funeral is nothing but strong indicator that Abu Talib died a believer because the Holy Prophet (SAW) does not act against the dictates of Allah.

In the Holy Qur'an, Tauba 9:84, Allah says: "*And pray not at all on any one of them who dies and stand not thee ever at his grave*". The fact is that by all the sayings and actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the messenger of Allah, reflecting His message, Abu Talib died a believer. Indeed, this is the general stand of the Shia about the faith of Abu Talib. Imam Jafar Sadiq (AS) said: the case of Abu Talib was like that of the people of the cave in the Holy Quran. (Kahf 18:9-26). They concealed their faith and disclosed shirk. Yet Allah bestowed upon them double reward.⁶⁶

In fact, the method of Islamization of Abu Talib, his support for the message of Islam and its effect on the Quraish was very unique. Therefore, the need for a special approach by him to be able to reach ultimate and fruitful success covering all aspects of relationship with the Holy Prophet (SAW), Islam and the Quraish. Indeed, he played the role of a matured, experienced and responsible leader all for the benefit of Islam.

Abu Talib mentioned his total support to the Holy Prophet (SAW) throughout the forty-two (42) years that he was with the Holy Prophet (SAW). The Quraish found it very difficult to

⁶⁶Al-Kafi vol. 1, by Kulaini: Al-Ghadir vol. 7 by Al-Amini

directly confront the Holy Prophet (SAW) because of the strong force behind him in the person of Abu Talib who cautioned the Quraish that any attack on the Holy Prophet (SAW) meant declaration of war against the whole Hashimi family.⁶⁷

When the Quraish realised that they could not use force to get rid of the Holy Prophet (SAW), they sent out the following resolutions to Abu Talib hoping to achieve their wicked goal against the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW):-

(1) To contact Abu Talib in order to take the Holy Prophet (SAW) from him in exchange for a beautiful boy called Ammaratu Ibn Al-Walid to be a son to him in place of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

(2) The Holy Prophet (SAW) to stop preaching Islam in exchange for:-

i. Being made their ruler

ii. Getting all the wealth he wanted

iii. Courting the most beautiful ladies among the young women to be his wife.

(3) To be confronting the Holy Prophet (SAW) in any disgraceful manner making life unbearable for him.

(4) To apply the following sanctions on the Household of Abu Talib:-

I. No one to inter marry with the sons of Hashim and Abdul-Mutalib family

ii. No one to have any peace treaty with them

⁶⁷ Tabaqatil-Kubra by Ibn Sa-ad vol. 1:203

iii. No one to have mercy on them until they handover the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Abu Talib replied to the resolutions vehemently saying: “This will never ever happen, that is to hand over the Holy Prophet (SAW) in exchange for a disbeliever (Ammaratu Ibn Walid)”.

When Abu Talib narrated the message of the resolution to the Holy Prophet (SAW), he replied that; *“Oh my uncle, if the sun is put on my right and the moon on my left for me to stop this Divine Command, I will never stop it until Allah makes it victorious or I perish in it”*.⁶⁸

Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) wept and stood up. Abu Talib embraced him and said to him, “Go, the son of myBrother, and say all that you want by Allah! I will never ever hand you over to anyone”.⁶⁹

When Abu Talib realised that the Quraish were eager to implement the sanctions and embargo on them he quickly and successfully assembled the sons of Hashim and Abdul-Mutalib and attracted them to the side of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his Divine message for a unified stand among themselves. They faced all classes of sufferings with high spirit of patience and reliance on Allah under the Quraish embargo for three (3) years.

Within the period of the harsh embargo, Abu Talib on every night used to be keeping surveillance over the Holy Prophet (SAW) and even exchanging his sleeping place with that

68Biography of the Holy Prophet (SAW) vol 1 by Ibn Hisham: Tabaqat of Ibn Sa’ad vol 1; History of Tabari vol. 2, History of Ibn Hadid vol 3

69Biography of the Prophet vol. 1, by Ibn Hisham, Tabaqat Ibn Sa’ad vol.1, History of Tabari vol. 2, History of Ibn Hadid vol. 3

of his direct children so as to be sure of protecting the Holy Prophet (SAW) in case of attack from the enemy camp⁷⁰. In fact, Abu Talib by way of his deeds was a Mu'min among the Quraish. May Allah advance His unique mercy and blessings on him in paradise!

The position of Abu Talib in the family was used as well in advising all his children to follow, support and have faith in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

When in history, Abu Talib witnessed the Holy Prophet (SAW) praying with Imam Ali (AS) on his right side, he told his son Ja'far to also join the prayers on the left side of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Indeed Ja'far embraced Islam shortly after Imam Ali (AS) did.⁷¹

Abu Talib ever mentioned to his brother Sayyid Hamza encouraging him to Islam with patience and to support the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW); saying in a poem – “Be patient:

- Oh father of Ya'la on the religion of Ahmad;
- Follow the one who brought the truth from his Lord;
- With the truth and seriousness never be a disbelieving Hamza;
- It made me happy when you said you are indeed a believer;
- Be, for the Messenger of Allah, in Allah, a helper.⁷²

Also he said about the Holy Prophet (SAW): To exalt him, Allah derived his name from His own; the one on High is called Mahmood whilst He named him Muhammad (SAW). There is

70 Al-Ghadeer vol.7:404 by Al-Amini

71 Asadul-Gaaba, vol 1:341, : Siratul-Halabiyah vol. 1:269 : Babu Zikr Awalul-Nas Imanan bi Rasul.

72 Sharhu Ibn Abi Hadid, Kitab 9 ,14,76.

no doubt that Allah appointed Muhammad (SAW) a Prophet. Therefore Ahmad is the most exalted personality in the entire universe.⁷³ .

Abu Talib, being committed to the success and victory of Islam over all concepts, never forgot helping and supporting the Holy Prophet (SAW). It has been recorded in Siratul Halabiyah that, Abu Talib even on the brink of death, addressed those around him saying: “I command you to be good to Muhammad (SAW) for he is verily, the trustworthy among the Quraish and the truthful among the Arabs and he is the collection of all that I command you to. By God, no one takes to his path except that he is guided, and no one is guided with his guidance except that he is fortunate and lucky. Had it been some remains in my life, I would have protected him against any trembling, and taken away from him any trouble. Verily Muhammad is truthful therefore, respond to his Divine Call. Unite in helping him, for he is a source of remaining dignity for you throughout life”.⁷⁴

There are a number of the companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) with the view that Abu Talib was a Mu'min (Believer) and not a disbeliever (Kafir). Let's mention these few examples as follows:

- (a) From the Book: (Sharhu Nahjul-Balagah Vol. 14:69 Babu Ikhtilaf Ra'yi fi Iman Abu Talib) Akrama reported from Ibn Abbas, that: “Abubakar came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) with Abu Quhafa (Abu-Bakr's father) leading him and he was an

73Dala il Al-Nubuwa vol. 1, History of Ibn Asakir vol. 1, History of Ibn Kathir vol. 1, Sharh Ibn Hadid vol. 3

74 Siratul Halabiyah vol. 1, Bab Zikr wafat Abu Talib and Khadija :351-352 :Siratul Halabiyah vol. 1, Tabaqat Ibn Sa'ad vol. 1, Tareekh Khamees vol. 1

old blind man. Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said to Abubakar: - “Why did you not leave the old man for us to come to him?” He replied: “Oh the messenger of Allah, I want Allah to reward me. But by the one who sent you with the truth, verily, you are more pleased with the Islam of your uncle Abu Talib than me with the Islam of my father. I request with that the delight of your eye. Then the Holy Prophet said, you have said the truth”.

- (b) From the Book: (Al-Gadir Vol.7:399):- Abul-Futuh al-Isfahani recorded that Muhammad Ibn Hamid said: “His father narrated to him and said: Abu Jaham Ibn Huzaifa was asked: Did the Holy Prophet (SAW) pray over Abu Talib? He replied: “Where was prayer at that time? Verily, prayer was made obligatory after his death. The Holy Prophet (SAW) was much sad over his death, instructed Ali (AS) to be in charge of him, and attended his funeral and **Abbas and Abubakar** bear witness of his faith. Others too bear witness for their truth because Abu Talib was hiding his faith. Had he lived to the total victory of Islam, he would have exposed his faith”.

Also at the marriage ceremony of the Holy Prophet (SAW), Abu Talib addressed the congregation of Quraish present saying, “Praise be to Allah who made us from the seed of Abraham (AS) and the progeny of Ismail (AS). He granted us a Sacred House and a place for pilgrimage. He made us to dwell in a secure sanctuary (Haram), to which the fruits of everything are brought. In addition, He made us arbiters of men’s affairs and bless for us this land in which we dwell.

Then he said; were Muhammad (SAW), the son of my brother, Abdullah, son of Abdul-Mutallib, to be weighed against any man among the Arabs, he (Muhammad (SAW)) would have excelled him nor will any man be comparable to him. He is peerless among men, even

though he is a man of little wealth. Yet riches are only transient possessions and offer ephemeral security. He has expressed desire for Khadija and she likewise has shown interest in him. As for any bride gift (Mahr) you demand, both the part to be presented now, and the part to be presented at a later date – both will be from my own wealth.⁷⁵

How can such a noble person from the seed of Abraham (AS), father of monotheistic faith with this laudable Islamic character and a rare opportunity of wedding for the Holy Prophet (SAW) of Islam be called a Kafir (disbeliever)? Indeed this is clear for people of understanding.

From the Books: (Sharhu Nahjul-Balagah Vol. 14 and Gayatul-Matalib 75) a number of poems by Abu Talib were recorded and going through them you will have no alternative other than to accept that Abu Talib was a sincere believer and died a believer. Below are a few of some of the poems:

(1) “I already knew that verily, the religion of Muhammad is one of the best religions”

⁷⁶(Sharhu Nahjul-Balagah Vol. 14, Fathul Bari vol. 7, Al-Isabah vol.4).

(2) “Don’t you know that I (Abu-Talib) found Muhammad (SAW) a Prophet like Musah (AS) written in the earlier scriptures? He is the illumined face which is the medium for the rains; he is the spring for the orphans and a protector for the widow”⁷⁷

75 Siratul Halabiyah vol. 1

76 Sharhu Nahjul Balagha vol 14:72, Kitab 9

77 Sharhu Nahjul Balagha vol 14:55, Kitab 9 : Sharh Bukhari Vol. 2 by Qastalani, Sirah Al-Halabiyah vol. 1, Sharhu Nahjul-Balagah Vol. 14

(3) “Oh, witness of creatures, over me be witness that verily, I am on the religion of the Prophet Ahmad (AS), whoever is astray in the religion then verily, I am guided” .⁷⁸

From all that is mentioned above, one will understand that, it was a mistake saying that Abu Talib died a disbeliever but he rather died a believer. Indeed, he acted maturely and responsibly for the defence of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Islam just like the stand of the man in the camp of King Pharaoh (Fir-auna) mentioned in the Holy Qur'an who defended Prophet Musah (AS) and Allah addressed him as “Mu'min Aali Fir-aun” (believing man of Pharaoh people).

Quran 40:28 *“And a believing man of Pharaoh people who hid his faith said: what! Will you kill a man because he says: my Lord is Allah?”* This means outwardly showing disbelieve and inwardly having faith. Therefore, Abu Talib must be seen and called “Mu'min Aali – Quraish” (believing man of the Quraish) who was hiding his faith for the defence of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Islam.

Factually, Allah the Almighty does not cheat any of His servants. We must be aware of accountability before Allah for all our deeds. Therefore, we must avoid running into hasty conclusions on issues that affect the personality and value of a fellow being particularly a pure servant of Allah like Abu Talib; a committed uncle of the Holy Prophet (SAW) who sacrificed his whole life for the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Islam as a whole. Remember, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is indeed a source of mercy to the whole Universe as mentioned by Allah in the Holy Quran (21:107): *“We did not send you but as a mercy to all*

78 Gayatul-Matalib 75

the worlds". Should this mercy not include Abu Talib, such a great and important personality to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Islam?

Let us change our conception about Abu Talib (Mu'min Aali-Quraish) by reading more about him through the Ahlul-Bait (AS) for our own salvation. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (Al-Baqarah: 189): "*And enter houses through their entrances*". Also in Qur'an (Ra'd: 11): "*Verily, Allah changes not the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves*".

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Shia and the Sahaba (Companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW))

Regarding the issue of Sahaba (companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW)), it must be seen as one of the most important topics to be tackled because if properly understood, it could lead us to reality and better understanding of Islam.

One of the major sources of division of the Muslim Ummah is reflected in the fact that we fail to sincerely know and understand the Sahaba by their deeds and beliefs. Also to avoid any blind imitation of what some people might be saying about the Sahaba without tangible reason or evidence. The Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) are of diversified concepts with regards to the real position of the Sahaba in Islam.

One of the wise sayings of Imam Ali (AS) recorded in the Books: (Nahjul-Balagah, Biharul Anwar Vol. 22) states that: “Verily, the right and the wrong are not known by knowing people, but rather know the right first you will know its people and know the wrong too you will surely know the wrong people”. Therefore, this gives clear value to the importance of searching for the truth and to know the path leading to the truth. This principle can be applied to the Sahaba for the sake of knowing and following the truth in the right path.

It is falsely concluded and propagated that the Shia insult the Sahaba and for that matter they are disbelievers. As if believing or having faith in the Sahaba is a condition in Islamic faith. This is very unfortunate, for the Shia in reality do not insult any Sahabi but rather expose to light actions and reactions of some of the Sahaba in relation to obedience and disobedience to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the teachings of Islam at large.

However, on this note some of the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) are of the view that the dark aspects of the history of the Sahaba must not be discussed or made known to the public and that their cases should be left to Allah, the Almighty.

For the sake of knowledge and following the right people and the right path, the Shia does not agree with this view and expose the true events and nature of some of the Sahaba. The history of the Sahaba in Islam is never straight and simple. Some of the Sahaba have betrayed Islam, poisoned, attacked, and killed Muslims even members of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) (the Progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW)). Some of the Sahaba lied against the Holy Prophet (SAW) for their selfish interests. Others directly disobeyed the command of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Why should these be covered and not mentioned out to the public? Should we be part of the betrayals? No! We should not be part of it. It is far better for the truth to be exposed than covered. Exposing the truth as in the case of what the Shia are doing should not be seen as insult to the perpetrators, but rather service to the course of Islam. The Holy Qur'an condemns the act of using falsehood to cover the truth.

The Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) stand on the concept of the Sahaba is that, any person who met the Holy Prophet (SAW) in his life time, believed in him and accepted Islam is a Sahaba and also all the Sahaba without exception are just and honest people. For that matter in the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) concept of the Sahaba, criticising a Sahabi or mentioning anything wrong in relation to the action and reaction of a Sahabi could be labelled disbelieving.

In the Shia view, however, the concept of Sahaba as proposed by the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) is considered to be unislamic and not acceptable at all because, it does not conform to the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (As-Sajdah: 18 – 20): *“Is he who is a believer like the one who is a*

transgressor? They shall not be held alike. As for those who believe and do good, for them, the gardens (of bliss) shall be the abode; as an entertainment of what (good) they were doing. But as for those who transgress, their abode shall be the (hell) fire”.

In looking deep into the history of the Muslim Ummah, one will realize that this idea of all the Sahaba being just and honest was only started by the Umayyad dynasty that usurped Islamic leadership and did a lot of mischief in Islam and wanted to cover and protect their political interest and themselves. They brought about the concept that all Sahaba are just and honest and so indirectly justifying their wrong doings. To deter people from discussing about their wrong doings, they further said that whoever mentioned anything wrong about the deeds of the Sahaba is kafir (disbeliever).⁷⁹

Therefore, this concept of all the Sahaba being just and honest is politically motivated with no Islamic rooting at all but rather to cover the betrayal of the power seeking tyrants in the history of the Muslim Ummah.

Ideologically, human beings by nature are always divided into three (3) categories to every concept. To any ideology, we have those that sincerely believe and accept it without any reservations and they can be termed as the believers. We also have their direct opposite who do not believe and for that matter reject the idea and can be called the disbelievers. Finally, we have those that are neither believers nor disbelievers but rather operate between the two stands and so can be called the hypocrites. The Holy Qur'an gives reflection on these three classes of people in relation to the Islamic ideology by even naming chapters from the Holy Qur'an accordingly. Such as Chapter of the Believers, Chapter of the Disbelievers and

79 Al-Isabat fi Tamyiz Sahaba by Asqalani Vol. 1

Chapter of the Hypocrites. So is the human society regarding any ideology everywhere and every time.

On the Sahaba, the Shia conforming to the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and historical evidences in relation to the deeds and faith of the Sahaba, say that not all the Sahaba were just, but rather categorise them into four (4) distinct groups.

The groupings are as follows:

(1)The first category are the Believers (Mu'minoon), they are the just, honest and sincere ones among the Sahaba. They knew the Holy Prophet (SAW) very well and extended total allegiance to him. The Holy Prophet (SAW) praised them at several instances and the Holy Qur'an positively talks about them too.

Allah, the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an (Al-Fathu: 29): *“Muhammad is the Messenger of God, and those who are with him are vehement against the infidels, compassionate among themselves, you see them bowing, prostrating seeking grace from God and (His) pleasure; their marks are in their faces, because of the effect of their prostration; that is their description in the Torah and their description in the Evangel; like a seed which put forth its stalk then strengthens it, then it becomes stout and raises firm up its stem, delighting the sowers, that He may enrage the disbelievers; Allah has promised **those who believe and do good deeds from amongst them**, forgiveness and a great recompense”.*

This noble verse is full of praises for the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Sahaba who were severe on the disbelievers and merciful to one another. At the tail end of the verse, Allah promised forgiveness and great reward **to some of the Sahaba not all**, but only to those that did believe and did good deeds from the statement: *“Allah has promised **those who believe***

and do good deeds from amongst them; forgiveness and great recompense". This group of Sahaba, the Shia praises and highly respects them for their strong faith in Islam and their laudable deeds.

(2) The second category of the Sahaba is those that accepted Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), but not in totality as in the case of the first group. Sometimes they obeyed and othertimes they disobeyed the commandments of Allah and guidance of the Holy Prophet (SAW) because of their selfish interests. The Shia in reality, under no circumstance compromise on respect or praise for any act of disobedience to the Holy Prophet (SAW), but rather expose and condemn such behaviour regardless of who the perpetrator might be. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (At-Tauba: 102): *"And others have confessed their faults, they have mixed a good act with another (which is) evil; may be God will turn unto them (in mercy): verily, Allah is oft-forgiving, All-Merciful"*.

(3) The third category of the Sahaba is the hypocrites. They openly claim to be Muslims, but inwardly they are not; rather they are harbouring enmity against the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Islam. In the broad history of Islam, the hypocrites have done a lot of harm to Islam and Muslims both during the life time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and after his death. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah, the Almighty made mention of the hypocrites in several places and promised to position them among the lowest of the low in the hell-fire for their evil deeds. Both the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah curse them for their harm to Islam and humanity at large. The Holy Qur'an (At-Tauba: 101) says: *"And of those who are around you of the Arabs (of the desert) there are hypocrites; and from the inhabitants of Medina (also); stubborn are they in hypocrisy"*.

(4) The fourth category of the Sahaba are the special class of Sahaba called the Ahlul-Bait (AS). They are the members of the household of the Holy Prophet (SAW) divinely selected by Allah, the Almighty for the divine course of Islam through the Holy Prophet (SAW). The Ahlul-Bait (AS) are those that Allah, the Almighty purified with total purification as clearly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. They are in fact one of the two valuables (two weighty and valuable things) left behind for the guidance of the Ummah by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in the well-known Hadith of the Thaqaalain (The Holy Qur'an and the Holy Ahlul-Bait (AS)). Qur'an (33:3): *“Allah only desires to keep away abomination from you, oh, the Ahlul-Bait, And to purify you a thorough purification”*.

Hadith Thaqaalain:- The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: *“I am leaving behind among you the two weighty and valuable things; the Book of Allah and my Ahlul-Bait; they shall never separate from each other till they reach me at the Pool”*.⁸⁰

Indeed, Shia do extend special love, respect and following to the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in all aspects of the Islamic faith in preference to all other Sahaba in direct obedience to the instruction of the Holy Prophet (SAW) to the Ummah. However, the Ahlul-Sunnah respect the Ahlul-Bait (AS) but do not follow them have no categorization of the Sahaba as in the case of the Shia and for that matter to them, Sahaba as a whole are the best of creation after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). That is why in extending salutation (Salawat) they include all the Sahaba without any exception.

80 Al-Mustadrak ala Sahihain Vol. 3:109-110

From all that has been stated above, one will understand that Shia as a matter of fact do not insult or disrespect any Sahabi but rather mention, expose and condemn only what has been negatively done in the history of the Sahaba and Islam.

To the best of my understanding, this stand of the Shia must be encouraged because it helps us to know and understand our history properly as Muslims and also helps us to choose the right direction in matters of faith.

The following are just a few examples of some of the wrong deeds of some Sahaba that need to be thought over:-

Abu Hurayrah Lied Against the Holy Prophet (SAW)

- I. It is recorded in the Book of Bukhari that Abu Hurayrah said that: the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “the best of charity is that which is left out of contentment, the upper hand is better than the lower hand. Begin to help those you provide for, the woman says (to her husband): you either feed me or divorce me, and the slave says: feed me and employ me, while the son says (to his father): you must feed me, to whom do you leave me?” Then they asked Abu Hurayrah: “Have you heard this Hadith from the Messenger of Allah (SAW)?” He said: **“No, it is from Abu Hurayrah’s purse”**.⁸¹

Take note, Abu Hurayrah started the Hadith saying: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) said”; and when being confronted and questioned, he admits that it is from his own purse and not from the Holy Prophet (SAW).

81Al-Bukhari Vol. 6: Babu Wujubul Nafaqah alal ahal wal Eyal

II. From the book :Sharh Nahjul-Balagha by Ibn Abi Hadeed narrated from his teacher Abu Jafar Asqalani that Muawiyah bin Abu Sufyan connived with some companions of the Holy Prophet(SAW) to fabricate hadith in his favour against Imam Ali(AS). Among those who created such false hadiths against Imam Ali(AS) was Abu Hurayrah.

Indeed, Ibn Abi Hadeed narrated that Abu Hurayrah in the Kufa Mosque in Iraq addressed a congregation for a favour from Muawiyah and said, “O people of Iraq, do you think that I would tell a lie against Allah (SWT) and His Prophet (SAW) and buy hell fire for myself ? Hear from me what **I have heard from the Holy Prophet(SAW)**: “Every Prophet has a Haram(Holy dwelling place) and my Haram is Madina. Whoever is responsible for innovation in Madina is cursed by Allah (SWT), His Angels and by all humanity. I swear by Allah that Ali was responsible for innovation because he has incited dissension among the people and **so according to the Prophet (SAW) should be cursed.**”⁸²

When Muawiyah heard what Abu Hurayrah did in his (Muawiya) favour in the Kufa Mosque, he rewarded him by making him the governor of Madina. Clearly, for favours from Muawiya, Abu Hurayrah fabricated this hadith against Imam Ali (AS) and incited others to abuse and curse him (AS). Note that Abu Hurayra said he heard this from the Holy Prophet (SAW) and swore that Imam Ali(AS) is responsible for dissention in Madina. Apart from the fact that this is a plain lie against the Holy Prophet (SAW) and factually incorrect, it contradicts the personality, virtue and stature of Imam Ali (AS) as described by the Holy Prophet of Islam on several different occasions. Saying: “*O Ali (AS) you are a master in this world and a master in the hereafter. Whoever loves you loves me, and whoever hates you, hates me. Your*

82 Sharhu Nahjul Balagha, vol 4:67 by Ibn Abi Hadeed

*lover is the lover of Allah (SWT) and your hater is the hater of Allah (SWT) and woe on to one who detests you”.*⁸³

Again the Holy Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said, “Ali (AS) is with the truth and the truth is with Ali (AS), wherever he turns, the truth turns with him”⁸⁴

Indeed, Imam Ali (AS) was faithful and truthful to the Holy Prophet (SAW) by all standards. However, Abu Hurayrah from the above narrations lied against the infallible Imam Ali (AS) and the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW).

Is it proper that a person who lied against the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the “Gate to the City of Knowledge” and the most noble of the Caliphs should be regarded as pious and reliable simply because he was once a companion of the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW)? Whilst we know that telling a lie against the Holy Prophet (SAW) leads to the hell fire.⁸⁵

Omar (the second Caliph) caned Abu Hurayrah for Corruption and Lies

1. It is recorded in the book (Sharh Nahjul-Balagha vol 3 by Ibn Abi Hadeed) that Omar bin Khattab appointed Abu Hurayrah as governor of Bahrain in the year 21 AH. He was deposed after just two years because of numerous scandals. It was reported to Omar that Abu Hurayrah had amassed so much wealth and even bought so many horses that Omar had no option but to depose him.
2. From the books (Tabaqat vol 4 by Ibn Sa-ad, Isaba by Ibn Hajar Asqalani) in narrating the event of the scandal of Abu Hurayrah in Bahrain pointed out what Omar told Abu Hurayrah, thus “When I made you the governor of Bahrain, you

83 Mustadrak Al-Hakim vol. 3:128, : Yanabee-ul Mawaddah : 205, :

84 Tarikh Bagdad vol. 14:321, : Kanzul-Ummal, vol. 5: Tarikh Ibn Asakira vol. 3

85 Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, book No. 3 pp 106,107,108,109,110

had not even shoes on your feet, but now I have heard you have bought horses for 1,600 dinars. How did you acquire this wealth? He replied, “These were gifts whose profits have multiplied much”. The caliph became angry and caned him so much that his back bled. Then he ordered the 10,000 dinars which Abu Hurayrah had collected in Bahrain to be taken from him and deposited in the “Baitul Mal” (Muslim Treasury).

3. It is also recorded that Abu Hurayrah has narrated so many Hadith from the Holy Prophet (SAW) that Omar beat him, saying: “you have narrated so many Hadith that I believe you to be a liar against the Messenger of Allah (SAW)”. This is because he narrated a Hadith saying that: “Allah has created the heavens and earth and creation within seven days”. When Omar heard this, he summoned him asking him to repeat the Hadith; as soon as he repeated it, Omar hit him and said: “Allah says within six days and you say within seven?” Abu Hurayrah said: “I might have heard it from Ka’bal-Akbar”. Then Omar said to him: “As long as you cannot differentiate between the traditions said by the Holy Prophet (SAW) and those said by Ka’bal-Akbar, it is better you never narrate anything”.⁸⁶

It is equally recorded in Sharhu Nahjul-Balagah that Imam Ali (AS) has said: “The biggest ever liar against the Messenger of Allah is Abu Hurayrah”.⁸⁷ Abu Hurayrah met the Holy Prophet (SAW) at the end of the seventh year of Hijrah and for that matter; his company with the Holy Prophet (SAW) was less than three years. However, he narrated six thousand Hadith from the Holy Prophet (SAW) even including events that he never witnessed while all

86 Abu Hurayra by Mahmoud Abu Rayyah Almisri pp 94-95

87 Sharhu Nahjul Balagha vol.4:28, Abu Hurayra by Mahmoud Abu Rayyah

the Sahaba and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) put together could not reach one-tenth of those narrated by him.

Abu Hurayrah is the first narrator in Islam to be accused of lies and fabrications yet Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) call him “Narrator of Islam” and consider him a very high authority. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said in one of his Hadith: *“Do not lie against me, verily; whoever lies against me will perish in fire”*.⁸⁸ .

The Shia, investigated most of the narrations of Abu Hurayrah and came out with the conclusions that he is not worthy of trust, hence they do not accept his narration except those that conforms to the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS). In short, it is not only the Shia who rejects Abu Hurayrah. When you refer to some major Sunnireferences that Imam Ali (AS), Omar bin Khattab, Ayisha and other respected companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) considered Abu Haurayrah unreliable.⁸⁹

The Shia are of the view that, it is not an insult to mention or expose the deeds of a Sahabi just like the case of Abu Hurayrah but rather an act of justice to the Ummah for better understanding of the history Muslims and Islam.

88 Sahih Bukhari, vol. 1, book No. 3 Hadith No. 106,107,108,109,110

89 Sahih Bukhari vol. 3:232, Babul-Sa-im yasbah Janaban : Muwatta' Malik vol.1:272, : Siyar A'lamul Nubala by Zahabi : Al-Bidaya wan Nihaya by Ibn Kathir, : Sharhu Nahjul Balagha vol.4:28 by Ibn Abi Hadid

The Sahaba and the Misfortune of Thursday:

On a Thursday, three days before the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW), a number of the Sahaba assembled in his house. The Holy Prophet (SAW) requested for a “*Pen and paper*” for him to write down guidance for them against going astray after his death. The Sahaba disagreed among them and disobeyed the request of the Holy Prophet (SAW). They left the house without the guidance being written for the Muslim Ummah. This unfortunate event is recorded in most of the Books of tradition.⁹⁰

The incidence goes as follows: Ibn Abbas said: - Thursday and what a Thursday! The sickness of the Holy Prophet (SAW) intensified, then he (the Holy Prophet (SAW)) said: *Come on, “I write for you a message so that you will never go astray”*, then Omar said: “Verily, pain has overcome the Prophet (SAW), and you have the Qur'an, the Book of Allah is enough for us”. Then the people disagreed among themselves and argued; some were saying, “get closer for him to write the message that you will not go astray”, others were saying what Omar said, when the argument and disagreement intensified before the Holy Prophet (SAW), the messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “Get away from me”. Then Ibn Abbas saying: “Verily, the misfortune of all misfortunes is what intervened between the Messenger of Allah (SAW) and their disagreement for him to write for them that message”.

90 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 BK 3 Hadith No. 113 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 3 Babu Qaulut-marid Qumu anni : Sahih Muslim BK 13 Hadith No. 4016 : Sahih Muslim vol. 5:75, Kitabul Wasiya : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1:355 also in vol.5:116 : Tarikh Tabari vol. 3:193 : Tarikh Ibn Athir vol. 2:320

There is no doubt about the occurrence of this sad incident. It is well recorded in the Books of both the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah. How many among the Muslim Ummah are aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet (SAW) was prevented by Omar and some other Sahaba from writing down guidance for the Ummah against going astray? This is indeed a complete betrayal of the whole Muslim Ummah for denying them the shield against going astray after the Holy Prophet (SAW). If you narrate or talk about this incident, some simply ask whether you are a Shia. In fact, there are a lot of questions about the reason, if any, why Omar and some of the Sahaba disobeyed and mistreated the Holy Prophet (SAW). Knowing very well that the Holy Prophet (SAW) does not speak in vain or of his own desire. Quran 53: 3-4 *“And he (Prophet Muhammad (SAW)) speak not of his own desire. It is but revelation that is revealed.”*

Well, if a narrator of the wrong deed of Sahaba is accused of doing wrong by narrating the deed then, what adjective qualifies the wrong doers themselves? We must learn to call a spade, a spade and end up by learning good lessons from the mistakes of the wrong doers. Some of the Sahaba indeed, misbehaved and there is no reason why we must defend them at all cost. We must remember that Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (Al-Hijurat: 2): *“O’you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and speak not loud unto him as some of you speak loud to others, lest your deeds become null while you perceive not”*. Also in the Holy Qur'an (Al-Ahzab: 36) says: *“And whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger, indeed he has strayed off a manifest straying”*.

However, beware! The Holy Prophet (SAW) is to be obeyed unconditionally whether healthy or sick. There is no excuse whatsoever to justify any disobedience by any person to the Holy

Prophet (SAW). May Allah, the Merciful protect us all against disobeying the Holy Prophet (SAW). Amen!

The Commemoration of Ashura

From the dark history of Muslims, after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the members of his holy household (Women and Children) led by Imam Husain (AS) were unjustly and brutally massacred at a place called Karbala in Iraq and the surviving women and children taken as captives. This sad event happened as a result of deep rooted hatred against the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW) by the Bani Umayyad family led by Abu Sufiyan, his son Ma-awiya and Yazid (Son of Ma-awiya).

In the month of Muharram (first month of Islamic calendar) especially the first ten days of the month, we hold discourses on the philosophy of Imam Husain's (AS) martyrdom, we the Shia and followers of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) elaborate and make clear every aspect of the true Islam. We painstakingly point out the role and merit of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his blessed household. Thorough discussions are made to expose and teach the real meanings of the word of Allah, "the Holy Qur'an" base on the vast knowledge and wisdom of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

We highlight the noble character of Imam Husain (AS) and his compassion, which paves an ideal straight path, built on truth, wisdom and knowledge on the teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and guidance from Imam Ali (AS) to serve as catalyst to guide mankind.

As we mourn the gruesome massacre of Imam Husain (AS) and some members of the holy family of the Holy Prophet (SAW) at Karbala on the day of Ashura, we rekindle our faith in Islam through the Holy Prophet (SAW) to the Supreme Being (Allah). Memories of the

unimaginable cruelty meted out to the holy family increases our steadfastness in faith and devotion to the Ahlul-Bait (AS), conversely, in sorrow, tears and heavy heart, we invoke Allah to curse(remove his mercy from) the perpetrators of this heinous crime in human history. Do we call this insult of the Sahaba? Allah the Almighty says in the holy Quran:

1. Quran (9:68)- *“Allah has promised the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women and the unbelievers the fire of hell to abide therein; it is enough for them; and Allah has CURSED them and they shall have lasting punishment”*.
2. Quran(2:159)- *“Surely those who conceal the clear proofs and the guidance that We revealed after We made it clear in the book for men, these it is whom Allah shall CURSE, and THOSE WHO CURSE shall CURSE them (too)”*
3. Quran (4:52)- *“those are they whom Allah has CURSED, and whomever Allah CURSES you shall not find any helper for him”*.

Concerning this bitter and unfortunate event where members of the household of the Holy Prophet (SAW) were openly targeted and killed, Muslims are divided into three (3) groups. The first group are those that declare and celebrate this sad event as day of victory and for that matter day of happiness as practised by the Bani Umayyad families. The second group are those that are surprised and confused. They even ask, how can a people attack and massacre the progeny of Prophet (SAW) and still call themselves Muslims and followers of the same Prophet? The third group are those that are fighting for the right of the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and always commemorate this sad event with the aim of creating more awareness and deeper meaning to it.

Considering the above groupings therefore, one will understand that, the first group is a reflection of the behaviour of the enemies of the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW). May Allah protect us against being enemies to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his holy family(AS).

The second group are the confused persons who do not understand anything and for that matter are the ignorant ones, they need to be informed. The third group are the lovers and followers of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) sharing the grief and sadness with them. In practical life, therefore, each one of us belong to one of the above three groups in terms of our actions and reactions to the sad event against the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

Generally, the unfortunate thing is that, when bringing to light the oppression and the injustice done to the Ahlul-Bait (AS) with particular references to this sad historic event of Karbala as Ashura commemoration, some from among the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) feel very uncomfortable and label it as an act of insult to the Sahaba hence discouraging people from exposing the truth and encouraging therefore ignorance and misunderstanding.

In fact, in relation to the Ashura commemoration, the Holy Prophet (SAW) stated that: *“Indeed, the killing of my son Husain has a heat in the hearts of the believers and it would never cool down”*. Therefore, by nature a sincere believer can never hide his/her feelings for Imam Husain (AS) and the sad and bitter event of Karbala. He/she has to expose the wrong doers if indeed he/she is a believer!

The Holy Prophet (SAW) also said that: *“Al-Hassan and Husain are the two youth leaders of Paradise”*.⁹¹ Undoubtedly, from this Hadith, one will understand that the killers of Imam Husain (AS) are definitely also leaders in the Hellfire!

To the best of my understanding therefore, narrating the history of the sad event of Ashura by the Shia, the injustice and betrayal done to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and mentioning whoever was a cause or a party to the cruelty and inhumane act against the holy progeny are never

91 Silsilatul-Ahdith Sahihah by Al-Baani vol.2 Hadth No. 796

insults to the Sahaba (perpetrators), but rather support and solidarity to the truth which must be the responsibility of all sincere Muslims and not only the Shia. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (9:119): *“O ye who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah, and be with the truthful”*.

We must as Muslims therefore, read more diversely about the Ashura, understand the history of Islam and Muslims and be with the truthful as mentioned by Allah in the Holy Qur'an. May Allah increase us in love and following to the Ahlul-Bait (AS).Amen!

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Shia and the Holy Qur'an

As propaganda against the Shia Muslims, there are some from among the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) who claim that the Shia do not believe in the Holy Qur'an which is in the hands of all Muslims, but rather have their own different Qur'an. This is baseless and very unfortunate lie from a Muslim against a fellow Muslim for worldly gains. However, it is not only the Shia who are refuting such allegation but some Ahlul-Sunnah Scholars in some way reject it. The reason is very clear because Allah the Almighty stated in the Holy Qur'an (17:88): *“Say, if men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others”*. It is the promise of Allah that no one can bring the LIKE of the Qur'an; therefore, saying that the Shia has a different Qur'an is in reality not an attack only to the Shia but to the sanctity of the Holy Qur'an and the faith of the Muslim Ummah at large!

The Muslim Ummah is blessed with the only divine Book of Allah, the Almighty on earth passed from generation to generation and word for word without any change in terms of addition or reduction. It is indeed the living miracle of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) of which falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it; a revelation from Allah, the Wise, the Praised one.

The issue of the Shia not believing in the Holy Qur'an or having a different Qur'an is baseless and for that matter useless. It is only satanic machination because in the physical and practical life, the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah do not possess any Qur'an apart from the one and only Quran revealed to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and handed over to the muslim ummah the world over. I therefore, strongly challenge any Shia or Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) who can

prove or present a single copy of a different Quran other than the Quran revealed to the holy Prophet (SAW). Yes, there are a few weak and unacceptable Hadith from the Books of Tradition of both the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah claiming some additions and omissions in the Holy Qur'an. This is in fact, only at the level of theory (saying) because practically in the whole world there is not a single copy of such a Qur'an. Therefore, such thoughts are satanic tools only meant to distance Muslims apart. However, whoever believes and insists in such baseless Hadith of addition and omissions should produce a copy of such a Qur'an not mere narrations of Hadith for such is never the Qur'an.

In the world, Shia is not a small group of people living in a small hidden village whereby we cannot see the Qur'an that they believe in and read. They are all over the world in several hundreds and millions. In their towns, cities, homes, mosques, Husainiyah, Schools, Universities, Hawzat, etc, we cannot get from them except the very same Holy Qur'an we have the world over. Why does the Shia read the very same Qur'an the world over in their homes, centres, occasions, and not reading something different? Therefore, for the sake of Allah, the Almighty, do understand that the Shia believe in and apply in practice the only Holy Qur'an for all Muslims and do not have a different one. We should all stick to the Only Qur'an we all have and put aside the devilish propaganda of lies against the Shia of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) for indeed we shall all account before Allah, the Most High for our deeds.

The Shia sect surely is built on the belief that Allah, the Almighty divinely instructed the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to will to the Muslim Ummah that after him, they should all stick to the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) as in the widely narrated Hadith of "Thaqalain". Therefore, for a sect that is holding firm to the divine will of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in relation to the Hadith of Thaqalain: The Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-

Bait (AS): how possible can they be suspected of not believing in one of the pillars of their sect? Indeed, to the Shia Islamic faith, the relationship between the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is like that of Oxygen and Hydrogen for the existence of water. Therefore, the absence of any one of the Thaqalain (the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS)) means the absence of the Shia Sect.

Also in the Sciences of Jurisprudence, the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah have a rule known as: the Rule of Subjecting Hadith to the Holy Qur'an. In a case where we have the Hadith contradicting the Holy Qur'an or Hadith contradicting another Hadith, Shia gives more preference to the Holy Qur'an more than their Ahlul-Sunnah Brothers. This is because, the Ahlul-Sunnah Scholars, for example, permit Hadith to cancel the verse of the Holy Qur'an even if the narrator of the Hadith is one person.

Like the case that took place between the Caliph Abubakar and Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) (daughter of the Holy Prophet (SAW)) when he confiscated from her the (Fadak) dates farm given to her by the Holy Prophet (SAW) during his life time and also denied her the right of inheritance from her father with the excuse that he heard from the Holy Prophet (SAW) that: "they the Prophets are not inherited, what they leave behind is but sadaqah".⁹² Sayyidah Fatimah (AS) protested using the Holy Qur'an and said: "Oh, son of Abu Quhafah, is it in the Book of Allah (Qur'an) that you inherit your father and I should not inherit my father? Indeed, you brought something that is fabrication".⁹³

92 Sahih Muslim vol. 2 Kitabul-Jihad

93 Nuomani Magribi fi Sharhi Akhbar Vol. 3

The Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) Scholars supported the Caliph and said that what he said was right and that the Qur'anic verse of inheritance was cancelled by the Hadith narrated by only one person (Abubakar). To the Shia Scholars, it is always compulsory to subject every Hadith to the Holy Qur'an, accept only one that conforms to it and reject the one that contradicts it. The 6th Imam, Ja'far Sadiq (AS) said: "The Holy Prophet (SAW) addressed the Ummah at Mina and said: Oh, people, what is brought to you from me, if it conforms with the Book of Allah, then I said it; and what contradicts the Book of Allah, I did not say it".⁹⁴ Therefore, how could the Shia be suspected of not believing in the Holy Qur'an while it is the first yardstick of their School of thought?

The representatives of the Shia at all times are their great scholars known as the "Marajie" (Jurists). They are the most knowledgeable in terms of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) Sect and its jurisprudence. They differentiate what is part of the Shia Sect and what is not part of it. They always give verdicts against any idea of addition or omission in the Holy Qur'an.

The following are just a few examples of the views of the Shia great scholars on the

Holy Qur'an:-

(1) The view of Sheikh Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Husain As-Sadooq. He said: "Our belief is that verily, the Holy Qur'an that Allah revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the one in the hands of people not less than that. The number of the chapters known is one hundred and fourteen (114). Then said: He who relates to us that we said more than this is a liar"⁹⁵.

94 Al-Kafi vol. 1

(2)The view of Allamah Hilly:- His answer to a question when he was asked: “What do you say about the Holy Qur'an, is it right that something has been omitted from it or added to it or changed its arrangement or not right at all?” He replied: “The right is that surely, no change, no delayance, no advancement in it, the fact is that no addition and no omission. We ask refuge from Allah, the Most High, from such beliefs; for surely such belief will lead to a doubt in the widely narrated miracle of the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW)⁹⁶.

(3)The view of Ayatullah Imam Khomeini (RA): He said: “Verily, looking at the commitment of Muslims in assembling the Book, protecting it, controlling it in terms of reading and writing, one will end at the falsehood of the claimed narrations. All that has been arrived at from the narrations are either, (I) weak and cannot be used as proof, or (ii) forged, with all signs of being forged, or (iii) Strange and surprising, or (IV) Somehow correct which needs wider explanation to eradicate the misunderstanding. Therefore, the claim of imbalance can only be seen in these areas, not in the real text of the Holy Qur'an. Details of all these needs a whole book to explain the history of the Holy Qur'an, the stages it passed through over the long centuries and ended up as that Mighty Book which is the very one in hand. No addition and no omission. The difference in the reading is a recent issue emanating from the individual strife without in anyway affecting the divine aspect that the Angel brought to the heart of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW)”⁹⁷.In fact, during my humble research on this topic:- ‘Authenticity of the Qur'an’, I discovered that there are some narrations though weak

95 Kitab E'tiqadatul-Imamiyah, Sharhu Al-Babu Hadi Ashara

96 A'jwibatul Masa-el: 121

97 Tahzibul-usul Vol. 2

from the books of traditions of both the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah indicating that the Holy Qur'an has some defect. Surprisingly, the number of such narrations in the Ahlul-Sunnah books is about ten times far more than that in the Shia Books.

Therefore, with the numerous narrations that I discovered on the alleged defects in the Holy Qur'an from the Ahlul-Sunnah Books, I then became of strong hope that the attacks and lies on the Shia would have stopped or at least the Ahlul-Sunnah scholars would have been more serious in giving answers to those attacking and lying against the Shia for the sake of justice, peace and unity. Unfortunately, I have not yet seen or heard anything serious of this nature from the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) Scholars. However, there is a wise saying that: "If you are thinking that the head of your fellow brother is only flesh or meat without bones in it, then touch yours; you will understand that, the head of your fellow brother too has bones in it".

Therefore, for the sake of better understanding among us as Muslims, I have no alternative other than to mention some few examples of the narrations from the Ahlul-Sunnah books indicating defects in the Holy Qur'an. Below are just a few examples:

(1) Omar Ibn Khattab, said: "Verily, Allah sent Muhammad (SAW) with the truth and revealed to him the book, part of which was revealed was the verse of stoning; we read it, understood it, the Messenger of Allah stoned and we also stoned after him, I fear that time will come that people will say that we don't have the verse of stoning in the Book of Allah and they will be lost for abandoning the obligation revealed by Allah, the Almighty. Stoning is

a punishment mentioned in the Book of Allah against any married person who commits adultery when proven or through the woman's confession and conception"⁹⁸.

(2)Ubay Ibn Ka'b asked Zirr ibn Hubaysh and said: "How many verses do you read Suratul-Ahzab (Qur'an: 33)?" He replied: "Seventy and a few verses". He said: "Never, I read it with the Messenger of Allah (SAW) and it is about the length of Suratul-Baqarah or more than that and in it is the verse of stoning".⁹⁹

(3)Huzaiifah said: "I read Suratul-Ahzab at the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and I forgot seventy verses from it of which I did not find it".¹⁰⁰

(4)Abu Musah Ash-ari said to some reciters of Basra: "Verily, we used to recite a Surah similar in length and intensity to the Suratul-Bara-ah which I forgot except for a single verse: If a son of Adam has two valleys of wealth he will demand for a third valley and nothing will fill the stomach of the son of Adam except the earth".¹⁰¹

(5)At-Tabarani and Al-Bayhaqi reported that two chapters of the Holy Qur'an were lost and they are: - (1) the first chapter: - "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, and the Most

98 Sahih Bukhari, vol. 8:28, Babul Rajm Hubla minal Zina : Sahih Bukhari Vol. 8 BK 82
Hadith No. 816

99 Musnad Ahmad bin Hambal vol. 5:132, Al-Itqan vol. 3:82, Tafsir Qurtabi vol. 14:113,
Durul-Manthur vol. 6:559 , Al-Mustadrak Hakim vol.4:359, Sunanul-Kubra vol. 8:211

100 Durul-Manthur vol.6:559

101 Sahih Muslim vol.2:726,1050 : Sahih Muslim BK 5 Hadith No. 2286

Merciful. We ask you for help and seek your forgiveness, and we praise you with all good and never disbelieve in you, we pull away and cut off with whoever sin against you”. (2) The second chapter: - “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, and the Most Merciful. Oh, Allah you alone do we worship and for you we pray and prostrate, and towards you we endeavour and haste. We seek Your Mercy and fear yourpunishment. Your punishment will surely be on the disbelievers”. These two chapters are recorded in the Mushaf of Ibn Abbas, Zaid Ibn Thabit, Ibn Mashood, Ubay Ibn K’ab and that Omar Ibn Khattab used to read them in his supplications (Qunut)¹⁰².

(6)Omar Ibn Khattab said: “Be careful not to be destroyed by leaving out the verse of stoning. By the one that my life is in His hands, if not because of fear that people will say Omar has added in the Book of Allah, I would have written it; the old man and the old lady if they adulterate, stone them decisively, deterrent punishment from Allah, and Allah the Most Mighty, the Most Wise. Indeed, we read it before”¹⁰³

(7)Laith Ibn Sa-ad, said: “Verily, Omar came to Zaid with the verse of stoning, and Zaid never wrote it for he was alone in this narration”¹⁰⁴

102 Manahil-Erfan vol. 1:257, Ruhul-Ma-ani vol. 1:25, Al-Itqan by Sayuti

103 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1:23,29,36,40 and 50. Al-Mustadrak Hakim vol. 4:359-360, Tabaqat Ibn Sa-ad vol 3:334 : Sunanu Darami vol. 2:179

104 Al-Itqan Vol. 3:206

(8)It was reported that Omar said to Abdul-Rahman Ibn Auf that: Don't you see in what was revealed to us; "Do strive like the way you strived before" and I don't see this verse? He said: "It was dropped among those dropped from the Holy Qur'an".¹⁰⁵

(9)Narrated from Ayisha: "verily Suratul Ahzab used to read two hundred verses during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and we could not get all except what we have now".¹⁰⁶

(10)Narrated from Ayisha: "The verse of stoning and breastfeeding ten times of a big person was revealed. It was under my bed. When the Holy Prophet (SAW) died, we were busy with his death and it got destroyed".¹⁰⁷

Dear reader, I don't have to comment on these narrations, I leave it to you to comment yourself on each of the narrations which are all from the Ahlul-Sunnah sources (Books) and not from the Shia Books though most of the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) might not even be aware of them. Indeed, these are just a few examples from the Ahlul-Sunnah own Books indicating that the Holy Qur'an has defects and for that matter not complete. Therefore if the Holy Quran in hand is not complete according to the Ahlul Sunnah own books then where is the complete Quran? And where is the justification for blaming and accusing the Shia

105 Al-Itqan vol.3:84,; Kanzul-Ummal vol. 2, Hadith No. 4741

106 Al-Itqan vol.3:82, Tafsir Qurtabi vol.14:113, Manahil-Irfan vol. 1:273, Durul Manthur vol.6:560

107 Al-Muhallah vol. 11:235, Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol.6:269, Sunanu Ibn Majah vol. 1:625, Al-Jamiu li Ahkamul-Quran 14:113

Muslims for an act that the Ahlul Sunnah are guiltier of? Oh, be honest to yourselves for the sake of peace and harmony!

However, what is very important is that, objectively, sincere leading Scholars of merit from both Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah have explained that these narrations and their types are rare cases and should not be given undue attention. They however, proved with all convincing evidences that the Holy Qur'an in our hands as Muslims is the very one revealed to the Holy Prophet (SAW) without any additions or omissions or any changes.

In fact, mentioning the above narrations is of great bitterness to me as a Muslim but I have no alternative than to do that in order to send some tapping signal to those attacking the Shia on this baseless and unIslamic propaganda. The Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) must fear Allah in dealing with one another and never to forget that we are all but the Muslim Ummah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Unity however, is a focal point in the religion of Islam. We must therefore all encourage it for peaceful co-existence and understand that what brings us together in Islam is by far greater than what divides us. May Allah, the most Merciful for the sake of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) have mercy on us all, Amen!

Shia and Taqiyah

Taqiyah from the Shia point of view is defined by their great Islamic Scholars from the Book: (Draasa'at fil firaq wal Aqa-id) as “an act of hiding inner feelings (reality) for fear of destructive effect and managing with an enemy, but with the heart in complete rejection and dislike while waiting for disappearance of the obstacle”.

Also Sheikh Al-Mufeed in his Book: (Awa-elul Maqalaat) stated that, Taqiyah means: “Hiding the real truth and not exposing the belief in it to avoid the damaging effect of opponents in issues relating to the material world (Dunya) and the religion”. From the general Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) view, they see Taqiyah as an unIslamic act equal to hypocrisy, imitating blindly this idea from their Sheikh, Ibn Taimiyah who said: - “Verily, Taqiyah is nothing but lies and hypocrisy”.¹⁰⁸

However, from the real Islamic point of view, Taqiyah is part and parcel of the religion of Islam since it (Islam) is a complete way of life; it must have solution to every situation be it normal, abnormal or unusual. Just like a case where a person gets into a predicament and has to choose between death and some faith related issues; Islam provides practical principles from the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) called Taqiyah as solution. Surprisingly enough, our Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) Brothers who are highly against the faith in Taqiyah have their Books of tradition full of evidences in favour of it through the Tafsir of some verses of the Holy Qur'an.

108 Minhajul Sunnah, Vol. 1

Below are some evidences giving direct Islamic value to Taqiyah from the Ahlul-Sunnah's own Books:-

(1) In explaining the verse of the Holy Qur'an (Nahl:16:106): *“He who disbelieves in Allah after his having believed, **not he who is compelled while his heart is at rest on account of faith**, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief on these is the wrath of Allah, and they shall have a grievous chastisement”*.

This verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in relation to the establishment of Taqiyah when the disbelieving Quraish with intense torture compelled a number of the first Muslims to choose between disbelieving and death. They killed whoever resisted in a very barbaric way like the father and mother of Ammar Ibn Yaasir who resisted and insisted on their Islamic faith. Ammar Ibn Yaasir however escaped being killed by responding to their harsh demand in declaring disbelief by his tongue while his heart was full of faith. Some of the people who witnessed the declaration of disbelief from Ammar Ibn Yasir at the hands of the disbelievers quickly ran to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and reported the incident and hastily concluded that Ammar had become a disbeliever because he refused to be killed and gave the enemies what they needed by rejecting Islam. The Holy Prophet (SAW) then replied to them and said: “Never, verily, Ammar Ibn Yasir is full of faith from his head to his feet”. Then Ammar arrived to the Holy Prophet (SAW) weeping, and the Holy Prophet (SAW) used his holy hands and wiped off tears from his face and said to him: “What is following you?” He said: “Oh Prophet of Allah, the devil, because I was in their custody never released me until I denounced you and praised their idols”. The Holy Prophet (SAW)

asked him: “How was your heart?” He said: “At rest with faith”. Then the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW) said to him: “If they repeat to you, repeat to them”.¹⁰⁹

(2) Explaining the following verses of the Holy Qur'an (Āal-Imran:3:28): “*Let not the believers take the unbelievers for friends rather than believers; and whoever does this, he shall have nothing of Allah, except that you should guard yourselves against them; and Allah makes you cautious of (retribution from) Himself; and to Allah is the eventual return*”.

It is reported that Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatam through Awfi, from Ibn Abbas said: “In this blessed verse: Taqiyah is by the tongue. Whoever is compelled to speak on an issue that implies disobedience to Allah, then he spoke over it in fear of people and his heart is full of faith. This will verily be not detrimental for him, since taqiyah is in fact with the tongue”.¹¹⁰

(3) Fakhruddeen Ar-Razi, explains with regards to the above verse (3:28): “*except that you should guard yourself against them*”, it means to fear for the destruction of life or other things, then you should guard yourself against them by showing love without believing in it; and this is the literal implication of the word of which all people of knowledge agreed upon.¹¹¹

109 Tafsir Shubbar,: Tabaqat Ibn Sa-ad : Sunanul- Baihaqi : Mustadrak Al-Hakim vol.. 2:357, Sunanul Ibn Majah vol. 1:150, Babu 11 : Tafsir Razi vol. 20:121, : Majma-ul Bayan vol. 3:388 : Tafsir Kashshaf vol. 2:430

110 Durul Manthur by Sayuti

111 Ahkamul-Qur'an by Fakhruddeen Ar-Razi Vol. 2

(4)Al-Hakim recorded the same explanation in his Mustadrak, Al-Baihaqi in his Sunnan through Atāu that Ibn Abbas said with regards to the verse (3:28): “*except that you should guard yourself against them*”: Taqiyah is speaking with the tongue but the heart is full with faith.

(5) Abd Ibn Hamid reported from Al-Hassan that he said: “Taqiyah is permissible till the Day of Resurrection”.¹¹²

(6)Abd Ibn Abi Raja, said that he used to read thus: “.....except that you should guard yourself against them with Taqiyah”.¹¹³

(7)Ibn Sa-ad reported from Ibn Sirin that he said: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) met Ammar Ibn Yasir as he was crying. He wiped out his tears saying: The disbelievers took you and plunged you into water, and you said so and so? (Then no problem), if they return to it you can tell them the same.”¹¹⁴

(8)Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Munzir and Ibn Abi Hatam, reported from Mujahid that he said: “This verse was revealed with regards to some people from Mecca who believed in Allah”. Then same Sahaba at Madina wrote a letter to them telling them: “Migrate to us for we don’t see you as part of us until you migrate to us”. So they went out, starting their journey to Medina. On the way, they were caught by some Quraish who punished them,

112 Durul-Manthur by Sayuti Vol. 2

113 Durul-Manthur by Sayuti Vol. 2

114 Tabaqaatil-Kubra by Ibn Sa-ad.

compelling them to disbelieve. Then regarding them this verse was revealed: “.....*except those that are compelled and their hearts steadfast with faith*”.¹¹⁵

(9) In Sahih Bukhari Vol. 7, Kitabul-Adab, Babul Mudarah ma-al Naas, reported that Abu Darda said: “We show our teeth before some people while our hearts are cursing them”.

(10) Imam Gazali writes in his book that: “to prevent shedding the blood of a Muslim is obligatory. Whatever is the purpose for shedding the blood of a Muslim hiding himself from the oppressor, and then to lie about him is obligatory”.¹¹⁶

From the above few examples and several other references not yet mentioned, one will understand that taqiyah is islamically permissible until the Day of Resurrection. It is clear that taqiyah has Islamic legitimacy and value contrary to the baseless claims of some brothers from the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) sect who blindly imitate Ibn Taimiyah that taqiyah is a lie and hypocrisy.

Taqiyah is never hypocrisy but rather, the direct opposite of it. Technically, however, the two can be defined from the Holy Quran’s point of view:-

(1) Hypocrisy is the act of hiding disbelief and enmity while displaying faith and love. From the Holy Qur'an (2:14): “*And when they meet those who believe, they say: We believe; and when they are alone with their Shaitans, they say: surely we are with you, we were only mocking*”. This means outwardly faithful and inwardly disbelief; this is equal to hypocrisy.

115 Durul-Manthur vol. 2:178

116 Ihya-al Ulum vol. 3:119

(2) Taqiyah is displaying disbelief and enmity whiles hiding faith and love. From the Holy Qur'an (40:28): *“And a believing man of Pharaoh’s people who hide his faith said: What! Will you kill a man because he says: My Lord is Allah”*? This means outwardly showing disbelief and inwardly faith; this is equal to taqiyah.

Similar is the case of the wife of Pharaoh, who lived with the disbelieving people by using taqiyah and Allah, the Almighty even mentioned her with merit in the Holy Qur'an (Tahreem:66: 11) for applying Taqiyah.

Nevertheless, there is no reason whatsoever for the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) to harshly attack the Shia because of their faith in Taqiyah, which they also have in their own books as permissible. The Shia never added anything extra except that due to the then harsh political situations they faced in history at the hands of some of the Caliphs from the Umayyad and Abbasiyah dynasties, they became known for the application of taqiyah for safety. For those days, it was even enough to say, this person is a Shia of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) and he would be killed in a very cruel manner at the hands of the enemies of the Ahlul-Bait (AS). Therefore, taqiyah was the only Islamic safe ground for the Shia to live with.

However, the Ahlul-Sunnah never faced such brutalities in the hands of the tyrant Caliphs because they were mostly their agents in total conformity with them. So it is possible for them to reject taqiyah and be against the Shia for accepting it in theory and in practice. Though, the Ahlul-Sunnah with all the references of records of evidences of taqiyah in their Books, still handle the issue of taqiyah as if it was a Shia initiative, thanks to Allah, the Almighty for it being a natural instinct in practical life, they apply taqiyah from the angle that they don't even know.

Let me quote my Brother, Dr. Tijani Assamawi from his Book: (TO BE WITH THE TRUTHFUL), regarding an interesting event that took place between him and Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) Scholar. He wrote: “I avail myself of this opportunity to cite a nice story I personally experienced with one of the Sunni Scholars. It coincided that we met on board an airplane, while we were among those invited to attend an Islamic Conference in Britain. We exchanged our view points about the Shia and Sunnah for nearly two hours. He was one of the Callers to Unity, and I admired him. But I was displeased when he said that; the Shia are asked now to abandon some of the beliefs that create disagreement among the Muslims, and causing them to defame and attack each other. When I asked him: Like what? He immediately replied: like the Mut’ah (temporary marriage) and taqiyah. I tried my best to convince him that mut’ah being a legitimate and legal kind of marriage, and taqiyah being a permission from Allah, but he insisted on his opinion, never be persuaded by all the evidences I cited for him. He claimed that whatever I cited and mentioned was correct and true, but it should be abandoned for the sake of a higher and more significant convenience, being unity of Muslims. I found his logic to be strange which is calling to abandon the precept and rules of Allah for the sake of unity of Muslims. In a courteous way, I said to him: “Had the unity of Muslims mainly depended on this thing, I would have been the first to respond and submit”.

We debarked in London airport, and I was walking behind him. As we approached the airport Policemen, we were questioned about the reason of travelling to Britain. He answered by claiming that he came for treatment, and I claimed that the reason of my coming was to visit some of my friends. We passed safely and without any delay, towards the hall of bags delivery. There I whispered in his ear: Have you noticed how taqiyah is valid and possible at all times? He said “How?” I said: Because we lied to the Police, I, through claiming to have

come to visit my friends, and you too claiming to have come for treatment, while we actually came for participating in the conference. He smiled, while recognising that he told a lie to my hearing, saying: “Don’t the Islamic conferences have remedy for our souls?” I laughed saying: and don’t they have a visit to our brethren!”¹¹⁷

So from the above story, one can see it clear that taqiyah is neither a lie nor hypocrisy as presumed by our Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) Brothers, it is a natural instinct for defence and peaceful management of affairs with opponents in terms of perceived danger.

Indeed, in practical life, there are several instances where even leading Muslim Scholars who were against taqiyah were compelled in difficult situations to apply it like the case of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. Ahmad Ibn Ubay Yaqub, recorded in his book about the testing moment passed through by Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal during the days of the controversial topic of whether the Holy Qur'an was created or not in the history of Muslims by the then Caliph, Al-Mu'tasim. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was against the view that the Holy Qur'an was created and for that matter he was summoned by the Caliph and severely whipped for his contrary view. After being severely beaten, one Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim, on behalf of the Caliph gave the following interview to Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal: “What do you say about the creation of the Qur'an?” He said: “I am a man who learnt knowledge but did not learn this”. Then Ishaq said to him: “Your knowledge, was it from Angel or men?” The Imam said: “I learnt it from men”. Then Ishaq said: “You learnt it by stages?” he said: “Yes”. Then Ishaq said to him again, “is there something yet for you to know?” He said “Yes”. Then Ishaq said to him: “This is what is left for you to know and the leader of the believers (Caliph Mu'tasim) has taught you. Then Imam Ahmad said: “Verily, I say exactly the saying of the leader of the

117 To be with the Truthful by Dr. Tijani As-Samawi pp 253-254

believers (Caliph). Then Ishaq said: “In the creation of the Qur'an?” Imam Ahmad said, in the creation of the Qur'an, be witness to it! Then he was released and sent back to his house”.¹¹⁸

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, was one of those who rejected taqiyyah saying it is only permissible when dealing with the disbelievers, but not with the Muslims; but when faced with harsh and severe beatings by Muslims (the Caliph) he as in the story above, applied taqiyyah by accepting the view of the Caliph only on his tongue and gained back his freedom. Therefore, there is vast difference between a natural situation and un-natural situation because in the former, taqiyyah is easily rejected by simply saying it is not Islamic. But in the latter situation, a strong opponent of taqiyyah ends in it for it is a natural course.

It is recorded by Ibn Taimiyah that; Abi Al-Hayaj Al-Asadi narrated that Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib (AS) said to him: “Won't I send you with what the Holy Prophet (SAW) sent me with; that is, not to allow any grave raised except that I level it down or an idol obliterated”.¹¹⁹

From this narration, the Ahlul-Sunnah walJamah (Wahabiyah sect) sees it forbidden (haram) in Islam to build any grave and for that matter any grave found built anywhere is crushed and the building destroyed. To the Wahabiyah Sect, there is no compromise whatsoever to any grave on this matter since the message in the narration is general to all graves. This is indeed strictly the view of the Wahabiyah Sect!

118 Tarikh Al-Yaqubi vol. 3:198 by Ahmad bin Abi Yaqub

119 Minhajul-Sunnah by Ibn Taymiyyah vol. 1:333

However, the grave of our beloved Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) which was built for centuries and is within their reach is seen untouched. The surprising question is why is the built grave of the Holy Prophet (SAW) left untouched by the Wahabiyah Muslims? The answer is nothing but TAQIYAH. They are in reality, implementing taqiyah on the Muslim Ummah for they know very well that if they should destroy the grave of the beloved Holy Prophet (SAW), Muslims world over will revolt against them harshly. So therefore, they resorted to taqiyah by leaving that built grave intact in the Great Mosque of the Holy Prophet (SAW) though they are against it. So taqiyah is not only for the Shia and is evident that the Wahabiyah Muslims who are the most aggressive against the Shia too do taqiyah practically though they denounce it in theory.

Types of Taqiyah

Taqiyah by the Islamic legislation is divided into five:

- (1) **Obligatory (Wajib)** Taqiyah: - Is when life is to be saved without sin and to be free from an oppressor without affecting the religion.
- (2) **Recommended (Mustahab)** Taqiyah: - Is for the sake of propagating the religion among people.
- (3) **Disliked (Makruh)** Taqiyah: - Is when there is no harm to the person and the religion.
- (4) **Forbidden (Haram)** Taqiyah: - If the religion is in danger then it becomes obligatory to defend it using all available possible means. Therefore, no taqiyah in such a situation, just like the case of Imam Husain (AS) in Karbala when the religion was in danger, he never surrendered to Yazid Ibn Ma-āwiyah.
- (5) **Optional (Mubah)** Taqiyah: - That is when there is no difference between doing an act and leaving it.

The Shia practice Taqiyah in obedience to the teachings of the Holy and Infallible Imams of the Prophet's (SAW) household. The Holy infallible Imams taught and applied Taqiyyah to protect themselves and their followers against all kinds of danger and destruction from tyrants. The first Imam, Amirul-Muminnen Ali (AS) is reported to have said: "Taqiyah is one of the best deeds of the believer; with it he protects himself and fellow brothers from the evil people".¹²⁰

Also, Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (AS), the 5th Imam said: "Taqiyah is of my religion and the religion of my fathers".¹²¹ Therefore to the Shia, whoever does not apply taqiyah has no Islam.

Dear Reader, to this stage, I hope the concept of taqiyah is better understood and that it is not a Shia initiative, rather a natural instinct endorsed by Islam which is being practised by all social beings in life at large.

120 Tafsirul Imam Hassan Askari :320

121 Usul-Kafi 2:219, Babu Taqiyyah

Shia and Mut'ah (Temporary Marriage)

Mut'ah marriage is one of the most controversial issues between the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) and needs some clarifications. Marriage commonly referred to in Islam as "Nikah" literally means "Sexual intercourse". It is a legal contract between a man and a woman by which sexual intercourse between them becomes legitimate in the sight of Allah, the Almighty and the society.

In Islam, marriage is of two types:-

- (a) Permanent Marriage: (An-Nisa-a: 4:3) – *“then marry such women that as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them) then (marry) only one”*.
- (b) Temporary Marriage (Mut'ah) – (An-Nisa-a: 4:24) – *“so those of them (women) who you enjoy (mut'ah) give to them their appointed wages (dowries) as a fix reward; and it shall not be a sin on you, in whatever you mutually agree after the fixed reward, verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise”*.

The permanent marriage however is the first Islamic legislation in the institution of marriage. It is called permanent because it has no time limit unlike the case of the temporary marriage which has time limit.

The second Islamic legislative marriage is the temporary marriage which is instituted to protect the society from falling into fornication and adultery. This is done only when it becomes difficult to contract the permanent marriage for any tangible reason or being under exceptional situation in life that demands having a temporary marital partner. Indeed (An-

Nisa-a 4:24) was revealed to encourage Muslims to practice temporary marriage. From the book of traditions, many credible narrators of hadith clearly mention that this verse (An-Nisa-a 4:24) was revealed on Temporary Marriage,¹²²

The word “Mut’ah” is an Arabic word meaning enjoyment and pleasure. It was the word commonly used for temporary marriage during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Sahaba after him.

Temporarily marriage as well as the permanent marriage serves as Islamic channels for directing man’s sexual desire in a lawful way, protecting family roots and maintaining morals, the fibre of the society.

The Ahlul-Sunnah and the Shia altogether agree on the legitimacy of Mut’ah marriage and that it has been prescribed by Allah, the Almighty in the Holy Qur’an (4:24) – *“so those of them (women) whom you enjoy (mut’ah) give to them the appointed wages (dowries) as a fixed reward; and it shall not be a sin on you, in whatever you mutually agree after the fixed reward, verily, Allah is all-Knowing, All-Wise”*.

They (the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah) also confirmed that the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW) has permitted this kind of marriage throughout his life time and the Sahaba practised it until Omar prohibited it during the last phase of his Caliphate.

122 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 4:436 : Tafsir Tabarani vol. 5:9 : Sunal Kabir vol. 7:205 by Al-Baihaqi : Tafsir Kashshaf vol. 1:360 : Tafsir Jamiu Ahkamul-Quran vol. 5:13 : Mafatihul-Gaib vol. 3:267 by Fakhruddeen Ar-Razi

However, the only disagreement between the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah with regards to the Mut'ah is whether it was abolished or not. The Ahlul-Sunnah believes that it was abolished by the Sunnah after it being permitted by the Holy Qur'an. The Shia too says since the halal of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is halal and his haram is haram to the day of resurrection, mut'ah therefore remains permissible to the end of time.

Narrations confirming the Legitimacy of Mut'ah in Islam

(1)Imran bin Haseen, said: “The verse of mut'ah was revealed in the Book of Allah and we practised it with the Messenger of Allah (SAW); no verse was revealed to cancel it and the Holy Prophet (SAW) did not forbid it until he died then a man said of his own view what he wanted”.¹²³

(2)Fakhruddeen Razi recorded in his Tafsir of the verse of mut'ah that Imran Ibn Haseen said: “The verse mut'ah was revealed in the Book of Allah, the most High, no verse was revealed to cancel it, the Holy Prophet (SAW) instructed us to do it and we did enjoy the mut'ah and he died but never stopped us from doing it, then a man said what he wanted to say of his view.”¹²⁴

(3)Abdul-Rahman Ibn Abi Abdullah said: “I heard Abu Hanifah asking Aba Abdullah (Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS)) on mut'ah. Then Abu Abdullah said: “out of which of the two is your question?” He said: “I ask you on mut'ah of Hajj then tell me on mut'ah of women

123 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol.4:426 : Sahih Bukhari, Kitabu Tafsir vol. 2:168, vol. 6:33 : Sahih Muslim vol. 4:48, : Sunanu Nasai vol. 5:155

124 Tafsir Razi Vol 10:49-50 : Durul-Manthur vol. 2:140

(temporary marriage), is it true?” He said: “Glory is to Allah! Don’t you read the Book of Allah”; ‘so those of them (women) whom you enjoy (mut’ah) give to them their appointed wages (dowries) as a fixed reward’. Then Abu Hanifa said: “By Allah, as if I had never read the verse”.¹²⁵

Contradictory narrations in Forbidding Mut’ah

Most of the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) Scholars used the following contradictory and single person narrated Hadith as evidence for the abolishing of mut’ah: -

(1)Ibn Abbas reported that Imam Ali (AS) said: “Verily, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) prohibited mut’ah and the meat of domestic donkeys at the time of khaybar”.¹²⁶

(2)Eyas Ibn Salmah narrated that his father said: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) eased up mut’ah thrice in the year of Awtas then forbid it”.¹²⁷

(3)Reported by Abdul-Malik Ibn Rabi-u Ibn Sabre Al-Jahni from his father that his grandfather, said: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) ordered us to do mut’ah in the year of Fathi when we entered Mecca and then prohibited it before we left Mecca”.¹²⁸

125 Wa saa-il Shia vol. 14:437

126 Sahih Bukhari vol. 7:24 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 5 BK 59 Hadith No. 527 : Sahih Muslim BK 8 Hadith No. 3263 pp 813

127 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:1023 : Sahih Muslim BK 8 Hadith No. 3261

128 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:1025

These narrations are contradictory to one another in relation to the time and place of the prohibition. In the first Hadith, the prohibition was at Khyabar, the second at Awtas and the third at Mecca. Then the rule of contradiction in the science of jurisprudence makes them valueless and cannot be used for any evidence. Also, as narrations from single individual cannot cancel the verdict of the Holy Qur'an.

Evidences Proving the Prohibition of Mut'ah during the time of Omar

(1)As a matter of fact, Omar never attributed the prohibition of mut'ah to the Holy Prophet (SAW) but rather to himself, whereby, he said: "Two mut'ah were commonly practised during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW), **I forbid them and I will punish whoever practised them, the mut'ah of Hajj and the mut'ah of women**".¹²⁹

(2)The statement of Imam Ali (AS) during his Caliphate, that: "Had it not been for the prohibition of Omar to mut'ah no one would have fornicated except a miserable person".¹³⁰

(3)The statement of Abdullah Ibn Abbas: "Mut'ah was a Rahmah (Mercy) from Allah to His servants. Had it not been for prohibition of Omar, no one would have fornicated except a miserable person".¹³¹

129 Tafsir Kabir by Fakhruddeen Razi on the tafsir of verse (4:42) : Mafatihul-Gaib by Fakhruddeen Razi vol. 10:52-53

130 Tafsir Tabari vol. 5:9, Durul-Manthur vol.2:140, : Tafsir Razi vol. 10:50

131 Tafsir Qurtabi vol. 5:130

(4) Abu Zubair was reported to have said: “I heard Jabir Ibn Abdullah saying: We used to do mut’ah with just a collection of dates and flour during the days of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Abubakar until Omar prohibited it in the case of Amru Ibn Harith”.¹³²

(5) Abu Nadrah said: “Ibn Abbas used to instruct for mut’ah and Ibn Zubair prohibits it and this was narrated to Jabir, he said: the event happened before me; we did mut’ah at the time of the Prophet (SAW), then when Omar stood up, he said: verily, Allah permits for His Messenger what He wants with what He wants, therefore complete your Hajj and Ummra, be firm to permanent marriage with women **for I will not accept to a man for a temporary marriage unless I stone him**”.¹³³

(6) Abdullah Ibn Omar (Son of the second Caliph) was asked on the mut’ah of Hajj, he said: “It is halal (permissible). Then the questioner said to him, verily your father prohibited it. He said: if you see that my father prohibited and the Holy Prophet (SAW) did it, do I have to follow the orders of my father or that of the Holy Prophet (SAW)? Then the man said: Definitely, the orders of the Holy Prophet (SAW)”.¹³⁴

What a surprising situation! Ahlul-Sunnah obeyed Omar in rejecting Mut’ah marriage and disobeyed him in performing mut’ah of hajj while his prohibition was on both the mut’ah of women and that of Hajj at the same time as clearly stated by him: “Two mut’ah were

132 Sahih Muslim Vol. 2; babu Nikah Mut’ah : Sahih Muslim BK 8 Hadith No. 3250

133 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:885 : Sahih Muslim BK 7 Hadith No. 2801

134 Sahih Tirmidhi vol. 1:157

commonly practiced during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW), I forbid them and I punish whoever may practice them, the mut'ah of Hajj and the mut'ah of women”.

However, there are some Scholars of the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) sect, upon all the evidences proving the existence of mut'ah islamically, they still insist and want to prove that the Quranic verse on mut'ah (4:24) was cancelled and no more applicable.

To defend their stand, they always refer to the Quranic verse (Muminoon23:5-7): *“And who guard their private parts, except before their (wives) or those whom their right hands possess, for they surely are not blameable. But whoever seeks to go beyond that, those are they that exceed the limits”*, saying that it cancelled the verse of mut'ah.

Indeed, any serious and sincere seeker of the truth will understand that erasing or changing a law normally takes place between two laws, the first existing law to be changed and the second or new law to take the place of the first. The relationship between the two enactment, is that, the law to be cancelled must exist before the enactment of the new law used to cancel it. Therefore, it is neither possible nor right to say that the first law erases the second law because the first law is existing when the second law is yet not in existence to be erased or cancelled.

Thus, the acclaimed verses (Muminoon:23: 5 -7) are Meccan verses whilst the mut'ah verses (Nisah: 4:24) are Medina verses. Meaning that the Meccan verses were revealed first to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Medina verses revealed second (later on). Therefore, how possible can the first verses revealed (Meccan verses) erase or cancel the later revealed verses (Medina verses)? It is not possible! The fact is that, the second law erases and replaces the existing earlier law. So technically, the said verses in Suratul Mu'minoon (Meccan) came

first before the mut'ah verse (Medina verse) hence cannot cancel its law. Therefore, the mut'ah marriage in the Holy Qur'an is firm and active.

With this humble presentation on the subject of Mut'ah in Islam, I hope that there will be no more room for accusing the Shia for saying that mut'ah is Islamic but optional and not obligatory. We Muslims must all understand that Islam is a source of mercy and solution to life in general and for that matter those that cannot go into permanent marriage for one reason or the other, since He, Allah created them with the natural sexual urge in them and with severe punishment for fornication and adultery, indeed need the mercy of Allah, the Creator hence the institution of Mut'ah (temporary marriage).

As clearly said by Imam Ali (AS): "Mut'ah is a unique mercy of Allah to His servants and that with its implementation, no one can move into fornication or adultery except a completely miserable and cursed person"

Therefore, mut'ah (temporary marriage) just like the permanent marriage is legislatively Islamic and rooted in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith. They however differ in some conditions and laws, the details can be traced for wider understanding from the Books of Islamic jurisprudence.

Weeping and Crying for the Dead

This is one of the topics of controversy between the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah of the Wahabiyah Sect. Some are of the view that it is forbidden Islamically to weep or cry for the dead person before or after burial. Therefore, it is of great importance to tackle such a topic to explain the Islamic point of view in the light of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

It is a natural instinct in man to shed tears involuntarily in a sudden loss of a dear or a beloved one. This instinct is inborn and natural in all human beings independent of any belief or tradition. Indeed, it is a reality that cannot be denied in seriousness.

In Islamic legislation, however, weeping and crying for the dead believer is not only seen as normal response to a natural call which is permissible in Islam, but also seen as a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and applied by the Sahaba and the believers after them.

To justify the above statement, read the following instances where the Holy Prophet (SAW) wept and cried for his beloved ones in Islam:

(1) The Holy Prophet (SAW) wept for the death of his son Ibrahim (AS) saying: **“The eyes shed tears, the heart become sad,** we do not say except what our Lord is pleased with, and verily, Oh Ibrahim we are indeed sad for you”.¹³⁵

135 Sahih Muslim vol. 4:1808 Kitab Fada-il : Sunanu Abi Dawud vol. 3:193 Kitab Jana-iz Bukan alal Maiyit : Sunanu ibn Majah vol. 1:507 Kitab Jana-iz Babu 53 Hadith No. 1589 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 BK 23 Hadith No. 390

(2)When Ibrahim (AS), the son of the Holy Prophet (SAW) was on the laps of the Holy Prophet (SAW) just about to die, **tears were falling from His eyes**, then Abdul-Rahman Ibn Awf, said to the Prophet (SAW): “Didn’t you forbid crying for the dead?” The Prophet (SAW) replied, saying: “No, rather I forbid on the two stupid and foolish voices in calamity, scratching of faces, tearing of pockets, resonance of the devil (Shaitan) and the voice away from the melody of amusement. **But this is a mercy, and he who does not give mercy, shall not receive mercy**”.¹³⁶

(3)When Tahir (AS), the son of the Holy Prophet (SAW) died, **the Holy Prophet (SAW) wept and said**: “Verily, the eyes shed tears, the tears are uncontrollable, the heart is sad, and we do not disobey Allah, the Almighty”.¹³⁷

(4)When Hamza, the Uncle of the Holy Prophet (SAW) achieved martyrdom, Safiya Bint Abdul-Mutalib came out calling, oh Hamza, and some Ansar were stopping her, then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “leave her”, and she sat by the Holy Prophet (SAW) and whenever she cried, **the Holy Prophet (SAW) cried too and Fatimah (AS) was crying too** and then he said: “I would never ever be affected like your effect to me”.¹³⁸

(5)The Holy Prophet (SAW) wept and cried over the death of his uncle Hamza and encouraged Muslims to cry over him.

136 Siratul- Halabiyah Vol. 3:348

137 Maj-maal Zawa-id by Haythami Vol. 3:8

138 Imta-ul Muqrizi :154

Ibn Sa-ad said: “When the Holy Prophet (SAW) heard the cry of Ansars over their dead ones after the battle of Uhud, his eyes shed tears and he cried saying: “But, Hamza has no one to cry for him”. Then Sa-ad Ibn Ma-aaz heard him; return to the ladies of Bani Abdul-Ash-hal then led and prayed for them. From then no lady from the Ansar cried over any dead except that she had to start crying for Hamza then to her dead person.¹³⁹

(6)The Holy Prophet (SAW) was announcing the death of Ja’far, Zaid Ibn Harith and Abdullah Ibn Rawahad and **his eyes were shedding tears.**¹⁴⁰

(7)When Ja’far and his companions achieved martyrdom in the battle field, the Holy Prophet (SAW) entered his house and called for the children of Ja’far. **He kissed them and his eyes shed tears.** Then the wife of Ja’far (Asmau) said: “What is making you cry, have you heard something about Ja’far and his companions?” He said: “Yes, they were struck today”. Then Asmau said: “I cried out and gathered women”. Fatimah (AS) entered crying and saying: “Oh my uncle!” Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Indeed, for the type of Ja’far must a crying person cry”.¹⁴¹ .

139 Tabaqat Ibn Sa-ad Vol. 3:11, Musnad Ahmad Vol. 2:129 Hadith No. 4964, Siratu Ibn Hisham Vol. 3:99 : Tarikh Tabari vol. 2:211 : Majma-ul Zawa-id vol. 6:120

140 Sahih Bukhari: Kitabul-Manaqib fi Alamaat Nubuwa fil Islam, Sunanul Kubrah by Baihaqi Vol. 4:70 : Al-Bidaya wan Nihaya by Ibn Kathir vol. 4:280 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 4 BK 52 Hadith Nos. 55, 298

141 Al-Kamel fi Tarikh vol. 2:420, Al-Isti-aab vol. 1:313, Asadul-Gaabah vol. 1:241, Al-Isaabah vol. 2:238

(8)The Holy Prophet (SAW) visited the grave of his mother **and wept over her** and caused those **around him to weep.**¹⁴²

(9)The Holy Prophet (SAW) was kissing Othman Ibn Maz-oun when he was dead and **tears were running over his cheek.**¹⁴³

(10)The Holy Prophet (SAW) was crying over a dead son of his ladies and Ibadah Ibn Samit said to him: “What is this oh Messenger of Allah?” Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “It is the mercy that Allah kept in the sons of Adam and truly Allah is merciful only to His servants who are merciful.”¹⁴⁴

(11)Sayyidah Fatimatu Zahra (AS) (daughter of the Holy Prophet (SAW)) at the death of her father, **cried over and again saying:** “Oh my father who got closer to his Lord, Oh my father who answered the call of his Lord, Oh father whose death Jibraeel announced, Oh my father whose return is to the highest paradise.”¹⁴⁵

142 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:671, Kitab Jana-iz Babu Ziyaratu Quboor Hadith 3234 Sunanu Nasa-I vol.4:90 , Kitab Jana-iz , : Sunanu Ibn Majah vol. 1:501, Kitab Jana-iz Hadith No. 1572

143 Sunanu Abi Dawud vol. 2:63 : Sunanu Abi Dawud BK 14, No. 3157: Sunanu Ibn Majah vol.1:445 : Sunanu Ibn Majah vol. 2 Chapter 7 No. 1456

144 Sunanu Abi Dawud vol. 2:58, Sunanu Ibn Majah vol. 1:481 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 BK 23 No. 373

145Sahih Bukhari: Babu Marda Nabi wa Wafatihi, Musnad Abi Dawud vol. 2:197, Sunanu Nasa-i vol. 4:13, Mustadrak Al-Hakim vol. 3:163, Tarikh Khatib vol. 6:262 : Sahih

(12) Sayyidah Fatimah Zahra (AS) stood at the grave of her father (the Messenger of Allah(AS)), collected some soil of the grave and threw it over her face, **cried and wept**, and recited a poem saying: “What is it to someone who smelled the soil of Ahmadi. Verily, that he will not smell disaster forever. Misfortune befell me, had it been directed to the Day it would have changed to Night”.¹⁴⁶

(13) On the day of Uhud, the Aunt of Jabir Ibn Abdullah came crying over her dead brother, Abdullah Ibn Amru. Jabir said: “**I was then crying** when some of the people were stopping me and the Holy Prophet (SAW) did not stop me from crying. But rather said to the people; **leave him to cry, do not stop him**. By Allah, the Angels shadow him with their wings until you bury him (the dead).¹⁴⁷

(14) The Holy Prophet (SAW) cried during the sickness of Sa-ad Ibn Ubadah; Abdulai Ibn Omar said: “Sa-ad Ibn Abdullah complained to him, when the Holy Prophet (SAW) visited him with Abdul-Rahman Ibn Awf, Sa-ad Ibn Abi Wikaas, and Abdullah Ibn Mas-oud. When they entered, they found him fainted, then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Is he dead?” they replied: “No, oh Messenger of Allah!” Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) **cried and when those around him saw him cry, they also cried**. Then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Don’t you hear that, surely, Allah does not punish for shedding tears, or for sadness of the heart, but He punishes or has mercy for this pointing to his tongue”.¹⁴⁸

Bukhari vol. 5 BK 59 No. 739

146 Al-Ghadir vol. 5:147

147 Al-Ghadir vol. 3:156-167 : Al-Isti-ab vol. 1:368

(15)Ibn Abbas said: “When Zainab, the daughter of the Holy Prophet (SAW) died, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Add her to our blessed ones”, Othman Ibn Maz-oun, then the ladies cried out and Omar was whipping them, then the Holy Prophet (SAW) held his hand and said to him be gentle Oh, Omar **allow them to cry**. But be careful of the croak of the Satan (devil)”. The Holy Prophet (SAW) sat by the edge of the grave, Fatimah (AS) by his side crying and the Holy Prophet (SAW) wiping her eyes with his dress as mercy for her.¹⁴⁹

However, the source of controversy regarding weeping and crying over the dead believer is the narration attributed to Omar Ibn Khatab and his son Abdulah IbnOmar that says that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “Verily, the dead is punish for the crying of his relations over him”.¹⁵⁰

Indeed, this Hadith contradicts the practical life of Omar himself in several instances with regards to crying over the dead. Below are just a few examples where Omar himself cried over the dead persons:

(1)When the news about the death of Nu'man Ibn Maqran Al-Mazni came, Omar sat on the pulpit in announcing about the death, kept his hands on his head and was crying.¹⁵¹

148 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:636 Kitabu Jana-iz Babu 6 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 BK 23 No. 391

149 Musnad Ahmad vol. 1:235, Mustadrak Hakim vol. 1:191

150 Imam Nawawi fi Sharhi Sahih Muslim vol. 6:228 Kitabu Jana-iz Jāmiul-Usul vol. 11:97.

151 Al-Isti-aab fi Tarjumati Nu'man vol.1:297; Al-aqdul Fareed by Ibn Abd Rabbihi Al-Andulisi Volume. 3

(2)Omar cried severely with Abubakar over the death of Sa-ad Ibn Ma-aan to the extent that, Aisha said: “By the one that the life of Prophet Muhammed (SAW) is in His hands, I could not differentiate between the crying of Abubakar and that of Omar whiles I was in my room”.¹⁵²

(3)Omar cried over the death of his brother Zaid Ibn Khatab.¹⁵³

The instances that Omar wept and cried over the dead persons are many, however, they are but signals pointing to the fact that, the Hadith supposed to be narrated by him and his son if even correct, has a different implication. It contradicts the Holy Qur'an that says:-

- (1) Qur'an (Al-Fatr: 35:18): *“And a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another”.*
- (2) Qur'an (An-Najmi53: 38):*”That no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another”.*
- (3) Qur'an (An-Najmi: 53: 39): *“And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for”.*
- (4) Qur'an (Zilzalah: 99:7 – 8): *“So, he who has done an atom’s weight of good shall see it* and he who has done an atom’s weight of evil shall see it”.*
- (5) Qur'an (Taha: 20:15): *“So that every soul may be rewarded as it strives”.*

Therefore, why should a dead person be punished for the crying done by someone else over his death?However, the narration attributed to Omar and his son, Abdullah against crying over the dead, contradicts not only the teaching of the Holy Qur'an but also the general view point of the Sahaba too.

(1)The view of Aisha on crying over the dead believer:-

152 Tarikh Tabari vol. 2:253

153 Al-Aqdul Fareed vol 3:235.

A) In records, when Omar gained consciousness from a state that look like death, he said: “Oh Suhaib, were you crying over me, when the Holy Prophet (SAW) had said: ‘Verily, the dead will surely be punished for the crying over his death by his relatives’”. Afterwards, when Omar finally died, Ibn Abbas mentioned what Omar had said to Aisha that the Holy Prophet (SAW) had said: “Verily, the dead will surely be punished for the crying over his death by his relatives”. Aisha then said: “May Allah have mercy on Omar; that by Allah, the Holy Prophet (SAW) never said so but rather said: ‘Verily, Allah increases **punishment to the disbeliever** for the crying of his relatives over his death’”. Aisha also added; “the Holy Qur'an is enough for you: *that no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another*”. Then Ibn Abbas at this stage said: “And that He, it is who makes (men) laugh and makes (them) weep” – (Qur'an 53:43).¹⁵⁴

B) In another narration, Ibn Abi Malekah said: “I mentioned the Hadith (narration of Omar and his son) to Aisha and she said: “By Allah, do not discuss this Hadith from the liars lying. But the hearing makes mistakes and in the Holy Qur'an you have what will heal you”; “*That a burdened soul can not bear the burden of another*”. But the Holy Prophet (SAW) rather said: “Verily, Allah will increase punishment **for the disbelievers** for their crying of their relations over their death”.¹⁵⁵

C) Umratu bint Abdul-Rahman said: “Aisha heard that Abdullah Ibn Omar saying: “Verily, the dead is punished for the crying of those alive over him”. She said: “May Allah forgive

154 Jāmiul Usul by Ibn Athir Vol. 11:92

155 Sahih Bukhari vol. 3:127 : Sahih Muslim , Babu mai-yit Yu-azzab bi Bukaa Ahluhu alaihi Hadith No. 928 : An-Nasa-i vol. 4 :18-19 fil Jana-iz

Abdul-Rahman, for he may not intend telling lies, but he has either forgotten or made a mistake. Surely, the Holy Prophet (SAW) was passing by a dead Jewish lady whereby her relatives were crying over her death. The Holy Prophet (SAW) then said: *“Verily, they are crying for her and she is surely punished in her grave”*.¹⁵⁶

D) Surely, Aisha was directly opposed to Omar with regards to crying for the dead. She even cried over the death of her father (Abubakar) contrary to the prohibition of Omar.

(1) It was narrated that Sa-eed Ibn Musaiyib, said: “When Abubakar died, Aisha stood up crying, then Omar moved to her door and asked her to stop but she refused to stop crying”. Then Omar said to Hisham Ibn Waleed: “enter and bring out for me the daughter of Abi Quhafah”, then Aisha on hearing this from Omar said to Hisham: “My house is forbidden to you”. Then Omar said to Hisham: “enter for I have permitted you”. Then Hisham entered and brought out Ummu Farwah, the sister of Abubakar to Omar. He canned her on hearing this event, the crying escalated.¹⁵⁷

(2) The view of Ibn Abbas is also clearly contrary to that of Omar with regards to crying over the dead Muslim as earlier on stated in his narration to Aisha of what Omar said and ended by saying that; “it is Allah who makes man laugh and makes him weep”.¹⁵⁸

(3) The view of Abu Hurayrah with regards to this, also contradicts that of Omar and his son (Abdullah). Abu Hurayrah narrated that: “A person died from the family of the Holy Prophet

156 Jami-ul Usul by Ibn Athir vol. 11:94

157 Tarikh Tabari vol. 2:349, : Hawadith Sanah 13

158 Jāmiul-Usul by Ibn Athir Vol. 11:92

(SAW) and the women came together crying over the dead person; then Omar stood up, stopping them and sending them away. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “leave them Oh, Omar for the eye sheds tears, the heart is affected and the promise is near”.¹⁵⁹

Therefore, from all that has been presented above, weeping and crying over the dead Muslim believer is accepted and recommended in Islam that is why we have its traces in the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW). In the Holy Qur'an, Prophets of Allah (AS) wept and cried over the death of their dear and beloved ones, like the case of Prophet Yaqub (AS) over his son, Prophet Yusuf (AS) – (Qur'an 12:84 – 85).

“And he turned away from them, and said: O my sorrow for Yusuf! And his eyes became white on account of the grief, and he was a repressor (of grief). They said: By Allah! You will not cease to remember Yusuf until you are prey to constant disease or (until) you are of those who perish. He said: I only complain of my grief and sorrow to Allah, and I know from Allah what you do not know

Glancing over the life history of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) reveals that he wept and cried over dead believers on so many instances, hence without any reservation, crying over the dead believer is permissible in Islam.

However, the narration of Omar and his son, Abdullah that forbids crying for the dead believer contradicts a whole series of authentic narrations and the practices of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the believers. It is also contrary to the logic and teachings of the Holy

159 Sunanu Nasa-i vol 4:19, : Sunanu Ibn Majah vol. 1:505, Babu Ma-Jaa-a fil Bukaa Hadith No.1587: Sunanu Kubra by Baihaqi vol. 4:117 Babu man rakhasa fil Bukaa Hadith 7159

Qur'an that says: *“And a burdened soul can not bear the burden of another”*. Meaning that, a dead person cannot be punished for the crying done by someone else over his death.

Therefore, the narration of Omar and his son against crying over the dead believer cannot be accepted. It can only be described as a mistake or an act of forgetfulness in terms of missing some words in the narration or misquoting the Holy Prophet (SAW) as indicated in the narration of Aisha and Ibn Abbas.

In conclusion however, to the Shia sect, crying over the dead Muslim is permissible in Islam on condition that it is not done outside the dictates of Islam.

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ABLUTION: WIPING OR WASHING OF THE FEET

The issue of ablution was one of the daily repeated open deeds of the Holy Prophet (SAW) throughout his life. It is therefore surprising to have differences among Muslims with regards to ablution.

There are four different views to the rule regarding the feet in ablution among Islamic Scholars and for that matter the Muslim Ummah. They are as follows:

- (1) ***Obligatory to wipe the feet in ablution.*** This is the Shia view point.
- (2) ***Obligatory to wash the feet in ablution.*** This is the view point of the majority of the Ahlul-Sunnah.
- (3) ***Optional to wash or wipe the feet in ablution.*** This is the view point of Alhassan Al-Basari, Muhammed Ibn Jarir, At-Tabari and their followers.
- (4) ***Obligatory to combine wiping and washing together in ablution.*** This is the view point of Dawud Ibn Ali Az-Zahiri, An-Nasir lil Haq and their followers. (References to the above four divisions can be traced from major Books on quranic exegesis.¹⁶⁰).

From the Holy Qur'an, the following is the only verse teaching about ablution in Chapter Al-ma-edah (5:6): "*O you who believe! When you rise up to pray, wash your faces and your hands with the elbows, and wipe a part of your heads and a part of your feet to the ankles*".

160 Tafsirul Kabir by Fakhrul-deen Ar-Razi vol. 3; Tafsirul Tabari vol. 6; Tafsirul Manar vol.

This verse explains ablution and the parts of the human body related to it in terms of washing and wiping. The verse itself is divided into parts. The first part of the verse is for the washing areas: *“wash your faces and your hands with the elbows”*. The last part of the verse is for the wiping aspect: *“And wipe a part of your heads and a part of your feet to the ankles”*.

The verse therefore is very direct and clear with regards to the rules of ablution on the feet and that is wiping over the feet. This is because mentioning of the feet came after the verb ‘wipe’, had the feet meant for washing, it would have come after the verb ‘wash’. This is basic and conforms to all languages world over.

Proofs for the Washers of the Feet

The Ahlul-Sunnah favours washing of the feet with a number of proofs according to them. Below are some of their proofs:

(1)Fakhrudeen Razi in his Book: Tafsir kabir Vol. 3 in his support of washing of the feet as against wiping, declared that surely, the verse of ablution from the Holy Qur'an (5:6) indicate wiping over the feet from all direction but he sees that there are a number of Hadith favouring washing of the feet and to him washing in itself includes wiping and better than it. Therefore, to him, Hadith cancels the verse of the Holy Qur'an which the Shia never agreed with.

In fact, he (Fakhrudeen-Razi) stated in his Book (Tafsir Kabir) that: “Verily, there are a lot of narrations in making washing of the feet obligatory. Washing includes wiping and not the opposite. For that matter, washing is closer to precaution. Therefore, it is compulsory to stick to it. In this regard it is obligatory to be certain that washing of the feet stands the position of wiping it”.This statement of Fakhrudeen-Razi is however, a deliberate wrong

since washing and wiping are two different realities. Therefore washing cannot stand for wiping.

(2) The Hadith used in proving washing of the feet as against wiping are of two types. (I) The Hadith that does not indicate washing of the feet at all, and (ii) The Hadith that indicate washing.

(I) The Hadith that does not indicate washing of the feet at all is the Hadith of Abdullah Ibn Amru Ibn Aas which says: “We were with Holy Prophet (SAW) on a journey and he remained behind. He joined us whilst we were performing ablution for the Asr Prayer which was long overdue and **we were wiping our feet, and then he shouted**: “Woe to your ankles from the fire”.¹⁶¹

This Hadith (if even accepted to be correct) confirms wiping not washing of the feet because the Holy Prophet (SAW) by this Hadith did not reject the wiping but rather endorsed it. He however, rejected the filth on their feet because some were still of the Jahiliyah behaviour, they urinated carelessly particularly on a journey hence he warned them by saying woe to their feet against the fire so that they would not enter salat with such filth on their feet. This Hadith therefore, is in confirmation of the wiping of the feet as stated rather than the washing. It also shows that the Sahaba, in their daily ablutions before this event were wiping and not washing their feet.

(ii) The Hadith that indicates washing of the feet like the Hadith of Hamran the servant of Othman Ibn Affan when he said: “I saw Othman who had washed his hands from the container three times, then he kept his right in the ablution and rinsed his mouththen

161 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1, book 3 hadith nos. 57,96

washed each of the feet three times, then said: I saw the Holy Prophet (SAW) performed ablution like mine”¹⁶²

(iii)The Hadith of Abdullah Ibn Zaid Ibn Aasim Al-Ansari, it was said to him: “Perform to us the ablution of the Holy Prophet (SAW), he requested for a container and fetched from itthen washed his feet to the ‘Ka-abain’, then said: this was the way of the Prophet (SAW) ablution”.

The above Hadith and some others are the said Hadith in relations to washing of the feet in ablution. However, there are some observations concerning these Hadith endorsing washing:-

(1) These Hadith contradict the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS). The Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) are the two weights and valuables mentioned by the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the two will never be separated. Therefore, contradicting the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS) makes the Hadith not acceptable.

(2) Abdullah Ibn Abbas, in proving wiping of the feet in ablution said: “Allah prescribed two washings and two wipings in ablution, don't you realize that He mentioned in Tayamam (dry ablution) in place of washing, He replaced washings and left away the two wipings”.¹⁶³

(3)Ibn Abbas used to say: “The ablution is two washings and two wipings”.¹⁶⁴

162 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1, book 4 hadith no. 161

163 Kanzul-Ummal vol. 5

164 Kanzul-Ummal vol. 5

(4) Ibn Abbas narrated the ablution of the Holy Prophet (SAW) then wiped over his feet.¹⁶⁵

(5) Narrated Imam Ali (AS) that he performed ablution and wiped the surface of his feet and said: "Had it not been that I saw the Holy Prophet (SAW) done that, the sole of the feet would have been more appropriate than its surface."¹⁶⁶

(6) Narrated from Imam Ali(AS) that he performed ablution and wiped his feet. He said, where is the person asking of the ablution of the messenger of Allah(SAW)? "This is the ablution of the messenger of Allah (SAW)."¹⁶⁷

(7) Ibn Abbass said: "People refuse except washing and I do not see in the book of Allah except wiping."¹⁶⁸

(8) Rufa-ah bin Rafiu narrated that the messenger of Allah (SAW) washes his face and his hands to the elbows and wipes his head and feet.¹⁶⁹

Surely, the narrations regarding the rules on feet in ablution are contradictory to one another. There are some hadith in favour of washing while others are in favour of wiping. Therefore,

165 Tafsirul Majma-ul Bayan vol. 3

166 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal 1:95,114,116,124

167 Kanzul-Ummal 9:448

168 Durul-Manthur 2:262

169 Sunan Abi Dawud 1:197, Sunan Nasaa-I 1:241, Sunan Ibn Majah 1:156, Mustadrak ala Sahihain 1:241, Sunanul Baihaqi 1:44, 2:354 Durul Manthur 2:262

so long as the Hadith contradict each other, then the ultimate stand should be the Holy Qur'an.

However, those calling for washing of the feet might be viewing washing to be more befitting to the feet than the wiping because of the possible link of the feet to filth. The fact is that we worship Allah the way that He wants us to worship Him not the way that we want to worship Him. Ablution is a spiritual type of cleanliness and not physical. Therefore, before performing ablution, if the feet are filthy, then it must be washed first after which the ablution is performed accordingly.

Proofs for the Wipers of the Feet

According to the Shia point of view, the rule of ablution with regard to the feet is wiping and not washing. The proofs to this point of view are the verse of the Holy Qur'an (5:6) and several Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

A)The Qur'anic verse on ablution: (Qur'an 5:6): *“O you who believe! When you rise up to pray, wash your faces and your hands with the elbows, and wipe a part of your heads and a part of your feet to the ankles”*.

Proving wiping of the feet by the aid of this verse depends on the two main accepted types of recital of the phrase – *“and your feet”* (*wa arjulikum* and *wa arjulakum*) from the end part of the verse.

However, the first is the reciting of the phrase: - *“wa arjulikum”* which is in the Arabic grammar called the recital with “Jarru” and this is the recitation of Ibn Kasir, Hamza, Abu Amru and Aasin from the narration of Abubakar. The second is the reciting of the phrase

“*Wa arjulakum*” known as the recital with “Nasab” and this is the recitation of Nafiu, Ibn Aamir and Aasin as narrated by Hafs.

Grammatically, reading with the “jarru”(*wa arjulikum*) means the phrase (your feet) is in conjunction with the phrase (part of your heads), therefore, as it is obligatory wiping the heads, so it is for the feet.

The reading with the “nasab”(*wa arjulakum*) also implies wiping of the feet because the phrase (part of your heads) is in the position of an object in the sentence which takes “nasab” in Arabic grammar. The verb (you wipe) in the sentence is acting on the object (part of your heads). Therefore, as it is obligatory wiping the heads so also it is for the feet.

However, it is not acceptable in Arabic language as well as any other language to have a separate sentence between two conjunctions (objects) in a sentence. Therefore, it is not possible to link the feet and the hands in the sentences of the verse of ablution though they are both objects because of the presence of a sentence between them. Also grammatically, if you have two verbs possibly to act on an object in a sentence, using the verb closer to the object is better accepted than the distant verb. In the verse of ablution, we have two verbs: “you wash” and “you wipe”, but in relation to the object (your feet), the verb “you wipe” is closer to it than the verb “you wash”. Therefore, the rule of ablution on the feet is wiping from all applications of the acceptable Arabic grammar with regards to the verse of ablution in terms of the two main accepted recitations by the “Jarru” and “Nasab”. This is in conformity with the exact conclusion of some leading Ahlul-Sunnah Scholars¹⁷⁰

B)From the Hadith:-

170 Tafsir Kabir by Fakhru-Razi Vol. 11 and Ibn Hazmi fil Mahallah

(1) Imam Ali (AS) said: “I was viewing the sole of the feet to be more appropriate for wiping than the surface of the feet, until I saw the Holy Prophet (SAW) wiping the surface of the feet”.¹⁷¹

(2) Ibn Abbas says: “Ablution is two washings and two wipings”.¹⁷²

(3) Abdullah Ibn Abbas in proving wiping in ablution said: “Allah prescribed two washings and two wipings in ablution. Don’t you realize that He mentioned in Tayamam (dry ablution) in places of washing He replaced with wiping and left away the two wipings”.¹⁷³

(4) Ibn Abbas narrated the ablution of the Holy Prophet (SAW) then wiped over his feet.¹⁷⁴

The view of those Wiping and Washing Together:

The view point of those combining wiping and washing together in ablution is as a result of extra precautions, which comes where there is doubt in what to do in terms of worship. Therefore, with the presence of precise legislative proves for wiping from both the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW), there will be no room left for any doubt. For that matter, in the absence of doubt too, the rule of wiping and washing the feet together which is as a result of doubt about the rule will not be necessary.

171 Musnad Ahmad Vol. 1; Sunanu Abi Dawud BK 1 Hadith No. 0163; Wasaa-ilu Shia; Abwabul-Wudu

172 Kanzul-Ummal Vol. 5

173 Kanzul-Ummal Vol. 5

174 Majma-ul Bayaan Vol. 3

The view of those who optionally Wipe or Wash

The view point of those who sometimes wipe and sometimes too wash comes when there is complete certainty that both wiping and washing are recommended islamically, in ablution. That is to say that, the verse of ablution indicates that both the wiping and the washing are accepted and also the Holy Prophet (SAW) has done the two (wiping and washing), that is at a time wiped and at another time washed. Only there and then that one can optionally decide to wipe or to wash otherwise it is not accepted. However, it is not right to optionally choose between a right act and a wrong one. You must know the right act and apply it and to know the wrong act and avoid it.

Verily, the view point of the Shia of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) with regards to the rule of feet in relation to the verse of ablution in the Holy Qur'an is that wiping the feet is obligatory and it is also in accordance with the practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

IS BISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM PART OF FATIHA?

One of the controversial issues among the various Islamic Sects that needs real and thorough research is whether Basmalah is part of Fatiha or not. The seriousness of this issue is reflected in prayer (Salat) which is a vital pillar in Islam. Is it to be recited as part of Fatiha or not? If yes, should it be recited loudly or silently?

In Islam Basmalah is recommended before starting any permissible action or deed. “Any significant act that does not begin with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is severed”¹⁷⁵ . Therefore, when we say Bismillah before starting any act, it means we are seeking Allah’s blessings and help in the act and that implies real commencement. However, some Islamic Sects are of the view that Basmalah is not part of Fatiha, therefore should not be recited as part of the prayer (Salat) let alone recited loudly.

The Shia Sect however, following the teachings of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) by the numerous authentic hadiths of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is of the view that Basmalah is part of Fatiha and must be recited loudly in prayer (Salat). The facts from the hadith of the Ahlul-Bait(AS) sources in support of Basmalah being part of Fatiha and recited loudly are numerous and highly authentic. However, quoting from the Shia books of tradition might not be of great use due the fact that, our Sunni brothers might not value the Shia sources but value their own sources. Therefore we have to quote from their books facts that are equally found in the Shia main books to compel them to accept whatever they compelled themselves to.

175 Jamiul Sagir vol. 2:91 by Sayuti : Kanzul-Ummal vol. 1 Hadith No. 2497

Research on this important topic revealed that, historically the difference started when Muawiyah during his visit to Madina led muslims in prayer without reciting the Basmalah as he used to do whilst in Sham (Syria) contrary to the teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet (SAW). However, for political reasons it got its way as a view to some Islamic Sects forcing it in to Islamic Jurisprudence with just a few, weak and contradictory narrations to justify its omission in the Fatiha.

It is recorded that Abdalla bin Osman bin Khateem from Ismail bin Ubaid bin Rifa-ah from his father said: Muawiyah came to Madina and led them in prayer and did not say the Basmalah and also did not say the Takbir in his bowing and prostration. Then the Muhajiroon and the Ansars after salaam called: Oh Muawiyah, have you stolen your Salat! Where is the Basmalah and Takbir in your bowing and prostration?¹⁷⁶

Also it is recorded that Abdullah bin Abi-Bakar bin Hafs bin Umar bin Sa-ad said: “Verily Muawiyah led people in prayer in Madina and did not recite the Basmalah and neither the Takbir that the people do, and when he completed the prayer, he was called by those who heard that from him from among the Muhajiroon and the Ansars, then they said: oh Muawiyah, have you stolen the Salat or you have forgotten? Where is the Basmalah?”¹⁷⁷

The above hadiths testify to the fact that, during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) down to the caliphate of Muawiyah, Muslims recited Basmalah aloud just as it is written in the Holy Quran.

176 Sunanul Baihaki 2:49-50 : Durul Manthur vol. 1:8, Tafsir Razi 1:198-199, Al-Ummu 1:108 by Shafi-ee

177 Al-musannif by Abdul-Razak vol 2:92 : Kanzul –Ummal vol 4 Hadith No. 4494

Still, there are others who in an effort to avoid this confusion resolve to recite Basmalah silently in their salat. However, research has shown that, this practice is not in line with the practice of the Holy Prophet (SAW). In fact, the first person reported to have started this is Amr bin Sa-ed bin Al-As in Madina.¹⁷⁸

Well, in practical life every action of a human being has a reason but when compared to a contrary reason can only then be qualified as acceptable or unacceptable. Therefore, to my dear reader, I want to put below the facts for those rejecting the Basmalah as part of Fatiha and for that matter do not recite it in Salat. Then the facts for those reciting Basmalah loudly in Salat will be presented too. Below are the facts supporting those rejecting Basmalah as part of Fatiha:

Point No. 1. Abu Hurayrah said: He heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) saying that Allah said: "I have divided Salat between me and my servant in to two equal parts and to my servant, I grant him what he requests for". When the servant says; *"All praises be to the Lord of the worlds"*; Allah says, "My servant has thanked me". When he says; *"The most Gracious, the most Merciful"*, then Allah says; "My servant has praised me". When he says; *"The Master of the Day of Judgment"*, then Allah says; "My servant has glorified me". When the servant says; *"You alone do we worship and to You alone do we ask for help"*, Allah says; "this is between me and my servant and to my servant what he requested for". And when he says; *"Guide us to the right path, the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favours, Not the path of those upon whom your wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray"*. He said; "this is for My servant and to My servant what he requested"¹⁷⁹. In explaining the above hadith, those who reject Basmalah as part of Fatiha argue that because

178 Sunanu Al-Kubra vol. 2:50, Tazkiratu Hufaz vol.1:110

the narration did not start with Basmalah means that it is therefore not part of Fatiha. This conclusion is not right because the hadith has some technical challenges:

1. This hadith contradicts several authentic hadith that mentions Basmalah as part of Fatiha. Several of these hadiths will be listed later. However it might be possible the narrator unintentionally omitted the Basmalah from the narration. For instance, from Tafsir Kabir, the same hadith has been narrated with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim¹⁸⁰. This supports our assertion that the narrator might have unintentionally omitted the Basmalah. Therefore, it is prudent that those who reject the Basmalah when citing the above hadith (point one) should let the ummah know that this hadith does not exist in isolation but have a contrary hadith with the same wording.
2. From the narration of the hadith that says “I have divided salat between Me and My servant in to two equal parts”, one can understand that Fatiha can be divided in to two equal parts, though this is not possible with regards to the number of verses. Since Fatiha has seven verses and not six.
3. Also if Basmalah is seen as part of Fatiha as by several authentic Hadith yet to be listed, then there will be four verses before the verse: “*You alone do we worship and to You alone do we ask for help*” and two verses after it making the total of seven verses. Therefore Fatiha cannot be divided in to two equal parts in number as mentioned in the hadith; “I have divided salat between Me and My servant in to two equal parts. Therefore the core message of this hadith is not explaining the number of

179 Sahih Muslim Babu Qira-at Fatiha fi Kulti Rakat 2:9, : Sunanu Abi Dawud, Babu man tarakal Qira-at fi salatihi 1:130 : Sunanu Nasaa-i , Babu Tark Qira-at Basmalah fi Fatiha 1:144

180 Tafsir Kabir vol. 1:270 Faslul Rabi'u by Fakhruddin Razi

the verses of Fatiha but rather the meaning of the verses in relation to Allah, the Almighty and His servant in Salat.

Point No. 2: Qatada narrated that Anas bin Maalik said: “I have prayed behind the Holy Prophet (SAW), Abubakr, Umar and Osman and *I have not heard* any of them reciting Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”.¹⁸¹

The fundamental problem with this hadith is that Anas bin Maalik said *he had not heard*, which in no way means the Prophet (SAW), Abubakr, Umar and Osman did not recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim. It could be that he had problems with his hearing or other barriers could have prevented him from hearing them in prayer.

Point No. 3: Anas bin Maalik said;- I prayed behind the Holy Prophet (SAW), Abubakr, Umar and Osman, and they all started with “Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alameen” without mentioning “Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim at the start and the end of the recitation”.¹⁸²

Ponder over the following contradictions from the same Anas bin Maalik

A. From the book: (Mustadrak Hakim 1: 234) Anas bin Maalik said:- “ I prayed behind the Holy Prophet (SAW), Abubakr, Umar, Osman and Ali(AS) all of them recited with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”

181 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:12 Babu Hujjatu man la Yajhar Bil Basmalah , Sunanu Nasaa-i 1:144 Babu Tark Jahr bil Basmalah: Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal 3:177,273,278

182 Sahih Muslim , Babu Hujjatu man Qala la Yajhar Bil Basmalah Hadith No. 52 , Sunanu Nasaa-I Kitab Iftitahu salat :20 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal 3:203,205,223

B. Qatada narrated from Anas bin Maalik that;- the recitation of the Holy Prophet (SAW) was prolonging, then recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, prolonging

Bismillah prolonging Rahman and prolonging Rahim”.¹⁸³

C. Again Sharik narrated that Anas bin Maalik said:-“I heard the messenger of Allah(SAW) reciting loudly Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”.¹⁸⁴

All the three hadith of Anas bin Maalik listed above contradict the one that he narrated against the Basmalah. So which one do we take for when two hadiths contradict each other, they both lose their value and authenticity.

The source of the contradictions with regards to the recitation of the Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is the historic event that is recorded in books such as (Al-Ummu by Shafi-ee 1:108, Sunanu Baihaqi vol. 2:49-50, Tafsir Razi 1:198-199, Tafsir Sayuti) that Anas bin Maalik said: “Muawiya led prayers in Madina and recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly but did not recite the Basmalah for the chapter (sura) after the Fatiha. After the salaam, the Muhajeroon and the Ansars who heard him called; Oh Muawiya, have you stolen the Salat or you have forgotten? When he prayed the next salat, he recited the Basmalah for the sura after the Fatiha and made the takbir for the prostration”. Fahrudeen Razi in his Tafsir vol 1, after narrating the above hadith inferred that, “This event shows that the Sahaba (companions of the Prophet (SAW)) collectively knew that Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is part of the Holy Quran and the Fatiha and therefore better to recite it loudly.”

183 Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-Fada-ilul Quran, Babu Maddil Qira-at 3:156, Sunanu Baihaqi, Babu Iftitah Qira-at fi salat Bi Basmalah 2:43

184 Mustadrak al-Hakim, vol. 1:233

Facts Supporting Those in Favour of the Basmalah as Part of Fatiha and reciting it in Prayer (Salat)

From history, one will understand that the culture of the early Muslims was that they regarded Basmalah as part of Fatiha and they recited it in Salat and the Holy Prophet (SAW) use to recite it even loudly. Therefore ponder over the following authentic hadiths in favour of the Basmalah and compare them to what has been presented against the Basmalah.

1. From Ibn Abbas that; - “The Holy Prophet (SAW) used to start his Salat with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”.¹⁸⁵
2. Jabir narrated that: The Holy Prophet (SAW) said to me, how do you recite when you stand to pray? I replied, I recite Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alameen, then said the Prophet (SAW), rather say Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.¹⁸⁶
3. Also, the wife of the Prophet,Ummu Salma narrated that; “The Holy Prophet used to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alameen.....” to the end of the chapter.¹⁸⁷

185 Sunanu Tirmidhi vol. 2:44, Abwabu salat Babu Ma Ja-a fi Jahri Bi Basmalah : Durul-Manthur 1:8, : Abu Dawud, Kitab Salat Babu Man Jahra Bi Basmalah Hadith No. 778 vol. 1:209

186 Durul-Manthur, vol. 1:8 : Sha-abu Iman by Baihaqi

187 Mustadrak al-Hakim 2:232 : Talhis by Azzahabi : Tafsir Razi by Fakhruddeen Ar-Razi vol

4. In addition, Ummu Salma (wife of the Holy Prophet (SAW)) was asked about the recitation of the Holy Prophet (SAW), she replied, “He used to space his recitation verse after verse: Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alameen.....” to the end of the chapter.¹⁸⁸
5. Narrated by Nafiu that ibn Omar used to start salat with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim in Fatiha and the chapter after it, and said that he heard it from the Holy Prophet (SAW).¹⁸⁹
6. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Holy Prophet(SAW) when leading prayers, starts with “Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”. Abu Hurayrah further said: “it is a verse from the Holy Quran, read Fatihah if you wish, indeed it has seven verses”.¹⁹⁰
7. From the books: (Sahih Bukhari- fada-ilul Quran Vol.3,Sunanul Baihaqi) Qatadah said : Anas bin Maalik was asked, how was the recitation of the Messenger of Allah (SAW), He replied it was prolonging and when he(SAW) recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, He prolonged Bismillah,Ar-Rahman Ar- Rahim.¹⁹¹

188 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 6:302 : Sunanu Abu Dawud vol. 4:371 : Sunanu Baihaqi vol. 2:44 : Durul-Manthur 1:7

189 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:47 : Sayuti vol. 1:8

190 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:47 : Durul-Manthur vol. 1:3 :

191 Sahih Bukhari, Kitab-Fada-ilul Quran, Babu Maddil Qira-at 3:156 : Sunanu Baihaqi, Babu Iftitah Qira-at fi salat Bi Basmalah 2:43

8. Again, Abu Hurayrah said; The Holy prophet (SAW) said “*if you read Alhamdulillah recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim for she is the mother of the Quran, the book and the seven repeated verses. Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is one of the verses*”.¹⁹²
9. From the book (Durul Manthur vol.1:7) Abu Hurayrah said; “I was with the Holy prophet (SAW) in the mosque and a man entered and started praying with Allamdulillah Rabbil Alameen and the Holy Prophet (SAW) heard him and said to him, “*Oh man you have spoil your salat don’t you know that, Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is part of the Fatiha and whoever leaves it misses a verse and whoever misses a verse spoils salat*”.
10. Tha’labi narrated on Imam Ali (AS) that he starts salat with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, and he(AS) used to say whoever leaves the Basmalah has reduced the Fatiha and it is the complete of the seven repeated verses.¹⁹³
11. Narrated by the Ibn Jareer from Abi also from Sa-ed bin Juber said: “And certainly we have given you the seven repeated verses” which is the mother of the Quran, and said Khal ibn Abbas verily, he recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim as seven verses.¹⁹⁴
12. From the books(Mustadrak Hakim vol.1:551, Sunanu Baihaqi vol. 2:47-48 Al-Itqan by Sayuti vol 1:80-81. Al-Ummu by Shafi-ee vol.1:107) Narrated: “Verily the seven

192 Sunanu Baihaqi vol. 2:45 : Durul-Manthur vol. 1:3 : Tafsir Razi vol. 1:196 : Al-Itqan by Sayuti vol. 1:81

193 Durul-Manthur vol.1:7 : Kanzul Ummal vol.2:191,375

194 Mustadrak al-Hakim vol. 1:550-551 : Kanzul-Ummal vol. 2:192

repeated verses is Fatiha and he recited it with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim. The narrator was then asked whether he was told that Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is a verse in the holy Quran .He replied yes and then said Ibn Abbas recited Bismillahir RahmanirRahim in the two Rakats (units of prayer) together.

13. Narrated by Nafiu from Abdullah bin Omar, He used to start the mother of the Book (Fatiha) with the Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.¹⁹⁵

14. Abdullah bin Omar starts salat after the Takbir with the Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim. Allamdu lillahi..... When he finishes he recites Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim and he used to ask why it was written in the Quran if not for recitation.¹⁹⁶

15. Muhammad bin Kab Al-Qurazi said, “Fatiha is seven verses with Bismillahir RahmanirRahim”.¹⁹⁷

16. Abu Hurayrah said: The Holy prophet (SAW) said; “*when you recite Al-Hamdu you recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim because it is the mother of Quran, the mother of the Book and the seven repeated verses. And Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is one of its verses*”.¹⁹⁸

195Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:48-49

196Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:44, Durul Manthur vol.1:7

197Durul Manthur vol.1:8

198 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:45 : Durul-Manthur vol. 1:3 : Tafsir Razi 1:196

17.) Ibn Abbas said; “The seven repeated verses is Fatiha” he was asked of the seventh verse, he replied: “Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”.¹⁹⁹
18.) Ibn Abass said, “The Shaitan (the Devil) has stolen the greatest verse from the Quran and that is Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”.²⁰⁰
19. Ibn Abbas said: “Certainly muslims do not know the completion of a chapter until the revelation of Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim. If Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim was revealed, they then know that the chapter has completed”.²⁰¹
20. Ibn Abbas said: “Verily whenever the Angel Jibreel comes and recites Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, the Holy Prophet (SAW) knew that was the beginning of a new chapter.”²⁰²
21. Abdullah bin Abbas said: Bismillah Rahman Rahim is a verse.²⁰³
22. Talha bin Ubaidullah said; The Holy prophet (SAW) said; “*Whoever leaves Bismillah Rahman Rahim has left a verse from the Book of Allah*”.²⁰⁴

199 Mustadrak Hakim vol. 1:551, Sunanu Al-Baihaqi 2:45

200 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:50

201 Mustadrak Hakim vol.1:232

202 Mustadrak Hakim vol.1:231

203 Durul Manthur vol.1:7

204 Durul Manthur vol.1:7

23. Ibn Omar said: “Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is revealed on every chapter”.²⁰⁵

24. Imam Ali (AS) used to say: “whoever leaves the recitation of Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim has certainly decreased (the Fatiha)” and he used to say “it is a complete seven repeated verses”.²⁰⁶

25. “Certainly, Azzahri starts with Bismillah Rahman Rahim and says it is a verse from the book of Allah but people left it out”.²⁰⁷

Reciting Bismillah loudly is Obligatory in Salat

26. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said; “The Angel Jibrael taught me salat, he stood and said the Takbir for us, then recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly in all the Rakats”.²⁰⁸

27. Ayisha said “verily the Messenger of Allah (SAW) used to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly”.²⁰⁹

205Durul Manthur vol.1:7

206Durul Manthur vol.1:7

207Tazkiratu Hufaz vol. 1:110, Musannif Abdul- Razak vol. 2:91

208 Durul Manthur vol.1:7

209Durul Manthur vol.1

28. Imam Ali (AS) said: “The Prophet (SAW) used to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly in the two chapters together”.²¹⁰
29. Abu Tufail said he heard Imam Ali (AS) and Ammar saying that, the Holy Prophet (SAW) used to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly with Fatiha in prayers.²¹¹
30. Abu Hurayrah said: “The Holy prophet (SAW) recites Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly in salat but the people dropped that”.²¹²
31. Anas said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah (SAW) reciting Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly”.²¹³
32. Anas bin Malik said:” I heard the Holy Prophet (SAW) reciting BismillahirRahmanir Rahim loudly”.²¹⁴
33. Ibn Omar said: “I prayed behind the Holy Prophet (SAW) Abubakar and Omar and they recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly”.²¹⁵

210Durul Manthur vol.1:8

211Durul Manthur vol.1:8

212 Sunanul-Baihaqi vol. 2:47 : Mustadrak al-Hakim 1:232 : Durul-Manthur 1:8

213Durul Manthur vol.1:8 : Baihaqi in Sha-abul Iman

214Mustadrak Hakim vol. 1:233

215Durul Manthur vol.1:8

34. Muhammad bin Ali Al-sari Asklani said: “ I prayed the morning and Magrib salat (prayer) behind Al- Mutamar bin Suleiman several times and he use to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly before and after the fatihah” He further said: I heard Al- Mutamar saying, he followed the salat (prayer)of his father. The father said he followed the salat (prayer) of Anas bin malik. Who finally said he followed the salat of the Holy Prophet (SAW)”.²¹⁶
35. Anas bin Malik said: “I prayed behind the Holy Prophet (SAW) Abubakar, Omar, Osman and Ali (AS) certainly all of them reciting Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly”.²¹⁷
36. Sa-ed bin Abdul- Rahman bin Abzi from his father said: “I prayed behind Omar bin khattab and he loudly recitedBismillahir Rahmanir Rahim”.²¹⁸
37. Shabi narrated that he saw Imam Ali (AS), prayed behind him and heard him reciting Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly.²¹⁹
38. Azraq bin Qays narrated that the he prayed behind ibn Zubair and he recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly.²²⁰

216Mustadrak Hakim 1 : 234

217 Mustadrak Hakim 1: 234

218Sunanul Baihaqi 2: 48

219Tafsir Razi 1: 196, Sunanul Baihaqi 2: 49

220Sunanul Baihaqi 2: 49

39. Abu Hurayrah prayed and recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly. After the salat, some said he has prayed the like of the prayer of the Holy Prophet (SAW).²²¹
40. Al-Mahdi prayed with us Magrib and recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly and was asked, Oh, the leader of the believers, what is this? He said: His father narrated from his grandfather who also received from his great grandfather and from Ibn Abbas that the Holy prophet (SAW) recited Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly then he said we shall narrate it from you? He said yes.²²²
41. Ibn Abbas said “Verily the Holy prophet (SAW) use to start reading with Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.” He recites Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim in salat means reciting it loudly.²²³
42. Ibn Sha-hab said: “ from the sunna of salat reciting Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim then Fatihah, then Bismillah Rahman Rahim, then reciting any surah and said the first to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim silently in Madina was Amr bin sa-ed bin Al-As and he was a shy man”.²²⁴

221Tafsir ibn Kathir 1: 16

222Sunanul Daruqutni 1:203-204

223Sunanu Baihaqi 2: 47

224Sunanul Baihaqi 2: 50, Tazkirat- Huffaz 1: 115

43. AbdulKhair said: “Imam Ali (AS) was asked about the seven repeated verses, and he said”: “Alhamdulillah.” Then it was said to him then it will be six verses. He then said: Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is a verse”.²²⁵
44. Imam Razi said; “Verily from several authentic and reliable sources it is confirmed that Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim was revealed by Allah(SWT) to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and it is firm in the writing of the Quran”.²²⁶
45. Muawiyah bin Ammar said: He asked Abu Abdallah (Imam Jafar Sadiq (AS)), if I stand for Salat, should I recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim in the Fatiha of the Quran? He replied, yes; then I said again, if I recite Fatiha of the Quran, should I recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim with the sura? He said yes. In fact, from the 114 chapters of the Holy Quran, it is only the 9th chapter that has no Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim written at the opening of it. Interestingly it is only the Basmalah of the first chapter (Fatiha) that is counted as the first verse of that chapter and therefore has the number one. Therefore the inevitable question is why the rest of the chapters do not have their Basmalah numbered? This indeed indicates that the Basmalah of the Fatiha is part and parcel of it and clearly add up to make the seven verses of the first chapter of the Holy Quran.²²⁷

225Sunanul Baihaqi 2: 45, Durul Manthur 1:3, kanzul Ummal 1: 191

226Tafsir Fakhrudeen Razi 1: 195

227Al-Kafi 3:312

From the facts gathered above, one can understand that Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim is indeed part of Fatiha and must be recited aloud in Salat. In fact according to Anas bin Maalik, it was not only the Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim that was altered but the Salat in totality has changed. It even made him to lament saying “I did not know anything better than the Salat during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) but it has been changed too”.

Besides, considering the narrators of these contrary hadiths: Imam Ali (AS) and Ibn Abbas on one hand and Anas bin Maalik and Abu Hurayrah on the other. Without doubt one will understand that the first group are more knowledgeable and closer to the Holy Prophet (SAW) than the second group. Therefore, any objective mind will consider the narration of the first group more reliable than the second group.

Abu Hurayrah contradicted himself saying that: the Holy Prophet used to recite Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim loudly. He further narrated that Omar bin Khattab, Ibn Abbas, Ibn Omar and Ibn Zubair used to recite the Basmalah loudly.²²⁸

To conclude, Imam Ali (AS) always recited Basmalah loudly in all his prayers. When the Banu Umayyah got control of the leadership of Muslims, they tried their utmost best to cancel all traces of Imam Ali (AS) hence their propaganda against the loud recitation of Basmalah. However the Holy Prophet(SAW) is reported to have said to Imam Ali (AS): “Verily you will not be loved except by a Mumin (believer) and you will not be hated except by a hypocrite.”²²⁹

228 Tafsir Kabir by Fakhrudeen Razi vol. 1

229 Sahih Muslim, Kitab Iman vol. 1:84 Hadith 131 : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol 1:84, Sunanu Nasaa-I Alamatu Nifaq 8:117

Indeed whoever emulates Imam Ali (AS) for his religion is certainly guided because the Holy Prophet(SAW) said in general terms: “Ali (AS) is with the truth and the truth is with Ali(AS), wherever he(AS) turns, the truth turns with him(AS)”.²³⁰

Dear reader, it is clear from all the above facts that, the Shia, reciting the Basmalah loudly is in conformity with the practice of the ‘Gate to the City of Knowledge’ (Imam Ali (AS)) and thus the Holy Prophet (SAW). On the face of all these evidences, I leave it to you, as a sincere seeker of the truth, to decide which way to follow, for there is no compulsion in religion.

FOLDING OF ARMS IN PRAYER

The folding of arms during prayer by way of putting the right hand over the left over the navel or under it in the standing position is one of the controversial issues among the Islamic sects. All the Islamic sects are of the view that it is not obligatory (wajib) folding of arms during prayers but differ with regards to its rule legislatively.

From the Book: Al-Fiqhu ala mazahibil Khamsah by Muhammad Jawad Mugniyah, we have the records of the views of the five major Islamic sects in relation to the rule over the folding of arms in prayers as follows:

230 Tarikh Bagdad vol 14, Kanzul-Ummal Vol 5, Tarikh ibn Asakir vol 3

(1)The Hanafiyah sect says: “Verily, folding of arms during prayers is a Sunnah but not obligatory (Wajib). It is better for a male Muslim to put the palm of his right hand over the left hand under his navel and for a woman Muslim to put her arms on her chest”.

(2) The Malikiyah Sect says: “It is permissible (Ja-iz) but better to leave the hands hanging in the compulsory prayers”. Some section of the Malikiyah sect sees it hateful to fold the arms in prayers (Sahih Muslim Vol. 1:382).

(3) The Shafi-eyah Sect says: “It is a Sunnah for the male and the female to put the right arm over the left under the chest and over the navel towards the left side”.

(4) The Hanbali sect says: “It is a Sunnah and better to put the right palm over the left hand but under the navel”.

(5) The Shia Sect says: “It is forbidden (haram) and spoils prayer to fold arms in prayer”²³¹.

From the above presentation, one will realize that all the Islamic sects are of the view that folding of arms in prayer is not obligatory but rather permissible or forbidden. Upon all these, you see cases where some preachers of the Ahlul-Sunnah (Wahabiyah) sect carelessly speak against those praying with their hands hanging and not folding as if an obligatory act has been violated. However, the problem is not even against the Shia only, but sometimes even among the Ahlul-Sunnah sect themselves where an Imam is accused of folding his arms in a particular way different from another Imam in prayer or even not folding the arms at all. The fault is not from the ordinary ignorant people but rather the fault of some clerics and

231 Wasaa-elul Shia vol. 4:126 Babu 15 Qawati Salat : Jawahirul Kalam 11: 15-16

preachers who do not differentiate between the Sunnah and wajib hence creating unnecessary tension among Muslims.

There are three main Hadith always referred to as proofs for the arms folding in prayers.

They are as follows:-

- (1) The Hadith of Sahal Ibn Sa-ad narrated by Bukhari from Ibn Hazim that Sahal Ibn Sa-ad said: “People used to be instructed that man should put his right arm over his left forearm in prayers, Abu Hazim said: ‘I did not know it except that he (Sahal) ascribed it to the Holy Prophet (SAW)’”.²³² Ismail Ibn Abi Oweise (Teacher of Bukhari) said: It was ascribed to the Holy Prophet (SAW)) and not say (he (Sahal) ascribed it to the Holy Prophet (SAW)).²³³ (Fathul-Bari Vol. 2).

Well, relating this Hadith to the Holy Prophet (SAW) is doubtful for two reasons:-

(a) In the Hadith, had it been the Holy Prophet (SAW) instructing for the arms folding, it would have been said: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) instructed” instead of saying: “People used to be instructed”.

(b) The end part of the Hadith also indicates that it was someone else who instructed for the arms folding and not the Holy Prophet (SAW) by the saying of Abu Hazim that: “I did not know it except that he (Sahal) ascribed it to the Holy Prophet (SAW)”. This Hadith therefore, cannot be used as prove for folding of arms in prayers.

232 Fathul-Bari fi Sharhul-Bukhari vol. 2:224 Babu WadulYumna alal Yusra : Sunanul-Kubra by Baihaqi 2:44, Hadith No. 2326, Babu Wadul yumna alal yusra fi salat

233 Fathul-Bari Vol. 5:325

(2) The Hadith of Wa-il Ibn Hijiri:- Narrated by Muslim from Wa-il Ibn Hijiri that, he saw the Holy Prophet (SAW) raised his two hands and said Allahu Akbar, when he started the prayer, then wrapped himself up with his dress and his right hand over the left. When he wanted to bow, he removed his hands from the dress then raised them and said Allahu Akbar for bowing.....²³⁴

Using both Hadith as proof for legality of folding of arms in prayer is wrong because, the Hadith is only narrating an action seen by a person and cannot be used as proof unless the reason for the said action is known which unfortunately was not known from the Hadith. The Holy Prophet (SAW) wrapped himself up with his dress to his chest and his right hand over the left as stated in the said Hadith; the question is, was the action done because it was Sunnah in prayer or he did that not to allow his dress loose, but rather to stick to his body and protect him from cold? However, the reason for such action was not known that he did that as a Sunnah.

Besides, the Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed with the Muslim Ummah for several years, had this action been confirmed from the Holy Prophet (SAW) as Sunnah, it would have been narrated by several persons not only Wa-il Ibn Hijir.

Also, the same Hadith narrated by Al-Baihaqi that Alqamah Ibn Wa-il from his father said: "The Holy Prophet (SAW) when he stood for prayers, held his right hand over his left and I saw Alqamah doing it".²³⁵

234 Sahih Muslim vol. 1:382, Babu 5 Kitabu salat Babu Wadul yumnal alal yusra : Sahih Muslim vol. 1, book 4 Hadith No. 0792

235 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:43

Had it been the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) it would have been commonly known by the people; but the statement that: “I saw Alqamah doing it” gives an indication that he got to know of it through Alqamah but not the Holy Prophet (SAW).

(3)The Hadith of Abdullah Ibn Mas-ood:- narrated by Baihaqi from Ibn Mas-ood that: “He was praying and he kept his left hand over the right and the Holy Prophet (SAW) saw him then kept his right hand over the left”²³⁶

The simple and straight forward question is that, is it possible for a prominent Sahabi like Ibn Mas-ood not to know the right Sunnah in salat? He was among the first group of Muslims. It is indeed not possible for such a person not to have known the Sunnah in Salat to such an extent that the Holy Prophet (SAW) had to correct him. This Hadith therefore is also doubtful!

In defending and giving appreciation to the concept of folding the arms in prayer, An-Nawawi in hisbook stated that: “Putting the hand over the hand is more secure than not doing it and better for humility and supplication”²³⁷.

As a response to this statement of An-Nawawi, we need to understand that Islamic legislation is not established by our own way of thinking. We worship Allah, the Almighty the way He wants us to worship Him not the way we want to worship Him. The idea of appreciation with regard to a concept in Islamic legislation comes after the concept has been proved from the Holy Qur'an or Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) otherwise it is of no value.

236 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:44 Babu wadul yumna ala yusra Hadith No. 2327

237 Almajmou by An-Nawawi 3:313

However, the issue of folding of arms and not folding in prayers indeed, is something that is supposed not to have any conflicting stand among Muslims because the Holy Prophet (SAW) lived with the Ummah for more than twenty years and prayed with them through out for at least five times daily in a particular way. Had the Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed folding his hands, the narrators of this event would have been many and not limited to just a few and also without contrary narrations rejecting the folding of the arms in prayers. In practical life of the Muslim Ummah, the case is not so, for there are a lot of contrary Hadith rejecting the concept that the Holy Prophet (SAW) used to fold his hands in prayers.

Reflecting over the numerous narrations of Hadith from the Ahlul-Bait (AS) revealed that folding of arms in prayers is highly rejected and even described as the act of magians (majuos) making it legislatively forbidden.

Sheikh Sadooq narrated that Imam Ali (AS) said: “A Muslim does not gather his hands in his prayers while standing before Allah, the Almighty, resembling the disbelieving people that is the magian (majuos).²³⁸

The Hadith of Abi Hamid Sa-adi which has been narrated by many is one of the narrations that contradicts and rejects folding of arms in prayers. The text of the Hadith is as follows:- Abu Hamid Sa-adi said to a number of Sahaba that: “I am most knowledgeable amongst you about the Salat (prayer) of the Holy Prophet (SAW)”. They said: “How?” You were not following the Holy Prophet (SAW) more than us, and you were not a companion to him before us?” He said: “that is right”, then they said to him: “Show it to us”, then he said: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) when he stood to pray, raises his two hands until they are opposite to his

238 Wasaa-ilul Shia vol.7:265-267 Babu 15, Abwabu Qawatiu salat

shoulders, then he says Allahu Akbar until all his limbs remain still and balanced in its place; then he reads then say “Allahu Akbar” and raises his two hands until they are opposite to his shoulders, then bows and keeps his two palms on his knees, then balances well without raising his head, then raises his head, then say: “Sami Allahu liman hamidahu”, then raises his hands until they are opposite to his shoulders; then he says “Allahu Akbar”; then he falls to the ground with his two hands by his sides, then raises his head, bends his left leg, sits on it and opens the toes of his legs in prostration then returns to the prostration. Then rises up and says: “Allahu Akbar”, then bends his leg and sits on it until all parts of his body are balanced; then he repeats the same for another rakat....., then they all say: he is right, that was the way the Holy Prophet (SAW) used to pray”²³⁹

The importance of this Hadith is that, it described the obligatory and the Sunnah aspects of Salat but did not mention any folding of arms and was fully accepted by the Sahaba without any objection but rather said to the narrator: “you are right for such was the Salat of the Holy Prophet (SAW)” and this shows the strength of this Hadith.

There are yet several Hadith from the Ahlul-Bait (AS) also explaining the Salat of the Holy Prophet (SAW) without mentioning of folding of arms.

One of the Hadith narrated is that Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS) said: “What a bad thing for a man to be sixty or seventy years without successfully performing one single and complete Salat”, then Hamad said: “I felt in myself humbleness”, then I said: “I put over ‘fadak’ therefore, teach us Salat”. Then Abu Abdullah (Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS)) - stood facing the Qiblah

239 Sunanul Baihaqi vol. 2:105 Hadith 2517 : Sunanul Abu Dawud, Babu Iftitahu salat Hadith No. 730 : Sunanu Titmidhi vol. 2:105, Hadith No. 304, Babu sifatu salat

straight then he left the hands hanging..... then said: “You Hamad, you should pray with your hands and fingers and do not sluggish to your right or left or in front”²⁴⁰

From the above two narrations (Hadith of Abi Hamid Sa-adi and Imam Ja’far Sadiq (AS) explaining the Salat of the Holy Prophet (SAW) to the people without sign of any of the types of arms folding in the teaching process means that folding of arms is not part of the Salat otherwise it would have been mentioned. It is therefore clear that leaving the hands hanging in Salat is the original Sunnah and natural aspect of Salat conforming to the Holy Prophet (SAW).

To end however, there is no ambiguity with regard to hanging of the hands in Salat whiles there are differences of views on the folding of arms even among the Ahlul-Sunnah; some fold on the navel, others below the navel, others above the navel, others on the left side of the navel, others on the chest, and so on. We cannot claim that the Holy Prophet (SAW) did all these types of arms folding during Salat.

However, the Ahlul-Bait (AS) whom the Holy Prophet (SAW) in the well and widely recorded Hadith of Thaqaalain {the Holy Qur'an and the Ahlul-Bait (AS)}, directed the Muslim Ummah to follow in order to avoid going astray in the religion, are of the view that folding of arms in prayer is an innovation and forbidden in Islam because the Holy Prophet (SAW) never prayed with folded arms.

Therefore, the Shia sect in obedience to the Ahlul-Bait (AS) declared folding of arms in prayer a forbidden act which spoils the prayer. The Ahlul-Bait (AS) know better of what is in

240 Wasaa-ilul Shia vol. 5:459-460, Babu 1, Abwabu Af-alu Salat

the house of the Holy Prophet (SAW) than any other person. Following the Ahlul-Bait (AS) is indeed following the Holy Prophet (SAW).

PROSTRATION ON THE EARTH

This is one of the Islamic practices that the Shia is wrongly and ignorantly accused of adhering to by some section of Muslims. Insha-Allah, with a little more patience, one will understand who is right and who is wrong.

There are no differences among all Muslims that Salat is an obligatory pillar in Islamic legislation. Without the least doubt to any Muslim, prostration is a pillar in Salat and of course the best part of it because it serves as an open expression of self humility by the creature to the Creator, Allah, the Almighty. In prostration, the Muslim Ummah however disagree among themselves on what is islamically right to prostrate on in worship of Allah, the most High.

The Shia unanimously prefer prostrating on the bare earth or any plant from the earth provided it is not edible and not wearable in accordance with the traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) recorded in the Books of tradition.

The other Islamic sects view this differently and some ignorant of the real facts even accuse the Shia of worshiping the earth for prostrating on stone or clay in Salat. There is the need for one to understand the difference between prostrating for the earth and prostrating on the earth. As Shia, we do not prostrate on the earth for the sake of the earth, but rather, we prostrate on the earth for Allah, the Almighty.

It is out of enmity and ignorance that the Shia is being accused of worshiping the stone for prostrating on it in Salat. Common sense will tell you that even the real and practical idol worshippers the world over, when they worship their gods, they prostrate for them but NOT on them because they are their gods and prostration is not done on gods. So, for the fact that the Shia prostrate on the earth (Stone) means that the earth (stone) is not seen as god for worship, but rather a means for self humility to Allah, the Almighty. Whoever, therefore fails to understand this simple logic has his own problem but it is not a problem of Shia. Indeed, the Shia in their belief prostrate on the bare earth for Allah, the Almighty but never for the earth. Otherwise, whoever prostrates on a carpet too or any other material other than the earth in Salat should be seen as worshiping it. Please, do understand the extent of the implication of this accusation if the logic is to be accepted.

From the history of Salat in Islam however, through the tradition of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), he and his companions prostrated mostly on the earth directly under even harsh conditions such as heat of the sun, dust and wet earth for us to understand the Shia preference of prostrating on the bare earth against prostrating on any other thing.

From the Books of tradition, there are three (3) categories of Hadith on what to prostrate on:-

- (i) Hadith for prostration on the earth.
- (ii) Hadith for prostration on leaves (plants)
- (iii) Hadith for prostration on something different from the earth and plants only on excuse of unbearable conditions.

(A) Sample of Hadith for prostrating on the earth:

(1) “The earth is made for me a place for prostration (masjid) and a purifier”.²⁴¹

(2) “The earth as a whole is made to us a place for prostration and its soil made a purifier when we don’t get water”.²⁴²

(3) “The earth is a place for prostration for you, whenever it is time for Salat you pray, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said to Abu Zarr”.²⁴³

(4) Ibn Abbas: “Verily, the Holy Prophet (SAW) prostrated on stone”.²⁴⁴

241 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1, Book 7 Hadith No.331 and Book 8 Hadith No.429: Sahih Bukhar vol. 1:86,113: Sahih Muslim, Book 4, Hadith No. 1057,1058,1060 : Sahih Nasaa-I 2:32 : Abu Dawud 1:79 : Sahih Tirmidhi 2:114 : Sunanul Kubra by Baihaqi 2:433,435

242 Sahih Muslim vol. 2:64 : Sahih Muslim Book 3 Hadith No. 0717

243 Sahih Nasaa-I vol. 2:37 : Sahih Muslim Book 4, Hadith No. 1057

244 Al-Mustadrak Al-Hakim 3:473

(5) Abu Sa-eed Al-Khudri narrated that: “He had seen the Holy Prophet (SAW) prostrating on wet mud, so much so that he could see mud stains on his nose and forehead”.²⁴⁵ .

(6) Jabir Ibn Abdullah said: “When we were performing the Zuhr prayers with the Messenger of Allah (SAW), I picked up some stones in my hand, cooling them and shifting them to other hand, and when prostrating I put my forehead on them”.²⁴⁶

(7) Anas bin Malik narrated: “We used to pray with the Messenger of Allah (SAW) in scorching heat and we picked up stones in our hands so that when they cooled we prostrated on them”.²⁴⁷

(8) Nafi-u: “Verily, Abdullah bin Omar, when prostrating with his turban raises it enabling him to put his forehead on the bare earth”.²⁴⁸

(9) Abu Obaidah: “Verily, Ibn Mas-ood never prayed or prostrated except on the bare earth”.²⁴⁹

245 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1:163,198, vol. 2:253-259, vol. 1, Book 11& 12 Hadith No. 638,777,798; Sunanu Abu Dawud vol. 1:143-144; Sunanul-Kubrah by Baihaqi vol. 2:104

246 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1:327 : Sunanul Kubra by Baihaqi vol. 2:105 : Sahih Nasaa-I vol. 2 chapter 33 Hadith No. 1082

247 Sunanul-Kubrah by Baihaqi Vol. 2:106

248 Sunanul-Kubrah by Baihaqi Vol. 2

249 Tafsir Kabir by Tabarani vol. 9:355 : Majma-ul Zawa-id 2:25

(10)Wa-il narrated: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) prostrated on the earth placing his forehead and nose in his prostration on it”.²⁵⁰

(11)Omar bin Abdul-Aziz (The Umaiya Caliph) used not to prostrate on the Khumrah (small mat palm leaves for prostration) only but put soil on it then prostrated.²⁵¹

(12)Khalid Al-Jahni narrated that: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) saw Suhaib prostrating as if he did not want to soil his forehead, then the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “*soil your forehead Oh Suhaib*”.²⁵²

(13)Jabir bin Abdullah narrates: “the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “*I have been given five (5) things which were not given to any of the Prophets before me. These are:-*

- i) *Allah made me victorious by inspiring fear in my enemies for a distance of one month’s journey.*
- ii) *The earth has been made a place of prostration for me, and a place to perform tayammam. Thus my followers can pray wherever they like, when the time of prayer is due.*
- iii) *War booty has been made lawful for me.*

250 Imam Ahmad Vol. 4:318

251 Fathul-Bari Vol. 1; Al-Ahwazi Vol. 1, Tabaqat vol. 1:366

252 Kanzul-Ummal by Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi 7:465 No.1981

iv) *Every Prophet was sent only to his own nation, but I have been sent to all mankind.*

v) *I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Resurrection).²⁵³*

(14)The Holy Prophet (SAW) declared that the best place for prostration was the earth or upon something that grows from the earth.²⁵⁴

(B)Sample of Hadith for prostrating on plant leaves:-

(1) Anas bin Malik: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) used to pray on Khumrah (small mat of palm leaves for prostration) and prostrate on it”²⁵⁵

(2)Ibn Abbas: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) used to pray on Khumrah”²⁵⁶

(3)Ibn Omar: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) used to pray on Khumrah and prostrate on it”²⁵⁷

253 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 Book 7 No. 331, Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 Book 8 No. 429

254 Kanzul-Ummal Vol. 4

255 Sunanul Kubra by Baihaqi vol. 2:421 : Majma-ul Zawa-id vol. 2:56-57

256 Sahih Tirmidhi vol. 1: No. 331 : Sahih Tirmidhi 2:126 : Sunanul Kubra by Baihaqi vol. 2:421

257 Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 6:111 : Al-Awsat by Tabarani 8:348 : Al-Kabir by Tabarani 12:292

(4)Maimunah (Mother of the believers): “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) used to pray on Khumrah”²⁵⁸

(5)Aisha (Mother of the believers): “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said to me, hand me the Khumrah and I said, I am menstruant. He said: Your menstruation is not from your hands”²⁵⁹

(6)Abi Sa-eed Al-Khudari: “Verily, he entered to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and met him praying on ‘Hasir’ (mat of plant leaves) prostrating on it”²⁶⁰

(7)Ishaq Ibn Fadl, questioned Imam Sadiq (AS) about prostration on “Hasir” (mat of plant leaves). He replied: “There is no objection to it, but to prostrate on earth is more preferable to me, for the Messenger of Allah (SAW) liked that the forehead touch the earth. Verily, I like for you whatever was liked by the Messenger of Allah (SAW)”²⁶¹

(C)Hadith for prostrating on something different from the earth and plant only under unbearable conditions:-

258 Sahih Bukhari 1:101 : Sahih Muslim 2:128 : Ibn Majah 1:320 : Nasaa-i 2:57 : Tirmidhi vol. 1 No. 331 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 1, Book No. 376

259 Sahih Muslim 1:245 : Tirmidhi 1:90 : Nasaa-i 1:192 : Ibn Majah 1:207 : Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal 2:86 : Sahih Muslim Book 3 No. 0587,0588,0589 : Tirmidhi vol. 1 No. 134,331,332 : Ibn Majah vol. 1 No. 632

260 Sunanu Ibn Majah 1:321 : Sahih Muslim vol. 2:62,128 : Sahih Muslim Book 4 No.1054

261 Al-Wasa-il Vol. 3:609

(1) Omar bin Khatab said: “If any of you is not able to withstand intense heat and cold, then he should prostrate on his cloth”.²⁶²

(2) Anas bin Malik narrated: “We used to pray with the Holy Prophet (SAW) in scorching heat and if any of us could not put his forehead on the bare earth (because of heat) then he would spread his cloths and prostrate on them”.²⁶³

(3) Anas bin Malik narrated: “We used to pray behind the Holy Prophet (SAW) in very hot afternoons, prostrating on our cloths in protection against heat”.²⁶⁴

From all the three (3) categories of Hadith mentioned above and the several others not mentioned relating to what to prostrate on in Salat, one can understand that originally under normal conditions, prostration must first only be done directly on the bare earth followed by something that grows from the earth reflecting on the Hadith of the Khumrah and the Hasir.

However, only under unbearable conditions where it becomes very difficult to prostrate directly on the bare earth, like the case of extreme heat it becomes permissible to prostrate on cloths which otherwise islamically is not accepted. There is not a single Hadith justifying prostration on carpet whatsoever. Therefore, prostration on carpet is out of the question.

From the teaching of the Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS), Salat (prayer) has far deeper meaning than the physical actions of standing, bowing and prostration. Indeed, one of

262 Kanzul Ummal vol. 8:83 : Sunanul Kubra by Baihaqi vol. 1:182

263 Sahih Bukhari 1:101 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 Book 10 No. 517 Sahih Muslim 2:109

264 Ibn Majah vol. 2:216 : Ibn Majah vol. 2 No.1033

the main essences of Salat is to kill the spirit of self in man (the Big I) through prostration and replace it with strong love for Allah, the Merciful.

Therefore, the philosophy of prostrating directly on the bare earth in salat is to remind us of our origin (the earth) and that no matter our social position, we are but all from the mother earth. This helps soften the heart of man and lead to self humility for the sake of the Almighty Allah by bringing together the highest of the human body (face) and the lowest and most degrading part of creation (the earth) in prostration.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (Taha: 20:55): *“From it We created you, into it shall We return you and from it shall We bring you forth another time”*.

Therefore, from the standing position in Salat, bowing and prostration, we are reminded that the standing position to the bowing position is a return towards our origin (the earth). Then from the bowing position to prostration on the bare earth, our ultimate return to the grave. Our coming back from the prostration to the sitting position reminds us of our resurrection from the grave for judgement before our creator, the Most High.

Therefore, prostration on the bare earth in Salat is more preferable because it leads to self humility for the sake of Allah and reminds us of the Day of resurrection which is a key to God fearing. This is just a little reflection of the concept of prostration on the bare earth to the Shia as taken from the teachings of the Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS). The Holy Prophet (SAW) in his last sermon also said: *“.....all of you are from Adam (AS), and Adam (AS) was created from clay (earth).....”*

To the best of my research for the truth and understanding, the Shia is in fact in total conformity with the direct command and practices (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Therefore, I am highly surprised and have no alternative other than to ask, why are some Muslims so fanatic against the Shia for prostrating on the bare earth, stone, wood and the “Turbah” (piece of clay) instead of the carpet? Why falsely accusing and defaming the Shia as disbelievers. Whereas the Shia as can be seen from the foregoing Hadith out of the several in the Books of tradition not mentioned, are practicing the exact Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) who only prostrated on the bare earth, stone, and Khumrah? Throughout the life of the Holy Prophet (SAW), he had never ever prostrated on the carpet as we commonly see all over among Muslims of today. The Islamic Republic of Iran a Shia dominated country however is one of the world leading producers of carpets but they do not prostrate on carpet. Why? The answer is because of its strict adherence to the real and original teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SAW).

Dear Brother and Sister in Islam, and seeker of the truth, be honest and sincere to yourself, if you cannot rightly praise the Shia for keeping alive the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in prostrating on the bare earth, stone, “turbah” and the “khumrah”, then do not falsely accuse them of worshiping stone because of their sincere and courageous response to the commands of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

Be reminded, we shall all account for our deeds before Allah, the Almighty, the All-Knowing and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), therefore, be careful not to live in sin and falsehood.

COMBINING TWO PRAYERS

Dear seekers of the truth, kindly ponder and reflect over the following Hadith. It would be clear to you that indeed prayers have undergone complete changes and therefore not reflecting the exact teachings and actual prayers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

1. From the Book: Tafsir Ibn Kathir in explaining the Quranic verse (Suratul Maryam: 19:59):- *“But there came after them generation who neglected prayers and followed sensual desires, so they will meet perdition”*. Ibn Abi Hatam narrated that Aba Saed Al-Khudri said: “He heard the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying that after sixty years, the next generation shall neglect prayers and follow sensual desires and they will surely meet perdition”.

These teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) simply imply that in sixty years to come, prayers (Salat) would be completely changed to something else.

2. From Sahih Bukhari, Osman bin Abi Rawad said: He heard Az-zuhri saying that he visited Anas bin Malik in Damascus and met him weeping and he asked him what makes you weep, He replied: "I do not know anything better than the prayers and it has been changed".²⁶⁵

Is it not enough for a thinking person to reflect and understand that if a sahabi like Anas bin Malik wept and lamented that prayers that he knew better than any other thing has been changed?. Indeed with all sincerity we need to seriously search for the correct mode of prayers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

3. From the book, Nawadir Usulli Tirmizi vol 4:1-2, Jundab said: "The Holy Prophet (SAW) preached the following Hadith to him that it is the right of every Muslim to learn and memorize it. That the Holy Prophet(SAW) said: *"should a man from the early Muhajireen and Ansar look into your mosque during prayers he would not see anything of which they were doing from what you are doing in your mosque except your Qiblah only"*.

Should any of the early Muhajireens and Ansar happen to visit the later day Muslims congregation in their mosques, they (Muhajireens and Ansar) would not recognize anything in their prayers in the mosques. Every aspect of the prayers would be changed. The only thing

265 Sahih Bukhari , Kitabul Salat No.499 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 1, Kitabu Salat, Book 10 No.507

that might suggest that they are performing a congregational prayer is the Qiblah (direction of Ka'aba) they would be facing.

It means that the Iqaama (starting of the prayers) would change, the standing (Qiyaam), the recitation of the Fatihah and the surah would all change. The Ruqu'u (bowing) would change. The Sujud (prostration) would change. Tashahud would change. Everything would change in the prayer except facing of the direction of the Ka'aba-Qibla.

4. From the book: Tafsir Qurtabi vol 1:172, Abi Musa Al-Ashari said: "Imam Ali (AS) led us in prayers in the battle of the camel; prayers that reminded us of the prayers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

This indicates that the changes in the prayers started even during the time of the sahaaba of which most of them were equally aware but still followed their own desires. Verily, Imam Ali (AS) maintained the exact prayers of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and has been testified by several of the sahaaba of still following the prayers and teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Therefore to be sure of your prayers whether it conforms to that of the Holy Prophet (SAW), Brothers and Sisters in Islam, give a moment of humble and sincere search for the exact prayers of the Holy Prophet (SAW) all but for your own salvation.

Therefore on the topic: "Combining two prayers" it refers to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in praying the Zuhr and Asr together, as well as Magrib and Isha prayers together with some few minutes interval between each of the two sets of prayer.

Some of the Ahlul-Sunnah see it wrong and for that matter Islamically unacceptable to combine Zuhr and Asr prayers, and also Magrib and Isha prayers together. They are usually very harsh on the Shia for combining the two sets of prayer.

In Islam, all Muslims (Shia and Ahlul-Sunnah) believe and practice the five daily prayers (Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Magrib and Isha) as obligatory. The disputing part in relation to the five daily prayers is the number of times for the prayers which are three or five. According to the Shia School of Thought, the five daily prayers can either be observed three times or five times within the day while some among the Ahlul-Sunnah agree with the five times only and disagree with the three times.

The Malikiyah, Shafi-eyah and Hanbaliyah Schools of Thoughts collectively agree on combining the two sets of prayer only during travelling, but disagree among themselves during excuses of fear, sickness or rain.

The Hanafiyah School of Thought totally disagrees with all the schools of thought that under no condition whatsoever should two sets of prayers be combined.

The Shia School of thought however agree with combining two sets of prayer under any condition and that the choice lies with the believer. This view is taken from the Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

The point of difference between the Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah is the general permission to combine the two prayers at all times by the Shia without any excuse of travelling, fear, sickness or rain.

However, agreeing or disagreeing to a particular practice in Islam must be based on facts from the Holy Qur'an or the authentic Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Therefore, attacking or name calling or showering abuses upon the Shia for combining two prayers as the common practices of the Ahlul-Sunnah wal Jamah (Wahabiyah) is not an Islamic behaviour because Islam says through the Holy Qur'an (Al-Baqarah 2: 111 – 112): “Say,

produce your evidence, should you be truthful. Certainly, whoever submits his will to Allah and is virtuous, he shall have his rewards near his Lord, and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve”.

Well, before presenting any fact or proof in favour or against combining two sets of prayers at all times, we need to understand that all Muslims [Shia and Ahlul-Sunnah] accept and practice the combination of the Zuhr and Asir prayers at Arafat during Hajj. Equally, at Muzdalifah, Magrib and Ishai prayers are offered the same way together.

From the Holy Qur'an, the times mentioned for the observation of the five daily prayers are three (3) only from two verses. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:-

(A) Suratul Isrā (17:78):- *“Establish the prayer from the sun’s decline till the darkness of the night and the dawn recital. Indeed the dawn recital is witnessed (by Angels)”*. This implies that:-

- (1) **“From the sun’s decline”** – indicates the time for the Zuhr and the Asr prayers.
- (2) **“The darkness of the night”** – indicates the time for the Magrib and Ishai prayers.
- (3) **“The dawn recital”** – indicates the time for the Fajr prayer.

(B) Suratul Hud (11: 114):- *“And establish the prayer at the two ends of the day, and during the early hours of the night. Verily, the good deeds take away the evil deeds. This is a reminder for the (believers who are) mindful (of their Lord)”*. This also implies that:-

- (1) **(The two ends of the day)**- indicates morning and evening that is the time for the Fajr, Zuhr and Asr Prayers.

(2)(*The early hours of thenight*)– indicates time for the Magrib and Ishai prayers.

From the Holy Qur'an therefore, the two verses stated above are the only verses indicating the times for the five daily prayers which perfectly conforms with the combination of the Zuhr and Asr, Magrib and Ishai prayers together. In fact, from “the Sun’s decline to before the darkness of the night” is the shared prayer time for Zuhr and Asr with the condition that the Zuhr prayer comes first. This therefore means that after the Zuhr prayer is observed, the rest of the time up to “before the darkness of the night” is solely for the Asr prayer. Therefore, technically from the Holy Qur'an it is permissible to pray Asr either immediately after the Zuhr prayer or any time within the period until “before the darkness of the night” where the Magrib prayer starts. The same applies to the Magrib and Ishai prayers as the case of the Zuhr and Asr.

On the part of the practices of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in observing prayers, there are several Hadith recorded in the books of tradition from both Shia and the Ahlul-Sunnah sources that He (the Holy Prophet (SAW)) used to combine Zuhr and Asr, Magrib and Ishai together unconditionally.

Therefore, in explaining to the Muslim Ummah the real implication of the verse of the Holy Qur'an (An-Nisai (4) verse: 103): “*Verily, prayer is (imposed) upon the believers as (a) timed ordinance*”, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) observed the five daily prayers sometimes separately and sometimes too combined Zuhr and Asr, as well as Magrib and Ishai.

From the four (4) main Shia Books of tradition namely (1) Al-Kaafi by Muhammad ibn Yaqub Al-Kulaini (2) Man la Yahduruhu Al-Faqih by Shiekh Sadooq (3) Al-Estibsar by Shiekh Muhammad Tusi and (4) Tahzeeb Al –Ahkam by Shiekh Muhammad Tusi, there are

several references to the Holy Prophet (SAW) combining prayers from the Infallible Imams of the Ahlul-Bait (AS). However, I will limit my references to the books of the Ahlul-Sunnah because they rather believe more in their own sources than that of the Shia. So, therefore it is much better to speak from the angle that you may be understood.

For better understanding of the right direction of action with regards to combining prayers, below are a few examples of authentic Hadith from the Ahlul-Sunnah trusted books of tradition confirming that the Holy Prophet (SAW) used to combine two prayers together proving that the Shia are actually practicing the real Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

(1) Jabir Bin Zaid narrated that Ibn Abbas said: “The Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed seven together and eight together”.²⁶⁶ *Prayed seven together means Magrib and Ishai; and eight together means Zuhr and Asr.

(2) From Ibn Abbas it is reported that the Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed Zuhr and Asr together, Magrib and Ishai together without any cause for fear or travelling. Ibn Abbas was asked why? He replied: “the Prophet (SAW) did not want to cause difficulty for his Ummah.”²⁶⁷

(3) Abu Imamah said: “We performed with Omar bin Abdul-Aziz the Zuhr prayer, after which we went out and entered upon Anas bin Malik who we found performing the Asr prayer. I said, what is that prayer you performed? He said: ‘It is Asr prayer, and it is the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (SAW) which we used to perform with him’”.²⁶⁸

266 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1 Book 10 No. 518 : Sahih Bukhari vol. 2 Book 21 No.270

267 Sahih Bukhari Vol. 1

268 Sahih Bukhari vol. 1:138 Babu Waqtul Asr

(4)Ibn Abbas said: “The Messenger of Allah (SAW) prayed Zuhr and Asr together as well as Magrib and Ishai together without any cause for fear or travelling.²⁶⁹

(5)Ibn Abbas said: we used to combine two prayers together in the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW).²⁷⁰

(6)Ibn Abbas said: “that the Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed Zuhr and Asr together in Medina without any cause for fear and without rain. Then Ibn Abbas was asked: Why the Prophet (SAW) did that? He replied: “He did not want anybody from his Ummah to face difficulty.²⁷¹

(7)Ibn Abbas said: “that the Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed in Medina seven Rakaats and eight Rakaats.²⁷² (Meaning Magrib and Ishai = seven rakaats, Zuhr and Asr = eight rakaats).

(8)Ibn Abbas said: “the Messenger of Allah (SAW) prayed Zuhr and Asr together, Magrib and Ishai together without any cause for fear or travelling.²⁷³

269 Sahih Muslim vol. 1:439 Babul jam-u Baina Salatain

270 Sahih Muslim Vol. 2; Bābul Jam-u Baina Salatain

271 Sahih Muslim Vol. 2:152

272 Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal Vol. 1:221

273 Muwata’ Imam Malik, Sharhu Hawalik vol. 1:161

(9)Abdullah Ibn Mas-ood said: “that the Holy Prophet (SAW) prayed Zuhr and Asr together, Magrib and Ishai together and when he was asked why he prayed together, he said: ‘I did this not to put my Ummah in difficulty’”.²⁷⁴

(10)Abdullah Ibn Omar was asked: Why the Prophet (SAW) was praying Zuhr and Asr together, Magrib and Ishai together while not travelling and without cause for fear? Abdullah Ibn Omar replied: “He did that not to put his Ummah in difficulty”.²⁷⁵

In fact, Islam is a complete way of life and for that matter it takes care of every person and every aspect of our life. As social beings, our professional activities are many and diverse and by far more than that of the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW). To some professions, time is of great value and is equated to “everything”. Therefore, losing it (time) means losing “Everything”. Islam having solution to every situation provides alternatives for the individual in terms of prayer which is obligatory upon every Muslim to either observe the prayers separately or combine them as a kind of mercy of Allah upon His servants. Therefore, there are indeed benefits for combining prayers such as:

(a) Not to make life difficult for the Ummah.

(b) To easily get our needs.

We have it on record in the Book, Alwasa-il Volume 2 that a man complained to Imam Hassan Askari (AS) that he was rich and became poor. The Imam (AS) said to him:

274 At-Tabarani

275 At-Tabarani, Kanzul-Ummal Vol. 4

“combine two salat, and then you will see what you like”. Allah, the Merciful says in the Holy Qur'an (2:185): *“Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire hardship for you”*.

Now from the two verses of the Holy Qur'an earlier on mentioned (Isrā verse 78 and Hud verse 114) and the authentic Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from the Ahlul-Sunnah ‘authentic’ sources, it should be understood that the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Sahaba used to combine two prayers together unconditionally. This is exactly what the Shia is doing.

If any person is claiming to be aSunni then the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is combining prayers as contained in the books of tradition. If you are against it, then what and who’s Sunnah do you claim to follow? **Be ware, however, that Sunnah is not a label, but practical application of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW)**. In fact, those from among the Ahlul-Sunnah who challenge the Shia on their religious practices explained above should realise that they are rather against the Ahlul-Sunnah books of tradition rather than against the Shia. After such clarifications, only the unjust can continue castigating the Shia for upholding this Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

I therefore humbly appeal to all believing individuals to engage in serious search to find the truth for themselves and follow it before it is too late since life on earth is temporary and we shall account for all deeds before Allah (SWT).

However some sunni clerics try to explain some of the hadiths and traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) justifying combination of the two prayers (Zuhr and Asr, Magrib and Isha) to fit their stand that one can combine only on condition of rain, travelling or in times of fear. This view is contrary to the practices of the Holy Prophet (SAW), therefore

making it very weak because of the narrations of Ibn Abbas in the above earlier mentioned hadith number 2, 4, 6 and 8 that says that the Holy Prophet (SAW) combined without any cause for fear, travelling, rains and for not putting the Ummah in difficulties.

In conclusion, I remind myself and all sincere believers of the verse of the Holy Qur'an (Az-Zumar 39:18): *“Those who listen to the word (of Allah) and follow the best of it; they are the ones whom Allah has guided and they are the people of understanding”*.

May Allah, the Merciful for the sake of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Ahlul-Bait (AS) help us and crown our efforts with ultimate success to listen to the word of Allah, follow the best of it, be guided by Him, and be people of understanding and practicing the prayers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Amen!

MAULID OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

Maulid is the celebration of the birth and life anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This is an old tradition that has stayed alive for several centuries in the hearts of sincere believers. It is usually celebrated in mosques, houses, schools, conference halls and other public places all over the world by Muslims. This is similar to a nation dignifying and honouring her heroes. On this great occasion gifts and charities are extended to people.

Celebration of the birth anniversary and life of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is indeed an expression of joy and a way of showing our gratitude to Allah, the Almighty for given the world such a great and an incomparable personality, a role model for both the ordinary man and the people within the echelons of power in the world. The Shia, who are known and sometimes vilified for their intense love for the Prophet (SAW) and his Ahlul-Bait (AS), highlights the virtues, high moral and spritual standard, exemplary leadership, high regard for kinship etc that the Holy prophet (SAW) taught and stood for. Besides it is the human instinct to celebrate people who have had great and positive influence over the life of others. In the Holy Quran, Allah, the Almighty is even swearing by the LIFE of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) showing his (SAW) greatness and importance for the thinking persons to reflect on: - *“By your LIFE! They were blindly wandering on their intoxication”*. (Al-Hijr 15-72).

Unfortunately, the Wahabiyah movement brand the celebration of the birth and life anniversary of the Prophet(SAW) as forbidden (haraam) andIslamically unacceptable. Their argument being that Maulid is a kind of worship of the personalities instead of Allah. Contral to the Grand Sheikh of the Wahabiya (Ibn Taimiyah) who stated in his book “Iqtida-u

Siraatul-Mustaqeem page 279” that: - “As for dignifying and celebrating the Birth of the Holy Prophet (SAW) as done by some people, **it has great reward** because of their good intention and for dignifying the Messenger of Allah (SAW)”. We shall try to examine the claim of the Wahabiyah against Maulid in the pages that follow.

The claim that Maulid is a form of worship of the personalities concern instead of Allah, the Almighty, is a gross mistake and is never true. The Wahabiyah have a problem of differentiating Oneness of Allah (Tawhid) from associating partners to Allah (Shirk) and worship (Ibada). Therefore they wrongfully consider honouring, respecting and dignifying the good servants of Allah to mean associating partners to Allah which is ‘shirk’. Indeed to every sound thinking and understanding person, there is vast difference between worship and honour or respect. As Muslims, we pride ourselves that the Holy Prophet (SAW) is the best personality Allah has created and He (SAW) brought the best religion that has the key to solving all problems of humanity. How do we propose to show appreciation to this source of pride? Should we not trumpet this for the whole world to know **by celebrating his life?**

In fact without the least doubt, Allah mentions, at several places in the Quran, the praises and honour to some Prophets (AS) like Zakaria (AS) and Yahya (AS) saying: “*Surely they used to hasten, one with another in deeds of goodness and to call upon Us hoping and fearing and they were humble before Us.*” (21:90). Can there be any thing wrong with any person imitating the Holy Quran by mentioning the praises, honour and virtues of the said prophets of Allah in a Maulid? Certainly no, because mentioning these virtues encourages others to emulate their exemplary lifestyle and humility before their Creator.

Also, in relation to the Ahlul-Bait (AS), Allah says in the Holy Quran (76:8-9): “And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive. We only feed you

for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks." If on the maulid of Imam Ali (AS) a speaker mentions to the congregation that indeed, Imam Ali (AS) is one of the members of the household of the Holy Prophet (SAW) who gave their food meant for breaking fast to the poor, orphan and captive for the sake of Allah, would this imply worship of Imam Ali (AS)? This is infact respect and honour to him rather than worship as perceived by our Wahabiyah brothers.

It is therefore the same issue with regard to the Maulid of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in which learned scholars and great thinkers recite and elaborate on some verses of the Holy Quran related to the high moral conducts and events conforming to the way of life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). How can this ever be a sin and forbidden? Is it not Allah, the Almighty, through the Holy Quran who instructed us to honour, dignify and respect the Holy Prophet (SAW)? Kindly ponder over the following verses of the Holy Quran where Allah is instructing us to honour and respect His beloved Prophet (SAW):

"So (as for) those who believe in him and honour him and help him and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these it is that are the successful." (70:157)

Consider the following from the verse:

- 1) Those who believe in him,
- 2) Honour him,
- 3) Help him and
- 4) Follow the light.

Do you think these obligations imposed on the believer are applicable only during the life of the Holy Prophet (SAW)? Emphatically never!!

Therefore, the words: “and honour him” means to dignify and respect the Holy Prophet (SAW) whether alive or dead. Allah, the Almighty wants us to honour and respect him to the end of time.

“Oh you, who believe, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet (SAW) and do not speak loud to him as you speak loud to one another lest your deeds become worthless whilst you perceive not. Surely, those who lower their voices before Allah’s Apostle are they, whose hearts Allah has proved for guarding (against evil); they shall have forgiveness and a great reward.” (49:2-3)

Surely Allah and His Angels bless the Prophet (SAW); O you who believe! Call for (divine) blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation”. (33:56)

In addition to the above verses of the Holy Quran, the following are some divine sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in connection to love for him (SAW):

- 1) The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “None of you can be a sincere believer until I become more loved to him than his wealth, his family and all people”²⁷⁶
- 2) Ibn Abbas narrated that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: “.....Love me for your love for Allah and love my Ahlul-Bait (AS) for your love for me”.²⁷⁷

276 Sahih Muslim 3:275, 3:183; Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal 4:183 Hadith No.13499 : Sunanu Kubra by Nasaa-i 6:534 Hadith No. 11745

277 Sunanul Tirmidhi 5:622, Hadith 3789

Verily from the Holy Quran and the hadith outlined above, it is incumbent to respect and dignify the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) but with the method and means of application left totally open for the Muslim to decide. Therefore Maulid is one of the ways of expressing love, honour and respect to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in conformity to the teachings of Islam.

Frankly, in Islam any issue that has Islamic evidence is never tagged as an Innovation (Bid-ah). Some of the Islamic evidences are however direct and specific to their targets by names whilst others are general in terms leaving the specificity, application and methods to the Muslim to decide. An example is the issue of acquisition of knowledge and learning. There is no doubt that this subject matter is in general terms. The means and methods for acquiring knowledge are entirely left in the hands of the Muslim. In the past for instance, the “feather-pen, an ink pot, and animal skin” were agents for acquiring knowledge whilst today we now use computers, voice recorders, projectors and other sophisticated apparatus. This can never be innovation (Bid-ah) and for that matter forbidden. So, the case of honouring the Holy Prophet (SAW) is under the same evidence with the means and method left to the intelligent Muslim to decide.

Imagine Prophet Isa (AS) who requested from Allah food from heaven and its day became an Eid (festival) for him and his people as narrated in the Holy Quran, thus:

“O’ Allah, our Lord send down on to us from heaven a table set with food that it should be to us an ever recurring happiness, to the first of us and to the last of us, and a sign from Thee and grant us means of sustenance, and Thou art the best of the Sustainers.” (5:144)

Don't you realise that, the personality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is by far greater than the food that was celebrated as Eid by Prophet Isa(AS) and his people for the simple reason that it was a sign of Allah and a miracle? Is the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) not more of a divine sign of Allah and an everlasting miracle of time compared to the table of food that was so shortlived? Every sound thinking person will appreciate and cherish the revelation of the Holy Quran to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his Prophethood as a unique gift from Allah to man on earth, therefore worthy of being celebrated as Eid festival.

Adhering to and applying the teachings and practices of the Holy Prophet (SAW) at anytime and place should be seen as a kind of Maulid and Eid for a Muslim. Therefore kindly reflect over the following verses of the Holy Quran about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW):

- 1) *“And exalted for you (Muhammad (SAW)), your fame” (94:4)*
- 2) *“And we have sent you not (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad (SAW)) but a Mercy unto (all) the worlds” (21:107)*
- 3) *“And most certainly you (Muhammad (SAW)) standest on sublime morality” (68:4)*
- 4) *“And God is not to chastise them whilst you (Muhammad (SAW)) are among them” (8:33)*
- 5) *“Say (O’ Our Apostle Muhammad (SAW)), if you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins, Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”*
- 6) *Surely Allah and His Angels bless the Prophet (SAW); O you who believe! Call for (divine) blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation”. (33:56)*

Indeed such unique attributes were never ever said to any person by Allah, the Almighty apart from His beloved and Noble Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Yes and surely the Holy Prophet (SAW) must be seen as a living Eid for all because he (SAW) is a source of mercy to the world at large.

Also some sincere, great thinkers of the world like Sir George Bernard Shaw, a Nobel Prize winner in literature, 1925, Mahatma Gandhi of India, and Alphonse de Lamartine, a French writer and poet, have written very impressive commendations about the noble achievement of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Below is the conclusion of Sir George Bernard Shaw after studying the Holy Prophet (SAW) of Islam:

“If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam”.

“I have always held the religion of Muhammad (SAW) in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him – the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-christ, **he must be called the Saviour of Humanity.**”

“I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable today”²⁷⁸

Mahatma Gandhi founder of India says:

“I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today an undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind..... I became more convinced than ever **that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life.** It was the rigid

278 Genuine Islam vol 1. No. 8, 1936 available at;
<http://www.cyberistan.org/islamic/quote1.html> accessed on 22-12-2013

simplicity, the outerself effacement of the Prophet (SAW), the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and his followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, absolute trust in God and his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle. When I closed the second volume (of the Prophets (SAW) biography), I was sorry there was not more for me to read of **that great life**".²⁷⁹ Mahatma Gandhi's said he was sorry there was not more to read, yet people have problems celebrating the Prophets (SAW) life.

Alphonse de Lamartine, the great French poet says:

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and outstounding results are the three criteria of human genius, **who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad?** The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all no more than material powers, which often crumble away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples, and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then-inhabited world; and more than that he moved thealters, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls.... His forbearance in victory, his ambition which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire, his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and triumphs after death – All these attests not to an imposter, but to a firm conviction, which gave him the power to restore

279 Young India, 1924 available at; <http://www.cyberistan.org/islamic/quote1.html> accessed on 22-12-2013

a dogma. This dogma was two-fold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with the words. **Philosopher, Orator, Apostle, Legislator, Warrior, Conquerer of ideas, Restorer of rational beliefs of a cult without images; the founder of twenty (20) terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured we may well ask 'is there any man greater than he'?'**²⁸⁰

These great thinkers though not Muslims have indeed celebrated (Maulid) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by these attestations of his virtues. Why then should some Muslims fail to do same or even more. It is a shame that some Muslims fail to understand that.

Indeed the birth and life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) deserve to be celebrated , his moral conducts, his educative messages and sacrifices for humanity to be made known to the world and generations to come.

However those who do not like the Holy Prophet (SAW) and act against him are doomed to fail and be sure of an ultimate disgrace and humiliation.

Allah, the Almighty, made a promise to the enemies of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in the Holy Quran that: *“And those who hurt the Apostle of Allah (Muhammad) for them is a grievous punishment”* (9:61).

280 Histoire de la Turquie, Paris, 1854 vol. 3 pp 276-277 available at; <http://www.cyberistan.org/islamic/quotel.html> accessed on 22-12-2013

Well, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Himself used to fast on Mondays marking and celebrating his Birthday (Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Kitaab Musnad Al-Ansar, hadith 21498). Therefore, we must all endeavour to celebrate the Birth and Life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) showing love and gratefulness to Him within our means and capabilities for our own salvation.

Verily, the Holy Prophet (SAW) loves us; we must reciprocate and show him love if indeed we are sincere and grateful Muslims. May Allah increase us the love and the real following of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and make it very possible for us all including the Wahabiyah to be celebrating the Maulid.

AZHAR UNIVERSITY VERDICT ON THE SHIA SECT

Indeed, the religion of Islam is the religion of peace and unity but there are some people who strive to divide the muslim Ummah at all cost for their selfish and material motives best known to them. However, their efforts will always be in vain InshaAllah.

It should be of interest to know that, many years ago, a group of concerned and devoted Sunni and Shia scholars formed a center at the Azhar theological Institute of advanced learning in Egypt by the name; “Darul-Taqreeb al-Mazahib al-Islamiyah” (Center for bringing together the various Islamic schools of thought). The main aim of this great center was to bridge the gap between the various schools of thought in Islam, and bring about a

mutual respect, understanding, and appreciations of each school's contributions to the development of Islamic Jurisprudence among the scholars of the different schools, so that they may in turn guide their followers towards the ultimate goal of unity, and clinging to one rope, as instructed in the Holy Quran(3:103): "*Hold fast to the rope of Allah, and do not be divided*".

As a result of the commitment of the center, a religious verdict(Fatwa), was declared with regards to the legitimacy and the authenticity of the Shia sect by one of the Sunni world's most revered scholar, Sheikh Mahmoud Shaltoot as the then head of one of the main centers of the Sunni scholarship in the world, the renowned Azhar University of Egypt.

Below is the declaration which was announced on July 6, 1959, from the Azhar University, which was subsequently published in many publications in the Middle East examples being; (1). Al-Sha'ab news paper(Egypt), Issue of July 7, 1959. (2) Al-Kifah newspaper(Lebanon), Issue of July 8, 1959.

THE DECLARATION OF SHEIKH SHALTOOT

Head office of Al-Azhar University

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICIENT, THE MERCIFUL.

Text of the verdict(Fatwa) issued by His Excellency, Sheikh al-Akbar Mahmoud Shaltoot, Head of the Al-Azhar University On permissibility of following "Shia al-Imamiyah" school of thought.

His Excellency was asked:

Some belief that, for a muslim to have religiously correct worship and dealing, it is necessary to follow one of the four known schools of thought, whereas, “Shia al-Imamiyah” school of thought is not one of them. Do your excellency agree with this opinion and prohibit following “Shia al-Imamiyah al-Ithna Ashariyah school of thought?

His Excellency replied:

- 1. Islam does not require a Muslim to follow a particular mazhab (school of thought). Rather, we say; every Muslim has the right to follow one of the schools of thought which has been correctly narrated and its verdict have been compiled in its books. And, everyone who is following such mazaahib (schools of thought) can transfer to another school and there shall be no crime on him for doing so.*
- 2. The Jafari school of thought, which is also known as “Shia al-Imamiyah al-Ithna Ahshariyah” (The Twelver Imami Shiites) is a school of thought that is religiously correct to follow in worship as are other Sunni schools of thought.*

Muslims must know this, and ought to refrain from unjust prejudice to any particular school of thought, since the religion of Allah and his divine law (Sharia) was never restricted to a particular school of thought. Their Jurists (Mujtahidoon), are accepted by the Al-mighty Allah, and it is permissible to the “non-Mujtahid” to follow them and to accord with their teaching whether in worship (Ibadaat) or transactions (Mu’amilaat).

Signed,

Mahmoud Shaloot.

The above declaration can also be found in the book: “Inquiries about Islam”, by Muhammad Jawad Chirri, Director of the Islamic Center of America, 1986, Detroit, Michigan.

From the above objective declaration by an eminent Sunni scholar of high repute, it is unfair for some ordinary Muslims to simply brand the Shia as unbelievers. Therefore, every sincere Muslim as a matter of Islamic obligation should think of uniting the Muslim Ummah than dividing it. The world today is in great need of peace and harmony amongst all societies and nations. May Allah help us to achieve it. Amen!

UNITED NATIONS AND IMAM ALI BIN ABI TALIB (AS)

Allah says in the Holy Quran;-

“Whatever the Messenger gives you take it and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah; verily Allah is severe in punishment”(Al- Hashr 59:7)

History tells us that the third Caliphate ended in chaos, turmoil and rebellion which ended with the murder of Caliph Othman. Consequently there was no question of nomination, election or consultation. The whole Islamic ummah was at Imam Ali’s (AS) door imploring

him to assume the post of caliph. That is how the ummah turned around perhaps in line with the order of the Holy Prophet(SAW) at Ghadir Khumm.

“.....And I say unto you that whoever I am his Master, then Ali is his Master, and he is Ali, the son of Abu Talib, my Brother and ‘Wasi’, (Executor of my will), and his Wilayah (Master ship) has been made obligatory by Allah, the Powerful, the Exalted”.

It is worthwhile to note that even today (modern world), the order of the Prophet (SAW) of Islam still resonates in the rulership of humanity. The UN Secretariat, under the chairmanship of His Excellency, Kofi Annan in 2002 declared that “the Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib (AS) is perhaps the fairest governor who appeared during human history (after the Holy Prophet)”. Therefore the World Organisation for Human rights called on rulers of the world to follow the recommendations of this noble character in delivering to their people equity, social justice and prosperity. Accordingly six of the sayings of Imam Ali (AS) were quoted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 2002 report on Arab Human Development. Thus:

1. "He who has appointed himself an Imam (ruler) of the people must begin by teaching himself before teaching others. His teaching of others must be first by setting an example rather than with his words, for he who begins by teaching and educating himself is more worthy of respect than he who teaches and educates others."
2. "Your concern with developing the land should be greater than your concern for collecting taxes, for the latter can only be obtained by developing; whereas he who seeks revenue without development destroys the country and the people."

3. "Seek the company of the learned and the wise in search of solving the problems of your country and the righteousness of your people."
4. "No good can come out in keeping silent to the government or in speaking out of ignorance."
5. "The righteous are men of virtue, whose logic is straightforward, whose dress is unostentatious, whose path is modest, whose actions are many and who are undeterred by difficulties."
6. "Choose the best among your people to administer justice among them. Choose someone who does not easily give up, who is unruffled by enmities, someone who will not persist in wrong doings, who will not hesitate to pursue right once he knows it, someone whose heart knows no greed, who will not be satisfied with a minimum of explanation without seeking the maximum of understanding, who will be the most steadfast when doubt is cast, who will be the least impatient in correcting the opponent, the most patient in pursuing the truth, the most stern in meting out judgment, someone who is unaffected by flattery and not swayed by temptation and these are but few."

For the benefit of readers, Letter No. 53, from the Nahjul Balagah, which are administrative instructions of Imam Ali (AS) to Maalik Al-Ashtari, when he appointed him as the governor of Egypt, to be used as code for good governance, is reproduced here;

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICIENT, THE MERCIFUL.

These are the orders issued by the creature of Allah, Ali, the son Abu Taalib (AS) to Maalik, the son of Ashtar when he appointed Maalik as the Governor of Egypt to collect Zakat there, to combat the enemies of Islam and Egypt, to work for the welfare of its people and to look after its prosperity.

I order you, Maalik, always to keep the fear of Allah in your mind, to give priority to His worship and to give preference to obeying His Commands over every other thing in life, to carefully and faithfully follow the commandments and interdictions as are given by the Holy Book and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (s) because the success of a man to attain happiness in this world and in the next depends upon these qualities, and a failure to achieve these attributes brings about total failure in both the worlds. I order you to use your head, heart, hands and tongue to help the creatures of Allah because the Almighty Allah holds Himself responsible to help those who sincerely try their best to help Him. Allah has further ordered you to keep your desires under control, to keep yourself under restraint when extravagant and inordinate yearnings and cravings try to drive you towards vice and wickedness because usually your 'self' tries to incite and drag you towards infamy and damnation unless the Merciful Lord comes to your help.

Let it be known to you, Maalik, that I am sending you as a governor to a country which has seen many regimes before this. Some of them were benign, sympathetic and good, while others were tyrannical, oppressive and cruel. People will judge your regime as critically as you have studied the activities of other regimes and they will criticize you in the same way as you have censured or approved other rulers.

You must know that a good and virtuous man is known and recognized by the good that is said about him and the praise which Allah has destined him to receive from others. Therefore, make your mind the source and fountain-head of good thoughts, good intentions and good deeds. This can only be attained by keeping a strict control on your desires and yearnings, however much they may try to incite and coerce you. Remember that the best way to do justice to your inner self and to keep it out of harm is to restrain it

from vice and from things which the 'self' inordinately and irrationally desires. Maalik! You must create in your mind kindness, compassion and love for your subjects. Do not behave towards them as if you are a voracious and ravenous beast and as if your success lies in devouring them.

Remember, Maalik that amongst your subjects there are two kinds of people: those who have the same religion as you have; they are brothers to you, and those who have religions other than that of yours, they are human beings like you. Men of either category suffer from the same weaknesses and disabilities that human beings are inclined to, they commit sins, indulge in vices either intentionally or foolishly and unintentionally without realizing the enormity of their deeds. Let your mercy and compassion come to their rescue and help in the same way and to the same extent that you expect Allah to show mercy and forgiveness to you.

Maalik! You must never forget that if you are a ruler over them then the caliph is the ruler over you and Allah is the Supreme Lord over the caliph. And the reality is that He has appointed you as the governor and tested you through the responsibility of this rulership over them. Never think of raising yourself to such a false prestige that you can declare war against Allah because you cannot ward off His Wrath and you can never be free from the need of His Mercy and Compassion. Do not feel ashamed to forgive and forget. Do not hurry over punishments and do not be pleased and do not be proud of your power to punish. Do not get angry and lose your temper quickly over the mistakes and failures of those over whom you rule.

On the contrary, be patient and sympathetic with them. Anger and desire of vengeance are not going to be of much help to you in your administration. Never say to yourself, "I am

their Lord, their ruler and all in all over them and that I must be obeyed submissively and humbly" because such a thought will unbalance your mind, will make you vain and arrogant, will weaken your faith in religion and will make you seek support of any power other than that of Allah . If you ever feel any pride or vanity on account of your sway and rule over your subjects then think of the supreme sway and rule of the Lord over the Universe, the extent of His creations, the supremacy of His Might and Glory, His Power to do things which you cannot even dream of doing and His control over you which is more dominating than that which you can ever achieve over anything around you. Such thoughts will cure your mental weakness, will keep you away from vanity and rebellion (against Allah), will reduce your arrogance and haughtiness and will take you back to the sanity which you had foolishly deserted.

Take care never to think of bringing yourself at par with Allah, never to think of matching your power with Him and contesting His Glory and ever to pretend that you possess might and power like Him because the Mighty Lord will always humble pitiless tyrants and will degrade all pretenders of His Power and Might.

So far as your own affairs or those of your relatives and friends are concerned take care that you do not violate the duties laid down upon you by Allah and do not usurp the rights of mankind, be impartial and do justice to them because if you give up equity and justice then you will certainly be a tyrant and an oppressor. And whoever tyrannizes and oppresses the creatures of Allah, will earn enmity of Allah along with the hatred of those whom he has oppressed; and whoever earns the Wrath of Allah loses all chances of salvation and he has noexcuse to offer on the Day of Judgement. Every tyrant and oppressor is an enemy of Allah unless he repents and gives up oppression.

Remember, Maalik! that there is nothing in this world more effective to turn His Blessings into His Wrath quicker than to insist upon oppression over His creatures because the Merciful Allah will always hear the prayers of those who have been oppressed and He will give no chance to oppressors.

You must always appreciate and adopt a policy which is neither too severe nor too lenient, a policy which is based upon equity will be largely appreciated. Remember that the displeasure of common men, the have-nots and the depressed persons more overbalances than the approval of important persons, while the displeasure of a few big people will be excused by the Lord if the general public and the masses of your subjects are happy with you.

Remember, Maalik! that usually these big personages are mentally the scum of the human society, they are the people who will be the worst drag upon you during your moments of peace and happiness, and the least useful to you during your hours of need and adversity, they hate justice the most, they will keep on demanding more and more out of the State resources and will seldom be satisfied with what they receive and will never be obliged for the favour shown to them if their demands are justifiable refused, they will never accept any reasonable excuse or any rational argument and when the time changes, you will never find them staunch, faithful and loyal. While the common men, the poor and apparently the less important section of your subjects are the pillars of Islam, they are the real assemblage of Muslims and the power and defensive force against the enemies of Islam. Keep your mind on their affairs, be more friendly with them and secure their trust and goodwill.

But be careful in forming your contacts (whether with the most important persons or the commoners); keep such people away from you and think them to be the enemy of the State who are scandal-mongers and who try to find fault with others and carry on propaganda against them because everywhere people have weaknesses and failings and it is the duty of the government to overlook (minor) shortcomings. You must not try to go in search of those weaknesses which are hidden from you, leave them to Allah, and about those weaknesses which come to your notice, you must try to teach them how to overcome them. Try not to expose the weaknesses of the people and Allah will conceal your own weaknesses which you do not want anybody to know.

Do not give cause to the people to envy each other (man against man, tribe against tribe or one section of the society against the other). Try to alleviate and root out mutual distrust and enmity from amongst your subjects.

Be fair, impartial and just in your dealings with all, individually and collectively and be careful not to make your person, position and favours act as sources of malice. Do not let any such thing or such person come near to you who does not deserve your nearness and your favour. Never lower your dignity and prestige.

Remember that backbiters and scandal-mongers belong to a mean and cunning group, though they pretend to be sincere advisers. Do not make haste to believe the news they bring and do not heed to their advice.

Do not accept the advice of misers; they will try their best to keep you away from acts of kindness and from doing good to others. They will make you frightened of poverty. Similarly do not allow cowards to act as your advisers because they will make you timid in

enforcing your orders, will scare you from handling important affairs boldly and will make your enterprises and invasions timid and timorous attempts. At the same time avoid greedy and covetous persons who would aspire to the position of acting as your counsellor because he will teach you how to exploit the community and how to oppress people to get their wealth. Remember that miserliness, cowardice and greed appear to be different wicked qualities but they all arise from the same evil mentality of having no faith and no trust in Allah.

Your worst ministers will be the men who had been ministers to the despotic rulers before you and who had been a party to atrocities committed by them. Such persons should not be taken into your confidence and should not be trusted because they have aided sinners and have assisted tyrants and cruel rulers.

In their stead you can comfortably find persons who are equally wise and learned but who have not developed sinful and criminal mentalities, who have neither helped the tyrants in their tyrannies nor have they assisted them to carry on their sinful deeds. Such persons will prove the least troublesome to you. They will be the most helpful. They will sincerely sympathise with you. If you take them in your confidence they will sever their connections with your opponents. Keep such people with you as your companions in your informal company as well as in official gatherings in audience. From amongst such honest and humane companions and ministers some would receive your fullest confidence and trust. They are those who can always speak out the bitter truth to you and unreservedly and without fear of your status, can refuse to assist you or associate with you in the deeds which Allah does not like His good creatures to commit.

Select honest, truthful and pious people as your companions. Train them not to flatter you and not to seek your favour by false praises because flattery and false praises create vanity and conceit and they make a man lose sight of his real self and ignore his duties.

You should not treat good and bad people alike because in this way you will be discouraging good persons and at the same time emboldening the wicked to carry on their wickedness. Everyone should receive the treatment which his deeds make him deserve.

Try carefully to realize that a ruler can create goodwill in the minds of his subjects and can make them faithful and sincere to him only when he is kind and considerate to them, when he reduces their troubles, when he does not oppress them and when he never asks for things which are beyond their power. These are the principles which you should keep in mind and act upon. Let your attitude be such that they do not lose faith in you because a good faith on their part will reduce many troubles of administration and will relieve you of many worries and anxieties. And so far as your confidence and trust is concerned, let it rest with those people whom you have tested in difficulties and whom you have befriended, but you should always mistrust those people whom you have wronged or who have proved themselves undeserving, inefficient or unfaithful.

Do not give up those practices and do not break those rules which good Muslims have evolved or introduced before you, which have created unity and amity among the various sections of the society and which have benefited the masses.

Do not break them and do not introduce innovations because if you do away with those good rules and traditions, the reward of having introduced them will go to those who evolved them and the punishment of having despoiled them will be your lot. You must know,

Maalik, that the people over whom you rule are divided into classes and grades and the prosperity and welfare of each class of the society individually and collectively are so interdependent upon the well-being of the other classes that the whole set-up represents a closely woven net and reciprocal aspect. One class cannot exist peacefully, cannot live happily and cannot work without the support and good wishes of the other.

Amongst them there are the soldiers of the army of Allah who defend His cause, the next class is that of the secretaries of the State to whom duties of writing out and issuing special or general orders are assigned, the third group is of the judges and magistrates to administer justice, the fourth is of officers who maintain law and order and guard the peace and prosperity of the country. Then there are common men, the Muslims, who pay the taxes levied by the government, and non-Muslims who pay the taxes levied by the government, and non-Muslims who pay tribute to the State (in lieu of taxes). Then comes the class of men who carry on various professions and trades and the last but not the least are the poor and the have-nots who are considered as the lowest class of the society. The Merciful Allah has fixed rights and duties of each one of them. They have been either mentioned in His Book or explained through the instructions of the Holy Prophet (s). A complete code of them is preserved with us.

As far as the soldiers are concerned, they are by the commands of Allah a fortress and stronghold to guard and defend the subjects and the State. They are the ornaments of the ruler and the country. They provide power and protection to the religion. They propagate and preserve peace among mankind. In fact, they are the real guardians of peace and through them good internal administration can be maintained. The upkeep and

maintenance of an army depends upon the taxes collected by the State out of which Allah has fixed for them a share.

With this amount they provide for their requirements, maintain themselves and their arms in sound position to defend the religion and the cause of justice. The army and the common men (common citizens who pay taxes or tributes) are two important classes, but in a Welfare State their well-being cannot be guaranteed without proper functioning and preservation of the other classes, the judges and magistrates, the secretaries of the State and the officers of various departments who collect various revenues, maintain law and order as well as preserve peace and amity among the diverse classes of the society. They also guard the rights and privileges of the citizens and look to the performances of various duties by individuals and classes. And the prosperity of this whole set-up depends upon the traders and industrialists. They act as a medium between the consumers and the suppliers.

They collect the requirements of the society. They exert to provide goods. They open up shops, markets and trading centres. Thus providing the consumers with their necessities, they relieve the citizens of the need of running after their requisites of life. Then comes the class of the poor and the disabled persons. It is absolutely necessary that they should be looked after, helped and well-provided for. The Merciful Allah has explained the ways and means of maintaining and providing for each of these classes. And everyone of this class has the right upon the ruler of the State that at least minimum necessities for its well-being and contented living are provided.

Remember, Maalik that Almighty Allah will not absolve any ruler from his obligations unlesshe sincerely tries his best to discharge his duties, invokes Allah to help him in theirperformance, remains steadfast and diligent on the path of truth and justice and bears all thiswhether the performance of these duties is congenial or hateful to him.So far as the army is concerned its chief and commander should be a person who is mostsincere and faithful to Allah, to the Holy Prophet (s) and to your Imam who is most pious, who is famous for his forbearance, clemency and gentleness, who is neither short-temperednor does he get angry quickly, who sympathetically treats sincere excuses and acceptsapologies, who is kind and compassionate with the weak, but severe against the strong and thepowerful, who has no vindictiveness which might lead to violence or any inferiority complexor weak-mindedness which makes them helpless and dejected. To find and select suchpersons you should have contacts with pious and noble families with high ideals and exaltedtraditions, families well-known for their bravery and courage and generosity andmagnanimity. They are the people who may be considered as sources of magnificence andsublimity of character and fountain-heads of piety and good deeds.

When you have found and selected such persons then keep an eye over them and watch them as parents watch their children so that you may find out if there appears any change in theirbehaviour. Treat them kindly and sympathetically. Do not grudge highest considerations tothem (if they rightly deserve) and do not refuse small mercies. This kind of treatment willcreate reciprocal tendencies in them and they will trust you and will be faithful to you. Underthe impression that you have paid enough attention to their major necessities and wants, donot close your eyes to their minor requirements and needs because small favours often bearbetter fruits though careful attention to major necessities is very important. Among themilitary officers those should receive your highest respect and

consideration who pay most attention to the needs of the soldiers under their command who come forward to help the soldiers with their personal means and property so that the soldiers may lead a happy and contented life and may have full confidence of the future of their families and children.

If the soldiers are thus satisfied and are free from anxieties and care then they will bravely and wholeheartedly face the conflicts. Your constant attention towards the officers and soldiers will make them love you more and more. The thing which should most gladden the heart of a ruler is the fact that his State is being ruled on the principles of equity and justice and that his subjects love him. And your subjects will only love you when they have no grievance against you. Their sincerity and loyalty will be proved if they gather around you to support your government, when they accept your authority without considering it an unbearable burden on their heads and when they do not secretly wish your rule to come to an end. So let them have as many justifiable hopes in you as they can and fulfil as many as you reasonably can. Speak well of those who deserve your praise. Appreciate the good deeds done by them and let these good actions be known publicly.

The correct and timely publicity of noble actions and golden deeds creates more zeal in the minds of the brave and emboldens the cowards and the weaklings. You must know and realize the good deeds done by every single individual so that the credit of noble deeds done by one may not be given to another. Do not underestimate and underpay the good work done.

Similarly do not overpay a work simply because it has been done by a very important person and do not let his position and prestige be the cause of overvaluation of the merit of his work and at the same time do not undervalue a great deed if it is done by a very

ordinary person or a commoner. Let equity, justice and fairplay be your motto. When you are faced with problems which you cannot solve or with a difficult situation from which you cannot escape or when uncertain and doubtful circumstances confuse and perplex you, then turn to Allah and the Holy Prophet (s) because Allah has thus ordered those whom He wants to guide. The way to turn to Allah is to act diligently according to the clear and explicit orders given in His Holy Book and to turn to the Holy Prophet (s) means to follow those of his orders about which there is no doubt and ambiguity and which have been generally accepted to be correctly recorded.

So far as dispensing of justice is concerned, you have to be very careful in selecting officers for the same. You must select people of excellent character and high calibre and with meritorious records. They must possess the following qualifications: Abundance of litigations and complexity of cases should not make them lose their temper.

When they realize that they have committed a mistake in judgement they should not insist on it by trying to justify it. When truth is made clear to them or when the right path opens up before them, they should not consider it below their dignity to correct the mistake made or to undo the wrong done by them. They should not be corrupt, covetous or greedy. They should not be satisfied with ordinary enquiry or scrutiny of a case, but should scrupulously go through all the pros and cons, they must examine every aspect of the problem carefully, and whenever and wherever they find doubtful and ambiguous points, they must stop, go through further details, clear the points, and only then proceed with their decisions. They must attach the greatest importance to reasoning, arguments and proofs. They should not get tired of lengthy discussions and arguments. They must exhibit patience and perseverance in scanning the details, in testing the points presented as true, in sifting facts

from fiction and when truth is revealed to them they must pass their judgements without fear, favour or prejudice. They should not develop vanity and conceit when compliments and praises are showered upon them. They should not be misled by flattery and cajolery. But unfortunately they are few persons having such characteristics. After you have selected such men to act as your judges, make it a point to go through some of their judgements and to check their proceedings. Pay them handsomely so that their needs are fully satisfied and they are not required to beg or borrow or resort to corruption. Give them such a prestige and position in your State that none of your courtiers or officers can overlord them or bring harm to them. Let judiciary be above every kind of executive pressure or influence, above fear or favour, intrigue or corruption. Take every particular care of this aspect because before your appointment this State was under the sway of corrupt, time-serving and wealth-grasping opportunists who were lewd, greedy and vicious and who wanted nothing out of a State but asinful consent of amassing wealth and pleasures for themselves.

Then come the officers of your State. You must supervise their work. They must be appointed after a careful scrutiny of their capabilities and characters. These appointments must be made originally on probation without any kind of favouritism being shown or influence being accepted otherwise tyranny, corruption and misrule will reign in your State. While selecting your officers take care to select experienced and honourable persons, members of respectable families who had served Islam during its early days because these are usually of noble character and good repute. They are not greedy and cannot be easily bribed. They mostly have before them the ultimate result of their thoughts and their deeds. Keep them also well-paid so that they may not be tempted to lower their standard of morality and may not misappropriate the cash of the State which they hold in their trust and if after being paid handsomely they prove dishonest, then you will be right to punish

them. Therefore keep a careful watch over their system of work and rule. You may also appoint trustworthy and honest men to keep a watch over the activities of these officers. The knowledge that they are being watched secretly will keep them away from dishonesty, misrule, malpractice and tyrannizing the subjects. Protect your government from dishonest officers. If you find any of them dishonest and your confidential intelligence services submit acceptable proofs of his dishonesty, then you must punish him. This may be corporal punishment besides dismissal from service and taking back from him all which he has dishonestly collected. He must be humiliated and must be made to realize the infamy of his wicked deeds. His humiliation and punishment must be given publicly so that it may serve as a lesson and a deterrent to others. So far as collection of land revenues and taxes are concerned you must always keep in view the welfare of the tax-payers which is of primary importance than the taxes themselves because these taxes and the tax-payers are the original sources on which the welfare of your State and its subjects depend. A State really lives upon the revenues collected from the tax-payers. Therefore, more importance should be attached to the fertility of land than to the collection of taxes because actual taxable capacity of people rests upon the fertility of the land. The ruler, who does not pay attention to the prosperity of his subjects and fertility of the land but concentrates only on collection of revenues, lays waste the land and consequently ruins the State and brings destruction to the creatures of Allah. His rule cannot last for long. If the tax-payers complain to you of the heavy incidence to taxation, of any accidental calamity, of the vagaries of the monsoons, of the recession of the means of irrigation, of floods or destruction of their crops on account of excessive rainfall and if their complaints are true, then reduce their taxes. This reduction should be such that it provides them opportunities to improve their conditions and eases them of their troubles. Decrease in State-income due to

such reasons should not depress you because the best investment for a ruler is to help his subjects at the time of their difficulties. They are the real wealth of a country and any investment on them even in the form of reduction of taxes, will be returned to the State in the shape of the prosperity of its cities and improvement of the country at large. At the same time you will be in a position to command and secure their love, respect and praises along with the revenues. Will that not be a lasting happiness? Not only this, but your benign rule and humane treatment will so affect them that they will come to your help at the time of your difficulties and you will be able to rely on their support. Your kindness, your clemency and your justice will be a kind of moral training to them, and the contented, happy and prosperous life, for which they will be grateful to you, will be the best support, strongest protection and the greatest treasury for you. Later if such circumstances arrive that you find yourself in need of their support, their help, their confidence, their wealth and their man-power, then they will have no grudge against you.

Remember, Maalik! If a country is prosperous and if its people are well-to-do then it will happily and willingly bear any burden. The poverty of the people is the actual cause of the devastation and ruination of a country and the main cause of the poverty of the people is the desire of its ruler and officers to amass wealth and possessions whether by fair or foul means. They are afraid of losing their posts or positions and sway or rule and want to make the most during the shortest time at their disposal. They never learn any lesson from the history of nations and never pay any attention to the commands of Allah.

You will also have to be very careful about your secretaries. You should entrust your work only to those who are the best among them. Specially the affairs which are of confidential nature and which deal with secrets, and the security of the State should be

entrusted only to men of noble character because men who are intoxicated with power, position and prestige carry on propaganda and speak against the government in public, they openly misbehave with you and consider themselves so important as to ignore you or your orders in financial transactions essential to the State, they avoid placing necessary papers before you or attending to important correspondence. Particular care should be taken that when the officers make contracts on behalf of the government or sign agreements, these contracts and agreements are not defective or harmful to the State, if they are negotiating any treaties and alliances they do not overlook or forsake the interests of the State or if they find the State in a weak and embarrassing position on account of unfavourable terms of treaties or due to intrigues, they should be able to find sensible ways out of them. See that they know and realize their proper place and rank, because he who does not realize his place and position will never understand those of others.

One more thing about these officers: You must remember not to select them for very important posts and not to trust them completely simply because you have found them honest, diligent, trustworthy and intelligent and have formed a good opinion about them because there are some people who, when it suits them, pretend honesty, diligence and fidelity and can put on the garb of piety and virtue and thus find their ways in the hearts of the rulers, though actually they are neither honest nor diligent nor wise nor sagacious. Therefore, you must always look to the record or reputation of the services of such men during previous regimes; more importance should be attached to their good reputation. This kind of selection and supervision will prove that you are faithful to Allah and that you wish your Imam well.

Thus you must appoint one officer as the Head of each important branch of your government. He should have knowledge and wisdom enough to cope successfully with all the intricate problems of his department and should be diligent enough to cope with extensive work. Remember well that if there is any defect in your officers and you are tolerating it, then you and only you are responsible for all those evils.

I want to advise you about your businessmen and industrialists. Treat them well, and order your officers to follow the same policy. There may be local businessmen carrying on their trade in certain places or those who send their merchandise from one place to another. There may even be those who import and export goods. Similarly there may be industrialists and manufacturers as well as industrial labour or men engaged in the handicrafts. They all deserve sympathy, protection and good treatment. They all are the sources of wealth to the country. They provide goods for the consumers. Most of these traders carry and convey these goods from across deserts, seas and over open lands and mountains, their consignments are brought from distant lands, often from places which are not easy to approach and where usually people do not care or do not dare to go. These businessmen are usually peace-loving people, not given to mischievous disturbances and seditious fomentation. You must look after their interest and protect them whether they are trading in your cities or towns or whether they are travelling over the countries carrying goods from place to place.

One more thing about these traders and industrialists. While treating them most sympathetically you must keep an eye over their activities as well. You know they are usually stingy misers, intensely self-centered and selfish, suffering from the obsession of grasping and accumulating wealth. They often hoard their goods to get more profit out of

them by creating scarcity and by indulging in black-marketing. Such a condition is extremely injurious to the public on one hand and disgraceful to the ruler on the other.

You must put a stop to all such practices because the Holy Prophet (s) has explicitly prohibited such practices. Remember that trade should go on between the buyers and sellers according to correct measures and weights and on such reasonable terms that neither the consumers nor the suppliers should have to face losses. But even with all the sympathetic treatments accorded to them and with all the facilities provided to them, if the traders and industrialists carry on hoarding and black-marketing, then you must punish them according to the intensity of their crime.

Then I want to caution you about the poor. Fear Allah about their conditions and your attitude towards them. They have no support, no resources and no opportunities. They are poor, they are destitute and many of them are cripples and unfit for work. Some of them come out begging and some (who maintain self-respect) do not beg, but their conditions speak of their distress, poverty, destitution and wants. For the sake of Allah, Maalik, protect them and their rights. He has laid the responsibility of this upon your shoulders. You must fix a share for them from Baytul Mal (the Government Treasury). Besides this reservation in cash, you must also reserve a share in kind of crops etc. from government granaries in cities where food grains are stored as are cultivated on State-owned land because in these storage the share of those living far away from any particular city is equal to the share of those living nearby.

Let me remind you once again that you are made responsible for guarding the rights of the poor people and for looking after their welfare. Take care that the conceit of your position and vanity of wealth may not deceive you to lose sight of such a grave and

important responsibility. Yours is such an important post that you cannot claim immunity from the responsibility of even minor errors of commission or omission with an excuse that you were engrossed in the major problems of the State which you have solved diligently. Therefore, be very careful of the welfare of the poor people. Do not be arrogant and vain against them. Remember that you have to take particular care of those who cannot reach you, whose poverty-stricken and disease-ridden sight may be hateful to you, and whom society treats with disgust, detestation and contempt. You should be a source of comfort, love and respect to them. Appoint a respectable, honest and pious person - a person who fears Allah and who can treat them honourably, order him to find out everything about them and to submit a report to you. Then treat these poor people in such a way that on the Day of Judgement you can plead your case successfully before Allah because of all classes of your subjects this class deserves more of your attention, sympathy and fair-deal. Though everyone of these poor persons deserves your sympathy and you will have to do justice to His cause to achieve His favour, yet you should pay more attention to young orphans and old cripples. They neither have any support nor can they conveniently come out begging. They cannot reach you; therefore, you must reach them. Remember that the fulfillment of this obligation and duty is considered as a tiresome burden by most of the rulers but to those who desire to achieve His Blessings and to enter into His Realm, even this work seems light and congenial. They bear it happily, dutifully and sincerely. They find pleasures in it and they believe in the promise made by Allah.

Out of your hours of work, fix a time for the complainants and for those who want to approach you with their grievances. During this time you should do no other work but hear them and pay attention to their complaints and grievances. For this purpose you must arrange public audience for them during this audience, for the sake of Allah, treat them

with kindness, courtesy and respect. Do not let your army and police be in the audience hall at such times that those who have grievances against your regime may speak to you freely, unreservedly and without fear.

All this is a necessary factor of your rule because I have often heard the Holy Prophet (s) saying, "That nation or regime, where the rights of the depressed, destitute and suppressed are not guarded and where the mighty and powerful persons are not forced to accede to these rights, cannot achieve salvation". You must remember that in those audiences the most common men will gather. Therefore, if you find them misbehaving, becoming unmannerly or if you feel that their talk is irrelevant, tolerate them; do not be rude and do not insult them, so that Allah may be kind and merciful to you and may reward you for obeying His command explicitly. Treat them courteously, hear their grievances patiently and if you are forced to reject their demands then reject them in such a way that your rejection may please them as much as your grants.

Then there are certain duties which only you will have to perform and which none of your officers can carry out. Among them are replies to the letters of your commissioners and governors and are beyond the jurisdiction or preview of your secretaries. If you find that your officers are not attending as much to the complaints of the public as they should, then you should personally attend to them. You must finish a day's work on that day only because each day will bring its own special work for you. Reserve your best time for prayers to Allah, though every work of the State is the work of Allah, especially, if you are sincere and honest, and if your subjects are happy with your rule and are safe from your oppression.

Among those duties that you are to perform diligently must be your daily prayers. These should be offered sincerely and persistently. You must fix times for this during days and nights. You must tax your bodily strength for this duty though it may tire you. Your observance of prayers should be sincere and faultless and should neither be so long as to tire out those who follow you in these prayers nor so short as to be faulty and defective because amongst those who follow you during the prayers, there may be some sick persons, while others may have to attend to some important work. When the Holy Prophet (s) sent me to Yemen I asked him how to lead the prayers. He advised me, "Offer prayers like a weak and old person and be kind to the faithful" (so that weak and old persons may follow your prayer easily and happily).

You must take care not to cut yourself off from the public. Do not place a curtain of false prestige between you and those over whom you rule. Such pretensions and show of pomp and pride are in reality manifestations of inferiority complex and vanity. The result of such an attitude is that you remain ignorant of the conditions of your subjects and of the actual cases of the events occurring in the State. You will fail to realize comparative importance of events taking place and may attach great significance to minor events and may slip over important facts, similarly you may attach importance to mediocre or insignificant people and may ignore real men of consequence; and what is more, you may lose the power of distinction between good and bad and may take one for the other or hopelessly mix up the two. After all a ruler is as much a human being as any other man and he may remain ignorant of facts of which his officers want to keep him in the dark (and on which the public may throw light). Thus truth may get mixed up with falsehood and may not be distinguished because there are no birthmarks on the forehead of truth that it may be easily differentiated from falsehood, one has to search for facts and sift

realities from fictions, only then can one reach the truth. Think for yourself, there are only two categories of rulers and you may belong to one of them.

You may either be a pious, sincere and diligent ruler, doing the right thing at the right moment and following the principles of justice and equity and you may be protecting rights of others and doing your best to fulfil your obligations, in that case why hide from the public, why draw a curtain around yourself! Or you may be a miser refusing to be generous to anyone, in that case people will gradually come to know of this trait of your character and will gradually give up asking for favours from you but do not overlook the fact that most of their demands will have nothing to do with your private purse, they will be about the rights of people, obligations of the State, complaints against the State, oppressions, and solicitations of justice, then why try to avoid hearing these requests!

You should never overlook the fact that around the rulers there usually are certain privileged persons (relatives and friends). They may often try to take advantage of their status and may resort to selfishness, intrigues, fraud, corruption and oppression. If you find such people around you then do away with them (however closely connected they may be with you), immediately bring an end to the scandal and clear your surroundings of all such moral and spiritual filth.

You must never give lands in permanent lease with all proprietary and ownership rights to your friends and relatives. You must never allow them to take possession of the source of water-supply or lands which have special utility for the communes. If they get possession of such holdings they will oppress others to derive undue benefits and thus gather all the fruits for themselves leaving for you a bad reputation in this world and punishment in the next.

Be fair in dispensing justice. Punish those who deserve punishment even though he may be your near relation or a close friend and even if such an action may give you pangs of sorrow and grief. Bear such a sorrow patiently and hope for Divine reward. I assure you this will bear good fruits. If on account of your strict measures people get suspicious of your behaving like a tyrant and oppressor, then come out openly before them and explain to them the reasons of your actions and let them see the facts for themselves and realize the truth. This will give training to your mind, will be an act of kindness to the subjects and the confidence thus reposed in them will make them support justice and truth while you will achieve the end you have in view of obtaining their support in the cause of truth.

If your enemy invites you to a Peace Treaty that will be agreeable to Allah, then never refuse to accept such an offer because peace will bring rest and comfort to your armies, will relieve you of anxieties and worries, and will bring prosperity and affluence to your people. But even after such treaties be very careful of the enemies and do not place too much confidence in their promises because they often resort to Peace Treaty to deceive and delude you and take advantage of your negligence, carelessness and trust. At the same time be very careful, never break your promise with your enemy, never forsake the protection or support that you have offered to him, never go back upon your words, and never violate the terms of the treaty. You must even risk your life to fulfil the promises given and the terms settled because of all the obligations laid by Almighty Allah upon man (in respect to other men) there is none so important as to keep one's promises when made. Though people may differ in their religions and ideologies and may have divergent views upon various problems of State, yet they all agree that promises when made must be fulfilled. Even the heathens take care to keep the promises made among themselves because they have seen and realised the evil effects of breaking promises. Therefore, take very particular care

of promises made, never go back upon the words given, never go into the offensive without previously challenging and giving an ultimatum. Deception and fraud even against your enemy is a deception against Allah and none but a wretched sinner would dare do that.

Allah has given promises and treaties the high rank of being messengers of peace and prosperity and through His Kindness and Mercy has made them a common desire (of keeping promises) in the minds of all men and a common requirement for all human beings. He has made them such a shelter and asylum that everybody desires to be under their protection. Therefore, there should be no mental reservation, no fraud, no deception and no underlying meanings in between the lines when you make a promise or conclude a treaty. Do not use such words and phrases in your promises and treaties as have possibilities of being translated in more than one way or as may have various interpretations and many explanations, let there be no ambiguity in them, and let them be clear, precise and to the point. And when once a treaty has been finally concluded, do not try to take advantage of any ambiguous word or phrase in it. If you find yourself in a critical situation on account of the treaty made in the cause of Allah, then try to face the situation and bear the consequences bravely and do not try to back out of the terms that account, because to face such perplexing situations as may gain His Rewards and Blessings is better than to break your promises on that account and earn that about which you feel nervous and for which you will have to answer Allah and which may bring down His Wrath upon you in this world and damnation in the next. Beware of the sin of shedding blood without religious justification and sanction because there is nothing quicker to bring down the Wrath of Allah, to take away His Blessings, to make you more deserving of His Wrath and to reduce the span of your life than to shed innocent blood.

On the Day of Judgement Allah will first attend to sins of bloodshed carried out by man against man. Therefore, never try to strengthen your power, position and prestige by shedding innocent blood. Such murders instead of making your position strong will not only considerably weaken it but may also transfer your power totally, taking it away from you and entrusting it to somebody else. If you have intentionally murdered a man then no excuse shall be acceptable to Allah or to me because punishment of such a crime is necessary. And if you kill a man by mistake without any intention or motive of killing or while delivering legal penalties, your whip, sword or hand unintentionally and inadvertently deals a fatal blow because even a forcefully delivered slap or box on the ear may cause death, then do not, on account of your prestige and position, refuse paying the compensation to the heirs.

Beware and do not develop the trait of self-admiration and self-appreciation. Do not get conceited of the good points that you find in your good character or good deeds that you have done. Do not let flattery and cajolery make you vain and egoist. Remember that of all the cunning ruses of the devil to undo good deeds of the pious people and to affect their piety, flattery and false praises are the ones on which it relies the most. Do not boast of the favours and kindnesses that you have done to your subjects and do not try to make them realise this, do not think too much of the good that you have done to them, and do not go back upon the promises made, all these three habits are very ugly features of one's character. The practice of boasting over the favours done undoes the good done, the habit of exaggerating and thinking very highly of our good actions will make us lose the guidance of Allah, and the habit of breaking one's promises is disliked both by Allah and by man.

The Merciful Allah says, "It is most hateful in the sight of Allah, to say something and not to practice it." [Qur'an, 61:3].

Do not be hasty and do not precipitate your decisions and actions, when the time comes for an action to be done, or a decision to be taken, then do not be lazy and do not waste time and do not show weakness. When you do not find a true way to do the thing on hand, then do not persist on the wrong way and when find a correct solution, then do not be lethargic in adopting it.

In short do everything at a proper time and in a proper way and keep everything in its proper place. Do not reserve for yourself anything which is a common property of all and in which others have equal rights. Do not close your eyes from glaring malpractice of the officers, miscarriage of justice and misuse of rights because you will be held responsible for the wrong thus done to others. In the near future your wrong practices and maladministration will be exposed and you will be held responsible and punished for the wrong done to the helpless and oppressed people. Take care and keep control over your temper, your anger and your desire to be arrogant and vain. Take care of your hands when you are out to deliver punishment and of the sharpness of your tongue when you are saying harsh things. The best way to achieve this is not to be hasty in making remarks and to delay in delivering punishment so that you may keep your temper under control and are not overexcited. And you cannot achieve this unless you constantly remember that you have to return to Allah and unless His fear overcomes every other sentiment. You must always try to remember the good and useful things done in the past, activities of a just and benign regime, good deeds done by it, good laws promulgated, instructions of the Holy Prophet (s),

commands of Allah given in His Holy Book and things that you have seen me doing or have heard me saying. Follow the good actions and advice found therein.

Similarly, follow carefully the pieces of advice contained in these orders. Through them I have tried to teach you all that can be taught about a good regime. I have done my duty towards you so that you may not go astray and your mind may not crave for base desires. If it does then you will have no excuse before Allah.

I beseech Allah that by His Limitless Mercy and by His Supreme Might He may grant our prayers, that He may lead both of us to the Divine Guidance of achieving His Pleasure, of successfully pleading our cases before Him, justifying our deeds before man, of gaining good repute, of leaving good results of our benign and just rule with ever expanding prosperity and ever increasing welfare of the State and of meeting our ends as martyrs and pious persons, as our return is towards Him only.

May the peace of Allah be upon the Holy Prophet (SAW) and His chosen descendants.

From the foregoing, one has no alternative but to admit the fact that the above administrative instructions of Imam Ali(AS) when applied by rulers of the world, will indeed result in social justice and ultimate peace that the world is yearning for in this modern day. It is therefore enough evidence that the United Nations (UN) has recognised this fact and are encouraging governments to adopt this code of governance. This does not only show his impeccable character, infallibility and the depth of his knowledge but also buttresses and confirms his divine appointment as the rightful successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

ADVICE TO SEEKERS OF THE TRUTH

An extract from the last will and testament of Imam Ali (AS) to his sons, Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS) from the Nahjul Balagah. He said:

“My advice to you is to be conscious of Allah and steadfast in your religion.

Do not yearn for the world, and do not be seduced by it.

Do not regret anything you have missed in it.

Proclaim the truth; work for the next world.

Oppose the oppressor and support the oppressed”.

“I advise you, and all my children, my relatives, and whosoever receives this message to be conscious of Allah, to remove your differences, and to strengthen your ties. I heard your

grandfather (the Holy Prophet (SAW), say: *“Reconciliation of your differences is more worthy than all prayers and all fasting”*”.

“Fear Allah in your relations with your neighbours. Your Prophet (SAW) often recommended them to you, so much so that we thought he would give them a share in inheritance. Maintain communication and exchange of opinion among yourselves.

Beware of disunity and enmity. Do not desist from promoting good deeds and cautioning against bad ones. Should you do that, the worst among you would be your leaders, and you will call upon Allah without receiving His response”.

As Muslims (Shia and Ahlul-Sunnah), from the above advice of the Commander of the believers, Imam Ali (AS), we need therefore, to be conscious of Allah in all our undertakings and always remember the Quranic verse (96:14) that says: *“Does he (man) not know that Allah see?”* Allah is ever vigilant, sees and knows our deeds and motives. Indeed, He (Allah) is the absolute witness and the Judge over us and our deeds.

We should try as much as possible to manage and reconcile our differences, maintain communication and encourage unity among ourselves. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (3:103) – *“And hold fast all together, to Allah’s cord, and do not be divided”*.

You might be surprised with some of the facts presented with authentic Hadith and references in this book, indeed such is life for it is a learning process. Therefore, do not be angry. Be sincere to yourself, you might have knowledge of something but ignorant of other things.

However, with seeking eyes, you should patiently and honestly think over the truth that has been presented and move forward into broader and deeper research about the Ahlul-Bait (AS).

We sometimes act on the basis of insufficient information and knowledge. Therefore, if you have to decide on what to do and you want to do the right thing, the best way is to acquire all the relevant information, to make sure that you do not have false beliefs that might distort your judgement and cloud your vision so that you cannot distinguish truth from falsehood.

Be ware, the man of knowledge is the one who recognises that what is known is very little compared to what is not known, and as a result, he considers himself ignorant, and accordingly he increases his efforts to know more by going out in search of knowledge. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (13:11) – *“Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of the people until they change what is in themselves”*.

To have better understanding of the Shia Islam, seek for knowledge directly from their sources by reading from their books, discussing and dialoguing with their Scholars; but never from their enemies or those who are not Shia for they will surely distance you away from understanding the reality of the Shia with false allegations, illogical and baseless lies. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an (17:36) – *“And do not follow that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the eyesight, and the heart – all of these are accountable”*.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is our light, mentor and of course source of reference. Therefore, let us ponder over some of the sayings of Allah about our Holy Prophet (SAW) in the Holy Qur'an, an example of which are:

(1) Qur'an (21:107) – *“We did not send you, but as a mercy to all the worlds”*. This implies that, the Holy Prophet Muhammad(SAW) is a source of mercy to all creatures and for that matter Muslims must live as source of mercy to one another and to the world at large.

(2) Qur'an (68:4) – *“And indeed you possess a great character”*. Allah, the Almighty describes the Holy Prophet (SAW) of possessing a great character, a description which was never ever given by Allah, the Creator to any of His creatures before; a man therefore, asked Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS): “why did Allah give this unique attribute to the Holy Prophet (SAW)”? He (Imam Sadiq(AS)) replied: - “among the noble characters of the Holy Prophet (SAW) was that:

- (a) He links up with whoever cuts away from him
- (b) He gives to whoever denies him, and
- (c) He forgives whoever wrongs him”

The Holy Prophet (SAW) was having such noble characters for us as Muslims to emulate as a living standard in life.

(3) Qur'an (8:33) – *“But Allah will not punish them while you are in their mist”*. This implies that Allah will never punish any group of people so long as they have the Holy Prophet (SAW) in their mist. This is achievable reality in life. What we only need to do as Muslims is to be very sincere in our dealings with the Holy Prophet (SAW) by creating a seat for him in our hearts by being conscious of him in our undertakings. We reflect his noble characters in our daily activities with our family members, neighbours, friends, even enemies and in fact with all creatures of Allah not to talk of among ourselves as Muslims.

Verily, we have responsibilities before Allah, the Almighty and indeed the world is watching us and expecting guidance from us, the Ummah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Islam is the religion of justice, freedom, patience, understanding and tolerance as taught and practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Therefore, any person presenting or reflecting something different from the above is neither representing Islam nor speaking on its behalf.

I sincerely believe that, if Muslims of the world should apply even for only a single day, the teachings and moral practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the whole world would have no alternative but to accept Islam. Islam is a natural and very beautiful religion such that when sincerely practised, peace and happiness are the ultimate result for the world.

Kindly ponder over each of the following sayings of the first student of the Holy Prophet (SAW), the Commander of the believers, Imam Ali (AS) with regards to what is expected of the behaviour of a practicing Muslim as he learnt from his teacher (the Holy Prophet (SAW)).

He said:-

- (1) “Do goodness to the good people and even the bad people for if they are not good people, you are but a good person”.
- (2) “Be like the flower that gives its fragrance to even the hand that crushes it”.
- (3) “Be our propagators without even using your tongue” That is by your way of life.
- (4) “There is not a single day that passes without it saying to a man, that I am a new day and surely a witness over you, therefore, in me you speak of good and in me you do good deeds. I will be a witness for you on the Judgement Day after which indeed you will never see me again”.
- (5) “Your yesterday is gone and your tomorrow is doubtful. Therefore, value today and act as though you will not have tomorrow”.

Therefore as Muslims, (Shia, and Ahlul-Sunnah) let us all together be sensitively aware and responsible for our deeds and its reflection to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and for that matter, Islam. Allah, the Almighty says in His last testament, the Holy Qur'an (99:78) – *“So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it”*.

Therefore, Shia and Ahlul-Sunnah, we are but Brothers of the big Islamic family with the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW) as the supreme head of the family. We should indeed, always reflect in our human relations, the noble character and behaviour of our beloved Prophet (SAW), the source of mercy to the worlds.

We should also remember that, life on earth is short, time is short, the journey is long, the destination is distant, the task is heavy, and the deadline is closing in. Therefore let us be conscious, concern and committed to what Allah calls us to in the Holy Quran, saying:

“And hold fast all together to Allah’s cord, and do not be divided” (Qur'an – 3:103).

And the noble saying of the Holy Prophet of Islam that: *“None of you shall be a complete believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”*

We should also remember on that day, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) shall be a witness against us, (using what he taught us from his Lord and our Lord) and we shall be witnesses against mankind (only if we sincerely and faithfully followed his examples and teachings in our lives on earth). May Allah, the Merciful, for the sake of the Holy Prophet Muhammed (SAW) and his Holy Household (AS) not let our efforts be wasted or be in vain. Amen! And God bless us all!

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**AHLUL-BAIT (AS) IN THE HOLY QURAN AND THE
SUNNAH OF THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD
(SAW)**

“Verily Allah desires to keep away uncleanness from you, **O THE AHLUL-BAIT** and purify you a thorough purification”.(Holy Quran-33:33)

“I am leaving behind among you two precious things; **THE BOOK OF ALLAH and MY AHLUL-BAIT**, As long as you adhere to them, you will never go astray after me. So do not go ahead of them for then you shall perish and do not fall short of them for they are more knowledgeable than you. Verily the two (**the Holy Quran and the Ahlul-Bait**) will never separate until they meet me in paradise.”
(Sahih Muslim, Book 31, Hadith No. 5920, 5923)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sheihu Dalhu Abdul-Mumin was born in Tamale, Ghana. He had his ordinary and advance level education in Ghana Secondary School, Tamale. He also had his basic Islamic education in Tamale under the tutorship of Shiekh Ibrahim Basha (Sheikh Bayan) and Sheihu Imam Husain-Rashid (Sheihu Salawatia).

He furthered his education at the Imam Husain (AS) University in Karachi, Pakistan, where he studied Islamic Sciences and Arabic Language.

Sheihu Dalhu Abdul-Mumin continued to the Theological Islamic Institute of Advanced Learning in Islamic Sciences in the Islamic Republic of Iran by name Hujjatiya in the Holy City of Qum for twelve (12) years. He was turbaned as “Hujjatul-Islam wal Muslimeen” by the late Grand Ayatullah Shiekh Muhammad Ali Araki (RA) in the Holy City of Qum.

He returned to Ghana with missionary zeal to project the truth and beauty of Islam, therefore got engaged in the activities of Islamic teaching and Da'wah (propagation). After spending a few years in propagation, his quest for knowledge drove him to Syria for further studies in Islamic Philosophy and "Bahthul-Kharij" under Ayatullah Sayid Yusif Tabatabai at the Hawza of Imam Khomeini (RA) in Sayyidah Zainab (AS), Damascus.

After completion, he came back home and continued his missionary activities of teaching, training propagators, healing spiritually and officiating as Chief Imam of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) Mosque in Tamale.

Shiehu Dalhu is not only an Islamic Scholar but also the Traditional Ruler and Chief of the Zango community in Tamale, Northern Region, Ghana.

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